

Lutheran World  
Information

**LWI**

Includes  
LWF Sunday

# What Is Enough?

**Perspectives on Food  
Security and Sovereignty**



2009

**05**

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**LWF Sunday 2009:  
Our Daily Bread –  
Celebrating God's Abundance ... I-IV**

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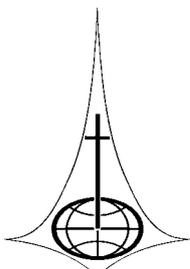
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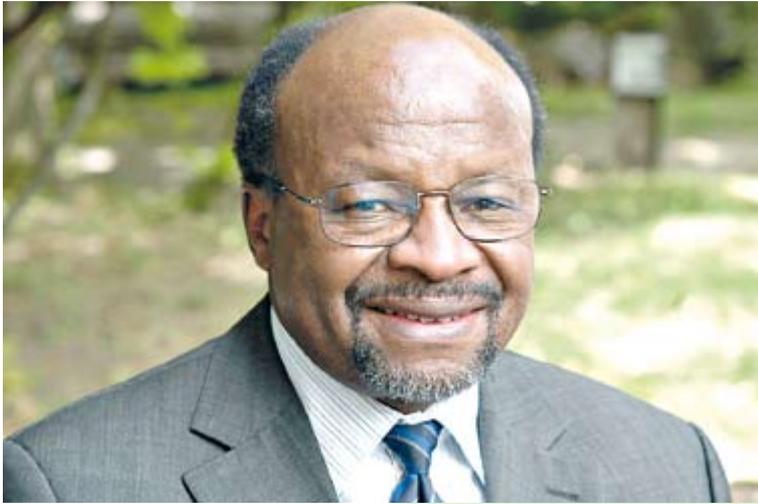
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A girl extends her hand with a small fish she caught in a rain-fed reservoir in Birni n' Konni, southern Niger. © 2009 www.olliviergirard.com





Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko © LWF/H. Putsman

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11).

It is our prayer, hope, and sadly, our lament.

The content of this special edition of *Lutheran World Information* (LWI) reminds us in very vivid ways of the deep gulf between God’s wish—dare we say, God’s command—that all people have enough food to sustain happy, hopeful, fulfilling lives, and the sad reality that most of the world’s people do not have enough to eat.

For many, especially the poor and marginalized, hunger, poverty, landlessness and lack of access to the bounty of creation are a daily reality. For them, “Give us this day our daily bread” is truly a lament. Despite the great technological achievements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, nearly one billion people today, almost a sixth of the global population, experience hunger and its related consequences.

The quest for “daily bread” is not only a deep ethical, moral and theological question but also an existential and spiritual challenge for our worldwide family of Lutheran churches. It especially strikes a deep chord as we reflect on the meaning of “Give Us Today Our Daily Bread,” the theme of the July 2010 Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to be held in Stuttgart, Germany. Do we have the courage to turn the recitation of Jesus’ prayer into acts of justice that challenge the current powers and entities that thrive on creating profit-oriented systems, all for the short-term gain of but a few?

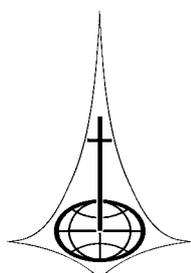
The stories in this *LWI* portray the dignity and resourcefulness of communities and individuals struggling to feed themselves amid insecurity, disease, political and economic disenfranchisement, and the strong commitment in the

LWF and the wider ecumenical family to work as partners with them.

The prayer for “daily bread” also underlines our responsibility to nurture the faith by reflecting on Scripture, as we journey together in God’s mission in this world. The *LWF Sunday* liturgical resources in this publication offer guidance for prayer and appropriate action on the critical issue of food security and sovereignty.

Let us turn Jesus’ prayer from a lament into a hopeful declaration for acts of justice in solidarity with the most vulnerable in our communities.

Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko  
LWF General Secretary



BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS

*What does our Christian faith tell us about the human struggle to feed ourselves—food security? The story of Joseph stockpiling grain for Egyptians, Jesus’ call to feed the hungry and Luther’s ethical concerns on securing food reveal a God who demands justice so that all may have enough to eat. Those who follow Jesus are called to resist the powers and principalities that rob the poor and vulnerable of this right and strip the land of its ability to provide food for all.*

**A Struggle for Food Security and Sovereignty – The Joseph Stories**

Selections from the Joseph stories in Genesis connect our Christian faith with food security, although interpreting them can be a challenge. They can be misused to justify the market and corporate right to control food production, access and distribution. The challenge is to read the Bible in dialogue with the issue of food justice today. These stories reveal how the need for food can be exploited by dominant powers.

**Storing or Accumulating?**

*During the seven plenteous years the earth produced abundantly. He gathered up all the food of the seven years when there was plenty in the land of Egypt, and stored up food in the cities; he stored up in every city the food from the fields around it. So Joseph stored up grain in such abundance—like the sand of the sea—that he stopped measuring it; it was beyond measure. (Gen 41:47-49)*

Joseph had the vision to store the food needed during times of famine. This is important. However, in this case, the basic need to store food so that people could eat was turned into a practice of unlimited accumulation that increased Joseph’s power and influence.

**Famine, Food and Trade**

*The seven years of plenty that prevailed in the land of Egypt came to an end; and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in every country, but throughout the land of Egypt there was bread. When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians,*

*“Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do.” And since the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover, all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine became severe throughout the world. (Gen 41:53-57)*

God’s wisdom was given to Joseph, and he prepared for a time of hunger. But food production, distribution and consumption must be organized in ways that are just, environmentally,

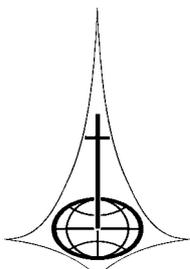
socially and economically sustainable. The process should also include agrarian reform, land redistribution, access to seeds, and the promotion of sustainable local agriculture.

Food security is typically determined by trade arrangements. It is important that sufficient food is available in times of floods or drought.

*Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe. As for the people, he made slaves of them from one end of Egypt to the other. (Gen 47:13, 21)*



Lutheran World Service India assisted community members in setting up this grain bank in South 24-Parganas district, West Bengal. © LWF/Albert Hubert





*Dalit women prepare a portion of farming land for a group income-generating project in Lalitpur district, central Nepal. © LWF/DWS Nepal*

At first Joseph’s food security program seemed wise but as people became dependent on it, it was oppressive. The land was concentrated under imperial power (Pharaoh). God is depicted as blessing Joseph with wisdom, but the story could also be an example of how the word of God is used to justify imperial policies.

The Joseph story shows how imperial powers can use those colonized to serve imperial interests. Joseph comes from a poor country; he was exploited and victimized. However, his wisdom on how to secure food for the people was used, not for the liberation of his brothers and other hungry people, but to make them increasingly captive.

First, the people had to use all their money to buy the food they

needed (Gen 47:14-15), as happens when the price of food escalates dramatically. Secondly, the people had to give up their livestock—their very means of livelihood—in exchange for the food they needed (Gen 47:16-17). Rather than raising or growing the food they needed through their own means, and through policies of food sovereignty, they were made passive and dependent. Today, farmers are compelled to grow crops that are often used as commodities or biofuels.

Finally, the people become so desperate that they give up their very land, and thus their very selves (Gen. 47:18-19). The bond between

the land and people is very tight, from the very beginning of Genesis, where *adam* (the human being) is created out of the very land or dust (*adamah*). Thus, land sovereignty is basic to food sovereignty. Without this, the people become enslaved. They give up their very lives for the sake of the food they require for daily life. They “die” by bread alone.

Having food security alone is not sufficient. What is also important is food sovereignty—being able to provide the food that is needed to live, rather than becoming captive to other forces; not charity but justice. People need to have and hold the land they require for the sake of food sovereignty and justice.

