

Bread for the World's 2019 Offering of Letters to Congress

# Better Nutrition, Better Tomorrow

## A Pan-African Devotional Reflection

By Rev. Jennifer C. Bailey

*“The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, ‘If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’ Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way, I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.’”*

(Exodus 16: 2-4)

God calls us to feed the hungry. Hunger is seen in the weary faces of seniors and mothers waiting on a bus to take the three-hour journey from their home to the closest grocery store and back. Hunger is found in the eyes of the working mother staring down at the \$5 in her wallet and forced to decide between purchasing a \$4 head of lettuce from the corner store or a full meal from a local fast-food restaurant to feed her children. These narratives are all too common within food desert communities—areas that lack access to full-service grocery

stores yet experience a surplus of convenience stores, liquor stores, and fast-food restaurants. They are often located among high populations of people of color with limited modes of transportation.

When people are hungry and malnourished, they cannot live into the fullness of who they are called to be. For the residents of food desert communities, the manna has yet to come. There is enough food to feed everyone, but over 1 billion people starve. We are the ones called to provide manna for those living in these deserts. We are the living Bread of Life through Christ.

### PRAYER:

God of plenty, give us moral courage to ensure all are fed. Help us to provide the manna needed in these food deserts of suffering.

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*Rev. Jennifer C. Bailey is the founding executive director of Faith Matters Network in Nashville, Tennessee, a new interfaith community equipping faith leaders to challenge structural inequality in their communities. This reflection was taken from “In Times Like These ... A Pan-African Christian Devotional for Public Policy Engagement.”*



**breadfortheworld**  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.