

2015 PLANNING & RESOURCE GUIDE
Week of Compassion Special Offering February 15-22, 2015



WILL YOU PUT YOUR
Compassion into Action?



2 Corinthians 8:13-15
weekofcompassion.org

A Message from the Director

Give and change the world. It really is that simple.



When we look around, it is easy to see a complicated, conflict-ridden world with needs almost too great to measure, so it may not seem that simple. But by the grace of God, all of us have the power to give, and the gifts we give make the world more the way God intended it to be—a place where everyone has what they need. Together, we can achieve a fair balance on this planet we all share, giving right back to God what God has so richly bestowed upon us. The Week of Compassion offering is this opportunity to give back to God by sharing our abundance with others in need.

When the Apostle Paul visited the early churches in Macedonia, they became incredibly excited about the ministry opportunities he laid before them. Namely, to be a part of an offering that would be received for the poor and the suffering in Jerusalem. These early followers of Jesus couldn't help but get caught up in Paul's

contagious zeal for the ways God was working in their midst. So much so, in fact, that they actually pleaded to provide resources for the "service to the saints" Paul spoke of while visiting their community—even though they were themselves living in poverty. This "service"—an offering much like our own Week of Compassion offering—was considered a spiritual calling, a living out of one's faith, a ministry in itself. This offering, or ministry, was a way for Paul to model the unity of all believers and to provide a pragmatic mechanism for demonstrating their care and concern for one another—even if they did not know each other personally.

Just as we do through Week of Compassion.

Our gifts reach those near and far, sometimes changing the life of someone in distress in your own congregation or community, and at other times impacting the lives of those we may never meet. The churches of the Roman provinces would never see or meet the Christians they were helping in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, their church-wide offering was a concrete representation of the Gospel: that in Christ there truly is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, that we are no longer separate but one body in Christ.

As people whose lives are intimately connected, we are granted the opportunity to give back to God by giving to others. "For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance" (2 Cor 8:12-13).

What would happen if all of us made choices based on this concept? We could achieve a fair balance across the globe by not only sharing what we have, out of our abundance, but also by recognizing the abundance in the needs, challenges, spirits, and stories of our sisters and brothers everywhere in the world.

All these centuries later, this is still what Week of Compassion does. For almost seven decades we have been making a difference, together—and glorifying God—through this offering which funds relief and development all over the world and in the U.S. and Canada.

Together, we can achieve a fair balance, bringing about a world the way God intended it to be.

Give and change the world.

Peace and Prayers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vy T. Nguyen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Vy T. Nguyen
Executive Director
Week of Compassion

Organizing the Offering Process

You have been asked to coordinate this year's Week of Compassion offering. How might you best prepare your congregation and community for the offering?

- Scan through this planning and resource guide. Other helpful resources can be found at www.weekofcompassion.org.
- The suggested offering date is February 15-22, 2015. If you do not already have a standing order with WoC or if you need additional offering materials (bulletin inserts, envelopes, coin boxes, etc.), please contact weekofcompassion@woc.disciples.org or call 317.713.2442. Once you've received the offering materials, give them to the appropriate person(s) (e.g., the bulletin preparer) for distribution at the appropriate times.
- Involve others!
 - Share the worship resources with your pastor/worship leaders.
 - Ask that the theme of the worship service on the offering date be connected to the offering. Worship resources in this guide and on the website can help.
 - Set dates for the Minutes for Mission (two weeks before the offering date) and the dramatic interpretation (one week before).
 - Share the children and youth activities with Christian Education and youth group leaders. Ask that they be used during the several weeks before the offering date.
 - Recruit people to do the following and share with them the written resources they will need to:
 - Offer the Minutes for Mission on several Sundays prior to the offering date.
 - Prepare and present the dramatic interpretation.
 - Prepare and make the offering invitation on the offering date itself.
 - Set a challenging goal for the offering with the leadership team. Consider increasing giving by a certain percentage over last year, or increasing the number of giving units.
- The month before the offering date, begin promoting the offering.
 - Put the offering date on the church calendar.
 - Send the congregational letter and sharing calendar to each household. Will you use the newsletter? A separate mailing? An e-mail?
 - Display the offering poster in a prominent place. Consider changing its location each week to keep the message fresh and to reach more people.
 - Do the traditional things your congregation associates with the offering—perhaps a potluck presentation on WoC, prayer time in the Sunday School classes, the children or youth reporting about the offering-related activities they have done.
- Two weeks before the offering date:
 - Share the Minutes for Mission during the worship service.
 - Make sure the offering date is listed among the “upcoming events” in the bulletin.
- One week before the offering date:
 - Include the dramatic interpretation in the worship service.
 - Include in the bulletin any written material people should consider as they make decisions about their giving.
 - Place offering envelopes in the pews.
- On the offering date:
 - Make sure extra offering envelopes are available.
 - Help the worship leaders in whatever ways they need to make the offering theme an integral and prominent part of the worship service.
 - Talk before the offering collection about how the offering helps us spread God's love in North America and the wider world. Specifically invite the congregation to give to WoC. Tell of your intention to increase your gift this year, and encourage others to do so, too. Remind people that needs continue throughout the year.
- One and two weeks after the offering date:
 - Report the amount received to date. Did you meet your congregational goal?
 - Invite those who have not yet given to contribute.
- At the end of the offering collection period:
 - Report to the congregation the total amount contributed. Celebrate and praise God for the wonderful work the offering will do!
 - Thank the congregation verbally and in writing for giving to WoC.
 - Encourage your members to sign up for WoC Updates at www.weekofcompassion.org, like Week of Compassion on Facebook, and follow Week of Compassion on Twitter.

Resources Available

Your standing order, if on file with Week of Compassion, will be mailed after December 25. Please check your order to make sure you have the materials or have questions about your order, please contact:

Week of Compassion

P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

Phone: 317.713.2442

Email: weekofcompassion@woc.disciples.org

Your standing order should include:

- 2015 theme posters
- 2015 bulletin inserts
- WoC offering envelopes
- Giving boxes

Additional Resources:

(There is no charge for resources)

2015 Planning and Resource Guide

Please share this guide with outreach leaders and others responsible for your congregation's Week of Compassion special offering. Additional copies are available upon request or can be downloaded from the WoC website. (Photocopy-friendly)

Week of Compassion Map/Poster

A beautiful 36"x48" interactive map/poster to help keep members informed and updated about Disciples work and witness in the world through WoC. (While supply lasts.)