*Elaine Neuenfeldt is secretary for Women in Church and Society, LWF Department for Mission and Development; Karen Bloomquist is director of the LWF Department for Theology and Studies.*



*Rev. Dr. Elaine Neuenfeldt  
© LWF/D.-M. Grötzsch*



*Rev. Dr. Karen Bloomquist  
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## Christians Called to Challenge Unjust Systems That Cause Hunger

For Christians, access to adequate, safe and nutritious food has always been one of the foundations of a just, peaceful and sustainable world. “Give us this day our daily bread” is a petition repeated by millions of Christians around the world every day as they recite the Lord’s Prayer.

“Give Us Today Our Daily Bread,” the theme of the July 2010 Eleventh Assembly of the LWF, continues this petition.

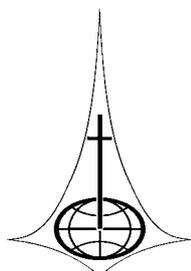
The vision of “daily bread” stands in stark contrast to the reality of

today’s world, where nearly 1 billion people lack adequate food. This brutal injustice is underlined by the fact that we actually produce enough nutritious food to feed everyone in the world.

We live in a broken and sinful world with hunger all around us. Our response as compassionate people of faith is to offer food. Jesus commends those who give food to the hungry, declaring that “just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40).

In its mission to promote a just, peaceful and sustainable world, the LWF works through its Department for World Service (DWS), which provides emergency response and effective long-term development programs in more than 30 countries. The DWS programs seek to create durable, sustainable conditions which are essential in empowering people to procure their own food and break the chains of dependency.

The LWF undertakes these programs in cooperation with many ecumenical partners around the world





Trade liberalization agreements between the global North and developing countries threaten the ordinary people's livelihoods. This demonstration in El Salvador was organized to protest against the ratification of the United States - Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). © LWF/DWS El Salvador

in the Action by Churches Together (ACT) International network.

*True compassion is more than flinging  
a coin at a beggar;  
It comes to see that an edifice  
which produces beggars  
needs restructuring.*  
Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.  
US civil rights leader

While providing food in times of want is commendable and necessary, God also demands that we “choose to loose the bonds of injustice” and “let the oppressed go free” (Isaiah 58:6).

This prophetic approach requires that we reflect on, critique and act against the systems that lead to pervasive and debilitating hunger. While we provide food to those who are in immediate and dire need, we must also expose and eradicate the causes of hunger, many of which result directly from the actions of “the rulers and the authorities” (Colossians 2:15).

As Martin Luther wrote in his *Large Catechism*, “When you mention and pray for daily bread, you pray for everything that is necessary in order to have and enjoy daily bread and, on the other hand, against everything which interferes with it.”

In short: pray for bread, enjoy it and reject all the forces that distort

the vision of bread for all. Luther’s comments on the fourth petition of the Lord’s Prayer challenge the easy temptation for Christians in the North: charity without economic justice. He rejects the tendency to provide economic necessities through charity without also identifying and challenging the economic oppression and exploitation that have impoverished the poor.

Since there is enough food in the world to ensure food security for all, we must conclude that hunger is a result of inequitable distribution and injustice. Some certainly have more than they need, while others starve. Our faith condemns such inequity. Whether the cause is greed, historical or environmental causes, or simple ignorance, we cannot tolerate hunger anywhere. Access to adequate and nourishing food is a right for all, not a privilege that only those with sufficient means may enjoy.

The LWF, especially through the advocacy activities of its Office for International Affairs and Human Rights (OIAHR), works to “break the chains of injustice” through international advocacy and to change power structures and relationships.

The LWF is involved in advocacy at many levels and in many contexts, from the grassroots, to national and regional efforts, to international and global forums, challenging the economic oppression and exploitation that impoverish the poor.

*Now a wide ecumenical movement is mobilizing to confront the root causes of hunger in the world.*

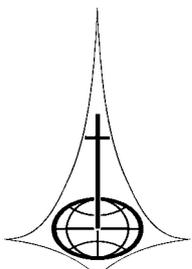
Through the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) of which the LWF is a member, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Evangelical churches and organizations are working together in a four-year campaign focused on food. By combining their collective advocacy on several critical issues, EAA members strengthen their voices and actions for justice, and have a greater chance to make a difference in church communities, among policy makers and in business circles.

The campaign launched in May 2009 focuses on the right of all people to adequate food. It looks beyond how food is produced and what is consumed, and includes the unjust and unsustainable policies and practices in today’s food systems. All churches, Christian organizations and individuals can join this campaign to eradicate hunger by working to eliminate unjust systems that jeopardize our harmony with Creation.

*This is a joint contribution by Peter Prove, LWF Assistant to the General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights; Francesca Traglia, OIAHR Human Rights Accountability Project coordinator; and Sara Speicher, EAA communications consultant.*



Mr Peter Prove (left) and Ms Francesca Traglia  
© LWF/H. Putsman



## SOME CHALLENGES FOR FOOD POLICYMAKERS A Debate

*Are genetically modified foods the answer to today's food security crisis, particularly in light of the potentially exacerbating effects of climate change in the South? While some contend that the focus on such new technologies distracts from the need for systemic change in the marketplace, others maintain that genetically modified foods will help liberate poor farmers in the developing world. Is it time for the Lutheran World Federation to reopen the debate on the use of genetically modified foods?*

### Should Climate Change Prompt New Thinking on GMO Technology?

Climate change is like a huge elephant. The poor can neither stop it from passing through unprotected fields nor wish it away. To avoid being crushed, they must find another route.

It has had a great effect on food production and yields, and will undoubtedly do more harm in Africa in the years to come, exposing increasingly more vulnerable people to food insecurity.

Perhaps the route to avoid being crushed by this "elephant" will be through genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Can the GMO technology be used to increase food crop production in the context of climate change in Africa?

Zambia banned the importation and distribution of genetically modified seed and food in 2003, arguing that the country lacked scientific capacity to guarantee the safety of such food consumption. There were also sharp arguments that the continuous consumption of large quantities of genetically modified food would weaken the consumers' immunity, including those living with HIV, thus worsening the pandemic. There were also fears that the poor could use such food as seed, which would contaminate indigenous seeds and diminish maize production. At the time of the ban, the country faced not only a shortage of maize grain, the staple food, but also pressure from commercial farmers urging the prohibition of genetically modified food.

The National Institute for Scientific and Industrial



Rev. Enos Moyo  
© LWF/H. Putsman



*The ZCRS Rural Community Development and Empowerment (RCDE) project includes a strong focus on food security and sustainable livelihoods. RCDE supports beekeeping using modern beehives to promote household income generation and energy sources. ©LWF/DWS Zambia*

Research now has a molecular biology laboratory to detect GMOs entering Zambia, and President Rupiah Banda has opened debate on the possibility of importing genetically modified maize.

Any technology that can improve sustainable production and food crop yields should be examined carefully. In our work with the poor and marginalized, we often come across starving, desperate people, who would do anything and eat anything just to live for another day.

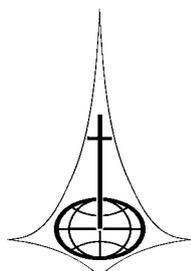
The LWF Department for World Service (DWS) guidelines on GMO use in field work operations state that DWS-administered resources would not buy any genetically modified food. The guidelines

underline general principles protecting the beneficiaries' fundamental right to food and to information for making informed decisions. When such food distribution would be unavoidable in order to alleviate serious hunger, then DWS would ensure that all beneficiaries know its origin, and decide whether they want it.

Rejecting and banning genetically modified seed and food may be the right thing to do, and may have been appropriate then, but it is not such a simple decision for many starving people in Africa.

Is it not time for the LWF to reopen the debate on GMO technology in light of increasing food insecurity and climate change impact?

