



## World Council of Churches Ten Principles for Food

February 2026

*Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

Luke 22:19

The Justice and International Mission Cluster continues to invite you to join campaigns for social justice in our food systems, to help address climate change, to eliminate the exploitation of people working in food production, to live sustainably, and to promote human health.

The World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, has been running a Food for Life Campaign, which can be accessed here <https://www.oikoumene.org/programme-activity/food-for-life>. It released an advocacy resource for congregations outlining 10 principles for how we should relate to food. The resource can be downloaded by searching for the title "Ten Commandments of Food".

The ten principles are:

1. Give thanks for the food you eat.
2. Eat food grown as close as possible to where you live.
3. Strive for all people to have knowledge about and access to affordable, nutritious food.
4. Eat mindfully and in moderation.
5. Do not waste food.
6. Be grateful to those who grow and prepare food for your table.
7. Support fair wages for farmworkers, farmers and food workers.
8. Reduce the environmental damage of land, water and air from food production and the food system.
9. Protect the biodiversity of seeds, soils, ecosystems and the cultures of food producers.
10. Rejoice and share the sacred gift of food with all.

The following are small parts of the text for each of the principles:

### **1. Give thanks for the food you eat**

We recognise God as the source of everything we have, and praying before meals helps remind us of that truth. Praying before eating with a thankful heart brings glory to God and focuses our minds on the great love that God bestows on us and on all creation. Our eating should also remind us of God's goodness and make us deeply thankful for it. "Taste and see that God is good." (Psalm 34:8).

### **2. Eat food grown as close as possible to where you live.**

There are economic, environmental, health and social benefits in consuming locally grown food. Food that is grown closer to home is fresher and loses fewer nutrients during transportation. Purchasing food locally supports local farmers. Locally grown food has fewer transportation emissions. As the distance food travels decreases, the need for processing and refrigeration to reduce spoilage decreases. Dependence on locally grown food is crucial for both tackling climate change and rebuilding a resilient local food network. If we neglect locally sourced products, our markets become saturated with highly processed foods and sweetened beverages.



### **3. Strive for all people to have knowledge about and access to affordable, nutritious food.**

"Just access" to food was given a very high priority by the followers of Jesus in the first century. The disciples appointed seven deacons with impeccable credentials to oversee food distribution



after questions were raised about the fairness of the distribution, and allegations arose of discrimination experienced by one group of widows in receiving food rations. In a world that has enough to feed each living person, it is estimated that between 638 and 720 million people, corresponding to 7.8 and 8.8% of the global population, respectively, faced hunger in 2024.<sup>1</sup> As followers of Christ today, we have the responsibility to strive to ensure that all children of God have access to affordable, adequate, nutritious food.

#### **4. Eat mindfully and in moderation**

“Remove far from me falsehood and lying: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that I need...” Proverbs 30:8. The Bible teaches us to moderate our desires for worldly things and to focus on following God.

#### **5. Do not waste food**

Food in Christianity is not just a commodity or a product. It is both physical and spiritual. It is a sacred gift from God. Its abundance is clearly linked to how we deal with food—a gift to be relished, shared, and not wasted.

#### **6. Be grateful to those who grow and prepare food for your table**

Women not only prepare most of the food but are also responsible for 40-60% of global agricultural production. Women and girls worldwide face many inequities and constraints, often embedded in norms, practices and legal provisions. Some laws, such as those governing access to land, institutionalise discrimination.

#### **7. Support fair wages for farmworkers, farmers and food workers**

“Listen! The wages of labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.” James 5:4.

#### **8. Reduce the environmental damage of land, water and air from food production and the food system**

Land and water resources, and how they are used, are central to the challenge of improving food security worldwide and ensuring environmental sustainability.

#### **9. Protect the biodiversity of seeds, soils, ecosystems and the cultures of food producers**

“Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And so it was.” Genesis 1:11. The narratives of creation in the book of Genesis manifest as a wondrous, divinely planned, ordered and solemn process. While we celebrate the beauty and diversity of creation, the whole creation praises God (Psalm 65). We also see the glory of God manifested in the entire creation (Psalm 104).

#### **10. Rejoice and share the sacred gift of food with all**

“...As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him.” Luke 24:28-31a. The word “companion” is derived from Latin “com-panis,” which literally means “with bread” or “sharing bread.” Companionship is a holistic relationship, sharing each other’s lives, resources, joys and pain—a dynamic relationship with an active desire to alleviate the other’s suffering.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-food-security-and-nutrition-world-sofi-report>