"What is Week of Compassion?" (3:30 Minutes)

A video presenting an overview of the extensive work of WoC. It is perfect for a Minute for Mission during worship, the Offertory, Sunday School, or at a fellowship meal. The video can be downloaded, along with several others at www.weekofcompassion.org/videos/.

Getting ready to Come Back

This ecumenical guide from Bread for the World helps Christians returning from mission trips become effective advocates to end hunger and poverty. Tools throughout the resource help teams prepare for their trip, reflect on their experiences, and take action once back home: all with the goal of making a long term impact by helping address the causes of hunger and poverty. The guide includes Bible studies, discussion topics, and prayers for each part of the journey. A limited number of copies are available from the WoC office at no cost.

Making Poverty History

Skits, simulations and worship resources around the issues of poverty and hunger. Useful for CROP Walk teams, youth groups, women's groups, etc. Call Church World Service at 800.297.1516 to order or visit www.churchworldservice.org/hungerbooklet/.

Disciples Coffee Project

The Disciples of Christ Coffee Project, a partnership between Week of Compassion, Disciples Home Missions and Equal Exchange, is a way for your congregation to join hands with independent farmer communities across the world. You can put your faith into action by using fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate and snacks in your congregation. Through the project, farmers receive fair prices for their crops, affordable credit, and long-term trade relationships with a trading partner they can trust, Equal Exchange. In addition, for every pound of fairly traded products Disciples order through the Project, Equal Exchange makes a donation to the Disciples Hunger Relief and Food Security fund. For more information visit www.equalexchange.coop/doc/.

Prosperity Candle

Prosperity Candle partners with Week of Compassion to celebrate and empower women through entrepreneurship. Prosperity Candle provides women the opportunity to earn more than a living wage so that they can break free from the cycle of poverty. Each candle comes with the story of the women who made it. Not only can you invest in the lives of these women and their futures by purchasing a candle, but with every Week of Compassion -related purchase made, 10% is donated in to WoC's Women's Empowerment Fund. Visit www.prosperitycandle.com

Week of Compassion Website

Find the Planning and Resource Guide, as well as reports, resources, stories and photos, links to partner sites, and much more online at our website: www.weekofcompassion.org

“The supposition that there will always be poor is an excuse for inaction.”

—Gustavo Gutierrez

Congregational Letter

Dear Friends,

It's that time of year again when we are given the marvelous opportunity to share in the abundance of needs of our sisters and brothers by contributing to Week of Compassion. By the grace of God, all of us have the power to give, and the gifts we give make the world more the way God intended it to be—a place where everyone has what they need. Together, we can achieve a fair balance on this planet we all share, giving right back to God what God has so richly bestowed upon us.

The Apostle Paul modeled this ecumenical offering in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, making an appeal to the early Christian communities to respond to those in Jerusalem who had just experienced a devastating famine. Thus, Paul's ecumenical, church-wide offering was not only practical in leveraging funds so they could make the most impact, together, but it was also one of the first visible expressions of the early Church's unity in Christ. This offering, or ministry, was a way for Paul to model the unity of all believers and to provide a pragmatic mechanism for demonstrating their care and concern for one another—even if they did not know each other personally. Just as we do through Week of Compassion.

The Week of Compassion offering reaches those near and far, sometimes changing the life of someone in distress in your own congregation or community, and at other times impacting the lives of those we may never meet but who are in desperate need of our compassion and generosity. God provides the gifts and resources so that we can give back. It's not the size of the gift that matters; it's that we give of what we have. We're simply giving back to God what is already God's—and everyone has a gift to bring!

“For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance” (2 Cor 8:12-13). The Message translates it this way, “Nothing left over to the one with the most; nothing lacking to the one with the least.” So our abundance becomes their need and their need becomes our abundance. Have you ever thought of it this way? What would happen if all of us made choices based on this concept? These are the questions we hope you'll ask your congregation to reflect upon during this offering season.

As the Church in the world, through Week of Compassion, we have the opportunity to act in one accord as the body of Christ, to ensure that all of God's children have what they need. This is the offering that Paul was promoting, and this is still our ecumenical ministry, all these centuries later. Together, we can achieve a fair balance, bringing about a world the way God intended it to be.

Thank you for your leadership in promoting this “ministry to the saints!”

Sincerely,

Pastor/Offering Coordinator

“ If I see the gift as mine alone to give, I might give hesitantly, even grudgingly, considering my options, then giving from a sense of ought. If I see the gift as God's who allows me to use it for a time, then the gift can flow more freely, as I join with others to be a channel for God's love and mercy. ”

—Roberta Porter

Worship Resources: Creating a Fair Balance

Call to Worship

This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

It is here, in this safe and sacred space, we receive one another just as we are, just as God receives us.

Wherever you are along your life's journey; whatever your name; however you feel—come one and all.

Come and experience the abundance of God's love for you, providing for your every need.

Come and experience the invitation to give back to our God who has given us life itself.

Come, so that our abundance meets the great needs of our world, and the needs of our sisters and brothers become part of our abundance.

Let us worship the Lord!

Opening Prayer

Mother and Father of us all,

As we gather together surrounded by the love of a community of faith, remind us to invite all those who are without safety, support, and acceptance to this sacred space. Challenge us to include those in need, whether here in our own community or on the other side of the globe. Even if we never meet them, may we always invoke their spirits, stories, and names to grace this space. May we remember them all, Lord, whether they be recovering from a disaster; fleeing as refugees or asylum seekers; suffering as victims of violence in any form; attempting to avoid the daily grind of poverty in this country; or struggling among the more than 1 billion people who live in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.25 a day, all across our world. We can't help but acknowledge what a generous God you are, and yet can't understand why so many of your children do not have even their basic needs met.

Guide us, as your sons and daughters, to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters, wherever they may be. Call upon us to share what we have so that others may receive what they need to live the abundant life Christ offered us all. Dare us to do so faithfully, joyfully, and with conviction.

Lord, in all our abundance, hear our prayer. Amen.

“The outrage of hunger amidst plenty will never be solved by ‘experts’ somewhere. It will only be solved when people like you and me decide to act.”

—Frances Moore Lappé

Litany (based on 2 Corinthians 8:1-15)

One: In this world of suffering and poverty, hunger and thirst, violence and tragedy,

Many: where we are often overwhelmed and even apathetic,

One: we recall the earliest followers of Jesus, who even in their own poverty, found something to give.

Many: For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has,

One: not according to what one does not have.

Many: There should not be relief for some and pressure for others;

One: rather, it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need,

Many: so that their abundance may be for your need,

All: **in order that there be a fair balance.**

One: The one who had much did not have too much,

Many: and the one who had little did not have too little.