*Enos Moyo is the LWF/DWS representative in Zambia, and director of the Zambia Christian Refugee Service.*



## Genetically Modified Crops Will Not Solve the Food Crisis

When a ship is taking on water, German sociologist Ulrich Beck quips, it may initially seem wise to drill a hole in the bottom to drain the water. Thinking again, however, it becomes clear this is a bad idea.

Such further reflection is also needed on claims about genetically modified (GM) crops and the new green revolution in Africa.

Market failure and poverty, not low production, cause world hunger and threaten farmer viability. Hunger is not the result of food shortages

(see “People die of famine in nation that exports food,” *London Times*, 18 January 2006, and “Poor in India Starve as Surplus Wheat Rots,” *The New York Times*, 2 December 2002).

Ever since the Irish potato famine, when tenant farmers starved while food was exported to England, the thinly veiled secret has been out: hunger is caused by



Prof. Leland Glenna  
© Private

unjust global agric-food systems.

In a market economy, people need money to convert hunger into food demand. Since poor people lack money, global commodity chains do not respond to them.

GM crops will not redistribute wealth to poor people. Furthermore, GM crops have downsides, including weed and pest resistance, and gene flow to wild relatives and non-GM crops.



A woman in northern Ghana plants rice. © David Ader

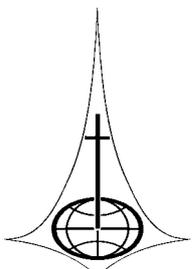
### Innovative Research

Massive spending on GM crops would be better invested in innovative research promoting low-input, ecologically beneficial crops and farming strategies, which might benefit small-scale producers. The money could also be spent on programs that guarantee a fair price for crops produced by African farmers.

In 2008, I conducted research in northern Ghana on a program developed by the African Rice Center that expanded rice production by paying farmers a guaranteed price for adopting improved non-GM varieties. Although very successful, the program is scheduled for termination. It is doubtful that the successes will continue when farmers no longer have a guaranteed market.

What is needed is a restructuring of the world’s agric-food system, and a radical redistribution of wealth. However, the public debates and policy changes necessary to promote such changes will not be forthcoming as long as we are distracted by the false promises of quick-fix technologies like GM crops.

*Leland Glenna is an assistant professor of rural sociology in the Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Department, Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, USA.*



## PERSPECTIVES FROM THE REGIONS

*How has the food security crisis come about? Farmers struggling to grow enough food to sustain their families and communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America are confronted with both local challenges and restrictive food policies decided in contexts that are far away from their daily reality. Resistance to these unfair systems is growing among churches and civil society in the developing world, as well as in North America and Europe, but there is more to be done before there is adequate food for all in today's world.*

### Africa

## Can Farming Regain Lost Glory in Oil-Rich Nigeria?

Alhaji Salihu Naannabi is one of many farmers toiling to support their families and feed their communities in Nigeria. He lives in the northwestern rural town of Tunga Maje, about 30 kilometers from Abuja city. Every day he travels some six kilometers to tend his crops on the land he has been farming for most of his 60 years. He grows yams, cassava, beans, maize and guinea corn for his family's consumption and sale.

Before commercial crude oil exploration began in the early 1950s, agriculture was the mainstay of Nigeria's economy, earning foreign exchange from the export of food products. But the accelerated development of the oil industry changed things and agriculture was relegated to the background. Today, the West African country is said to be among the top dozen oil producing countries in the world and the second in Africa after Angola. But the majority of or-



*Alhaji Naannabi stakes yams in his farm at Tunga Maje, northwestern Nigeria.*  
© Abuo Ojie

dinary Nigerians like Naannabi can hardly count any direct gains from the oil boom.

Agriculture contributes 41.5 percent of Nigeria's gross national product, while oil contributes 37 percent. Oil also is responsible for 83 percent of the total revenue and 98 percent of exports.

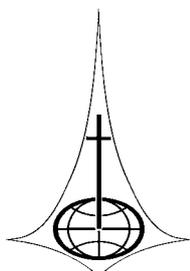
### Good News

However, the government has taken major steps in making agriculture a priority again—good news for farmers like Naannabi who work very hard to get high crop yields that can also fetch reasonable prices on the market.

Over the last 20 years, Naannabi has witnessed a gradual but steady expansion of his farm, thanks to improved varieties of seedlings made available by the government-supported research institutions. He says the establishment of agricultural

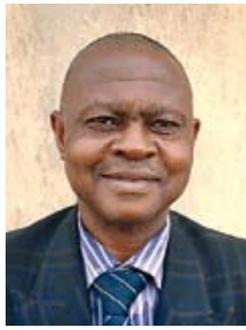


*Like other small-scale Nigerian farmers, Naannabi grows a variety of crops including cassava.*  
© Abuo Ojie



development projects with trained staff throughout the country has created great opportunities for many rural farmers, who can now produce enough to feed their families and for the market.

There are indications that the government's effort to subsidize fertilizers



Mr Abu Ojie © Private

and agro-chemicals and help small and large-scale farmers access credit to expand their operations would be a boon to many like Naannabi. The re-introduction of commodity boards that buy farm products and then market them has also eased frustrations. Such programs have the

potential to make farming worthwhile again for many in this country of more than 140 million people.

Gradually agriculture appears to be regaining its lost glory, says Naannabi, and hopefully this would put enough food on family tables and earn farmers a good income.

*Abuo Ojie is a journalist with the Abuja Today newspaper in Abuja, Nigeria.*

Asia

Diversifying Papua New Guinea's Lifeblood

Umoib Maneum survives on a traditional diet of *taro*, a homegrown vegetable.

The Girawa man, from Begesin in Madang Province on the northern coast of mainland Papua New Guinea (PNG), is dependent on the tuber. Once harvested, it has to be consumed right away as it does not keep. Someone from the household must go to the garden every day to fetch the meal.

In the rainy season this can be a very arduous journey for Maneum as

he traverses slippery paths and crosses swollen rivers. When there is illness in the household, someone still has to make the trip for their daily sustenance.

Maneum is not alone.

PNG is a land of great contrasts and divisions but agriculture is its lifeblood, from the islands to the highlands in this



Mr Klaus Neuemeier © ELC-PNG/ Hermann Spingler

country of over 6 million people.

More than 80 percent of the rural people subsist on what they produce in their gardens. Yet, despite these efforts, PNG is a net food importer, mainly due to population growth.

The Yangpela Didiman Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua

New Guinea (ELC-PNG) has been addressing food security issues in the country's rural and remote areas for more than 30 years. The program trains men and women to use their resources wisely in order to provide for their families. The goal is to create a wider variety of crops that are resilient to failure and offer a balanced diet.

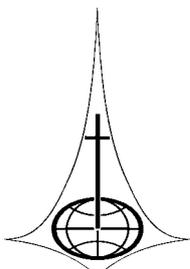
One can imagine that a supply of non-perishable food would make life a lot easier for Maneum. That is why the program continues working on the issue of food security.

There has been a long struggle to find a practical and simple way to process homegrown rice. ELC-PNG donor partners purchased communal rice mills to equip poor farmers but these schemes failed because of technical problems, ownership issues and difficulties in obtaining fuel and spare parts.

One solution to the problem is the *Kiser*, a rice hulling device from Indonesia. It can be produced from local hardwood without the use of special tools. The Yangpela Didiman Program teaches farmers to intercrop



Thanks to the locally produced rice hulling device, Umoib Maneum can process enough grain for a family meal in 15 minutes. © ELC-PNG/Klaus Neuemeier



rice in their existing gardens and carve a *Kiser* from a log to process it. This simple technology allows

even children to easily process home-grown rice for a family in about 30 minutes.

*Klaus Neuemeier is adviser to the Yangela Didiman Program of the ELC-PNG Lutheran Development Service.*

Europe

Relief Agencies Urge Consistent EU Policy on Global Hunger

Relief organizations throughout Europe are calling for a consistent European Union (EU) policy to combat worldwide hunger.

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) states that the number of hungry people worldwide has risen by 113 million since 2006. According to FAO, nearly one billion people—15 percent of the world’s population—are undernourished.

