

It's Souper Easy to Tackle Hunger

A Youth Ministry Guide to Souper Bowl of Caring

Background to the Souper Bowl of Caring

In 1990, a simple prayer, "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat," was delivered to a small youth group at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina. This idea was born. Why not harness the energy and enthusiasm of Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football, food, and fun, to unite communities around the country to do something huge? Individuals and groups collect money, canned foods, and non-perishable items for those in need by donating directly to local charities in their communities.

Since 1990, Tackle Hunger, with its signature Souper Bowl of Caring event, has become a national, grassroots, youth-inspired movement where over \$170 million dollars and food has been generated while benefiting thousands of soup kitchens, food banks, meal programs, and other hunger-relief charities in local communities.

Tackle Hunger

Hunger-related issues and food insecurities happen 365 days of the year – not just on Super Bowl Sunday – which is why the Souper Bowl of Caring is now known as Tackle Hunger. The Souper Bowl of Caring is under the Tackle Hunger umbrella – its signature event.

Purpose

The purpose of Tackle Hunger and its Souper Bowl of Caring event is to inspire people across the nation to “tackle hunger” in their local communities with the goal of eliminating food insecurities and hunger-related issues completely. Tackle Hunger’s endeavor is to create awareness and action so all food charities have critical resources to feed those in need at all times.

Why engage youth and churches in this project?

To put it as simply as possible, we are called as Christians and as human beings to help those in need. Tackle Hunger and their Souper Bowl of Caring event is an easy way for students, churches, and communities to help those in need, specifically with food insecurities.

Churches and youth groups in particular are positioned to be a force when it comes to striving to eliminate hunger issues in our local communities. Generally, we have monetary resources, lots of people to help, and a desire to do good in the world. Also, personally as a youth director who is always looking for tangible ways to connect students to the bigger church, the bigger story, if you will, this is a perfect event with a lot of flexibility to do that.

Where to begin for single church first timers...

- 1. Select your food charity.**
 - Choose an organization in your community or that your church already partners with that is tackling food-related issues in your community.
- 2. Choose your path.**
 - How do you want to run your campaign?
 - Will you run an in-person food drive? Collect cash donations? Both?
 - It doesn't matter which direction you go!
- 3. Register your fundraiser campaign.**
 - Let Tackle Hunger know who you are by visiting: <https://tacklehunger.org/register-participant>
 - Call 1-800-358-SOUP (7687) or email at info@tacklehunger.org with any questions.
- 4. Utilize Tackle Hunger's resources.**
 - <https://tacklehunger.org/resources/promotional-materials-and-inspiration>
 - There is no reason to reinvent the wheel. Want posters? They've made them! Social media templates? They have those, too. You want coloring pages? Just click print!

You've done the Souper Bowl of Caring event, but want to change it up...

- **Make it more visual.**
 - If you haven't put up posters, put them up!
 - If you haven't shared on your social media, share it!
 - Find out from your local charity how many cans or much money it takes to feed a family for a week/month and as you hit those goals acknowledge that. It shows your group that actual people will be helped by your donations.
- **Make it more personal.**
 - Talk with your charity/charities and ask them for stories that you're allowed to share.
 - If there are members of church who have been through a tough time and are willing to share, ask them.
- **Educate your youth and church.**
 - Talk with your local charities and research the specific needs of your community.
 - Create a presentation about what Tackle Hunger and the Souper Bowl of Caring are and include those specific statistics and needs.
- **Engage with your charity more.**
 - Invite them to come and talk with your youth and your church.
 - Have them come on the day you are collecting or finishing collecting.
- **Engage your neighborhood with a "Door to Door Campaign."**
 - Distribute fliers (found in the Tackle Hunger resources) to homes around your church notifying them of a collection date and providing them with a paper bag to fill.
 - Go around and collect the canned goods and distribute them to your charity.
- **Host a virtual campaign.**
 - Utilize ways for people to donate online.
- **Partner with a school near you.**
 - Is your church connected to a school nearby? Ask them to take part in this challenge with you.
 - If you're not connected with a school in your community, this might be a great opportunity to reach out!

- **Challenge another church.**
 - Talk to the church down the road and have them compete to see who can collect the most items, most money, or both!
 - Find ways to connect throughout the process through social media, videos, youth group hangouts, etc.
- **Pit church groups “against” each other in the name of competition.**
 - Identify different groups within your church (i.e., Sunday school classes, life groups, youth groups, Children’s Ministry, choir, bell choir, etc.).
 - Have a contest to see which group within your church can collect the most items/monetary donations. The winning group could have a catered meal during one of their gatherings.
- **Host a Hunger Banquet.**
 - Through the resources of Tackle Hunger and their leadership, your church could host an event for your church (or multiple churches) where you can physically see and experience the disparities between socioeconomic classes within our society through a dinner and discussion.
- **Give to more than one organization.**
 - Utilize the Tackle Hunger map and find more organizations that are helping with food relief efforts in your communities: <https://map.tacklehunger.org>
- **Partner with the National Football League’s Alumni Association in your region.**
 - Tackle Hunger is in partnership with the NFL Alumni Association, and they are willing to help promote your events and raise awareness in your communities to ultimately help you collect more items.
- **Partner with local businesses in your community.**
 - When we come together, we can do more. Talk to local businesses and see if they’ll contribute to your efforts, join you in the collection drives, etc. Consider starting by asking businesses owned by church members.
- **Do a service/mission project as a church or youth group.**
 - What better way to get ready for a food drive than to volunteer with an organization that helps with food insecurities in your community?
 - Volunteer for a day, a morning, an afternoon, a weekend, a week, whatever time you have – volunteer!

Most importantly, report back to Tackle Hunger!

After you finish your campaign, feel free to donate your collection directly to the charity of your choice. Then, Tackle Hunger wants to celebrate with you! No number is too small or too big!

Login or create an account at <https://tacklehunger.org/forms/login> and tell them how many cans, pounds of food, or dollars that were donated. Your virtual donations will automatically appear, but you can add any in-person collection totals as well. You can even call Tackle Hunger at 1-800-358-SOUP (7687) or send an email to reports@tacklehunger.org.

Have pictures or stories? Tackle Hunger would love to share them on their social media pages! Tag them in your posts @souperbowl

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