

Greetings!

This letter is a follow up to Zach Schmidt's presentation about Bread for the World programs at the February Presbytery Assembly meeting. Below is a brief description of Bread for the World, a recap of two Bread activities that may appeal to those in your congregation, and links to additional information. Please share this as you are able with your mission team or similar body.

Bread for the World ([bread.org](http://bread.org)) is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision-makers to end hunger at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, Bread's advocacy provides help and opportunity at home and far beyond where we live. For almost fifty years, Bread has been at the forefront of a Christian response to ending hunger.

Bread's signature activity is the annual (usually in the spring) Offering of Letters (OL) campaign, when thousands of congregations of various denominations encourage members to urge their senators and representatives to support legislation that addresses hunger. A campaign at the level of a congregation can take several forms. It may be as simple as directing members to Bread's OL website so that an email may be sent. A campaign could also be a Sunday fellowship activity, where congregation members are invited to gather over coffee and snacks to write letters to their representatives in Washington. Bread's OL website ([ol.bread.org/](http://ol.bread.org/)) has sample letters, fact sheets, and much more!

Another, somewhat more individual Bread activity, is personally engaging with congressional offices to advocate for specific legislation that relates to ending hunger. Because Bread has limited staff, they rely on volunteers to stay current on Bread programs and engage directly with congressional offices on hunger-related legislation. If this is of interest, some in your congregation might want to consider joining Bread's next Midwest regional briefing on March 15 at 12 pm (on zoom - more information is available at [bread.org/regionalmeetings](http://bread.org/regionalmeetings)).

Your Blackhawk Mission Committee and its Matthew 25 Task Force believe that Bread for the World programs, particularly the OL campaign, afford a meaningful, educational, and effective non-partisan path for advocating for programs that offer hope of ending hunger. We would love to see many more Blackhawk congregations take this up.

Ridgefield-Crystal Lake PC has participated in Bread's OL campaign for over a dozen years, using a variety of formats. Mike Rugh ([michael.rugh@outlook.com](mailto:michael.rugh@outlook.com)) is available to answer questions or share Ridgefield's experience. Another great source is Zach Schmidt, Bread's Senior Midwest Regional organizer ([zschmidt@bread.org](mailto:zschmidt@bread.org)). Or please view a video of Zach's presentation at the February Presbytery Assembly: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-ZbIRpKKdA>.

Sincerely,

*Rev. Alex Regets*

Moderator, Blackhawk Mission Committee

*Susan Krause*

Moderator, Matthew 25 Task Force