However, the EU pursues a policy mainly oriented toward the interests of the region’s agro-industry lobby. Although slow progress is being made in reforming this policy, it is accompanied by serious regression. The January 2009 EU reintroduction of subsidies for dairy exports has raised protests from African dairy farmers and non-governmental organizations such as German Protestant aid agency Brot für die Welt, who see this move as “slap in the face to the hungry.”

**Subsidies**

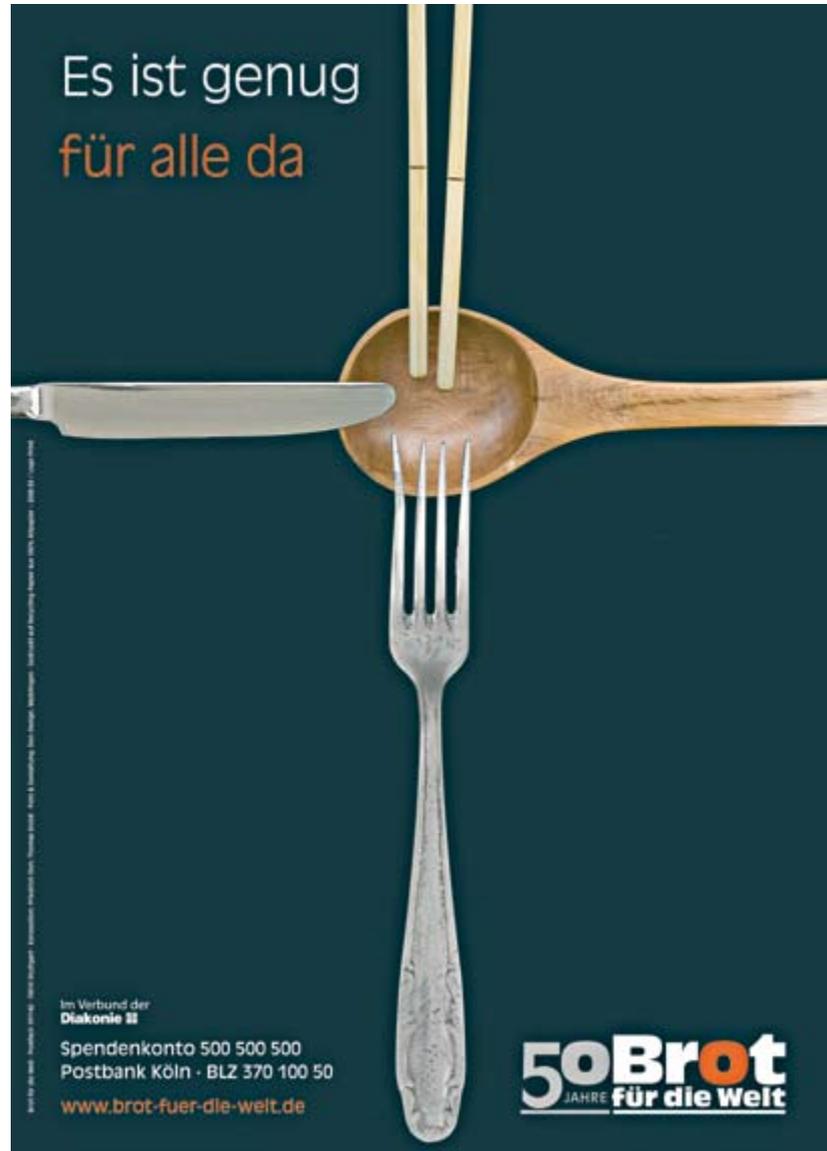
Moreover, the EU Commission decided not to exclude developing countries from these export subsidies, claiming that very few dairy farmers in Africa would be adversely affected by such measures.

Of course there are dairy farmers in countries such as Burkina Faso, Uganda and Zambia who are threatened. The decision to raise EU milk quotas and reintroduce subsidies threatens to trigger a dumping “competition” in which the African farmers would have no edge.

Studies in Zambia show that the price of imported powdered milk influences local milk prices.



Mr Rainer Lang © Private



“There is enough for all,” states this Brot für die Welt anniversary campaign poster for just global food policies. © Brot für die Welt

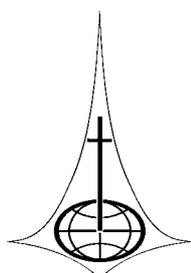
Higher imports of dairy products threaten the domestic producers’ income. At the same time, the EU under the so-called development partnerships obliges African countries to open their markets.

The EU’s new economic agreements prohibit African, Caribbean and Pacific countries from raising their pro-

ective import duties against cheap imports.

**Restrictions**

Undoubtedly, the EU is not pursuing a free trade policy. Agricultural subsidies, import restrictions and the export of cheap agricultural surpluses undermine farmers in other world regions. Meanwhile, domestic production in many developing countries has declined so much that some of



them have to import staple foods to feed the population.

In this context, FAO and the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development have called for the doubling of food production in developing nations by 2050 in order

to guarantee the right to food of all human beings.

The EU responded to the 2008 food crisis by setting aside 1 billion Euros toward agriculture in developing countries. While this is a step in the right direction, there is no oversight on how these funds are used,

whether for example, they could go toward promoting the cultivation of genetically modified plants.

*Rainer Lang is media officer for the Protestant relief organizations Brot für die Welt and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in Stuttgart, Germany.*

## North America

### United States: Advocacy Can Help Shape Government Nutrition Programs

The current global financial crisis has put an increased number of people in poverty. In the United States of America, 35.5 million people experience hunger or the risk of hunger. Food is a basic necessity of life. Those who are impoverished are struggling now more than ever to keep it on their tables.



*Ms Jodi L. Deike © Private*

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp program) traces its earliest origins back to 1939 when it was created to help needy families during the depression era.

#### Moral Responsibility

We may not be in a depression era, but we all recognize the difficulty of the current recession. As Christians, we have a moral responsibility to help our neighbors in such times of need. We can help shape government nutritional programs by our advocacy.

Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) are called to live out their faith through actions such as advocacy. This is one way to love our neighbor in response to God's love given to us in Jesus Christ. Speaking to those in power provides us with an op-

portunity to create laws that are just toward the hungry and needy in the United States and around the globe.

The ELCA has more than 28,000 advocates who are calling upon their state and federal legislators to ensure just policies and programs. If because of our advocacy more people are able to put food on their tables through programs such as SNAP, then God's work is being done. More families will be able to purchase more food. Distributors will then need to produce more food to meet the demand. Companies will need to employ more people. Jobs will

be created and more families will be able to support themselves.

We need to support one another through our prayer and our work. When we work for public and corporate policies that advance justice, peace, human dignity and care for the earth, we are standing with people who are suffering because of their poverty.

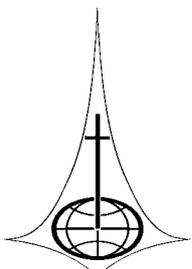
*Jodi L. Deike is the director for Grassroots Advocacy and Communication at the ELCA Washington Office.*

Information about the ELCA World Hunger program is available at: [www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger.aspx](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger.aspx)



*Mr Robert Francis, ELCA director for Domestic Public Policy, preparing a group of faith-based and anti-poverty activists for visits with their members of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington D. C. © ELCA Washington Office*

**Past LWI special editions are available at [www.lutheranworld.org/News/Welcome.EN.html](http://www.lutheranworld.org/News/Welcome.EN.html)**



## Costa Rican Church Joins Coalition Urging Measures to End Poverty

Costa Rica can feed its population. However, the conversion to non-traditional exports and emergence of an intermediary food industry over the past 30 years, has systematically weakened crop production, forcing many farming-dependent families to change to other sectors.

