

Hello,

My name is Andy Morris. I'm on the board of directors of the World Fellowship of Methodist and Uniting Church Men.

## About the Workshop

This workshop is called, "How to Pick a Fight with World Hunger". I hope everyone is in the correct meeting room because some of the other workshops are about peace, which is important, but this workshop is about fighting...hunger. I want to thank you for joining me today. I consider it an honor that as a body you are allowing WesleyMen to serve in this capacity. We are excited to try and build what we are calling a "grassroots" global movement to end world hunger. Today I want to talk about what I mean by grassroots movement, introduce you to [FastPrayGive.org](http://FastPrayGive.org), why we think it will be effective, how we intend to make it global. I don't expect to talk the entire time allotted for this workshop so at the end I hope to be available to answer questions or receive feedback.

## About Me

First I would like to introduce myself. I'm a layperson in the United Methodist Church. I live in Nashville, Tennessee which is about 1,000 kilometers from here (about 650 miles for you not using the metric system). I am married to the smartest person I know, Roxanne, who is a Pharmacist and we have a three-year-old son Henry whose birthday was yesterday. For over ten years I have worked in the information technology industry where I lead business operations for a division of an outsourcing company. Specifically, my business unit provides enterprise level computer storage and data protection services.

## Call to Mission

Five years ago I discerned a call to mission. God placed before me a set of questions that when I answered them it became clear that I was being called to feed people. I learned quickly that feeding

people who did not have enough to eat filled my soul, but I could not get enough of it. I was called into a ministry of leadership. With the help of a team of laity at my church each year we feed over 3,800 meals to people in our local community through various programs, and with the international aid organization known as Stop Hunger Now we have packaged nearly half a million meals to go to places like Haiti, Nicaragua, and Uganda. I know you didn't come into this room today to hear how I have fed people, but you have come to hear how to pick a fight with world hunger. So here is how WesleyMen suggests we go about it.

## Why Hunger

Hunger is a wound that has not healed since we were tossed from the garden of Eden. We've grown accustomed to it. We live with it. I say that because **we** live while others suffer and die as a result of hunger. It is sickening that it is allowed to exist. I believe it is intolerable. Now you know how I feel. One of the most common phrases attached to it is "tragedy". Maybe I'd feel better about that label if it were a Greek play, but it's not a tragedy. It is a **double tragedy**. What do I mean by that? I mean to say that the first tragedy is that there are people without enough to eat. Those tasked with counting people who are food insecure could drive you deep into slumber with facts and figures. They talk about malnourishment and undernourishment. They roll out statistics called "wasting" and brain development in the first 1,000 days of a child's life. They can help you understand and possibly even drive you so deep into despair. You can be filled with so much information that you might lose hope that even as a whole world we cannot defeat this common enemy. Today the Food and Agriculture Organization say there are about 795 million people who are chronically malnourished. Simply put the first tragedy is- one out of every nine people will go to bed hungry. The first tragedy is more people will die this year because they've not eaten well than those who die of AIDS and Tuberculosis combined. The first tragedy is that 780 of that 795 million people are not here in the United States but are in developing countries and half

of those persons are under 18 years of age. The list of details about the first tragedy goes on and on, but what is the second tragedy, Andy?

The second tragedy is that we know about it. It's a second tragedy regardless if a solution there is clear or apparent. A tragedy is a sad, unfortunate, or upsetting situation and that exists regardless of if there is something that can be done after it has occurred. The second tragedy is: This sad, unfortunate, or upsetting thing might be prevented and it is not. Researchers tell us that God has entrusted us with an earth which has the potential to solve the problem. That is to say that the resources for prevention exist. Economists and statisticians tell us the earth produces over four pound of food per person per day. Working off of some statistics from 2014 we know that if there are 7.125 Billion people on earth and the world produces around 24.5 Billion pounds of food per day and simple math tells us that is about 3.4 pounds of food per person per day. Raise your hand if you are eating more than 3.4 pounds (about 1.5 Kilogram) of food each day? I know we are in Texas and "everything is bigger in Texas" but not even the most voracious of appetites here is eating more than one share of that. The second tragedy is we know about it, have the potential to resolve, and yet the problem still exists.