One: Nothing left over to the one with the most;

Many: nothing lacking to the one with the least.

All: **But enough for all.**

Prayer of Confession

Lord of sea and sky and sun and rain, Lord of the African, the American, the Syrian, and the Honduran, God of the rich and of the poor and all those in between.

We have heard it said that good news for the poor is that they are poor no more. We have also learned that Christ came “that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10b). This abundance is ours, offered freely and lovingly, to all of us.

Yet instead of thanking you, or at times not even recognizing our abundance, we take it for granted. We forget. We deny. We hoard. We do not always or willingly share—even though we know of the tremendous suffering plaguing this world.

We confess that we contribute to that suffering when we ignore or avoid it. We confess that we have blamed others, or even you, for our sins.

Forgive us, Lord, for the sin of withholding. Forgive us our lack of faith. Forgive us our reluctance to trust in you. Forgive us, your privileged people, for not acknowledging our own abundance—all of which comes from you and only you.

Gracious Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Worship Resources: Creating a Fair Balance

Words of Assurance (based on 2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
Beloved of God, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. Brand new! Everything old has passed away! See, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

Hear the Good News that is ours: by the redemptive, unconditional, and extraordinary love of Christ, we are forgiven.

We are forgiven indeed. Hallelujah!

Offertory Meditation (based on 2 Corinthians 8-9)
During what the Apostle Paul calls a “severe ordeal of affliction,” the early churches of Macedonia somehow managed to “overflow in a wealth of generosity” for their sisters and brothers in need. Their own extreme poverty combined with their abundant joy resulted in this overflow, and as Paul testifies, they not only gave according to their means, they gave beyond their means. Even more remarkable, they actually begged “earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints.”

Giving is a privilege. Have you ever imagined what it would be like not to be able to give?

But God provides all we need, making giving possible—always. Everyone has a gift to give. God does not leave people out. God has created a world where there is more than enough; once you know the invincible love of God and the Good News of the Gospel, you can’t help but share it. In the sharing of your resources, you are living out your confession of faith as followers of Jesus the Christ.

For well over six decades, we have been putting our faith into action and making a difference, alongside millions of other Christians throughout North America, through the Week of Compassion offering which funds disaster relief, food security, clean water, resettles refugees, empowers women, and provides sustainable development all over the world. Just this past week/month, your gifts have been hard at work in places such as: [fill in here with the most current events and responses being made with WoC funds]. Praise be to God! Giving itself is a gift. A privilege. An opportunity to respond to God’s outpouring of love for you. Giving through Week of Compassion not only changes the lives of individuals and communities in need, it changes the world. Let us come now and feel our own hearts, minds, and lives change just as we’re helping to improve and transform the quality of life for others. Amen.

Offertory Prayer

Lord of Lords, Creator of all that has been, is, and will be, You are the God who sees and sustains us. How can we ever thank you for all that you have granted us? For you have granted us our very lives, creating us in your own divine image, and calling us good.

Thank you for the privilege of giving. May these gifts, which we give right back to you, transform hunger into nutritious food; illiteracy into education; thirst into clean, accessible water; disease into healing; displacement into welcome; and despair into hope. We humbly ask you to consecrate these gifts for the transformation of lives and communities so that our abundance may be for their need and their need become our abundance. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Welcome, family, to the feast! This is the feast of our Lord, where all are fed. No one goes away hungry. At this table, there is room for everyone. This is not our table, of course, but Christ’s; it is He who has set the table and prepared a meal with enough for all. Just as the early followers of Jesus, who would come together to share a meal, share stories, and share community, we too gather at the Table of our Lord, hungry and eager to eat our fill.

At this table lies the mystery of our faith; for Communion doesn’t work without a broken body. To share bread, we must break it. To share of ourselves, we must be willing to share our own wounds, worries, and fears. Out of brokenness emerges wholeness and holiness.

This is the paradox of life abundant: love shared not out of perfection, but out of messiness, frailty, confusion, and self-absorption. This is the Feast of Justice, where compassion starts. This is where we are fed and likewise commit to feeding a hungry world, empowered by the divine nourishment of this, the Lord’s Supper. At this abundant feast, we partake and participate in creating a fair balance for all.

Come to the table. All—all, no exceptions!—are welcome.

“You have not lived a perfect day, even though you have earned your money, unless you have done something for someone who will never be able to repay you.”

—Ruth Smeltzer

Worship Resources: Creating a Fair Balance

Communion Prayer

(for many voices, two voices, or only one)

One: God of grace and abundance, we have received your word and tasted your truth: Jesus the Christ, your very presence among us.

Many: We pray that your Christ will guide us that we may live with each other in unity, equity, and love. May we grow in faithful assurance that our future—the future that all of your children share—is in you today, every day, and always.

All: Amen.

Benediction

Church, hear the Good News: there is enough for all! May we do our part to distribute our abundance equitably and compassionately, so that the needs of our world may be no more. Our sisters and brothers are counting on us. Go now into a world that is waiting for all you have to give. Amen and amen!

Hymn Suggestions

“We Give Thee but Thine Own”

“God Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

“Seek Ye First”

“Take My Gifts”

“Take My Life, God, Let It Be”

“Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service”

“Fill the World with Love”

“Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race”

“Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether”

“When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed. We have refused to be instruments of love in the hands of God to give the poor a piece of bread, to offer them a dress with which to ward off the cold.”

—Mother Teresa

Additional Prayers

“Give bread to those who are hungry; give hunger for justice to those who have bread. Amen.”

—South American table grace

“Jesus, our brother,

We lie in front of you on our bellies

as we wait for you as a big brother to teach us.

Your words are to us a mirror, a bath, a powdering, and perfuming.

Help us rise up with a fresh bath

and go out among the world this week.”

—Haitian prayer, from *God Is No Stranger*, edited by Elizabeth Turnbull, 2004

Prayer Litany for an end to poverty:

Creator God,

You loved the world into life.

Forgive us when our dreams of the future are shaped by anything other than glimpses of a kingdom of justice, peace and an end to poverty.

Incarnate God,

you taught us to speak out for what is right.

Make us content with nothing less than a world that is transformed into the shape of love, where poverty shall be no more.

Breath of God,

let there be abundant life.

Inspire us with the vision of poverty over, and give us the faith, courage and will to make it happen.

—Christian Aid

Answer of a Starving Child . . . “Who Is Jesus Christ?”

