

Global Food Crisis

August Fast Materials

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Land and the Food Crisis

Korea



FAST SCHEDULE AND CONTENTS JULY 31 – AUGUST 2

Friday


Korean Christians and the Practice of Fasting.....	2
Learn More: Korea and Land: Part I	4
Friday Evening Prayer	6

Saturday

Prayers: Waking, Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, and Evening	7
Bible Study: Land as Blessing and Trouble	10
Bible Study Questions.....	12
Learn More: Korea and Land: Part II	12

Sunday

Prayers: Waking and Breakfast	15
Worship Materials	15
Bringing it Home: Personal and Communal Responses.....	16

IMPORTANT: *Fasting from food should be avoided by those with health-related conditions, such as diabetes, heart problems, and pregnancy. Anyone with questions about their health condition should consult with their doctor before beginning. Those fasting should read the guidelines in "[Fasting 101](#)."* 

Fasting options - A fast typically begins after a simple meal Friday evening, no food Saturday, and ends with Communion or a communal meal on Sunday. Other schedules are welcome. Those who are not fasting from food can choose to eat simple meals, skip a meal, or design a fast that fits their circumstances.

Friday evening: preparing & focusing

Introduction

"Land is the foundation of everything under heaven." For starters, land provides our food, our clothing and our homes. Land is life!

This month we have the opportunity to consider the meaning of land through the eyes of Koreans and in relation to the global food crisis. We are deeply indebted to Dan Adams, who along with his wife Carol Chou Adams, is a PC(USA) mission co-worker teaching at Hanil University and Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Jeonju, South Korea since 1983. Rev. Dr. Adams wrote nearly all the materials and study questions, and he enlisted Rev. Dr. Kim Tae-Hun, who kindly contributed Saturday's bible study.

These materials come from South Korea, but the situation in North Korea must be raised when talking about the food crisis. Famine has been a frequent visitor to the north half of the Korean peninsula. The PC(USA) has been responding and in the responses section below you will learn how you can contribute to reducing hunger in North Korea.

First, let us learn about the Korean practice of fasting as we enter into our fast...

Korean Christians and the Practice of Fasting

Although the origins of fasting among Korean Christians is lost in antiquity, there are at least two factors which have contributed to the significance of fasting today. The first is the ancient Buddhist tradition of retreating to the mountains—usually at remote temples—for extended periods of prayer and meditation. These periods of retreat were usually accompanied by a strict ascetic diet interspersed with periods of fasting. Two of the early converts to Christianity, Kil Sun-Joo (1869-1935) and Kim Ik-Du (1874-1950) had studied Buddhism prior to their conversion and Kil had participated in a number of these Buddhist retreats. The second factor is related to the practice of fasting in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. The great revival of 1907, in which both Kil Sun-Joo and Kim Ik-Du participated, placed an emphasis upon prayer and fasting. Kim, who became well-known in the Korean church for his ministry of prayer and healing, often fasted when praying for the sick. Other Christians sought to follow the example of Jesus when he retreated to the wilderness and fasted for forty days.

Following the Korean War there were a number of prayer houses founded in the mountains. Known in Korean as *kidowons*, and commonly referred to as prayer mountains, these retreat centers soon became a hallmark of Korean Christianity. Early prayer houses were little more than grottoes in the hillside or small huts. In later years, as their popularity increased, they provided basic rooms for sleeping and simple food for those not participating in a complete fast. People came to these prayer houses for short fasts of only a few days, for week-long fasts, and occasionally for forty-day fasts.

Today fasting occupies a prominent place in the spiritual life of the Korean churches. There are at least four reasons why Korean Christians fast. The **first** is for spiritual renewal and to discern the will of God for one's life. Pastors will often go to a prayer house to make a forty-day fast at least once a year as a form of spiritual retreat and renewal. Many people enter a period of prayer and fasting in order to discern the will of God when faced with a momentous personal decision such as a career change, the choice of a marriage partner, or whether or not to enter a Christian vocation such as the ministry or missionary service.