In all four gospels there is a telling of "Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand." Regardless of what we've learned or now know about the timing of these writings and the likelihood that some of these stories are copied from one another, three of the four gospels each detail Jesus telling his disciples the same exact thing, "You give them something to eat." I don't believe this to be a coincidence. Christ calls all his disciples to feed those who hunger. This is why a global movement to end world hunger does not start with large organizations, it does not begin with churches, it begins with you and it begins with me. This is why we must build a grassroots movement.

## A Grassroots Movement

The term Grassroots means the most basic level of an activity or organization. The “grass roots” of the World Methodist Council is YOU the body. It’s not just you in the front row; although a heartfelt greeting to those of you who sat in the front row. Most everyone who got here early sat in the back rows. But the Body is, of course, is not just the members of the member churches of the World Methodist Council. Really we should zoom out and say that the body is any person who is part of the community of faith based in the Methodist movement, right? We are a powerful group that is driven by the clear statements we are making here at this conference. As we confirm the existence of our oneness we must also address hunger in a single, united manner. How do we do that? How is that grassroots? The term “grassroots” is largely used to describe a base set of supporters for a political or economic movement. I do not think we have to frame the discussion around addressing hunger in terms of politics if we act in a singular manner. While we’re going to steer the conversation away from politics we know that as people in the global “church” today we belong to organizations which very much have polity and economics involved. In THIS grassroots movement to end world hunger I ask that you set that aside. I ask that you consider this. The Methodist Movement has brought you into this organization but does not define it. To end hunger, we must be introduced to the movement to end hunger inside our organizations, but we must break out and participate individually in a single manner. Zoom out to the highest viewpoint and consider yourself not a Methodist, not even a protestant, but a Christian who has heard the gospel and believes that all things are possible through God. In the book of Mark chapter 10 Jesus ensures Peter that we can be saved with God’s help. (Mark 10:27) I don’t know about you, but in a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is a task so simple a two-year-old can do it alone and 10 is a task so hard it requires God’s help, such as salvation, ending world hunger cannot be 11. If salvation is possible so is ending the tragedy of hunger which has to start to seem simpler based in scale of our salvation.

A significant number of Methodists are engaged in fighting hunger, but an insignificant number are working in a collaborative and combined effort.

When I say that I don't mean that we all must only work on the same exact projects. I do not believe that only one method should be used to tackle this highly complex issue which manifests different in each region and culture. I understand that the systemic causes of hunger will not and cannot be addressed in a single program or effort. Nor do I believe that there is an order to who's hunger is more important and should be eliminated first. Here is what I mean by a collaborative and combined effort: We must use means of grace and the results, the progress, the earnings, will be immeasurable on a scale of 1 to 10.

*William Easterly* writes in his book, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*, that the solution to end poverty is to get the resources needed to **Searchers** and no longer in the hands of **Planners**. Planners are the visionaries, celebrities, presidents, chancellors of the exchequer, bureaucracies, and even armies. They have been allocated aid to go out and feed people and end poverty time and time again and we have yet to see a result. They address the first tragedy with compassion, but a 'Big Plans' for sending foreign aid to feed people has traditionally failed. Please don't confused my call to a single program or effort to be a 'big plan' because no one in this room, or at this conference, or at any of our member churches can put together the total package to end hunger. Don't be discouraged by that because as I said before **a significant number of Methodists are already engaged in fighting world hunger**. We have to engage those people that Easterly calls "searchers" and give them the resources they need. Searchers are people on the ground. Searches are our people in the mission field. An example of a searcher is the persons running a school in Uganda refugee camps that are feeding children every day which encourages their families to send them to school instead of into the workforce or to beg. Children get an education and they lift up their communities, they improve economies, they are able to learn about sustainable agriculture or job skills,

a complete childhood education has been proven to slow population growth, and at the same time they hear the Gospel. The Methodists of the world are in the mission field are the searchers. The “big plan” here is to not have a plan, but to set everyone in motion in a manner consistent with capabilities each and every one of us have. I believe that if we offer intercessory prayers to God that His will shall be done. If we fast while we are spending time in prayer for those who are hungry, we are multiplying our efforts. If we give in a manner that our hearts, minds, and spirit agree is equivalent in manner to which we are called by Jesus to love our neighbor the resources will be shepherded to those empowered to help the needy. That is the grassroots program!

