



## AS YOU BEGIN

As your church embarks on the new challenge of becoming part of the **Cents-Ability** program, prayerfully consider these thoughts from the Rev. Pat McGeachy in his book, *Traveling Light*.\*

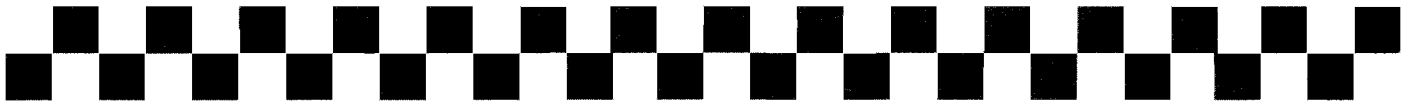
“ *Hunger is the most dreadful word in the English language. Hunger can kill an infant or child, but it also can take a lifetime to kill, leaving in its wake mental retardation, loss of dignity and despair.*

*Both in our country and abroad there are people who if we could place in their hands the money, the tools and the know-how, could get to work to improve their own lives and thus help us with the greatest problem that confronts the human race.*

*It is not a question of pouring money down the drain. It is a question of the haves of this world being good Samaritans to the have-nots. We need to expand our efforts on behalf of justice and human fulfillment.*

*Such an effort might fail, of course, but could the followers of Jesus turn back from it because of that? Did not Jesus himself embark on a cause that led him not to success but to the Cross? He devoted himself to the cause of the poor and needy, the sick and the troubled of the world — and in the end it brought him to his own death. But that did not stop him and it should not stop us. And as Christians we know that after the Cross comes Resurrection. ”*

\*McGeachy, Pat; *Traveling Light*, out of print.



## **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN AND THE PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP AGAINST HUNGER**

"Only 2¢ so everyone can participate regardless of income. Those who have will give more, those who have little to give will have more." These were the words given to Rosellyn Calvert in Titusville, FL, in November 1975. She and her family were praying for direction as they watched the starving people of Bangladesh on the national news on the TV. "We were shocked! We were living on a \$1.00 a day for the three of us for food after a lay-off. The move and double house payments were absorbing our income. What could we do? The Lord said that 2¢ a day, regardless of race, color, or creed for 20 years would help. We could do that!"

The Calverts sent their small checks, along with an explanation of what they were doing in their family, to the Hunger Program office of the Presbyterian Church of the United States (PCUS) in Atlanta. In April of 1976, Mrs. Calvert presented the 2¢ offering plan to the Northeast Florida Spring Presbyterial and the offering was adopted. From that small beginning the 2¢ a Meal idea has spread across the nation. Each year the Presbyterian Women have generously given \$75,000 to \$150,000 to the Presbyterian Hunger Program to support hunger-related projects around the world.

Presbyterian women have had a long history of commitment to being on the front lines in the fight against hunger. In 1973, the PCUS Women's Birthday Offering of \$308,380 funded a hunger action program that created the Hunger Action Enabler (HAE) network. Fourteen lay and clergy leaders were selected and, beginning in 1974, these HAE's assisted congregations in developing hunger programs, linking them with ecumenical agencies and the poor in their own communities. This network has expanded annually and has been a model for other denominations. In 2001, over one hundred HAE's and hunger contacts were serving the church, working in 90 presbyteries and 16 synods.

Rosellyn Calvert's idea was the basis for numerous hunger initiatives in presbyteries throughout the PC(USA) — 2¢ A Meal, 4¢ A Meal, Penny Power, Nickels for Hunger, Pennies for Hunger, etc. As Mrs. Calvert has said, "We will never see world peace until we wipe out hunger. Let's stick with what we started, doing it from the heart, remembering we are doing it because of the love our Christ has given to each of us, and letting this hunger action come from within and go out into all the world."





## HOW TO START A CENTS-ABILITY PROGRAM

- **1.** Share the information in this packet with your church session or mission committee and ask them to approve **Cents-Ability** for your church. If your presbytery has a Two-Cents-A-Meal or similar program, be sure to coordinate your efforts. Consider inviting your presbytery's HAE to address your session.
- **2.** Ask the session of your church to formally covenant to participate in **Cents-Ability**. That is the first vital step in what promises to be an exciting journey for your church. (See Section V for ideas on covenanting.)