A **second** reason for fasting is supplication before God concerning a particular need in one's life or in the life of a family member. Two of the most common of these life situations are the university entrance examinations and problems related to one's health. Many mothers go to the prayer houses to fast and pray so that their son or daughter might be successful in passing the all-important university entrance examinations. When faced with serious health problems it is common for Christians to go to the prayer houses to seek healing through prayer and fasting.

The **third** reason for fasting is as a form of social protest. Not only Christians, but also Buddhists and even non-religious people participate in this kind of fasting. It is common to see several people sitting or lying on a silver colored mat participating in a fast at labor disputes, anti-government protests, and when seeking (or preventing as the case may be) the dismissal of a university president or other administrator. When the central government planned to change the laws concerning private schools and universities, many church leaders—including those in the Presbyterian Church of Korea—participated in a protest fast. Unlike a hunger strike, these protest fasts are of limited duration and the participants often fast in shifts.

A **fourth** reason for fasting in Korea is to show solidarity with a particular group of people. One such group is the hungry people of North Korea, and there are frequent fasts to demonstrate solidarity with those who do not have enough to eat. Older Koreans can remember when famine and hunger was common in the south, especially after a long hard winter or following heavy rains and floods which caused crop failure. Fasting for them brings back memories of hard times. The younger generation often fasts to show solidarity with the hungry in other areas of the world and such fasts are frequently accompanied by donations of the money not spent on meals.

While the practice of a monthly three-day fast may be a novel idea to many American Presbyterians, most Korean Christians would find such a practice to be very familiar, for fasting is a significant part of Christian life and practice in Korea.

1. What do you think accounts for the differences between Korean and American attitudes toward fasting?

2. Traditionally—and biblically—fasting is one of the spiritual disciplines in the church. Among American Presbyterians it is a spiritual discipline that has been largely neglected. Why do you think this has happened?
3. Of what value is fasting in expressing solidarity with hungry people? How does fasting relate to the land and the food supply?

Learn More—Part I

“Land is the foundation of everything under heaven.”
Yu Hyongwon—Confucian scholar (1622-1673), *A Proposal for Land Reform*

“Heaven gives birth to the people, and first thing Heaven does is to put them on arable land so that they can live and eat.”

Chong Yagyong (Tasan)—Confucian scholar (1762-1836), *On Land*



Land reform has always been a priority for those concerned about justice in Korea. During the Chosun period the reformer Yu Hyongwon pointed out that “the rich held lands in vast amounts stretching from field to field while the poor did not have enough land to stand an awl on. That is why the rich gradually got richer and the poor gradually got poorer. After a long time went by, the profiteers took over almost all the land.” Chong Yagyong asserted that “If you allow those who do not engage in industry or commerce to get land, then you will end up teaching the whole world that not working pays, and any system that teaches the whole world that leisure pays cannot be completely good.” Yu and Chong were voices in the wilderness and their pleas for land reform went unheeded.

It was not until the late 1800s that the peasants rebelled against this unjust system and the Tonghak (Eastern Learning) Movement arose demanding, among things, the equal distribution of land. Unfortunately the Tonghaks were defeated and the Japanese moved into Korea and colonized the country until the end of World War II in 1945. Prime land was seized by the Japanese and rice was exported to Japan while Koreans went hungry. Uprooted from the land, many Koreans ended up in exile in China.

“If I had been happy, I wouldn’t have been a writer.”

Park Kyung-Ni—novelist (1926-2008)

The post-war years were turbulent times for most Koreans. Following the defeat of the Japanese the country was divided, and was soon plunged into a bitter civil war between the communists in the north and the capitalists in the south. Park Kyung-Ni’s husband was killed during the Korean War and shortly after the war she lost her infant son. In 1969 she began to write an epic novel, *Toji*—The Land—which described the years of the Japanese occupation and the removal of Koreans from their farmland. The novel was finally completed in 1994 and published in sixteen volumes. The *han* or suffering of the characters in the novel was not finally resolved until they were allowed to return home to their beloved farmland in a valley beneath Jiri Mountain.

