



CANNING HUNGER

Dear Pastor,

I pray this letter finds you well and rejoicing in the ministry that God has called you to.

Thank you for your interest in *"Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections."* I have enclosed your free guide and know that God will use you and your church to make a significant impact in your community.

I have been blessed, since 1993, in sharing this ministry with thousands of Christians who have successfully used its' dual-goal strategy to fight local hunger while meeting their neighbors under the best of conditions.

The results are truly wonderful. I continue to see the hand of God at work as the church sends workers into a ripe and receptive harvest field. I'm confident that you'll see answered prayers as a result of your experience.

I'm here to assist you and share our years of knowledge. Please feel free to contact me before, during, and after your first outreach. I look forward to what God has in store for you.

His servant,

Dr. Norm Whan
Founder of Canning Hunger



A dual-goal strategy to fight local hunger while meeting your neighbors under the best of conditions

Here's Why It Works

It works because it enables you to connect with your neighbors naturally by simply inviting them to help serve hungry kids and their families in their own community. Some people call this comfortable, non-threatening approach "the ultimate ice-breaker."

"Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" is a strategy that gives us the courage to go from our neighbor's sidewalks to their front door. It finally takes us from prayer-walking to neighbors talking."

— Dr. Paul Cedar, Chairman, Mission America

Here's How It Works

Visit approximately 10 of your closest neighbors and invite them to share one or more non-perishable food items from their cupboards to help fight hunger right where they live. What could be easier?

"Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" is, without exception, the easiest, most effective neighbor-to-neighbor relationship building strategy I have ever seen."

— Rev. Bob Baily, Indiana

Here's What We've Learned

After years of experience, and knocking on thousands of doors, here's 3 things you can be sure of:

1. "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" never fails.
2. You can never knock on ten doors without collecting some amount of food.
3. You can never knock on ten doors and not either deepen an existing relationship or start a new relationship with someone you had never met before.

"Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" is a great way to meet your neighbors while doing good at the same time. It's a simple way to make acquaintances and build friendships. It always felt good to the soul."

— Dr. Charles Mylander, Retired Friends Church Pastor

Here's What Happens Immediately

You learn new names of people who live within walking distance of your own front door. You increase the name recognition of your church in your community. You learn of needs that you or your church can serve. You have a very real impact on hunger right where you live.

"I've been doing this for two years. I now know dozens of my neighbor's names and they know me by name. "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" gives you the perfect reason to intentionally converse with your neighbors."

— Candace R., Neighborhood Volunteer California

Here's Where the Food Goes

All of the food stays in the community where it's collected. It's then distributed through your own church pantry, an agency that your church supports, or the agencies in your community that are experts at getting the food to those who need it the most.

"I know every item of food I collect makes a difference to the needy in our community. That makes me feel good, it makes my neighbor feel good, it makes the distribution group feel good, and makes a family near-by feel good. How can you not want to do that?"

— Jan B., Outreach Director North Carolina



Here's How Things Change

Once friendships have formed, and you continue to pray for and talk with your neighbors about their dreams and needs, real relationships build, real trusts begin to grow, and real doors open leading to opportunities to invite them to church, to an event, a small group, or a back yard BBQ.

"Wouldn't it be incredible if your neighbors, over a period of time, began to share with you their needs, dreams, and spiritual desires? That happens with 'Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections.'"

— Bruce Wilkinson, Author, "Prayer of Jabez"

Here's The Good News

As those relationships grow naturally, they lead to opportunities to effectively share the Gospel.

"While prayer and fasting remain the foundation of spiritual revival, we come to a point where we must boldly and lovingly share the Gospel. "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" paves an incredible path for the messenger."

— Dr. Bill Bright (1921 - 2003)
Founder of Campus Crusade for Christ

Here's What Happens Long Term

- Neighborhood Bible studies form or expand.
- Support develops for need in your neighborhood
- Individual prayer life develops and grows.
- Un-churched neighbors learn where to turn to in crisis.
- "Dis-connected" Christians get "Re-connected".



GUIDE TO A GREAT EXPERIENCE



This Guide is the result of over three decades of experience and feedback from thousands of individuals who have successfully moved from praying for their neighbors to talking to their neighbors under the best of conditions.

STEP Introduction

1

Go to www.canninghunger.org click "Programs" "click "Neighborhood Connections".

View the video from Pastor Larry Stratton from Christ Community Church in St. Charles Illinois. It's an example of how one church makes a huge impact in their congregation and community using "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections". (Christ Community Church does this 3 to 4 times a year while this guide is designed for you to do this once a year or more)

Print out your free "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" materials.

STEP Put it to the Test

2

Recruit at least 2 people to conduct a "test route" in their neighborhood. When they've completed their routes, ask them for their feedback. Ask if they would recommend it for the whole church.

Consider increasing the test by adding at least one staff member or any other "influencer" to do a route in their neighborhoods. We've found that the most successful ministries are the ones that are led from the front.