YOUR PASTOR'S PLACE IN THE PARTNERSHIP — It is essential for the pastor of your church to be enthusiastic about **Cents-Ability**, to keep in touch with its developing plans, to speak and preach in support of the miracle of multiplication, and in general, to encourage the members and friends of the church to become participants along with himself/herself. The pastor needs to lead the congregation by example.

- **3.** Following the session's formal endorsement, a person(s) should be designated to coordinate the **Cents-Ability** program. Let the presbytery HAE know who the hunger contact person for your church is so that person will receive information about hunger.

It is important for the person(s) appointed to have solid credibility and high visibility with the congregation. The Session, in formally appointing this leader(s), gives the position the importance it needs and deserves. When this person(s) is in place, help should be sought from the pastor in identifying persons to help form a **Cents-Ability** committee or team. These people should possess a sensitivity to the plight of the poor and have energy to invest in the creative process of leading your congregation. DO NOT forget about your youth and young adults!

The number of persons who make up the **Cents-Ability** team depends on the local situation. It is more important to get the "right" people than simply a "lot" of people. Pray over their selection. Then talk with them and explain the **Cents-Ability** program and invite them to participate.

- **4.** When the **Cents-Ability** team is in place, determine how funds raised through your program will be used. If your presbytery has a program, there will be a recommended breakdown for local, presbytery, national, and international projects. Your task will be to determine how local funds are used. If there is no presbytery program, recommend one to your session. Please consider sending at least 50% of the funds raised to the Presbyterian Hunger Program for national and international hunger projects. Funds sent to the PHP should be sent through your normal PC(USA) receiving channels designated for account #H-000107. They can also be mailed to Central Receiving Service, Section 300, Louisville, Kentucky 40289-0300, with the #H-000107 designation.



## HOW TO COLLECT CENTS-ABILITY CONTRIBUTIONS

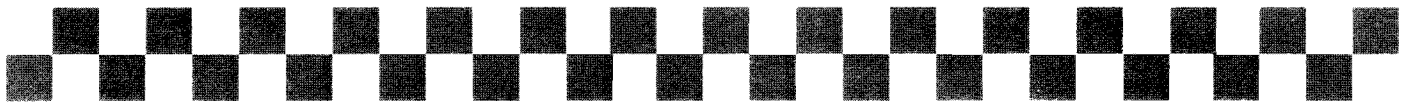
### HOUSEHOLD COLLECTION

1. The emphasis of **Cents-Ability** is daily participation by each member of the household, rather than a once-a-month check or routine contribution by one member alone.
2. The idea is to build a consciousness among participants that all of us are capable of helping, and that all of us are responsible for helping. The hope is that **Cents-Ability** becomes part of our daily walk with God.
3. Ideally family members contribute a pre-determined amount (2¢, 5¢, 10¢) at each meal. They may wish to contribute the combined amount at dinner, or whenever the whole family is together. Distribute the **Cents-Ability** banks (PDS #74360-01-322) for each family's use.
4. Whenever the collection is made, it should be a special time. Families may want to share thoughts or feelings about hunger. They may wish to read Biblical passages. Personal prayers and/or table graces may be prayed by the family together. Some suggested table graces and Biblical passages are included in section II and may be copied and distributed. A **Cents-Ability** prayer table tent (PDS #74360-01-325) is available for distribution.
5. Ideally, **Cents-Ability** contributions will come from "living more simply so that others may simply live." Encourage members to consider ways to make their meals more simple and "earth friendly," such as serving less meat or using organic vegetables.

