

ELCA World Hunger
Global Farm Challenge
“More than Food” Podcast

Episode 1: Introducing “More than Food”

Ryan: Hello and welcome to ELCA World Hunger's More Than Food podcast. This is a chance for us to dive into the stories and people that are part of the Global Farm Challenge and to hear how God is calling us to be active workers for justice in the world, accompanying our neighbors and building a just world where all are fed. I'm Ryan.

Brooke: And I'm Brooke,

Ryan: And together we are the hunger education team with ELCA World Hunger and the hosts of More than Food. In this episode, we will share more about ELCA World Hunger and the Global Farm Challenge. To get us started, Brooke, can you say more about what ELCA World Hunger is?

Brooke: The ministry of ELCA World Hunger responds to hunger and poverty across the globe and provides support to communities in 60 countries, including the United States. We work through all different kinds of partners to help end hunger by addressing root causes of hunger. And we'll talk more about that in a little bit.

Ryan: So you mentioned root causes. ELCA World Hunger does more than just provide food, like shipping food overseas or things like that?

Brooke: Yeah. Well, it's always important for us to support our neighbors with immediate relief programs, right? So like food pantries or other sorts of needs. But long term holistic projects are what we try to do more often. They aim at transforming communities, including adaptations to climate change, economic justice, housing, maternal and child health care, HIV and AIDS, and advocacy, accompaniment of people impacted by the criminal justice system, support for refugees and migrants, sustainable agriculture, local lending and loan groups, gender justice, and so much more. Because we know that when it comes to hunger, there's so much more than just feeding people.

Ryan: All that points to the name of this podcast, More Than Food. The church has been at this work for a long time, and we've learned a few things along the way. One of the first things we've learned is we can't feed our way out of hunger. Hunger is not just about food, but about whole systems, how our food is grown, who has the ability to access or purchase it, things like healthcare that can impact our ability to make a living and afford food. And of course, the economic and political systems we live in. So More than Food is a pretty good way to get at that.

Brooke: Oh, totally. One of the other things we've learned together and with our partners across the globe is the importance of relationships. They make our work more effective. It takes all kinds of people with a myriad of different gifts to create a just world where all are fed.

Ryan: Most definitely. This work is supported entirely by gifts to ELCA World Hunger and the work of our partners on the ground. And this summer, the Global Farm Challenge is a big part of that. This initiative is an invitation, especially the youth and the ELCA, to join us in supporting smallholder farmers around the world through the ministry of ELCA World Hunger. Small holder farmers face hunger at rates that

might be surprising. Now we know that the world produces more than enough food to feed every person. Yet rates of hunger have been rising for at least the last five years, and the very people who produce food for the world farmers are often at much higher risk of going hungry themselves. So the Global Farm Challenge is a whole Church, season long event to bring attention to the challenges small holder farmers face and the difference that an investment in them and their communities can make as we tackle the issue of hunger.

Brooke: With the cancelation of the youth gathering this year, this initiative is even more important. We had hoped to see you all in person at the youth gathering in Minneapolis, my home city, to share our work of our Church with our companions and partners in Minneapolis and around the world. The youth gathering may be canceled, but our team hasn't stopped, and we are inviting you to be part of this work.

Ryan: We haven't stopped because hunger hasn't stopped, and we hope that you join us this summer. The work to end hunger may seem large and maybe even more difficult now that we're apart this summer, but we're still all in this together. You all already have a lot of the skills and tools you need right in your communities, and we have a few things to help you along the way. Right, Brooke?

Brooke: We sure do. And I am excited about a lot of them. First is this podcast. In the next episode, we will share more about ELCA World Hunger, and we'll hear from our friends and colleagues about the real communities behind the stories we're going to share. We also have the Global Farm Challenge to go card game. You can play in all kinds of different places – on the road or in your Church with all kinds of different people. An online fundraising program that's going to be pretty cool. We're really excited about that that you can use to gather gifts to support ELCA World Hunger and a whole lot more. All of this can be found elca.org/globalfarm.

Ryan: If we've learned anything in our work with ELCA World Hunger, it's that we can make progress against hunger. The rates may be on the rise now, but they have come down incredibly over the last few decades. So we know that hunger isn't inevitable. It doesn't have to be this way, and it won't be this way forever. God promises a world where hunger will be no more, and we're excited to invite you to be part of bringing that world into being. So be sure to check out the resources Brooke mentioned elca.org/Globalfarm and thank you for being a part of the work that God is doing through our Church.

Brooke: And for Ryan and your ELCA World Hunger team at the Churchwide office, our partners and companions around the world and here, domestically, and for me, thank you for joining us. And be sure to check out other episodes of "More than Food."

Ryan: Thanks for joining us today. And remember to check out Elca.org/global farm for more episodes and info about the Global Farm Challenge.