The answer of a starving child in Ghana:

“Oh! Jesus. I have heard of that name. You say he is the Life of the world. Life! But I am hungry. I am lifeless. There is no milk in my mother’s breasts. She is sick and weak. They tell me that some people called ‘Red Cross’ are sending or have sent some powdered milk. But I am hungry. I am dying. You say Jesus is the Life of the World? But I am dying. Can Jesus help to keep me alive?”

—An African Call for Life, from *An African Prayer Book*, edited by Desmond Tutu

Sermon Starter

“Our Fair Share” 2 Corinthians 8:13-15

How is it that there are enough resources on our planet to feed the entire world, and yet so many hunger? As people of faith, what is our role in a world where the gap between the rich and the poor only seems to widen? How do we ensure that all of God’s children get their fair share?

When the Apostle Paul visited the early churches in Macedonia, they became excited about the ministry opportunities he laid before them. These early followers of Jesus couldn’t help but get caught up in Paul’s zeal for the ways God was working in their midst. They actually pleaded to be a part of the “service to the saints” Paul spoke of while visiting their community—despite their own poverty. This “ministry to the saints,” referred to in his Second Letter to the Corinthians is another name for the offering Paul and the early churches were organizing for those in Jerusalem suffering from a devastating famine. The offering was considered a living out of one’s faith, a spiritual calling—a ministry.

To organize a church-wide offering, a relief fund, if you will, (Week of Compassion is not original!) was not only practical, it was also a visible expression of their Christian unity. This offering was a way for Paul to unite all believers and to provide a way for them to care for one another—even if they did not know each other personally. For the churches in Macedonia and Corinth, many of them would never see or meet the Christians they were helping in Jerusalem. So their ecumenical offering was a concrete representation of the Gospel: that in Christ there truly was no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, rich or poor—no longer separation or division, but unity in Christ.

Everyone, regardless of economic or social location, has a gift to give. God supplies the gifts and resources so that we can give back. After all, none of what the early followers of Jesus gave was really theirs, right? Because all that we have is God’s! We’re simply giving back to God what is already God’s. In giving to God, we give to others. Our gifts will be part of transforming a life, a community, and indeed, the whole world.

“For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus the Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9). This is what God has given; through our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ the Good News has been shared with us so that we never doubt that we have all we need, and in turn ensure that others get

what they need. “For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance” (2 Cor 8:12-13).

Our abundance becomes their need and their need becomes our abundance. Have you ever thought of it this way? We could achieve a fair balance across the globe by not only sharing what we have, out of our abundance, but also by recognizing the abundance in the needs, challenges, spirits, and stories of our sisters and brothers all over the world. “It is not with your own wealth that you give alms to the poor,” asserted St. Ambrose, “but with a fraction of their own which you give back; for you are usurping for yourself something meant for the common good of all. The earth is for everyone, not only for the rich.”

God has given us life and a world where there is already enough for all—this has been proven time and again. It is our task to ensure a fair balance. Through Week of Compassion, we have the opportunity to act as the body of Christ by giving what we have; to work together so we might share the world in ways that are more equitable; ensure that everyone gets a part of the plenty, and guarantee that all of God’s children have what they need. This is the offering, the “ministry to the saints” that Paul was promoting.

This is still our ministry, all these centuries later, through Week of Compassion—not only by this church family, but across the country by Christians of many denominations contributing to an ecumenical offering which has shared abundance for the meeting of needs for almost seven decades.

Together, we can make sure that everyone—yes, every single one of God’s children, our sisters and brothers—get their fair share, bringing about a world the way God intended it to be.

Ready to change the world?

“If you don’t like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time.”

—Marian Wright Edelman

Children's Sermon: Sharing Our Lunch

Materials Needed:

- Globe or world map
- Five loaves of bread and two fish—either plastic (toy) fish or real
- Twelve baskets filled with food, decorating the space

Before the sermon, Read John 6:1-13 to prepare.

“Good morning! It's wonderful to see each and every one of you here today! I have a very important question to ask you. What is your favorite food? What do you love to eat? Maybe it's something your family makes, or maybe it's something you like to order at a restaurant. Maybe it's something you tried at a friend's house, or at a church pot-luck supper. So, what is your favorite food?”

Allow the children to respond.

Show the globe or map to illustrate how big the world is and how many people do not have enough food to eat, despite there being enough in the world to feed everyone (according to the World Food Programme, 66 million primary school-age children attend classes hungry across the developing world, with 23 million in Africa alone; and Feeding America studies show that 16 million children in the U.S. live in food insecure households).

“What do you imagine other children's favorite foods to be? Very sadly, I have learned that many children in the world may not have a favorite food because they don't have enough food to eat. Imagine living in a home where there was little food for you or your family. Imagine how that would make you feel. On some days, there may not be food at all, or maybe food for only one meal a day. Many children in the world, including in the United States, and right here in our own community, do not have enough to eat. Eating their favorite food is a rare treat. Many kids don't even have a favorite food because they only have one or two foods to choose from.”

Tell the children the story of the little boy and Jesus feeding the 5,000. Illustrate the story with the bread and fish: “One day, a boy in the town of Galilee was a part of a big crowd following Jesus and his disciples. When the disciples noticed just how many people were following Jesus, they worried that they would not have enough food to share with them. Then one of the disciples, Andrew, noticed a small boy. This small boy had brought a lunch with him—five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus walked over to the boy and took his lunch in

his hands, the bread and the fish, and multiplied them so that everyone in the crowd would have food. It was amazing! Out of just five loaves of bread and two fish Jesus and the disciples and the little boy fed 5,000 people! Jesus made sure that everyone there had more than enough to eat. After everyone had been fed, the disciples gathered the left-overs, which filled more than twelve huge baskets full with food!” Point to the overflowing twelve baskets which you have set up around them.

Help the children understand the concept of sharing so that everyone can have enough. “When the little boy shared his lunch with Jesus, a miracle happened, and suddenly there was enough lunch for everyone. But for all to have their fair share, the little boy had to share what he had. So, when someone does not have enough, what might you do to change that? How can you make sure that there is a fair balance?” Ask them for ideas before introducing the offering boxes.

Pass out the Week of Compassion coin boxes. Explain that the boxes are to collect offerings of money, and tell them when to bring them back to church to share. Explain that coins and bills, when shared with WoC, will turn into lunch or dinner for someone who wouldn't otherwise have enough food to eat.

Then the leader can say, “When you can't give food itself to people who need food, you can use money to offer food and help to those without enough. This is something every child can do, each one of you, with any amount of money. As you collect money in your special offering boxes, you can explain to others how important it is to help every child have enough food to eat, and maybe, even one day, have enough that they can share their favorite food with someone else, just like the little boy in the story of feeding the 5,000.”