## Introducing [FastPrayGive.org](http://FastPrayGive.org)

FastPrayGive.org is an invitation for those who are called to declare hunger intolerable. We will plan to not be planners but will give to those who are searchers. We ask that you Fast one meal per week, Pray during that meal time for world hunger, and give what you would have spent on that meal towards the World Wesleyan Hunger fund.

Fasting is important. It is sacrifice. I believe it creates an opportunity for us to connect with God in a different way. I believe that when combined with prayer it is transformative. Getting started is the hardest part because you don't have to do something, you have to NOT do something. Author JD Walt says, “Fasting is all about focusing on fellowship with God. In any relationship, the most valuable gift we have to offer is our attention. Because God is invisible, focusing our attention can be a tricky thing. Fasting creates a very tangible act of offering our sustained attention.” Fasting can really refer to anything that involves giving something up. I think that giving up a meal makes the most sense if you are trying to feed people who don't have food. I can't expect my plan to work for everyone, but what I do know is that we have to give up something and we have to focus our attention on how God wants us to make significant progress in ending the suffering of others. I like JD's example, “When I'm with another person and I make the tangible act of choosing not to use my cell phone, it is a focused offering of my

attention to them by refusing to be distracted by my phone. In like fashion, I can make the tangible act of choosing not to eat food as a focused offering of my attention to God by refusing to be distracted by my physical appetites.” Let the FastPrayGive program be your first tangible act to end hunger.

That brings me to the topic that is most asked about as part of FastPrayGive.org...the giving. Disclaimer: I speak from an American perspective. Please forgive me if in any of what is to come about giving sounds ignorant. I am very interested in learning more about how giving might be best approaching in other countries, cultures, and traditions. In the first world, I believe we give of ourselves in ways that don't drain us of our fiscal resources, don't drain of our time, or our physical abilities. However, to hear us tell the story of how we give we are just empty. We often, in the first world, decide that we've given enough and decline to give more by saying, "I'm sorry but I can't help today." Isn't that polite. There is the more impersonal, "I gave at the office." Of course the little lie that, "I've given all I can." When in reality the truth may be different. We can put all of that aside. When it comes to fasting we're making the resources. We can skip a meal and devote that time to prayer. You can't be too busy to not pray if you're not eating. I know, my wife and I eat at a record pace. Sometimes I eat food over my sink so I don't have to waste time washing dishes. Isn't that efficient? If it takes me two minutes (which would be a personal record for me) to swallow un-chewed what might generously have be referred to as a meal, then I have two minutes to pray if I fast that mealtime. If my pie chart of time is fully allocated I've just made some time available by fasting.

When I talk to young people in Tennessee about giving to hunger it's pretty easy to drive home how easy it is to reallocate resources via FastPrayGive.org by using the McDonald's Big Mac sandwich. The average price of the sandwich is available widely on the internet and the International Monetary fund along with *The Economist* and Thomson Reuters has indexed the price. Go ahead and google search "The Big Mac index". Can you believe that this burger is so widely sold that a Purchase Price Parity has been developed to compare to what extent market exchange rates effect goods costing the same or

more in different countries? We're considering a piece of meat between two pieces of bread to be a measurable commodity. How can we not measure our ability to give against that? The current average going rate for two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, tomatoes, pickles, onion – on a sesame seed bun is Three Dollars and ninety-nine cents (\$3.99 USD). The World Bank on its website says that the developing world lives largely on less than \$1.90 USD per day. It does strike youth as unjust that they can spend on a portion of one meal what someone earns in two days. So when someone says their income is fully allocated and there is no room in their pie chart to feed hungry people I tell them they can make some funds available by fasting.