STEP Recruit a Coordinator

3

Most of the time this volunteer comes from the "test group" that had a great experience in their own neighborhood. The Coordinator will be responsible for signing your church up with Canning Hunger, collecting the Route Results, and sending them to Canning Hunger.

STEP Put it on the Calendar

4

Plan a timeline that includes a total of three weekends. Introduce the opportunity on the 1st weekend, repeat the opportunity on the second weekend for those who missed the previous announcement, and have the food brought back to the church on the third weekend... "Collection and Celebration Day."

STEP Preach It

5

When launching, most churches share a sermon that emphasizes serving the poor, taking care of the widows and orphans, fighting local hunger and homelessness, and meeting the needs of the lost, the last, and the left out...serving Christ by "serving the least of these". Matthew 25:40.

Consider having one or more of the test volunteers share from their first-hand experiences. Their testimonies will significantly increase participation.

STEP Recruit the Whole Church

6

Have the "Neighborhood Volunteers" stand in your service and invite the whole church to be part of "*Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections*" by praying for them and the needy in their community.

Invite every household to take a bag at the end of the service, fill it with non-perishable food items from their cupboard, and bring it back on "Collection and Celebration Day."

Have an usher or volunteer hand a bag to every household as they exit. Handing out a "reminder bag" dramatically increases participation and the amount of food that gets returned.

STEP Recruit new "Neighborhood Volunteers"

7

Invite those who want to start a "*Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections*" route to pick up their starter kit from the distribution table at the end of the service.

Have one or more of the "test volunteers" at the table to answer questions and offer encouragement. For convenience, have bags bundled in 10's along with other materials and instructions.

Note

Canning Hunger has over three decades of experience in coaching churches and their members to fight local hunger while intentionally building relationships with their neighbors.

We're a phone call, email, text, or any other form of communication away and available to share our experience and rejoice with you as you join the growing team of churches that are sold out to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q What do we do with the food?

A Here's a few options:

1. If your church has a food pantry, keep the food until you meet all of your distribution needs.
2. If you don't have a food pantry but you have an existing relationship with another food distribution organization, give the food to them.
3. Contact your local food bank or other food distribution groups and develop that relationship. They will be excited to participate. A great resource is www.foodpantries.org

TIP: If possible, have the local agency on site the day of your collection. This way the food gets to the agency immediately and eliminates having to store the food at your church. Have that agency report the results of the pounds of food collected, number of meals provided, value of the goods and services, or any other fun facts. (1.2 pounds = 2 meals and every meal = \$4.05 worth of goods and services). Consider having that agency share in your service on "Collection and Celebration Day."

Q Where do we get the bags?

A Many churches ask their local markets to donate the bags as a way of advertising their participation in the fight against hunger. Others order the bags from a company like Uline, www.uline.com. The (12x7x17) paper bags with flat handles come in bundles of 300. Another option is to use plastic T-shirt bags from Uline or Costco with "Thank You" printed on the bags.

TIP: The paper bags with handles are easier to organize when they are being transported and stored. However, their cost can be a factor in making a decision between "plastic or paper".

Q Is it mandatory that we provide the bags for our members and/or our neighbors?

A No. However, our experience is that you'll receive considerably more food by providing the bags.

TIP: If you use paper bags you can staple the flyers...if you use plastic bags you should tape the flyers.

Q What are the best times of the year to do Canning Hunger routes?

A Here's a few options:

Spring, Summer, or Fall and here's why:

- Spring...several weeks before Easter, so that you can look for opportunities to invite neighbors to your Easter Service.
- Summer...because it is the highest spike in the hunger issue in America...kids are out of school and the food banks experience their largest shortages of the year.
- Fall...because Thanksgiving is the time of year that most people pay attention to the need for a holiday meal.

TIP: Postal Workers normally do an annual food drive called "Stamping out Hunger" on the 2nd Saturday of May. The Boy Scouts of America do their annual food drive called "Scouting for Food" at various times of the year. Check with the Local Scouting Council in your area for their dates. Both of these groups have a long history of doing great works and you should avoid competing with them.

Q How many times a year should we visit our neighbors to collect food?

A Start with once.

Our Canning Hunger Challenge: "Dedicate at least one day, once a year, to help fight hunger in America."

Q Does everyone visit exactly 10 neighbors?

A No! There is nothing magic about the number 10. If you live on a cul-de-sac with 7 homes... your route could be 7 homes. If you live on a street with 12 homes from one corner to the next...your route could be 12 homes. Your route should make sense geographically and be physically comfortable.

Q Can I visit more than 10 neighbors to collect even more food?

A "Canning Hunger thru Neighborhood Connections" is not just a food collection. It is about developing relationships. Experience has taught us that exceeding 10 to 12 neighbors starts to diminish the quality of the relationship building component.