From 1949 through 1952 a partial land reform program was put into effect to be followed by the New Village Movement of the 1970s. Although much of the land was made available to farmers through low interest loans, there were still large tracts of land which remained in the hands of wealthy absentee landowners. However, the land reform program did revitalize Korean agriculture and it gave most farmers the opportunity to own their land. A farmers’ cooperative was formed, new methods of agriculture were introduced, and annual crop yield was greatly increased. The famines and food shortages of the past were clearly over.

In spite of these reforms there were pockets of the old tenant farm system remaining and it was during the *minjung* (people’s) movement that these last vestiges of the old system were rooted out.

“If we didn’t have to pay tenant fees,
I would have been able to go to middle and upper school.”

Mr. Yun—a tenant farmer in Kochang (1985)

From 1985-1987 a *minjung* farmers’ movement was active in Kochang in southwestern Korea. Working together with the Catholic Farmers Organization, the farmers sought to bring an end to the tenant system whereby farmers worked the land that was owned by absentee landlords. Because tenant farming was unprofitable, many farmers were leaving the land and moving to the cities to work in factories. In order to encourage the farmers, rural youth who were now studying at universities in Seoul returned to their home villages during the summer vacations to work on the farms and to demonstrate solidarity with the farmers in their demonstrations against the absentee landlords. Although the protests were largely successful, there were some significant contradictions. One university student who was home for the summer was told by a junior high school student, “Isn’t it a contradiction that you tell us to stay in the countryside, but you yourself left?”

Perhaps there was, in these university students, a kind of idealization of rural life. It may be that the following poem catches the essence of this ideal.

Ku Sang—poet (1919-2004), *Fields 2*

Urging his ox,
a farmer ploughs his field.

The long-blocked pores of the ground
Burst open once more.

The frozen lungs
expand again.

The spring sky seems
almost near enough to touch.

Ox and peasant
glance upwards together.

A cloud slowly drifts
North-wards.

Moooo!

The ploughshare bites into the ground
and rips its way through
thorns and creepers.

1. What do you think about speculators holding land which they do not farm? Is there any intrinsic reason why only farmers should be allowed to own farmland?
2. Perhaps you—or someone you know—now lives in the city but has rural roots on the land. How do you feel about leaving the land? How do you feel when you return to the land?
3. How do we idealize the life of the farmer and his or her relationship to the land? How close is our ideal to the real?

Friday evening prayer

Open me, O God, as I begin this time of fasting.
Open me to your Holy Spirit.
Open me to my sisters and brothers.
Open me to your children in Korea – north and south.
Open me to your creation.
Open me to myself.

Open me that this might be a time
of drawing closer to you
of reflecting on how I live
of remembering the impact I make on your world
of realizing anew my relations with others
of renewing my efforts to follow Jesus.
Open me, O God.
Amen.

Saturday: fasting / integrating

Saturday Waking Prayer

This Good Land

In the East our fair home, Asia's northeast shore,
On the land, yet three sides shore, all in harmony.
Beautiful landscape, all three thousand li,
Gift of heaven, this land, ours forevermore.

In our land richly blessed, temperate and warm,
With abundant gifts of heaven set before us all.
Birds and beasts, fishes, numberless they swarm,
Silver, gold, riches, piles like mountains tall.

If to us youth today falls the task to hold,
Royal shrines, lands and crops, five centuries of trust.
Four thousand years and more of tradition old,
We must learn then teach those who follow us.

Let each one in our land, twenty million strong,
Join as one for independence always firm and free.
Struggle on until our flag is raised aloft,
In our land in Asia, for all the world to see.

(written during the period of Japanese occupation of Korea)

Poem from Im Chang-Bin, compiler, Anthology of Resistance Poems. Seoul:
Chongumungo, 1983, pp. 34-35.