The dismantling of public services that guaranteed land purchasing, scientific research and technical assistance has greatly contributed to the decline of family agriculture, creating a precarious situation for the entire Costa Rican society. Meanwhile, the agricultural system promotes crops for export, genetically improved seeds, agrochemicals and mechanization. In addition, the basic goods' pricing policies make it difficult for farmers to earn a living from their produce, and with less food available, rural poverty is increasing in this country of more than 4.1 million people.

### Church Leadership

As a Lutheran bishop, I have spoken out publicly about food security as a vital issue and about the need to revive small and medium-scale crop and livestock production. This is an important sector of the economy which can guarantee the supply of staple foods and generate jobs.

Lutherans have joined a coalition of farmers, businesses, environmentalists, local communities, and churches in presenting to



Bishop Melvin Jiménez  
© LWF/D.-M. Grätzsch



The Lutheran Costa Rican Church joined a coalition opposing the country's adoption of free trade agreements, saying this would adversely affect the majority of the population. A Maleku (indigenous community) representative speaks during a meeting organized by the Lutheran church before the October 2007 national referendum on CAFTA. © LWF/DWS Costa Rica/ N. B. Arroyo

the government "Ten Measures for Confronting the Economic Crisis and Ensure Social and Productive Inclusion." The proposal seeks solutions to the economic crisis through a national dialogue involving all sectors of the society.

### Sustainable Production

In our proposal for food sovereignty and security, we seek to promote environmentally sustainable forms of production that stimulate local consumption. Equally important are medium and long-term programs targeting not only inputs but also investment in land, infrastructure, training, technical assistance, guarantee systems, and market

development including fair trade systems that are officially recognized to be of public interest. Such programs would provide job security and sustain and increase productivity.

We are urging support for women and youth in order to reverse the exclusion of youth from agricultural activities and the feminization of poverty, and foster their sustained involvement in agriculture.

This is a national crisis that will not be resolved easily, but allowing it to degenerate into structural poverty would result in the loss of land, food, education, security, health and housing.

As churches, we say Jesus is alive and accompanying the process of seeking justice and equity, especially for the most disadvantaged in our society.

Melvin Jiménez heads the Lutheran Costa Rican Church.

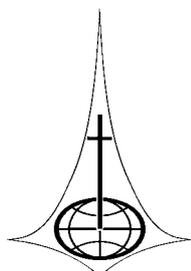
## LWF Peru Project Provides Model for National Curriculum

In Peru, ongoing partnership between the LWF Department for World Service (DWS) program and the Peruvian Lutheran Evangelical Church strengthens and promotes work among the country's marginalized communities.

The DWS associate program, Diaconia Peru, carries out projects that focus on improving living conditions for the poor and excluded people in rural areas. One of the major initiatives over the last few years was a training project in food production and nutrition, aimed at improving children's nutrition and the

quality of teaching in rural schools. The project has had significant impact on public policies, with many aspects of its diversified curriculum for rural schools included in the official Ministry of Education course outlines.

The DWS program also supports peasant communities through the construction and rehabilitation of irrigation canals and reservoirs, and training in water management. Diaconia Peru encourages income generation by promoting sustainable agriculture, livestock production, marketing, and formation of small enterprises.



YOUTH PERSPECTIVES

*How are youth tackling the issue of food security? Whether in Honduras, Madagascar, Russia or Thailand, they are involved in local church programs that help feed the poor, advocate for systemic change and teach families how to be self-reliant.*

Call for Incentives That Draw Young Thais to Farming

Nowadays most young Thai people prefer to work in a big city rather than in a rural area because of the social conditions the urban area offers—a comfortable lifestyle, good income and entertainment options.

Working on the farm doesn't have the same attractions.

Every year members of my church in northern Thailand visit a demonstration farm where we learn about the real conditions for farmers.

In order to change young people's attitudes and encourage them to go into farming, the government should provide significant support toward agriculture and make it more profitable.



Ms. Joice Jule Bunchuen  
© Private

The government can make young people more interested in farming by offering them career training that equips them with skills on how to grow different products, and make a living working on the farm.

It should also provide funds for those who have no money and allocate them farmland.

Most importantly, the government should raise the prices for agricultural products and demand higher quality. That would allow farmers to earn a better income and be satisfied working on a farm.

*Joice Jule Bunchuen, 24, is a youth leader in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thailand.*

Honduras: A Nutrition Education Program for Families

The Martin Luther Kindergarten in the rural Honduran village of La Cañada is tackling poverty and malnutrition in the community by running a nutrition education program for families.

Established by the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras, the kindergarten offers the community's children at least one healthy meal a day during the school year. In addition, mothers are taught about nutrition and hygiene so that they can make more informed choices when buying and preparing food. The program is a blessing in this predominantly rural country of 7.5 million, where on the one hand, food for a well-balanced diet is expensive, and on the other hand, fast foods



Mr. Roger Vivas  
© Private

are heavily promoted. The program is beneficial because it teaches families how to support themselves.

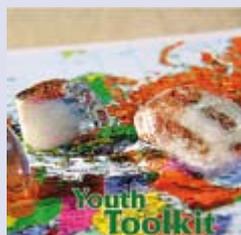
However, the church, which relies on donations for the project, does not have the funds to continue maintaining it. We must find money to pay the instructor's salary and buy food to ensure that this labor of faith, love and dedication continues.

As the church youth coordinator, I need to become more familiar with the project and explore ways in which our many young people might participate.

*Roger Vivas, 24, is youth coordinator for the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras.*

LWF Youth Resource on Climate Change

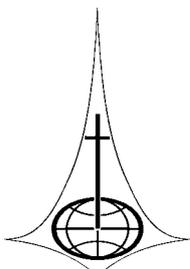
The *LWF Youth Toolkit on Climate Change* can be used to equip youth with knowledge about the impact of climate change and organize Bible studies, role plays and other activities on the topic of climate change in various settings such as youth workshops, confirmation classes, etc. It provides guidelines for youth to design local projects that help communities to fight climate change.



Copies can be ordered from the LWF Youth desk at: [lwfyouth@lutheranworld.org](mailto:lwfyouth@lutheranworld.org)

Individual copies are free of charge, but postage reimbursement would be requested for bulk orders.

An online version is available at: [lwfyouth.org/2008/12/17/youth-toolkit-on-climate-change](http://lwfyouth.org/2008/12/17/youth-toolkit-on-climate-change)



## Malagasy Church Equips Students with Farming Techniques

Food is a vital part of life in the rural area of Madagascar where I live, surrounded by farming communities and agriculture activities.

Most of the population farms for a living but still, getting enough to eat remains a great challenge, especially during the lean season.

Deficient farming techniques, climatic changes and poverty keep production low and create food insecurity here. The little that is produced is sold to provide for basic needs such as clothes and medicine. Farmers are left with little or no food to eat.

Even when the harvest is abundant, farmers do not manage their crop well. Too much produce is consumed and sold right away, as though



Mr Hery F. Ravelonjanahary © Private

the bitterness of the difficult season and the eventuality of its return

are forgotten. The harvest is never enough for the whole year.

Local churches are working to prevent such food insecurity by teaching farming and agricultural techniques through institutions such as the Tombontsoa School of Agriculture and Farming, an institute of the Malagasy Lutheran Church (FLM).

If each of us supported agricultural and farming efforts and protected the environment, we would attain food stability.

*Hery F. Ravelonjanahary, 20, is a member of the FLM Antsoatany congregation, and a farming student at the Tombontsoa School of Agriculture and Farming.*

## Russian Youth Reach Out to Marginalized People

I recently heard that a woman who lived near Moscow had died from starvation.

It was shocking because Russia is a developed country and it happened so close to us. Some of our local churches support starving people. Our partner church in Moscow has a soup kitchen where poor people come for food. In another city our Lutheran church works with the Red Cross.

Our youth distribute food boxes to people who are hungry. We also take food to people with disabilities who cannot get out to shop, and those



Ms Yana Aizetova © Private

who do not have enough money to purchase food. One paralyzed woman, who lives in a village, survived all summer on apples. We visited her and brought her food.