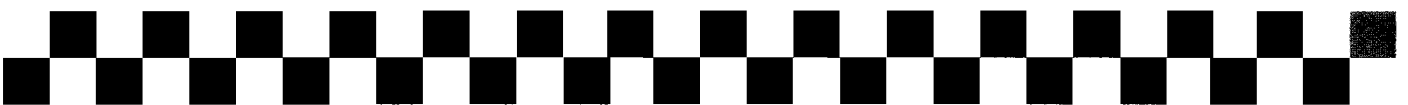
### CONGREGATION COLLECTION

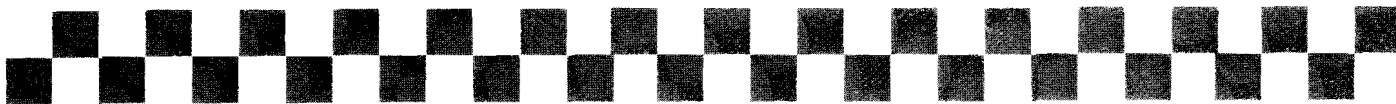
1. Designate one Sunday each month (if possible) as the day for the collection of **Cents-Ability** contributions.
2. Use a short "hunger reminder" in the bulletin the Sunday before and on collection day.
3. Design special receptacles (cardboard boxes, milk jugs, bread baskets, goldfish bowls, barrel, pots, pans, etc.) that can be passed down the pews or placed at the front of the church. Remember that coins make a joyful noise when dropped into metal containers! For a quieter offering, you may want to use the **Cents-Ability** offering envelopes (PDS #74360-01-323).
4. Have a member of each family or each contributing person bring the contribution forward at a designated time. If the children are excused from part of your service, be sure to take the **Cents-Ability** collection before they leave worship.





- **5.** If bread baskets, pans or other containers that can be passed are used, a special song could be sung or played while the money is collected — possibly by the young people or the children of the church. (See section II for ideas.)
- **6.** Offer a special prayer of thanksgiving for our many blessings and for the opportunity to share in Christ's name and for His sake. (Ideas available in section II.)
- **7.** The **Cents-Ability** collection is kept separate from the regular Sunday morning offering. Each congregation and/or presbytery determines the distribution of funds. Example: 25% is designated for local mission and 75% is sent to the Presbyterian Hunger Program for national and international mission.
- **8.** Do it your own way. If the above suggestions do not suit your church, you may decide on a better way to collect the **Cents-Ability** monies. Share with your Hunger Action Enabler and the Presbyterian Hunger Program any good ideas you have and any problems you might run into, so other churches can benefit from your experiences.
- **9.** Some churches have suggested recycling their pennies. This means just using the same ones over again at home and writing a check each month for **Cents-Ability**.
- **10.** Use **Cents-Ability** containers at congregational dinners to remind the ones present of the need to share.





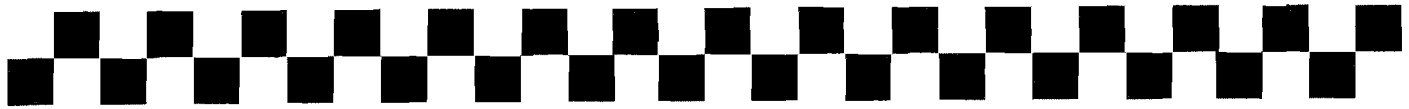
## SUSTAINING AND MAINTAINING CENTS-ABILITY