Breakfast-time prayer:

God, let us never forget that you are with us always.
Help us to remember that you shine through your people,
And that if we need to see your face,
All we must do is look into the eyes of another.

May we see you
In our next-door neighbor
And in the face of a Korean farmer
In the people squashed against us in the crowded bus
And in the face of those who speed by in their expensive cars
In the weary shoppers elbowing their way towards the counter
And in the face of a child starving
In the doctor who treats people in a local clinic
And in the face of a young girl dying of AIDS
In the playful children kicking dust
And in the faces of their mothers watching.

O God, our Companion,
Let us never forget that you are with us everywhere.

[Jubilee USA Network](#), adapted

Lunch-time prayer:

Food Is Heaven

Food is heaven
You can't make it on your own
Food should be shared
Food is heaven.

We all see
The same stars in heaven
How natural that we
All share the same food.

Food is heaven
As we eat
God enters us
Food is heaven.

Oh, food
Should be shared and eaten by all.

Poem by Kim Chi-Ha, *The Gold-Crowned Jesus and Other Writings*, ed. Chong Sun Kim and Shelly Killen. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978, p. 30.

Note: Kim Chi-Ha is the son-in-law of the novelist Park Kyung-Ni who wrote Toji (The Land). He was also a prominent dissident during the military regimes and spent much time in prison for his convictions.

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Supper-time prayer:

God of eternal justice and endless mercy,
we confess our sins of action and complicity,
sins that have oppressed our sisters and brothers,
compromised our witness to the gospel,
and endangered the earth you made.
We have found profit and pleasure in economic injustice.
We are consumed by selfishness and captivated by greed.
We have plundered the resources of nature,
failing to be responsible caretakers for your creation.
We have fractured your church and abandoned your mission.
Forgive us, gracious God.
Restore in us a vision of abundant life for all,
and a longing for the promise of your peaceable realm.
Amen.

David Gambrell, A Prayer of Confession based on the [Accra Confession](#)

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Evening prayer time:

This song was written by Dr. Bae Min Su who believed that the lyrics should fit the folk songs popular in the rural areas of Korea.

Farmer's Song

This great land of ours gift of God's grace,
In its rich abundance our blessed place.
Plow the higher ground make it a field,
Plow the lower ground, rice it will yield.

When the spring is here make the ox go,

Plow the high fields and the paddies below.
Scatter the seed around press in the ground,
As the sprouts show their heads may joy abound.

Summer comes again and brings the rain,
Paddies now are flooded and promise new grain.
Set out the plants, run off to play,
See how they grow and bring joy day by day.

Harvest comes will fall new crops are here,
All the grain and fruit stored for the year.
All of the family gathered to eat,
New rice with beans makes a wonderful treat.

What a good yield this is a record year,
Our land is blessed it is good to be here.
Let us praise and thank God, give thanks for grace,
In this our great land, our happy place.

(Chorus)
Shout for joy and raise our song of thanks.

Bible Study

“Land as Blessing and Trouble”

By The Rev. Dr. Kim Tae-Hun
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Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Jeonbuk, Korea

Land is one of the main concerns in the Old Testament. The history of Israel is closely related with the land. God promised the land to the patriarchs, and led the Israelites into the promised land. The Israelites lived in this land for many centuries but eventually lost the land, first, with the fall of the first Samaria, and second, with the fall of Jerusalem. Only later did they return to the land.

The land did not belong to Israel originally. God had original ownership (Ex. 3:17; Deut. 28-24) and the right to dispose of land (Lev. 25:23; 1 Sam. 26:19; Jer. 2:7). The relationship of the land to Israel is characterized by the noun “inheritance” [*nahala*] (Ex. 32:13). “Inheritance” denotes two things. First, land was transferred to Israel by God and it should be handed down through the generations (Lev. 25:46). Second, God has authority to dispose of the land, and therefore the land should not be sold (e.g. Lev. 25:10ff; 1 Kings 21:3ff). Land was the foundation stone for the life of the tribes, clans, and families, and the monopolizing of the land was prohibited (Lev. 25:10, 13).