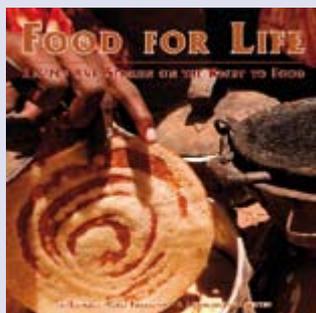
The most important thing we do is share the gospel with people because spiritual hunger can be felt even more sharply than physical starvation. In feeding people, we need to remember to share the gospel because the worst thing would be to be separated from God forever.

*Yana Aizetova, 26, is youth coordinator for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States.*

## LWF Cookbook – Recipes and Stories on the Right to Food

The LWF cookbook, *Food for Life – Recipes and Stories on the Right to Food*, is inspired by the LWF Eleventh Assembly theme “Give Us Today Our Daily Bread.” The publication extends an invitation to enjoy dishes nourishing people in a variety of contexts in which the LWF Department for World Service (DWS) works.

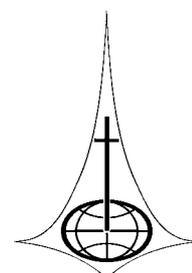
With over 100 recipes from individuals and communities in 23 countries and regions served by DWS, *Food for Life* also includes table blessings, and gives insight into different cultural and religious backgrounds. It also sheds light on food production methods and the ways in which people cope with scarcity and adapt to



climate change. The dishes are grouped into four chapters focusing on the agricultural cycle, religious celebrations, major life events, and daily life.

The original recipes have been edited for use in other countries, and extra information is provided concerning ingredients which may be unfamiliar.

*Food for Life is available in hardback format for CHF 25 / EUR 15 + shipping and handling. Fax or email orders to: Ms Colette Muanda [cmu@lutheranworld.org](mailto:cmu@lutheranworld.org) Tel. +41/22-791 6370, Fax: +41/22-791 66 30*



**DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF FOOD SECURITY**

*What happens when the struggle for the daily bread of poor families becomes entangled in the wider webs of lethal politics, brutal business practices and debilitating disease? It only makes it more difficult to set affordable, healthy, local food on their tables. The fight to protect natural resources in Colombia, the battle for democracy in Zimbabwe, and efforts to provide good care for those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS in South Africa underscore the parallel need for just food systems worldwide.*

**A Struggle for Land Rights amid Resource Exploitation in Colombia**



*An internally displaced man in Tame examines organically grown bananas in Colombia. DWS Colombia initiated this community-based project in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Church of Sweden, in order to improve food self-reliance, generate income and prevent further displacement. © Church of Sweden/Magnus Aronson*

“The President of Colombia said during a meeting in Chocó: ‘This is one of the richest regions (in Colombia).’ But when we ask about the possibility of building highways here, [we are told] ‘There is no money,’” says Nubia, an Afro-Colombian local leader.

“But there is enough money to buy 20 Black Hawk helicopters,” she adds, shaking her head. Located in the west facing the Pacific Ocean, Chocó is rich in natural resources. However, they do not benefit the local population. Instead, they attract national and international companies that bring their machinery and toxic chemicals to extract the minerals and timber. Nicolasa, a leader of the local community-based

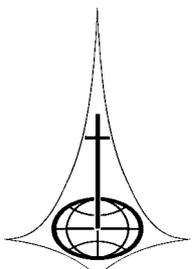
organization COCOMOPOCA, adds: “It is scandalous that Andagueda, the main river in our area, is being dried out. All the mercury and chemical elements that the mining industry is using get into the river, pollute the water and kill the fish, which makes it hard for many people as they depend on the river for their livelihood.”

In the northeastern region of Arauca, an indigenous leader recounts sadly: “We can’t hunt, fish or cultivate our lands because this territory is full of antipersonnel mines.” He belongs to a community that has been displaced several times. Arauca too has huge natural resources, including 18 percent of Colombia’s oil. The

struggle for the “black gold” in the territory is intense, and big business uses guerrilla and paramilitary groups to protect their installations and scare communities off their lands. The South American country used to



*Mr Henrik Halvardsson  
© Church of Sweden/Magnus Aronson*



export food, which it now imports, while replacing food crops with biofuel plants as the latter are more profitable and receive state subsidies. Meanwhile an estimated 60 percent of the population lives in poverty.

The LWF Department for World Service (DWS) in Colombia works

with local organizations and displaced communities, empowering them to claim legal rights to their lands. The DWS program also supports organic farming projects that help communities recover their traditional foods and culture. This ensures that the indigenous and farmer

communities improve their food self-reliance and generate income, which helps to prevent further displacements, enhance unity, and foster non-partisanship in the conflict.

*Henrik Halvardsson is the information officer for DWS Colombia.*

## What Drives Food Aid Politics in Zimbabwe?

It wears the kind face of aid. It seeks out the vulnerable and the needy. However, it often strips them of their dignity. It utilizes the powerful and those who seek power. It uses the very sustenance of life—our daily bread. It is highly organized. Yet it denies its own existence. It is the politics of food aid.

Local leaders are the key to a community's food assistance efforts in Zimbabwe, whether they are councilors, village heads or chiefs, all of whom pledge allegiance to national political leadership, either willingly or by being on the government payroll. These leaders play an active role in identifying beneficiaries, and

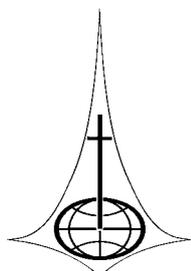
generally no work can be carried out in any district without their involvement. But local leadership is easily manipulated by those with a political agenda, because they in turn seek to retain their influential positions. So what better way is there to solicit support than to use what people need most—food?

Whole communities can be held to ransom when there is no food emergency declaration as leaders bid to sway the electorate's allegiance by providing food just at the right time. There is often no problem in feeding under-fives and primary school children because they do not form part of the electorate.

At election time, there are stricter controls on the flow of food. In times of critical food shortage, the national grain bank is accessed only by those who identify with the main political party. One has to produce a party card in order to buy food from the grain bank. Quite often it is difficult to differentiate between genuine trade with the grain bank and corrupt practices that benefit those in power. Some politicians in the constituencies that house the grain banks tend to buy in bulk from the national stocks to sell to the public at exorbitant prices. Zimbabweans cannot avoid falling into the traps



*In Zimbabwe local residents gather in a school to receive relief food.  
© Church of Sweden/ACT International/Eva Berglund*



set by those who politicize food aid. Innovative selection criteria such as food-for-work go a long

way to reducing incidences of such politicization, but they are not sufficient.

*\*The contributor (named withheld) works in a community-based organization in Zimbabwe.*

## Brazilian Program Promotes Recognition of Women's Role in Food Security

Globalization and increasing urbanization have prompted change in the way food is produced, distributed and consumed in Brazil today. Not only have farming and food processing methods been industrialized, our eating habits have also become standardized. What we eat and how we eat it is no longer determined solely by the individual's wishes. A series of factors influence the way in which feeding the population is organized.

The globalization of the food market affects traditional eating habits across the generations. The trend toward standardized eating patterns puts pressure on specific regions and farming sectors to replace their local products with so-called global products. In addition, there is increasing de-



Mr Jaime Weber © Batista Weber

regulation of economic activity within nations, a fact that threatens both food security and national independence.

### Labor Market

The changing role of women in Brazilian society is also affecting the way in which we deal with food and

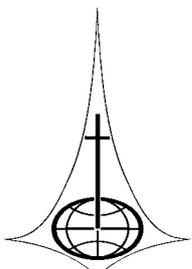
food security. As more women enter the labor market, there is pressure on them to produce meals at home that are quick and easy to prepare. They spend less time at home, and so more processed food is consumed.

