

HARVEST FOOD RAISING AND ACTIVITIES

TRUSSELL TABLES



If you love the idea of doing more around poverty and justice in your church, and more with your local food bank – why not consider becoming or appointing a Trussell Church Ambassador volunteer who can take the lead in this area?

To find out more, including details of the training and support on offer from the Trussell Trust for these volunteers, please visit our website: trusselltrust.org/church-ambassador



A TIME FOR FOOD AND CONNECTION

We invite your church to make this Harvest a time of celebration and gratitude that includes people from all backgrounds, particularly people facing financial hardship.

Churches play a key role in creating a more just and equal society, in which people do not have to turn to food banks to get the essentials they need. Churches can be places where everyone finds a home and we recognise the dignity of every human, made in the image of God.

There is a strong link between hunger and social isolation, so how can your church support people experiencing hardship at Harvest time and beyond?

Trestle tables are often used in many ways across the life of a church community, particularly to share food. This resource includes ideas for turning your trestle tables into a 'Trussell Table' as part of your celebrations, as well as inspiring your congregation and guests to donate food, and use their collective voice to call for change.



1 IN 4

people referred to our food banks experience severe social isolation, being in touch with people socially only once a month, or never.

Remember there may be people in your church Harvest services who are experiencing hunger and can't afford the essentials. So do plan how you will make immediate support available and accessible, or put people in touch with food banks or other local organisations.

These ideas have been developed alongside people with lived experience of hunger and poverty, as well as together with church leaders. If you want any help to adapt these resources or to be put in contact with your local food bank, **please email us at churches@trusselltrust.org. We would love to hear from you.**

HARVEST IDEAS FOR CHURCHES

TRUSSELL TABLES



IDEAS BASED ON THE TIME YOU HAVE TO PREPARE

We know how busy church life can be and so the ideas below are designed to make use of the time you have available to prepare for your Harvest celebration:

1



2



3



PICK ONE

1

WE HAVE 15 MINUTES

to prepare...

a food bank collection table

2

WE HAVE 1-2 HOURS

to prepare...

a shared Harvest meal for your church community

3

WE HAVE 4-5 HOURS

to prepare...

host an afternoon of shared cooking and eating together with your wider community



15
MINS

FOOD BANK COLLECTION TABLE



FOOD BANK COLLECTION TABLE TIPS:

- 1 Display the back page of this resource as a poster in the run up to your Harvest celebration so you can gather the items your food bank needs the most.
- 2 You could **decorate the table** with a table cloth, flowers or candles to symbolise how valued these donations are.
- 3 Arrange an anonymous **donation bag swap** during the service, to help people reflect on the different amounts we all have to offer, and how close hardship can be to us:
 - Give your church community bags to bring their Harvest donations in.
 - Invite people to place their bags together at the back of the church room at the start of the service.
 - Have a designated volunteer discreetly mix up the items in the bags so no bag is recognisable, making sure some bags hold a lot and some less. This is important so no one feels self-conscious about the amount they can donate.
 - During the service, explain that the bags have been repacked, and now everyone will be handed a new, randomly chosen bag. Invite people to bring up, and empty a bag onto the food bank collection table.
 - Invite people to reflect on the different amounts we each can give. There will be people in our community who can't give as much, but everyone has been generous. You might want to use the parable of the widow's mite in Luke 21:1-4 as part of this reflection, which not only pulls out the theme of the widow's generosity but also points to the injustice of the system being perpetuated by people with power.

Set up a food bank collection table to sit pride of place at the front of your church venue during your Harvest service.

This Trussell Table will help provide a focal point for your Harvest celebrations acting as a physical reminder of our gratitude to God for his provision as you collect offerings for your local food bank.

- 4 During the service you could show one of Trussell Trust's Harvest video resources and encourage people to reflect on the biblical themes of justice and compassion. These can be downloaded at: trusselltrust.org/harvest-videos. In response, you could ask people to consider the following question: 'what more could we do as a church community to stand in solidarity with people facing hardship?'
- 5 Once donations have been placed onto your food bank collection table you could use one of the Harvest prayers included at the end of this resource.