Please don't give me credit for any of this. I didn't make this idea up! Take the journal of John Wesley from July 6, 1746:

***Sunday, July 6:** Talking largely with both the men and women leaders. we agreed it would prevent great expense, as well of health as of time and of money if the poorer people of our society could be persuaded leave off drinking of tea. We resolved ourselves to begin and set the example. I expected some difficulty in breaking off a custom of six and twenty years standing. And accordingly, the three first days my head ached more or less all day long, and I was half asleep from morning till night. The third day on Wednesday, in the afternoon, my memory failed almost entirely. In the evening I sought my remedy in prayer. On Thursday morning my headache was gone. My memory was as strong as ever. And I have found no inconvenience, but a sensible benefit in several respects, from that very day to this.*

***Thursday, July 17:** I finished the little collection which I had made among my friends for a lending stock it did not amount to pounds: which a few persons afterward made up fifty. And by this inconsiderable sum. above 250 persons were relieved in one year.*

Now in this example Wesley is leading his team to set an example and give us something to create resources for the people who need help. I'm not sharing this part of Wesley's journal because I think we need to show hungry people how to fast. That would be counterproductive, right? Wesley gives us a preview of the rewarding nature of making a sacrifice for the benefit of others. Now that I've checked

the box on the check list that says, “mention John Wesley in relation to your topic” I can introduce our Global Movement to End World Hunger, FastPrayGive.org. So the only part of FastPrayGive.org that I really have to explain is ALL of it. As you can see it is website. It is where this journey starts. Today you can go and signup and choose to donate \$8 per month or multiples thereof. That money goes into the World Wesleyan Hunger Fund. The suggested donation, eight dollars, represents what is a fair representation of the cost to feed a single person one meal per day. It all derives from one quarter of a US dollar. \$91.25 USD per year will feed one other person. Split into 12 months that comes out to just under \$8 per month. Once you sign up we’ll deliver a weekly prayer example that you can pray during the meal time in which you choose to fast. The money you donate goes to feed people, but if at all possible will do so in a manner in which more people are engaged to Fast, Pray, and Give to build the movement to end world hunger. You may want to ask, “how, Andy?”

Initially we hope to drive adoption of the practice with member churches of the World Methodist Council by engaging local church congregations with hunger partners who bring volunteers together to act in the fight against hunger. For example, package healthy, nutritious meals which are delivered to persons who are **searchers**, like the Ugandan schools I mentioned earlier, who are looking for resources to feed those who don’t have enough to eat. Those captive volunteers will be invited to Fast, Pray, and Give. We believe the that highest rate of people joining the program will be after experiencing the work of actually assembling food that will go to those in need. As we grow the number of people who participate we will reach a capacity at which we have enough money in the World Wesleyan Hunger Fund that we will open regular grants to be made to Methodist organizations seeking to feed those in need, educate and grow FastPrayGive.org or in the best case scenario do all of these things. As I mentioned before, each week we will send an email sharing an example prayer to say during your time of fasting and also regular updates on how the funds you’ve donated have been spent.

## Why we think this will work

I spent a number of years selling things as I was working through school. I made a pretty good living once I learned some simple rules in how to engage and capture the imagination of a potential customer. The most important lesson I learned was the transference of ownership. You have to put the product in the customers' hands and let them feel what it is like to own it. The psychological term of ownership is much different than the type of physical ownership we are commonly involved in. It's an idea or a feeling that once recognized it changes our brain chemistry and increases our ability to want that feeling to continue or increase. When you assemble food packages that are intended to feed someone else you take ownership in the sustaining of that person who you are helping. You begin to redefine yourself as someone who feeds and saves lives. The stewardship of the program to gather resources and reallocate them to those in need becomes a level of commitment. Everyone who is active and is in service against the double tragedy of hunger has officially picked a fight.

By the numbers this can't be bad. If there are about 80 million people who are members of churches of the World Methodist Council. If we were to say that twenty percent of those people are able to hear the call of those who hunger and do something about in a meaningful way, there would be 16 million Wesleyans in action. If twenty-five percent of those 16 million were able to participate in FastPrayGive then we would have 4 million people Fasting, Praying, and Giving. If it works out to a quarter a day that means one million dollars a day could be made available to pick a fight with world hunger.