Offer a celebratory prayer for them and for Week of Compassion. Thank them for the opportunity and ability to share with others so that everyone gets enough.

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Children's Activity: Sharing Our Favorite Food

Materials needed:

- Crayons and markers
- Construction paper in different colors
- White paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Table and chairs
- Globe or world map

“What is your favorite food? What do you love to eat? Maybe it’s something your mom or dad or your grandparent makes, or maybe it’s something you like to order at a restaurant. Maybe it’s something you tried at a friend’s house, or at a church pot-luck supper. Share with us what your absolute favorite food is by drawing and coloring it or making it out of construction paper. When you’re finished making your favorite dish, please place it on the table where we’ll share a meal.”

Allow the children to respond by creating artwork representing their favorite food. Give them ample time to make their dish.

After each of them has created artwork of their favorite food, invite them to place it on the table. Each child should have his or her own place setting and seat. Once they have all “set the table” with their favorite food, invite them to sit at their place and share what they’ve contributed to “the meal.” Ask them to imagine that they are about to enjoy a meal together.

Next, invite them to pass the different dishes. Did they make enough for everyone at the table? Or did they make enough only for themselves to eat? Invite them to share this favorite food with everyone at the table. “You have all made your favorite foods. Because they’re your favorites, we’d all love to try them!” Pay attention to how the children respond. Do they readily pass their dish? Do they not have enough? Are they unsure how to share it? Encourage them to pass their dishes to everyone at the table, with the goal of everyone partaking of all the dishes. Do they enjoy “tasting” each other’s favorite foods? Help them to imagine what each tastes like; have fun!

Chances are, the children did not make enough for everyone, however, but only enough for themselves. Be prepared to discuss with them how it feels when there is not enough to go around and some people miss out. “How did it feel to try the other favorite foods? How did it feel to be left out?” If any of the children actually did make more than enough to share, use that dish as an illustration for what it means to share of your abundance.

“How did it feel to share what you made? How did it feel to share your food with others?”

Show either the globe or the world map to illustrate how big the world is and how many people do not have enough food to eat, despite there being enough in the world to feed everyone. “Everyone at our table had at least enough food for themselves, because they provided their own favorite food on the table. Imagine now coming to a table where there was very little food for you, your family, and your friends. Imagine how that would make you feel. On some days, there may not be food at all, or maybe food for only one meal a day. For many children in the world, including in the United States, and right here in our own community, there is not enough food to go around. They do not have enough to eat. Eating their favorite food is a rare treat. Many kids don’t even have a favorite food because they only have one or two foods to eat.”

Help the children understand the concept of sharing so that everyone can have enough. When someone does not have enough, what might the kids do to change that? “One way that you can help other children have something to eat is to share what you have. When someone else does not have enough, but you have what they need, how can you make sure that there is a fair share?”

Pass out the Week of Compassion coin boxes. Explain to the children that the boxes are to collect offerings, and be clear about which Sunday to bring them back to church to share in the offering. Explain that coins and bills will turn into food for someone who wouldn’t otherwise have enough food to eat. “When you can’t give food itself to people who need food, you can use money to offer food and help to those without enough. This is something every child can do, each one of you, with any amount of money. As you collect money in your special offering boxes, you can explain to others how important it is to help every child have enough food to eat, and maybe, even one day, have enough that they can share their favorite food with someone else.”

Last, invite the children to make more of their favorite foods to place on the table, celebrating that when they give to Week of Compassion, they help to set tables where there is enough food for all; where everyone gets their fair share. Invite others in the congregation to join them for their abundant meal, expanding the table! Close with a table grace, thanking God for the opportunity and ability to share with others so that everyone gets enough.

Youth Activity I: The Power of One

Materials needed:

- Newspapers
- News magazines or journals
- Large pieces of paper or poster board
- Scissors
- Glue

Open with this prayer, read with one voice:

“O God of all youth, we pray to you:
We are young people, and we want to celebrate life!
We cry out against all that kills life:
hunger, poverty, unemployment, sickness, repression,
individualism, injustice.
We want to announce fullness of life:
work, education, health, housing, bread for all.
We want communion, a world renewed.
We hope against hope.
With the Lord of history we want to make all things new.”

—Brazilian youth

Invite the youth to look through the newspapers and other resources to pick out stories of current events in the world. What are the top stories? Ask the youth to look for local, national, and global stories. Each youth should find at least three articles of interest, focusing on the stories that compel them the most. Invite them to cut out the stories and glue them on their posters. They should cover only half of the poster, leaving space available on the other half.

Follow with a series of questions to introduce the concept of a “fair balance” with the group. Ask the youth to form a circle, either standing or sitting, and pose the following phrases. After each question, invite the youth to respond aloud, showing their collages as they complete the phrases:

A current issue confronting our world that I am most concerned about is . . .

I see inequity in my community in the form of . . .

I see injustice in the world in the form of . . .

I think the most challenging thing about following Jesus is . . .

After the youth have been given ample time to respond and to listen attentively to everyone’s responses, the facilitator then shares the following:

“Each of you has the power to make a difference. Do you believe that? One moment can change your life. One

vote can determine an election. One voice is sometimes all the world needs to hear for change to occur. One person can make a difference. One youth taking a stand and speaking out has the power to overcome injustice. One hour is enough for you to put your faith into action by sharing what you have so that others may have what they need. One dollar is enough to help put food on a hungry family’s table. One dollar, added to your friend’s dollar, added to another friend’s dollar, added to your church’s offering, suddenly becomes life-saving medicine, or a well with clean accessible water, or a safe and warm shelter after a storm. One dollar. Just one.

“The good news is that there are enough resources on the planet to feed the world. Yet one in eight people go to bed hungry in our world. Many do not even have beds to sleep in. Why? What is not working? What needs to happen to change this statistic? What can you do? What can we do, together? How can we make sure that our sisters and brothers receive what they need? Let’s see how Scripture may speak to these questions.”

Ask one or a few of the youth to read the Scripture lesson, 2 Corinthians 8:10-15: **10** And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something—**11** now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. **12** For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. **13** I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between **14** your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. **15** As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.”

Introduce the Week of Compassion offering; ask the youth what they know about WoC. Describe all the ways it works to end injustice and inequity in North America and across the globe. Read one of the Mission Moments in this Guide. The youth are then asked to pair up, two by two, and are guided through a time of further reflection, asking each pair to share with one another the responses to these questions:

What is the gift, skill, or quality you possess that you will use to make the world a better place?

Youth Activity I: The Power of One

What is one thing that you can do in your home congregation to help make the world more equitable?