We are inviting churches to stand with us against the injustice of hunger by supporting our Guarantee Our Essentials campaign.



Watch our short film and discover more about this campaign at: trusselltrust.org/churches-GOE

Could you show our film at your Harvest celebration? See the next pages for more ideas.

1-2
HOURS

SHARED HARVEST MEAL



SHARED HARVEST MEAL TIPS:

- 1** **Share the preparation** of the meal amongst your church community. Write a list of the jobs that need to be done and give everyone the dignity of asking them how they would like to help rather than making any assumptions.
- 2** You could arrange the meal as a **bring and share** where people can bring their own cultural or family dishes.
- 3** Make sure you have **considered the appropriate health and safety requirements** for hosting a shared meal. This might include food safety certification, public liability insurance, as well as a range of food options to cover dietary requirements and allergies. If you want more information or guidance on health and safety you may wish to visit Ecclesiastical's website for support here: ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-health-and-safety/
- 4** Print out the **Conversation Starter resource** from the Trussell Trust website and include these on your tables to help spark conversations about food banks and hunger in the UK. trusselltrust.org/get-involved/conversation-starters/

These conversation starter cards will help guests around your table to:
 - Discover stories from people who have used a food bank.
 - Find out the facts about food bank need.
 - Reflect on how the cost of living is pushing people deeper into hardship.
- 5** **Consider making a shared meal a quarterly or monthly event in your church?** 26% of people referred to food banks in the Trussell Trust network are experiencing severe social isolation. Bringing people together over a shared meal can help create a sense of community and belonging.

Plan a shared Harvest meal as part of your celebrations. Eating together around the table is about more than just sustenance, it's about connection, inclusion and community.

Think about people who might not usually be included around your table as a church community and how you might extend an invite to them. This might include people on the edge of church life or participants of your community projects throughout the week.

KEY
ASK

Ask the people sharing your meal to help Guarantee our Essentials.

People can take the latest Essentials Guarantee campaign action on our church action page:
trusselltrust.org/churches-GOE

You can print posters with a QR code and link to this page for your tables or notice boards, here:
trusselltrust.org/church-action-poster



When

People are going without

It's time to

**GUARANTEE
OUR ESSENTIALS**

Visit trusselltrust.org/churches-GOE



4-5
HOURS

COMMUNITY COOKING EVENT



This might be an event you could host with other churches in your area, or a Churches Together group. Joining together will help practically, and the more churches and community groups represented will also encourage civic leaders to attend.

Everyone invited should take part in preparing and serving the meal together. This can help to break down barriers and stereotypes, creating space for people to engage and belong together.

COMMUNITY COOKING EVENT TIPS:

1 Many of the tips for the shorter Shared Harvest Meal will be useful here. Remember to make sure you have **considered the appropriate health and safety requirements** for hosting a shared meal (see the Shared Harvest Meal tips). More information and guidance on health and safety is available on Ecclesiastical's website: www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-health-and-safety/

2 Think about **capturing stories** (anonymously) and **themes of conversations**. A meal like this can trigger impactful conversations that could lead to change, so make sure there are ways for people to record important elements of people's stories, ideas and suggestions. Having someone responsible for this capturing can help. You could have a variety of creative methods, post-its or postcard art, and gather ideas in one place like a prayer tree or map of your area. You could set up a video blog area or photo booth to capture people and important words or ideas. Make sure to think carefully about consent for any photography or filming.

3 Think about **where you can advertise this event**. Once community and civic leaders are committed to attending, can they advertise the meal in their venues and buildings i.e. the doctor's surgery?

Use Harvest as an opportunity to host your wider community for an afternoon of shared cooking and eating together.