With emergence of the monarchy, the nature of the ownership of the land was changed. Under the tribal confederation the basis of the socio-economic order had been the possession by each extended family of its own plot of land which was sufficient for their sustenance. However, under the monarchy, wealthy individuals and families accumulated properties into large estates while at the same time oppressing small land-owning peasants and displacing them from their inherited portion of the land. This process of land accumulation took place through debt instruments. For example, the taxation of agricultural produce was heavy. Injustice and corruption were practiced in the market place. Rulers oppressed the common peasants, judges received bribes, and merchants practiced deceit in business transactions (Amos 2:6 and 8:5; Hosea 12:7).

Poor weather also affected the process. If the crops failed, the peasants were forced to borrow food and money for the payment of taxes and agricultural expenses. If the crops failed again in subsequent years, the peasants fell even deeper into debt. When this happened the peasants had to repay the debt either by offering some of their own land, or, in the worst situation, offering a member of the family as an indentured slave. Sometimes a free peasant ended up as a day-laborer in the city.

In this social situation the eighth-century prophets indicted the wealthy elites. In the words of Isaiah: "Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land! The Lord of hosts has sworn in my hearing: Surely many houses shall be desolate, large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant" (Isa. 5:8-10). Amos proclaims: "Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, saying, 'When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the Sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat'" (Amos 8:4-6). Micah spoke critically as follows: "Alas for those who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in their power. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress householder and house, people and their inheritance. Therefore thus says the Lord: Now, I am devising against this family an evil from which you cannot remove your necks; and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be an end time" (Micah 2:1-3).

These indictments of the prophets are very suggestive for the present state of affairs in Korea. Korea enjoys unprecedented economic prosperity and political stability, however, most of the benefits go to a minority of the population, mainly elites living in Seoul. A wealthy and powerful minority eat the fruits from monopolizing the land, while the majority of the population feels a sense of relative privation. As the gap between the rich and the poor widens the majority middle class finds itself sliding into impoverishment.

The land belongs to God. It is given by God as the basis of human existence and survival. Therefore land and real estate should not be subject to speculative hoarding and selling. The way to please God is to utilize the land justly, equally, and for the common good. Accordingly God's people should not practice real estate speculation and the monopolization of land.

Suggested study questions:

1. In relation to the biblical understanding of the land, what is the meaning of “inheritance”?
2. What were the accusations of the eighth-century prophets and against whom were they directed?
3. What is problem concerning land even in an economically prosperous and politically stable society like that of Korea?
4. What attitude should God’s people take toward real estate and land speculation?
5. How can God’s people please God in relation to the issue of the land?

Learn More—Part II

“The new dividing line, about 190 miles across the peninsula, sliced across Korea without regard for political boundaries, geographical features, waterways, or paths of commerce. The 38th Parallel cut more than 75 streams and 12 rivers, intersected many high ridges at variant angles, severed 181 small cart roads, 104 country roads, 15 provincial all-weather roads, 8 better-class highways, and 6 north-south rail lines, It was, in fact an arbitrary separation.”

U.S. Army history, chapter one “Korea: Case History of a Pawn”

One cannot fully understand the current situation concerning land in Korea without first taking into account the division of the country into North and South. Prior to the division the northern half of the country was the industrial powerhouse as it was rich in raw materials such as minerals and coal. The southern half of the country, being both warmer and having relatively flat plain areas along the Yellow Sea was the rice basket of Korea. Together the two halves complemented each other and made Korea economically and agriculturally self-sufficient.

When the country was divided the South was cut off from the raw materials necessary for economic development. With a largely agriculturally based economy it lagged behind the North. Following the Korean War what little industry the South had was completely destroyed and the government found it necessary to industrialize from the ground up. In order to maintain the process of economic development and insure a supply of raw materials the decision was made to rely on exports as the mainstay of the economy.