What is one thing you can do to help create a fair balance in the world, so that all of God's children have enough?

Discuss the importance of stewardship and the giving of their financial resources. Emphasize that they have choices in how they use their money, and that their choices make a difference. Invite them to give to WoC, and to make it a faithful commitment.

On the other side of the poster, invite the youth to find images that represent the world as they would like it to be, a world where not only is there enough to go around, but where everyone truly has what they need. Ask them to include images that represent their own commitment to making this world a reality.

Display the posters when completed so that everyone can view them. If so inclined, the youth can be invited to interpret their posters. If possible, the youth can create an "art gallery" of their work so the rest of the congregation can also view their collages.

Giving thanks for all the commitments named by the youth, and for the opportunity to give to Week of Compassion, then close the session by praying aloud and in unison:

"O God of all youth, we pray to you:
We are young people, and we want to celebrate life!
We cry out against all that kills life:
hunger, poverty, unemployment, sickness, repression,
individualism, injustice.
We want to announce fullness of life:
work, education, health, housing, bread for all.
We want communion, a world renewed.
We hope against hope.
With the Lord of history we want to make all things
new. Amen!"

—Brazilian youth

“It's not a coincidence in the Scriptures, poverty is mentioned more than 2,100 times. It's not an accident. That's a lot of airtime, 2,100 mentions.”

—Bono

Statistics and Facts

Poverty

Nearly 1.5 billion people in developing countries live in extreme poverty, living on less than \$1.25 a day.

Source: *Bread for the World*

The extreme poor live on less than \$1.25 a day. Many lack basic sanitation and clean drinking water; they're malnourished and suffer from lack of education.

Source: *World Bank*

2.5 billion people lack access to proper sanitation; 1.1 billion still practice open defecation.

Source: *WHO/UNICEF*

About 75% of the world's poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood.

Source: *Bread for the World*

Most Americans, approximately 51.4 percent, will live in poverty at some point before age 65.

Source: *Urban Institute*

23 out of every 1,000 children in Vietnam will die before their 5th birthday. Source: *World Bank*

In Latin America, 1 in every 4 people aged 15-29 is poor or extremely poor. Source: *UNDP*

Between 1990 and 2010, the poverty rate across Latin America decreased from 48.4 percent to 31.4 percent, while the rate of indigence—or extreme poverty—fell from 22.6 percent to 12.3 percent.

Source: *UN*

Only 17.2 percent of Kenya's government budget is spent on education. Source: *UNESCO*

African youth are more likely to be underemployed and among the working poor than the general population. Source: *ILO*

Hunger

One in eight people still go to bed hungry in our world.

Source: *UNDP*

Every day, almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes. Source: *Bread for the World*

In the United States, 14.5 percent of households struggle to put food on the table.

Source: *Bread for the World*

Statistics and Facts

More than one in four American children are at risk of hunger. More than one in five children live in households that struggle to put food on the table.

Source: Bread for the World

More people escaped poverty during the 2000s than any other decade in history. *Source: Bread for the World*

Each year, under-nutrition is responsible for as many as 2.6 million deaths of children under age 5, one-third of the total number of children's deaths. *Source: UNICEF*

World-wide, 1 in 8 persons is under-nourished. That means a total of 870 million in all do not eat enough to be healthy. *Source: WFP*

870 million people in the world are chronically food insecure. *Source: CARE*

Nearly half of Pakistan's population of 180 million lives in food insecure households. *Source: UNICEF*

Asia has the largest number of the world's hungry, more than 560 million. *Source: WFP*

In countries with high levels of childhood malnutrition, the economic loss can be as high as 2-3 percent of GDP. *Source: Bread for the World*

14.5 percent of U.S. households struggle to put enough food on the table. More than 48 million Americans—including 15.9 million children—live in these households. *Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture*

Water

11 percent of the world's population still doesn't have access to clean drinking water. *Source: UN*

783 million people do not have access to clean water and almost 2.5 billion do not have access to adequate sanitation. *Source: UN*

In Africa alone, people spend 40 billion hours every year walking for water. Women and children usually bear the burden of water collection, walking miles to the nearest source, which is unprotected and likely contaminated. *Source: Charity Water*

In rural Cambodia, only about 1 out of every 2 people has access to drinking water that is free of disease and pollution. *Source: UN*

Diseases from unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war. *Source: WHO*

Children are especially vulnerable to water-borne diseases, as their bodies aren't strong enough to fight diarrhea, dysentery and other illnesses. 90% of the 30,000 deaths that occur every week from unsafe water and unhygienic living conditions are in children under five years old. *Source: WHO*

3.4 million people die each year from a water related disease. *Source: water.org*

Refugees and the Displaced

The UN is concerned that the burden of caring for refugees is increasingly falling on the countries with the least resources. Developing countries are host to 86% of the world's refugees, with wealthy countries caring for just 14%.

Source: BBC, June 20, 2014, World Refugee Day

Unaccompanied children are arriving in the U.S. at unprecedented numbers. From October 2013 to June 2014, more than 52,000 unaccompanied children were apprehended while crossing the southern border. This is twice the number for the same period last year. Advocates cite violence, gangs, crime, and neglect or abuse as factors driving the migration.

Source: Immigration Advocates Network

Right now there are about 51.2 million forcibly displaced people in the world. More than half (53%) came from just three countries: Afghanistan (2.56 million), Syria (2.47 million) and Somalia (1.12 million).

Source: UNHCR, June 2014

50 percent of the world's refugees are children.

Source: IRC

Of the 1.5 million internally displaced people in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake, nearly 1.2 million have left camps and relocated. *Source: World Bank*

Since at least the 1840s, when the Irish potato famine killed 1 million people and drove 2 million overseas, poverty and hunger have been major causes of immigration to the United States.

Source: Bread for the World

Statistics and Facts

Today, approximately 40 million immigrants live in the United States—13 percent of the population. About one-fourth of all immigrants to the U.S.—about 11 million people—are unauthorized. *Source: Bread for the World*

“The number of people around the world forced by conflict to flee their homes, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported, has soared past 51 million, the highest number since World War II. That’s more than six times the population of New York City, emptied into squalid camps.”

Source: New York Times, June 20, 2014

Gender and Development

774 million adults—64 percent of whom are women—still lack basic reading and writing skills.

Source: UNESCO

Women and girls account for six out of 10 of the world’s poorest and two-thirds of the world’s illiterate people.

Source: UNDP

If female farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of the world’s hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million. *Source: WFP*

The world’s poorest inhabitants—six out of ten of whom are female—are the most severely affected by increasingly longer droughts, more severe storms and flooding, species depletion, soil degradation, deforestation, and other negative alterations to the natural environment.