In current literature, various women authors emphasize the role of women as food producers, stewards of natural resources, recipe organizers, and guardians of home cooking and healthy diets. They advocate women's empowerment through a number of targeted actions.

In our work at the Support Center for Small Farmers (Centro de Apoio ao Pequeno Agricultor – CAPA), we see the need for greater recognition of women's responsibility in the area of food and greater appreciation of their



The Picoli Baseggio household uses home-produced products for family meals.  
© CAPA/IECLB



knowledge and traditional expertise in this vital daily preoccupation. On the other hand, it is also necessary to raise awareness about the fact that food and food security issues are increasingly a matter of concern not only for women but also for the entire Brazilian society.

The Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) started the CAPA program in 1978 to meet the needs of small-scale farmers forced to leave the Brazilian countryside following the introduction of a so-called green revolution economic model.

CAPA's work benefits 7,000 families including farmers, indigenous groups, *quilombolas* (descendants of African slaves) and traditional fishermen.

*Jaime Weber, an agronomist, is CAPA's coordinator in Santa Cruz do Sul in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.*

## South Africa: A Holistic Approach to Sustenance for AIDS-Affected Families



*This vegetable garden at the LAAP-supported iThemba Labantu center helps to improve family nutrition and income. © LUCSA*

Sithembele Ndenetya, his common law wife Neliswa and their children live in a shack in the Philippi community, Cape Town, South Africa. Ndenetya's first wife died of AIDS-related illness in 2001 leaving him alone to raise their two children. Being HIV positive and having tuberculosis, he was not able to earn an income. After his shack burned down, he and his children became a burden to struggling family members.

They were in dire need when they sought assistance at the *iThemba Labantu* (People's Hope) care center,

the local Lutheran community center. It is situated in one of South Africa's poorest squatter communities, which is also said to have a significantly high HIV prevalence.

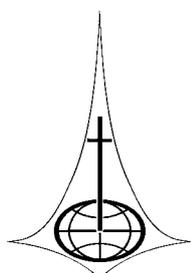
Food security is a key focus of the center, which offers programs in nutrition, health, education and income generation.

Ndenetya and Neliswa both underwent training in bead work and could then earn an income and start a new life. After receiving anti-retroviral treatment, Ndenetya could work as a bricklayer again,

helping to build the center's training workshops for motor mechanics and solar technicians. He is currently a security guard at the new vocational training center.

### Workshops

Every month the center provides 40 families with provisions of staple food. In order to receive such assistance, they are invited to participate in workshops on raising children and HIV prevention. The AIDS patients in our care are provided with nutri-



tious food in addition to anti-retroviral treatment.

**Income Generation**

One of the most important aspects of *iThemba Labantu's* work is the income-generation program for young, unemployed HIV-positive mothers.

The bead work brings in enough money to provide for their families,

and offers emotional support.

The partnership between the center and the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) HIV and AIDS Action Program (LAAP) began around 1992, with a seed grant for a vegetable garden. LAAP continues to



Rev. Otto Kohlstock  
© Private

provide the center with support to organize workshops for persons living with HIV, as well as other projects that contribute to making a positive difference in the community.

*Otto Kohlstock is the project director of iThemba Labantu care center.*

**Green Revolution Brings Abundance to Malawi's Farming Communities**

An ambitious agricultural subsidy program implemented by the Malawi government in 2005 has brought new life to farming communities.

During the previous decade, farmers had struggled because of drought and climate change. Productivity was down. Access to improved seeds and fertilizers proved a major challenge.

With increased rainfall, maize production doubled in 2006, and almost tripled in 2007 and 2008. This improved the lives of poor farmers, who can now make ends meet and feed their families two meals a day most months.

"We can now access fertilizer and hybrid seed to improve productivity within our small land holdings," says Mr Simon Eleson Nyondo of Dowa District, where the Evangelical Lutheran Development Program (ELDP) operates food security projects. "Now I have enough food at my house and should be able to sell surplus maize," he remarks.

There is strong evidence of the government's commitment to agriculture, including its promotion of irrigation farming and expansion of subsidies to farmers during the June to July winter season. Winter maize yields have increased by over 80 percent since 2006.

The government's "Green Belt" program involves a pipeline linking farmers to bodies of water like Lake Malawi and the



ELDP supported the construction of this maize grain bank for the Dowa Fundo food security project in central Malawi. © LWF/ELDP

Shire River. This is expected to boost maize and rice production.

As the majority of high-yielding maize seed varieties require sufficient rainfall, the government increasingly promotes drought-resistant food crops such as cassava, sweet potato, sorghum and millet.

Input for cash crops such as tobacco and cotton are also subsidized. Fertilizer and improved seed varieties are being distributed. The improvement in cash crop production would increase household income.

Private stakeholders and civil society, including ELDP, have joined the government in creating a level playing field by

ensuring fair application of subsidies and providing additional support toward complementary activities.

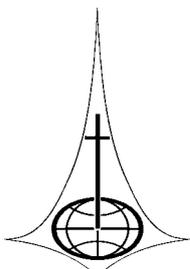
Those not directly benefiting from the subsidy program are offered other interventions that boost their production.

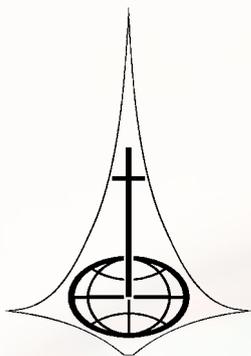
Malawi has moved from being highly dependent on food aid to being a net exporter of maize. In 2007 it exported USD 160 million worth of maize to its neighbors, especially Zimbabwe. It also donated 10,000 tons of maize to Lesotho and Swaziland. Malawi is getting close to achieving food self sufficiency. The green revolution has arrived in Malawi.

*Emmanuel Mponya is project coordinator of ELDP, the LWF Department for World Service associate program in Malawi.*



Mr Emmanuel Mponya  
© LWF/DWS Malawi





# Our Daily Bread – Celebrating God's Abundance

## LWF Sunday 2009

July 2009

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

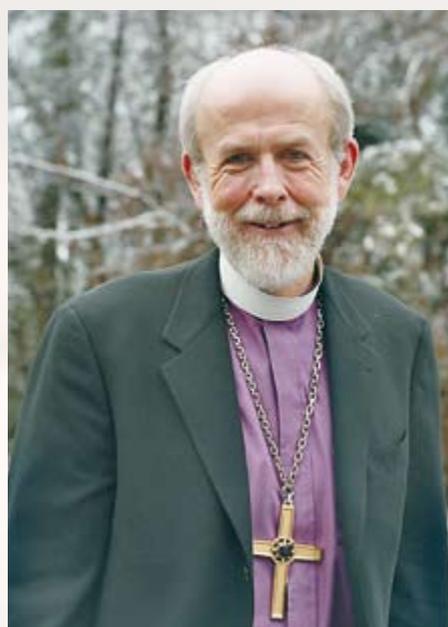
This worship resource has emerged out of a North American context. Much like the rest of the world, we have been deeply affected by the global recession. As of the end of April 2009, statistics showed that the United States of America alone had lost more than 600,000 jobs in each of the previous five months. Many economists think that by the end of 2009, one in ten people in the USA will be unemployed. Some analysts predict that as a result, the number of US citizens living in poverty by the end of the recession will approach 50 million, nearly one-sixth of the total US population (curiously matching the estimate of one in six people living in poverty globally).

The recent financial turmoil has introduced new uncertainties. Up until the last few months, general financial security provided a sense of stability and predictability. In this position of power and privilege, and profound abundance that we were living in, it is easy to fail to see the signs that we are still a part of a broken and hurt world.

Now, however, the harsh realities of life are hitting close to home, even in the home. We realize more fully that the world's groaning and longings are our own. Although we may be just beginning to feel the fear and hunger from the economic downturn, those who are poorest have already felt these realities. Indeed, as the economy continues to falter, many of the most vulnerable will continue to bear the brunt of the downturn. These are uncertain times that hurt those who are the poorest most of all. So we wait on God, who has acted in history and continues to bring us to realization of full redemption.