The immediate result of this decision was threefold. First, more and more farmland was taken out of production as cities grew and as industrial complexes were constructed. Second, the majority of the younger generation moved from the rural areas to the cities where there was employment in the factories which promised higher income and more leisure time. Third, in order to increase the production on rapidly shrinking farmland there was a dramatic increase in the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides

which resulted in soil depletion, contamination of water supplies, and an increase in the incidence of cancer among farmers.

“Parents who are farming don’t want their children to do farming. There is no hope. They cannot get any benefits from farming.”

Lee Jung-Jin, a childhood friend of Lee Kyung-Hae, a farmer from Jangsu who committed suicide in protest of the World Trade Organization (WTO) at Cancun, Mexico in 2003

The long-term result of the government’s decision to focus on industrial exports was twofold. First, there was an attempt to protect agriculture by means of tariffs of more than 100 percent on 142 farm products. For example, the price of Korean beef is now the highest in the world and Korean consumers pay about five times the world market price for rice. Second, government policy favored big business, industry, and the continued exports of manufactured goods as the mainstay of the economy. This has paid off economically as Korea’s economy is now the twelfth largest in the world.

“Many Koreans forget that food comes from the farm.”

Kim Chul-Kyoo, professor at Korea University

Today most Koreans live in gigantic apartment complexes and work in offices and factories located in large metropolitan areas. Food comes not from the farm, but from shopping complexes such as Lotte Mart, E-Mart, and Home Plus. The connection between what is on the dinner table and the farm has almost been completely lost. About the only time that many Koreans visit the farm is on *Chusok*, the autumn harvest festival when virtually everyone returns to their farms and villages to renew family ties and pay homage at the tombs of their ancestors. Increasingly many urbanites are finding such visits to be burdensome due to massive traffic jams, rustic conditions in the rural areas, and the pleas of the children to return home so that they can enjoy such fast foods as hamburgers, pizzas, and ice cream which come not from the farm, but from McDonalds, Pizza Hut, and Baskin Robbins.

The globalization of food production coupled with the World Trade Organization (WTO) meant that the Korean government was faced with a hard choice—either join the WTO in order to ensure that the world will buy its exports, or remain outside the global economic order and suffer a dramatic decrease in exports. They chose the former with the result that the agricultural sector has been sacrificed. According to WTO rules, if you export, you must also import, and for Korea the decision was made to import food, so much so that up to 70% of all food products in Korea are now imported. The result for Korean farmers has been devastating.

“We can’t eat semiconductors or auto-parts.”

Richard Shin of Daewoo Logistics

When in 2008 there was a sharp spike in global food prices, Koreans suddenly became aware of the fact that the country was no longer self-sufficient in food production. There simply was not enough farm land being cultivated to feed the population. Government and business leaders decided that a possible solution to this problem was to lease, buy, or otherwise obtain farmland in other countries for the express purpose of growing food for the Korean market. While an attempt to obtain land in Madagascar failed, attempts are being made in other African and Asian countries. The hope is that Korea can “have its cake and eat it too” by maintaining its industrial competitiveness at home while shifting its food production abroad.

“It is really bad for Korean companies like Daewoo to occupy the land of foreign peoples like neocolonialists. Daewoo is bound to earn the same reputation as Monsanto or Cargill from such practices.”

*Han Young-Me, Chief of Policy
Korean Women Peasants Association*

Korea is a small country and the decision has already been made to shift the land use from agriculture to industrial and urban development. As a member of the WTO Korea has already made the decision to import food in order to guarantee that it can continue to export manufactured goods which are the mainstay of the economy. Yet there are groups of farmers, labor activists, and environmentalists who are arguing for a shift in priorities. People such as Han Young-Me argue that it is possible to reach food sufficiency through domestic agriculture. “Buy local” campaigns, protests against continued appropriation of farmland for non-agricultural uses, and a change in government policies can make a difference.