Think how you might connect with people in your local area who may be facing hunger and social isolation. Your local food bank might have suggestions of people who would welcome an invitation. You could also invite civic leaders, such as elected officials, police officers, head teachers, along to take part.

- 4** Suggested **running order** for the event:
- Welcome and introductions over teas, coffee and squash.
 - Icebreaker to get people mixed up and talking (ask people to get into pairs and share their name and an interesting fact about it, then into bigger groups of 4-5 people and find 3 things in common with each other).
 - Split into teams to prepare food, tables etc.
 - Eat main course on one table, swap for pudding.
 - If someone is facilitating capturing themes of conversations, have them gather themes together for a reflection at the end.
 - Thank you, ending prayer/blessing and invite to the next event (see below).
- 5** At the end of the event you may wish to **get a commitment from your congregation, community, and civic partners** to make this gathering a bi-annual event where the community comes together to listen to one another and discuss local issues. If these larger community meals continue, consider weaving into them other important events that can bring people together, such as Easter or bank holidays. Make sure you include your local food bank in any future plans.

HARVEST PRAYERS



O LORD,

what a variety of things you have made!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.
They all depend on you to give them food as they need it.
When you supply it, they gather it.
You open your hand to feed them,
and they are richly satisfied.

This Harvest, we thank you O Lord for every provision.
We pray for those who go without,
That in your mercy you may provide.
And when we have plenty, help us to share with those in need.
O Lord of the Harvest we praise you,
and it is in Your Name we pray,

Amen!

GOD OUR FATHER,

During this season of Harvest we pray for everyone in our country
and in our local community who are facing hunger at this time.

We thank you for the work of the food bank network. May you bless
and sustain all those who respond in acts of loving service to the needs
of their local communities.

We know Lord that you are a God of justice. May your Spirit guide
us then, to have a voice to call for, and the strength to take action
for a country without the need for food banks.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son.

Amen.



NEXT STEPS



We are incredibly grateful for your support and donations this Harvest. Ongoing support from churches like yours is vital in helping us in the fight against hunger and poverty locally. Together we can ensure that everyone can afford life's essentials and end the need for food banks.

Here are some other ideas for how your church can join us in this mission:

SET UP A REGULAR DONATION BOX

If you haven't already got a regular donation box for your local food bank, you might want to consider setting one up:

- Ask a member of your congregation to take responsibility for organising this and taking the donations regularly to the food bank. They could also share news from the food bank with the congregation and make appeals for donations.
- You could commit to sponsoring one particular item that the food bank really needs, and ask your congregation to donate this. For example, could you be a 'juice church' or a 'milk church'. Building a theme to the donations might encourage people in your church to give and build a sense of partnership with your food bank into the future.

APPOINT A TRUSSELL CHURCH AMBASSADOR

Church Ambassadors act as representatives who can help your church to continue to engage with the injustice of hunger and poverty in your community and the wider UK. They will receive training, support and resources from the Trussell Trust and empower your congregation to:

- Support your local food bank
- Use their voice to call for change
- Build community with people who have experience of hunger and poverty

To find out more, including details of the training and support on offer from the Trussell Trust for Ambassadors, please visit our website:

trusselltrust.org/church-ambassador

SIGN UP FOR MORE CHURCH RESOURCES

Visit the Trussell Trust website to sign up for news, events and resources especially for churches as together we seek to end the need for food banks: trusselltrust.org/church-updates

Or get in touch via email at: churches@trusselltrust.org

HARVEST APPEAL



HELP SUPPORT YOUR FOODBANK WITH FOOD AND FUNDS THIS HARVEST

DONATE FOOD

Help by donating an item or two from our shopping list to ensure we can provide food to help people in crisis.



DONATE MONEY

Help to cover the costs of storing and distributing food, as well as developing sustainable projects.



SHOPPING LIST TOP TEN ITEMS

*Don't forget...
You can help transform
more lives with a financial
donation too.*



[.foodbank.org.uk](http://foodbank.org.uk)

Registered Charity in No.