In this context, what then does it mean to gather around the table and celebrate God's abundance?

Bishop Mark S. Hanson  
LWF President



*Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson*  
© LWF/H. Putsman

## Prayer, Lament, and Praise

### Invocation

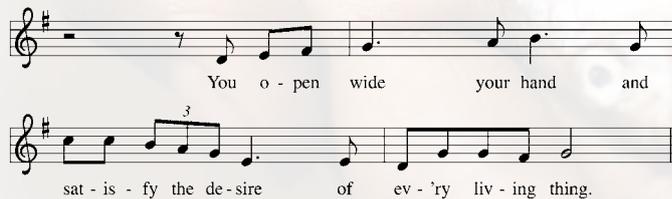
*The time of prayer, lament, and praise may be introduced with these or similar words:*

In times of uncertainty, we turn in on ourselves, holding onto fleeting earthly security while turning away from the safe embrace of our eternal God. Our hands clench tightly closed and we fail to receive that which God provides: grace, love, security, and abundant life. Let us turn toward God, opening our hands to reveal our human vulnerability, resting in God's protection and life, and allowing ourselves to be filled with the abundance of God's grace.

*Encourage the assembly to make fists with their hands, clenching tightly to begin this time of lament, prayer and praise, gradually opening their hands to the end.*

I am one.  
One heart beats within my one body.  
I know the pain of hunger in my heart,  
my stomach, my soul.  
When I am afraid, I turn in and focus on me.  
I seek security in temporal things that do not satisfy my deep hunger for freedom and life.

Gracious God,



Psalm 145:16  
Psalm refrain reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year B* © 2008 Augsburg Fortress.  
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We are one,  
Assembled by God for worship in this  
time and place.

Our hearts and voices mingle with the  
stories of those we have come to know.

When we are hungry and afraid, we turn  
toward familiar places, where we know love.

But our familiarity may close us off to  
the one who stands on the outside.

We fail to hear the stranger who cries out  
for justice, healing, and food.

Open our hands to give and to receive in  
this place.

Merciful God,

*You open wide. . .*

We are one,  
Gathered together as a global community.  
Our communities join together in a com-  
mon mission.

When one of us lives in fear and insecur-  
ity, we all suffer.

Yet we do not always heed the call of the  
community beyond our borders.

We get tangled in difference rather than  
united in faith.

Help us to reach toward one another with  
the hope and courage you provide.

Gracious God,

*You open wide. . .*

We are one,  
Baptized in Christ Jesus,  
there is no longer slave and free,  
no longer male and female,  
no longer Jew nor Greek.

We are one in Christ Jesus: one heart,  
one mind, one body.

In that one body, we share our fear, our  
faith, our suffering and our hope.

In that one body, we share your abundant  
gifts that bless and sustain our lives.

With open hands, we release our sinful-  
ness and anxiety

to receive your abundant grace.

With open hands, we release the gifts you give.

We are free to share our dependence on  
your love,

Through Christ our Lord, now and forever.

**AMEN.**

## Presentation: What We Receive and Share

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**Offertory Response**  
**Bendice, Señor, nuestro pan**  
 (Agape 9)

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### Eucharistic Prayer

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One: The Lord be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**ALL: We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**ALL: It is right to give our praise and thanks.**

Truly it is right and good to glorify you, at all times and in all places, to offer our thanksgiving, O Holy God, our inviting and renewing Host. Through your living Word, you made all things and breathe into them life to share, reflect and celebrate your glory.

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, the bread for the world, who prepared this feast for all, announcing the good news to the poor. His grace reveals to us the way of the cross, transforming us to see one another in your image and to serve with a joyful heart until he comes again. And so, with the angels and all the saints, we proclaim and sing your glory:

**Sanctus**  
**You are holy (Agape 16)**

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O God, servant of all, be present in our midst. Send your life-giving Spirit so we may follow your light into the upper room, where you served a common bread, sign of your gracious gifts of hospitality, redemption and love for all. We are gathered around this meal of bread: formed by the rain, sunshine and fertile soil from seeds to grains; shaped into dough by strong hands; and baked in the flames to fill our hunger.

After they had given thanks that night in Jerusalem, Jesus broke bread and gave it to his friends saying, "Take and eat, this is my body, given for you. When you do this, remember me."

And he took the cup, and after they had given thanks, Jesus said, "Take and drink. This is the cup of the new covenant, poured

out for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. When you do this, remember me."

Jesus served his disciples with ordinary bread, preparing them to receive and enjoy an extraordinary gift, his unconditional love.

Today, we will taste many different kinds of bread, each one a gift with its own story from the people gathered together at this table as a reminder of Jesus' gift.

### Tortillas (Latin America)

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Tortillas, from Central America, symbolize the courage and resilience of Latino peoples amid systematic exclusion, instability and unwelcoming neighbors. May this bread teach us to struggle for a just distribution of wealth and power and remind us that our true identity and joy are not tied up with prosperity in isolation but in relationships reflecting who God is.

### Rice Cakes (Asia)

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Rice cakes, from Asia, symbolize the gifts of diversity and unity of Asians, who live amid religious and ethnic pluralism. May this bread teach us to accept and celebrate diversity beyond tolerance and always to reach out to others and overcome all the barriers among people.

### Rye Bread (Europe)

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Rye bread, the staple bread of the laboring class in Eastern Europe, symbolizes the persistence and hopefulness of all who are unemployed, whose wages are low, are discriminated against by employers, or children and women who are forced to work. May this bread teach us to work for the common good and for the integrity of all people.

### Pita Bread (Middle East)

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Pita bread is a gift of the people of the Middle East, who continue to hold others in hospitality and dream of peace in spite of greed, suffering and violence. May this bread teach us to welcome and care for strangers and become friends instead of enemies.

### Ugali (Africa)

Ugali, a staple food in many African countries, reminds us that unwavering faith and joyful passion for life abounds among Africans, even in the face of pandemic diseases, abject poverty and militarization. May this bread teach us to raise our hands and voices in gratitude that knows no bounds, and strengthen us in the fight against poverty and life-threatening diseases.

### Brown Bread (New England, USA)

Brown bread, shaped from molasses, corn and rye in a recipe that the Pilgrims received from their Native

American neighbors, symbolizes the willingness to remain open to the gifts of others. May this bread teach us to be God's guests in the world, remembering that Christ's taking the risk of being a guest in this world made us God's people, who will eat this bread in anticipation of the coming of God's reign, that feast of all feasts, to which all are invited as friends.

**ALL: Welcoming God, receive us as your guest to this mysterious yet revealing feast!**

We eat this bread in celebration of the light that transforms the way we see each other and heals broken humanity and creation.

**ALL: Healing God, fill us with gifts that last: justice, peace and abundance for all.**

Jesus says, "I am the Bread of Life. I am the living bread that comes down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread shall never die." Their eyes were opened in the breaking of the bread. Let us approach the bread before us that our eyes might be opened and we might recognize Jesus, the Bread of and for life, and that we might truly see one another, in the breaking and sharing of the bread.

**ALL: Transforming God, stir us up to create a new humanity and a new community!**

## Conclusion

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, all honor and glory is yours, inviting and loving God, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**ALL: Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

(invite to pray in the language they learned it)

### Jesus, Lamb of God (Agape 37)

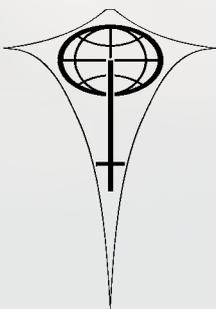
### Prayer after Communion

One: Let us pray.

**ALL: O God, you gathered us here today, hungry but now filled with these sacramental gifts. We also receive from each other gifts through the experiences of just sharing and belonging. In your mercy, strengthen us to offer ourselves as bread of hope for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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