

# PCUSA fasting monthly to identify with poor: First Friday of every month

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The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is inviting its members to participate in a monthly churchwide fast for “repentance, reflection, and coordinated actions” to empathize with those suffering from hunger and famine around the world.

Over the next year, the denomination will study aspects of the world hunger crisis, including trade policies, climate change and the rising cost of food. It will release its findings along with scriptural studies during each fasting period.

Starting the first Friday of every month and ending the next day, individuals will abstain from food for 40 hours. The fast ends with a communal meal and a time for people to respond to the crisis by donating time and money to the cause.

“We hope that people will understand the food crisis in a much bigger way,” said Ruth Farrell, coordinator of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. She believes that the spiritual discipline of fasting will spark creativity in response to the crisis.

Buying from local farmer’s markets and being aware of how trade agreements affect other countries, she added, are ways that people can help. *-Religion News Service*