**AFTER YOU HAVE LAUNCHED THE CENTS-ABILITY PROGRAM IN YOUR CHURCH, THE QUESTION MOST OFTEN ASKED IS:**

**HOW DO WE KEEP INTEREST IN AND SUSTAIN THE PARTNERSHIP OF PRAYER, UNDERSTANDING, AND GIFTS?**

- **1.** Keep your **Cents-Ability** team active and involved in creative brainstorming.
- **2.** Let the regular IN-GATHERING OF GIFTS be a special time. Your **Cents-Ability** team should work closely with your pastor and worship committee.
- **3.** Set a church goal at the beginning of each year and track your progress with a poster or bulletin board. One idea is to draw the outline of a coin and fill it in as money is collected. You could construct a **Cents-Ability** THERMOMETER and show total gifts since you became a part of the **Cents-Ability** ministry or show total gifts for the current year. Put it in the vestibule a few weeks prior to your next in-gathering.
- **4.** Collect the offering at all special church events such as Bible School, Family Night Suppers, Sunday night youth meetings, week night activities or Sunday School Classes.
- **5.** Put **Cents-Ability** banks at all church mealtimes: covered dish suppers, youth pizza nights, even formal parties and receptions. The more often, the better.
- **6.** Have a collection container wherever there is food or drink available in your church. Example — soft drink machines, coffee pots, kitchens, snack machines and areas where people gather for refreshments.
- **7.** Have a variety of groups in the church responsible for collecting the offering. Example — Circles, Men's Group, Youth Group, Scouts, etc.
- **8.** Keep **Cents-Ability** before your congregation and don't forget to introduce new members to **Cents-Ability**.
- **9.** Show the Presbyterian Hunger Program's interpretive video, *'Til The World Is Fed* (PDS #74360-99-323), to the congregation to help tell the story.
- **10.** Have a brief minute during each worship service to emphasize **Cents-Ability**.
- **11.** Mention **Cents-Ability** during the Children's Sermon. Order "A Kid Started It!" from the PHP (PDS #74-360-99-342) for a great children's sermon on giving.
- **12.** Keep your POSTERS up and keep them in visible and eye catching places.





- **13.** Make sure everyone gets a CAN LABEL, BANK or OFFERING ENVELOPE.
- **14.** Promote **Cents-Ability** in your CHURCH NEWSLETTER. Short descriptions of the programs and projects receiving the money are of interest to members. It helps if they can see where their money goes. Contact your Hunger Action Enabler or the PHP for project descriptions.
- **15.** Sing about hunger, use worship aids and service ideas in sections II and III.
- **16.** Use the printed BULLETIN INSERTS.
- **17.** Have the TABLE TENTS with prayers at church suppers.
- **18.** Use **Cents-Ability** stickers on posters, mailers and banks to promote the program.
- **19.** Give a bank and interpretive information to participants in New Members Classes.
- **20.** Share what you are doing with your **Cents-Ability** funds with your Hunger Action Enabler (HAE) and/or the presbytery mission committee.
- **21.** Recruit a group to walk in the Crop Hunger Walk, the Community Hunger Walk or an equivalent.
- **22.** Use the special **Cents-Ability** BANKS (PDS #74-360-01-322) and/or OFFERING ENVELOPES (PDS #74-360-01-323).
- **23.** Encourage church members to VOLUNTEER to work at local food banks or soup kitchens.
- **24.** INVITE your HAE or presbytery mission committee to visit and do a family night or special program for your congregation.
- **25.** Do a presentation on **Cents-Ability** in a Sunday School Class; contact your HAE or the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) for ideas or resources.
- **26.** Invite the director of a local food bank to do a program for your church.
- **27.** Invite a mathematician, math teacher or computer person to come up with interesting statistics. How much could your church give if EVERYONE participated? What about if only half participated? Have fun with it. See the PHP webpage for hunger facts and statistics ([www.pcusa.org/hunger](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger)).
- **28.** Highlight your **Cents-Ability** program with CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION (see section V for examples). This could be part of your Minute for Mission.
- **29.** Make the in-gathering/offering time a special time of PRAYER for the hungry, for local feeding and development programs, and for PHP projects.





- **30.** Send representatives to the Bread for the World (BFW) National Gathering (contact your HAE or the PHP for details).
- **31.** SPECIAL RESEARCH PROJECT — If older children or youth need a project for school or scouts, encourage them to write about hunger or the Presbyterian Hunger Program.
- **32.** Have a Middle and/or High School HUNGER LOCK-IN and give the gifts to **Cents-Ability**. Contact the PHP, your HAE, or the presbytery resource center for a copy of "A Fast That Lasts," a 24- or 30-hour fasting kit produced by the PHP (PDS #74-360-99-326).
- **33.** Announce the amount of your IN-GATHERING/OFFERING in your church bulletin and newsletter.

**SUSTAIN THE PARTNERSHIP OF PRAYER,  
UNDERSTANDING, AND GIFTS.**