Source: UNDP

Women spend 200 million hours a day collecting water.

Source: water.org

About half of all girls worldwide attend schools without toilets. The lack of privacy causes many girls to drop out when they reach puberty. *Source: water.org*

Women do 66% of the world’s work but own only 1% of its property. *Source: IRC*

“Less than 1% of U.S. foreign aid is specifically targeted to women and girls.”

Source: Half the Sky, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

Disasters

Fifty-three percent of affected people by disasters live in developing countries. *Source: UN*

3 out of every 4 people impacted by disaster worldwide live in Asia. *Source: UN*

In the context of emergencies, vulnerable groups may include individuals with disabilities, pregnant women, children, elderly persons, prisoners, certain members of ethnic minorities, people with language barriers, and the impoverished. *Source: UC Davis Law Review*

Wild weather and unpredictable seasons are changing what farmers can grow and is making people hungry. Food prices are going up. Food quality is going down. Soon, climate change will affect what all of us can eat. *Source: Oxfam*

“Storms, floods, famine, cyclones, drought, typhoons, earthquakes, mudslides, avalanches. Each year for the past decade, an average of 258 million people have lived through some kind of disaster—in total, this is the equivalent of almost half of the world’s population.” *Source: Christian Aid*

More than 50 times as many people were affected by disasters in developing countries as in developed countries. *Source: Christian Aid*

Each year, the death toll from disasters is growing greater—from 84,570 in 1995 to 249,896 ten years later. *Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*

“In Bangladesh, an average of 12 to 13 tropical storms strike every year. These storms and cyclones are among the most destructive in the world. While they only contribute around 5% of the global total of storms they account for about 75% of global losses from storms in terms of lives and property.”

Source: Christian Aid

“In Malawi, poor rains repeatedly result in pitiful harvests. When crops fail up and down the country, thousands of children are reduced to eating just one meal a day or less. It’s not lack of rain that leads to this. It is people’s poverty that prevents them storing food and having the funds to plant more crops.”

Source: Christian Aid

Rights and Protection

There are more than 370 million indigenous peoples living in 90 countries across the globe. *Source: UN*

Minutes for Mission

Washington and Tupelo: A Single Weekend Changes Everything



It was a lesson in vulnerability, and a lesson in just how connected we are as the body of Christ.

In late Spring 2014, in a single weekend, First Christian Church, Tupelo, Mississippi, and First Christian Church, Washington, North Carolina, were both destroyed. A tornado ripped through Tupelo, destroying residences, businesses, and of course, First Christian Church. Members of First Christian Washington were also impacted by a tornado, and then lost their historic sanctuary to fire just days later.

Two communities impacted; two historic congregations lost. But that isn't the end of the story.

Through Week of Compassion, Disciples from across North America responded—quickly. Week of Compassion sent grants from its Compassion in Action fund immediately to help affected

families at both churches, and on top of solidarity grants sent to each church from the Compassion in Action fund, Week of Compassion helped direct designated gifts to both Washington and Tupelo, providing resources for their interim needs and rebuilding.

Through Week of Compassion, Disciples work to make sure there is a fair balance—through our prayers, our hopes, and our resources.

Historical Change: Water in Kenya

In her arid region in Kenya, Matee Kakoo and women in her community had to walk over six miles in order to collect water, wait in line for four to five hours to draw the water and then start the journey home. Their children could not attend school. Often, families went hungry as there was no water for cooking, watering the crops . . . the most vulnerable suffered the most.

Together, Week of Compassion's partner CWS and the people of Mbangulo built a sand dam and shallow well. The community worked hard to collect local materials. And, they banded together and build the sand dam within a month. One month and their lives were changed forever.

Children are now attending school regularly and do not even have to carry water with them to school. They are drinking safe,

clean water from the well dug by their classes. There is now water for vegetables and fruit trees. Families' nutrition is improving and the younger children are thriving. This is truly your Compassion put into Action.

"To speak the truth, this project has changed this community. On behalf of the people of Mbangulo, we thank God for the historical change you have brought this community. It will be remembered for generations to come. Thank you."



Minutes for Mission

Colorado: After the Floods

When the rains began in Colorado in 2013, no one expected what was to come. From communities as far north as Fort Collins to as far south as Colorado Springs, floods rushed through towns large and small. In addition to providing grants to help those who were displaced, Week of Compassion and Disciples Volunteering began a conversation with First Christian Church, Loveland, Colorado, about how to best partner and respond in affected communities. Though the long Colorado winter slowed down any organized response to the widespread flood damage, summer soon meant that local long-term recovery groups could begin their preparation, so FCC Loveland did, too. Through the support of WoC and Disciples Volunteering, FCC Loveland adapted its facilities in order to host volunteers, forged relationships with community leaders, local recovery organizations, and now stands ready to be part of the recovery of so many impacted communities across the Central Rocky Mountain Region.



Empowering communities impacted by disasters and empowering congregations to minister and respond: that is the work of Week of Compassion. That is how we can help impacted communities reach a fair balance.



A Better Future: Indonesia

Abdullah had to flee Somalia with his mother and younger brother in 2011 because of the violence and together they made their way to Jakarta, Indonesia. As refugees, it was hard for his mother to find him a safe space to attend school, let alone the funds to allow him to go.

That's where Week of Compassion stepped in. Your donations to WoC are supporting a CWS refugee center in Jakarta, where Abdullah began learning both Indonesian and English. Speaking the local language was a vital first step for both young boys to go to school in their new home.

Finally, last year, Abdullah and his mother got the great news. "I was one of the lucky ones to be able to

go to school. My mother is also very happy because she always says that education is very important to have a better future."

It's true. When we support education, we support the future. Abdullah and so many like him are learning their way out of poverty one lesson at a time. "I like my teacher and friends. Hopefully I can continue my education." With YOUR help, he will.

Children's Activities

Secret Code

Decipher the secret messages using the code below to discover what Jesus said about sharing.

Code

N	B	E	A	I	L	O	R	H	G	U	F	C
∩	☺	♥	✕	↗	✓	h	o	o	♠	♪	**	↘

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
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— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
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Word Creation

How many words can you make using the letters in the words below?

WEEK OF COMPASSION

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

ENOUGH FOR ALL

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tongue Twister
 Say three times as fast as you can:
 Our sharing shall surely show the shining love of God!

Scripture Lesson
 “Nothing left over to the one with the most; nothing lacking to the one with the least.”
 2 Cor 8:12-13, The Message
 What do you think that means?
 If someone has less than you, what can you do to help them have more?