“Land is Life”

Mosaic seen on an embankment at an expressway interchange south of Seoul

1. What is the solution for Korea—and other nations as well—for food sufficiency in the light of the realities of the WTO and the globalization of food production? Will domestic farmland continue to be taken out of production?
2. What do you think about leasing or buying land in Africa to produce food for your own country?
3. Do you know where the food you eat comes from? Have you lost touch with the land in terms of your own eating habits?
4. Why do Korean farmers criticize Monsanto and Cargill? What do you know about these companies and their policies? Do you agree with the Korean criticisms.

Sunday: breaking the fast / responding

IMPORTANT: It's important to break a fast carefully. Eating too much too soon will overload your digestive system, causing uncomfortable and disruptive reactions.

Sunday Waking Prayer:

God of my going out and my coming back, I thank you for the gift of this day. As I contemplate eating later today, remind me of my sisters and brothers who have no choice about what to eat or even whether to eat. Help me reflect on all the choices I make and the impact those choices have on others. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Breakfast-time prayer:

Pre-meal chant used in all Buddhist temples—

Calculating how much effort went into producing this food,
we contemplate where this food comes from.

We reflect on whether our own virtue is worthy of this offering.

Our main task is to guard the mind and leave behind faults
like craving and so forth.

We correctly consider that the salutary medicine of food will
save our bodies from withering away.

We shall receive this food in order to complete the task of enlightenment.

Break the Fast with Holy Communion

A majority of Presbyterian congregations have communion on the first Sunday of each month, but some do not. If your congregation doesn't celebrate the Eucharist on the first weekend of the month, you could break the fast with a breakfast or a lunch before or after worship. Alternately, another time of the month can be chosen to do the fast.

Worship Materials

Fast and food crisis-related worship materials www.pcusa.org/foodcrisis/fastworship
These include a new sermon by Lee Hinson-Hasty on "Give us this day our daily bread."

Bringing it home

The following responses are steps towards solutions. They are ways we can engage in our food system and learn ways of working toward the deeper changes needed. Consider choosing one or two to do during the month as part of your faith practice.

Personal Responses

1. The next time you eat a meal, reflect on where this food came from. What international treaties and agreements were involved in the production of this food (e.g. NAFTA, WTO, etc.)? Who owns the land where the food was grown?
2. What products used in your daily life come from Korea? You may be surprised to discover that many of the inner parts of your computer, for example, were made in Korea. Does this mean that you have played a part (albeit an unintentional part) in the using of farm land in Korea for industrial development?
3. [Donate to the Global Food Crisis Fund/North Korea](http://www.pcusa.org/give/online/projectSelectAction.do?numberString=H333333) to provide hunger relief in North Korea.
www.pcusa.org/give/online/projectSelectAction.do?numberString=H333333



Communal Responses

1. Reflect theologically with others in your family or congregation on our complicity in the use and misuse of land today. What does this tell us about such traditional doctrines as total depravity (all of life is prone to the possibility of sin) and the extravagant grace of God (all of us are in need of divine forgiveness)?
2. How can our church become more responsible in our use of land and in our complicity in the use of land in other countries? For example, it may be easy for North Americans to criticize Daewoo Logistics for seeking to outsource the production of food for Korea to other countries while at the same time we are eating fast food hamburgers using beef produced by U.S. companies in Latin American countries.
3. What concrete steps can you take to put pressure on political leaders and business leaders to be more responsible in the use of land? How can your church participate in movements to bring about sustainable use of farmland in your community, in the United States, and in countries such as Korea?

Glossary

World Trade Organization (WTO) — The successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the WTO deals with the rules of trade between nations at a near-global level; it is responsible for negotiating and implementing new trade agreements, and is in charge of policing member countries' adherence to all the WTO agreements, signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The structure of the WTO allows the interests of the major industrialized countries of the global North to dominate the processes and agreements.