

## March 2024 Offering of Letters

At St. John's we help hungry people by our contributions of food and money to our local food banks and to families in need in our East Penn School District, and through our contributions to our local CROP Walk and to the ELCA's World Hunger Relief. For the last several years we have also helped hungry people by participating in Bread for the World's "Offering of Letters."

Bread for the World is a 40-year-old non-partisan Christian citizen's movement urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Last fall in our "Offering of Letters" we asked Congress to pass a Farm Bill that will help diminish hunger both domestically and abroad. The Farm Bill is usually renewed every five years. How does the Farm Bill do this? Nearly three fourths of the bill's funding goes to nutrition programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- formerly known as food stamps). The bill includes funding for the Food for Peace program that addresses hunger internationally

Unfortunately the current Congress has not renewed the Farm Bill. Bread for the World believes that the Farm Bill has traditionally been a bi-partisan piece of legislation that can help kickstart bi-partisan collaboration and help restore our food system. Bread for the World staff will be conducting several legislative actions around the Farm Bill in March, and the pressure that an Offering of Letters provides to the members of Congress will help strengthen our push to get a Farm Bill on the table. There is no guarantee that a Farm Bill will be passed before 2025, but we believe there is a good chance that we can get a draft of the bill out before May.

A sample letter that you can use is printed on the last page of this insert. Insert the correct addresses for our members of Congress that are printed below the letter. A paragraph is included in the sample letter that refers to some of the ways our congregation helps people dealing with hunger in our community. Feel free to revise it so that it reflects your own perspectives and experiences.

If you have any questions or concerns about this program, feel free to talk with one of the Outreach Committee members: Audra Berner, Martie Dech, Faith Drescher, Cheryl Kraemer, Roger Timm and Deb Yoder.

Bread for the World appreciates knowing how many letters are sent to Congress. If you write a letter, please tell the church office or Pastor Timm ([rmtemmaus@gmail.com](mailto:rmtemmaus@gmail.com)) how many letters you wrote and to whom you sent them. Thank you!

## Offering of Letters Sample

[Date]

Rep. \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC  
20515  
Sen. \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Senate Washington,  
DC 20510

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_, / Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

The farm bill is our nation's most important national food system legislation. It is critical to the work of ending hunger at home and abroad. Indeed, the farm bill impacts each one of us.

As Congress works to renew our food and farm programs through the farm bill, I urge you to support legislation that builds healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Specifically, I ask you to:

- Protect SNAP from further restrictions.
- Increase funding for fresh produce within SNAP benefits through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP).
- Reduce food waste by cosponsoring the *Food Date Labeling Act*, H.R.3159/S.1484.
- Reauthorize the Food for Peace global nutrition program at no less than its current level of \$2.5 billion annually and allow additional flexibility to provide the most effective form of assistance in each local context.

As a person of faith, I am moved to help people experiencing hunger and poverty – no matter where they live. Through the social ministry programs organized by the Outreach Committee of my church, St. John's Lutheran Church in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, I have become aware of hunger in our community. We gather food for food banks in Allentown and Emmaus. We partner with others in our community to help families in need in our East Penn School District. Also last year we helped resettle an Afghani refugee family, and the SNAP program has been crucial to help them adjust to life in America. This is why I urge you to support a farm bill that builds healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Sincerely,

[Your name]  
[Your address]

### Our Members of Congress

Senator Bob Casey Jr.  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator John Fetterman  
142 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Congresswoman Susan Wild  
1027 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515