If you have any doubt that this could work look at Imagine No Malaria campaign and see that they have cut Malaria deaths in half in 2015. Over 1.2 million people benefitted from their programs. <need more detail on this or need to cut it> <potentially add info about stop hunger now's success>

## How WesleyMen wants to grow this globally

I want everyone who has a device to go to [FastPrayGive.org](http://FastPrayGive.org) and check it out. This is an English only website and has been produced at no cost to the WesleyMen organization. The site is functional but is

not perfect. Even though we launched this idea in a preliminary manner in 2015 this is the very first version of what will hopefully be many subsequent upgraded versions. Today we can accept currencies from all over the world via a credit card but if your normal currency is not USD when you donate in that manner there will be an exchange rate conversion as it is converted to US dollars. I hope this isn't confusing as I bring this up to be transparent. This potentially raises concerns on how we then distribute the funds back to other regions of the world without paying currency exchange fees a second time. These types of challenges are ones we can overcome with some careful planning as we launch this outside the United States. This is why for the rest of 2016 we'll focus on growing domestically and internationally by funding education about FastPrayGive.org via matching grants with our partner Stop Hunger Now via food packaging events. In this scenario the World Wesleyan Hunger Fund will contribute by buying the meals that will be sent to Stop Hunger Now partners all over the world. If you are not from the United States and want to participate we do not want to discourage you, but there is a vision of how this grows which sees FastPrayGive.org contribute to hunger initiatives all over the world in different countries from within those countries and regions and across all countries and regions. As we grow we will build infrastructure in each region in the native languages which will be represented and maintained in those regions by local leadership. These leaders will play a critical role in controlling the disbursement of the World Wesleyan Hunger Fund.

We need involvement from teams all over. The WesleyMen organization, as it exists today, can't be the sole labor force to grow this program and decide how to best disperse funds. Our global body will need to provide representation to help discern how to issue grants to fulfill the needs of the hungry and to build the movement. We need to build a partnership with leaders in every member church to build a team who can work to discern the best path forward.

From here we encourage you to take this back to your church at whatever level you feel called. We hope that of the thousands of people at this conference a large number of you are called to sign-up today.

Your commitment to Fast, Pray, and Give will demonstrate to others what the leaders of our global Methodist movement can do. We encourage you to signup, decide on one meal each week to fast, and find the routine necessary to be in regular dialogue with God about how you can make a difference in the life of those who don't have enough to eat. Take this to your small groups or Sunday School classes and build accountability groups to grow into this mission. Through the rest of 2016 we hope to grow the number of subscribers by working with our partner organization Stop Hunger Now to introduce FastPrayGive.org after meal packaging events with member churches. Most will be in the United States or in countries with close proximity to Stop Hunger Now locations. (They are on six continents) If you want to package meals with Stop Hunger Now and introduce FastPrayGive.org to your flock, please take my business card and Steve Hickle from Stop Hunger Now and I will work with you. In 2017, we hope to have grown to a point where our leadership team can build a technical deployment plan and a marketing plan to deploy infrastructure into regions as leadership is identified and ground rules for operations is established. As we begin to understand how each region or country can participate we will continue to communicate that through our WesleyMen communications and through the World Methodist Council communications. Our growth and ability to demonstrate the success of this program will strengthen our ability to request and receive development funds to make progress without ever spending program funds (the \$8/month) to manage administrative tasks.

## The Vision is cast

Clearly we have a plan, to not be planners, but to be active in helping gather resources for the searchers who are making a significant impact in the lives of others. Our vision is cast far and long. I believe we have a vision of a project team focused on every country and region to encourage everyone to fast and pray for those in need. We hope to engage in new ways for people to donate funds from different payment portals and gateways, that includes both standardized currencies an including emerging currencies like cryptocurrencies and mobile minutes. We want to reach new ways to communicate our

goals via emerging and disruptive technologies via the internet, mobile devices, and produce real time data sharing how many people are in action. We hope to build informatics that allow us to dashboard where people participate and how so that one neighborhood might be able to challenge another to join the fight against hunger.

In each of the gospels there is the description of Jesus and his disciples feeding a massive crowd. At the beginning of my time with you I told you that in three of the four gospels Jesus gave a specific commandment to the disciples, "you give them something to eat." The fourth telling of the event in the book of John includes instead the appearance of a boy with five loaves and two fishes. It was not a rich man, but a boy. Jesus gave thanks and distributed the food and there was enough. If a boy can bring the resources needed to feed thousands with God's help so can every one of us. The vision is cast. May God multiply our gifts to feed millions. As Jesus said, "You give them something to eat. "