Care Package

God created you. There is no one quite like you; you are unique and beloved by God. You are God’s very own care package for the world! So what is inside you that you could share with others who need your care? Can you think of ways you could care for others who may not have what they need? What items would your care package contain that you could share?

(Your care package could include a hug, a smile, a helping hand, your offering, your prayers, etc.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Your Offerings Are a Care Package for the World

When you collect offerings in your Week of Compassion coin box, those coins and dollars turn into things that people need. When we have more than we need, we have the opportunity to share with others! WoC is like a care package from God and you for those in need in the world. Color below the things that your WoC offerings do to help others:

(Suggested images: food, water, a blanket, animals, shelter, school supplies, medicine, seeds, shovel, etc.)

What can you share with others?

- Collect coins and dollars in your Week of Compassion coin box
- Your lunch at school
- Help a neighbor who needs help at home
- Make cards to send to children in an area hospital
- Make art projects for nursing home residents
- Plant a community garden with your family and friends
- Collect canned goods for a local food bank
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen in your community
- Welcome a refugee family in your congregation
- Organize a blanket drive in your church (<http://www.cwsglobal.org/get-involved/cws-blankets/blankets.html>)
- Put together a CWS Hygiene, School, Baby or Clean-Up Bucket (<http://www.churchworldservice.org/kits/index.html>)
- Walk in the local CROP Walk to fight hunger (<http://www.churchworldservice.org/CROP/index.html>)

Sharing Calendar

The calendar below highlights some of the challenging situations your gifts to Week of Compassion address when extending care to God's people in North America and around the world. Each day suggests a donation of coins or bills. Your household can decide which unit is best for your situation each day. We challenge you to be as generous as you can be. We pray that this calendar is not merely a stewardship tool, but also a daily opportunity to educate and discuss how our faith, when acted upon, makes a difference in the world.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>"Nothing left over to the one with the most; nothing lacking to the one with the least" (2 Cor 8:12-13). Give one unit for each time you have received help when you needed it most.</p>	<p>Nearly 1.5 billion people live in extreme poverty, earning less than \$1.25 a day. Give one unit or \$1.25 today on behalf of those living in extreme poverty.</p>	<p>2.5 billion people in the world lack access to proper sanitation. Give one unit for every toilet in your home, church, or school.</p>	<p>People living in extreme poverty often do not have access to clean drinking water. Give three units for each water faucet in your home.</p>	<p>Approximately 75% of the world's poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Give two units for every pet in your home or for every animal you love.</p>	<p>23 out of every 1,000 children in Vietnam will die before their 5th birthday. Give one unit for every child in your class or Sunday School or, if you are an adult, one unit for each child in your life.</p>	<p>African youth are more likely to be underemployed and among the working poor than the general population. Give one unit for each chore you do or each job you have ever had.</p>
<p>One in eight people go to sleep hungry in our world. Give two units for each meal and snack you ate today.</p>	<p>Almost half of the girls in the world's poorest countries have no access to primary education. Give one unit for each year of formal schooling you have had.</p>	<p>In the United States, 14.5 % of households struggle to put food on the table. Give two units for each table in your house.</p>	<p>"For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on" (Mark 12:44). Give sacrificially today.</p>	<p>About half of all girls worldwide attend schools without toilets. The lack of privacy causes many girls to drop out when they reach puberty. Give one unit for every toilet in your house.</p>	<p>World-wide, 1 in 8 persons is under-nourished—that means a total of 870 million people do not eat enough to be healthy. Give two units for every fruit and vegetable you ate today.</p>	<p>In Africa alone, people (mainly women and children) spend 40 billion hours every year walking for water. Give one unit for every staircase or step in your house, school, or workplace.</p>
<p>774 million adults, 64% of whom are women, still lack basic reading and writing skills. Give one unit for each book and notebook in your schoolbag or each book on your coffee table or nightstand.</p>	<p>Diseases from unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war. Give one unit for every one of your family's doctors.</p>	<p>Less than 1% of U.S. foreign aid is specifically targeted to women and girls. Give one unit for every sister, daughter, mother, stepmother, aunt, and grandmother in your life.</p>	<p>Each year for the past decade, an average of 258 million people have lived through some kind of natural disaster, the equivalent of almost half of the world's population. Give one unit for each sunny day this week.</p>	<p>Every day, 16,000 children die from hunger-related diseases. Give one unit for every aisle at your local grocery store or for every stand at your farmer's market.</p>	<p>Of the 1.5 million internally displaced people in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake, nearly 1.2 million have left camps and relocated. Give two units for every time you have had to move into a new home.</p>	<p>Blankets often provide refugees their only protection from weather, a way to carry their few remaining possessions, and allow for privacy in crowded refugee camps. Give one unit for every blanket or comforter your family has.</p>
<p>Most Americans, approximately 51.4%, will live in poverty at some point before age 65. Help end poverty in the U.S. by giving two units today.</p>	<p>Give three units for every person in your life who has taught you about generosity and the privilege of giving. Offer a special prayer of gratitude for them!</p>	<p>By the end of 2013, 51.2 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide, the highest in recorded history. Give two units for every time you can recall feeling welcomed in the past month.</p>	<p>"Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt 6:11). Give one unit to provide daily bread to those who would otherwise not have a meal today.</p>	<p>Children below 18 years of age constituted 50% of the refugee population last year, the highest figure in a decade. Give one unit for everyone under 18 in your extended family.</p>	<p>Nearly 900,000 Canadians are assisted by food banks each month; 38% are children and youth and 11% are Aboriginal. Give one unit to address hunger in your community.</p>	<p>"... it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need" (2 Cor 8:13-14). May the needs of the world be met by what you have to give. Give all you can today.</p>

Sources: Bread for the World, Charity Water, Christian Aid, Church World Service, Food Banks Canada, International Labor Organization, U.S. Census Bureau, UNESCO, UNHCR, The New York Times, World Bank, World Food Program, World Health Organization

Daily Giving Devotion

- At a time appropriate for your household, read the day's entry in the Sharing Calendar. Discuss the situation described and its relationship to your household.
- Read 2 Corinthians 8:13-15, the theme scripture for Week of Compassion 2015:
"I do not mean that there should be relief for others a pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written,

'The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.' "

- Consider your household's Sharing Calendar contribution for the day, and add the contribution to your coin box.
- Offer a prayer for the people and situations highlighted in the Sharing Calendar, and for the people your household will meet in the coming hours and days.
- Remember to take your coin box to church on the day when the Week of Compassion offering is received.

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