

MAKE ROOM AT THE TABLE

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# Pray | Learn | Give

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A group activity for World Refugee Day



Canadian Lutheran  
World Relief

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Everyone has to eat. Meals are a time of connection, fellowship and often lively conversation. Many families and friends try to plan meals together. Churches, businesses and schools hold special banquets and gatherings around food. As Canadians, we are blessed with enough to eat that we can share our blessings with others.

*Make Room at the Table* is a way for you to make a place at your table and connect with refugees—to invite them as guests and to share a meal with them. It is an opportunity to welcome the stranger into your home.

Through the experience you will learn more about refugees, pray for those who have been displaced, and give from your blessings to help provide shelter, food, water and other crucial support to refugees supported by Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

### WHO IS THIS FOR?

- Families and individuals
- Congregations
- Church groups
- Businesses
- Schools and universities

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

- Participants are asked to set an extra plate at the table for one of the refugee “guests” included in this resource. The empty plate serves as a reminder of the needs of refugees.
  - Before the meal, those gathered read the guest’s story. You could also include one of the biblical stories related to refugees and meals.
  - Following the story, participants say a prayer for blessing and comfort for the refugee and to give thanks for the food.
  - Those gathered for the meal could be encouraged to donate \$15—the cost of an average restaurant meal—to support CLWR’s work with refugees.
- Visit [www.clwr.org/donate/refugee-sponsorship](http://www.clwr.org/donate/refugee-sponsorship) to make your gift.

Photo Credit (front cover): LWF/S.Cox




Photo Credit: Canadian Foodgrains Bank/A.Thorsteinsson

## **BIBLICAL STORIES**

Key biblical tie-ins include the parable of the great banquet (Luke 14:15-24) and wedding feasts (Matthew 22:1-14), and other verses comparing the kingdom of God to a banquet to which all are invited.

## **WHEN DOES IT HAPPEN?**

The key focus for *Make Room at the Table* is World Refugee Day on June 20. The month of June could be a general target.

However, you can always make room at any time during the year, or for any event or occasion. Family meals at festive

occasions like Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthdays, weddings and anniversaries could take on new significance, or *Make Room at the Table* could be a monthly tradition or annual remembrance for World Refugee Day.

Churches could set one or more extra places at the table at church suppers, following a World Refugee Day service or at other special occasions. Schools and businesses could participate when they hold special meal-oriented events.

## **OPTIONAL**

You can add another dimension to *Make Room at the Table* by having a “ration meal.” Preparing and eating a simple meal reminds us that many refugees rely on rations or food vouchers to have enough to eat. You can find two “ration meal” recipes in this package.

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Are you making room at the table? Take a photo and join the conversation on social media using the hashtag

**#canlwr**

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MAKE ROOM AT THE TABLE FOR

# Malang & Ajok

It took 12 days for Malang to travel from her home in Jonglei state, South Sudan to Adjumani, Uganda. When she arrived in early 2017, she reconnected with family members who had previously sought refuge in Uganda. Now, she lives with her 12 grandchildren on the 30 x 30 metre plot that the Ugandan government provides for refugees.

Three *tukuls*—round houses—stand on the family’s homestead, two of which were built with support from Canadians like you and the Government of Canada in partnership with The Lutheran World Federation Uganda. The tukuls are deeply appreciated by the family. When some of the children first arrived in 2014, they spent a week and a half sleeping outside under the trees.

“Life was terrible—it was not good, because when we were under the trees, there was

nowhere to stay in when it rains,” says 12-year-old Ajok. “Now we have shelter; our lives have changed. Now we don’t get rained on and life is normal.”

Shelter is a primary concern for many South Sudanese refugees in Uganda, particularly for those who are unable to construct their own homes for a variety of reasons. Your support has been providing housing for people with specific needs, such as child- or elder-headed households, since 2015.

“If we were not given these things, we would have no other option,” says Malang. “Thank you [Canadians] because you have given us shelters, mattresses—you have done your part for the children.”

*Malang and Ajok were interviewed by CLWR/Ellen Paulley*



Photo: Malang (right) sits with two of her twelve grandchildren, Garang (left) and Ajok, in front of one of two shelters CLWR built on their homestead. CLWR/E.Paulley

## MAKE ROOM AT THE TABLE FOR

# Shinga & Esperance

The first time Shinga and Esperance and their five children experienced running water, electricity and indoor plumbing was when they arrived in Waterloo, Ontario, in August 2016. Their new home, arranged for by their sponsorship group, the Ecumenical Welcoming Partnership, had all these things and more. It was a striking contrast to the home the family left behind in a refugee camp in Burundi, where they'd lived for the past 12 years. The family had fled conflict in their home country of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Having adequate housing was only one of the challenges the family faced in the refugee camp. Others included obtaining sufficient food and accessing health care if a family member became ill.

"The life in the camp is really bad," says Shinga. "You're given a monthly portion of food that is not enough and is sometimes finished after the first week. There are a lot of sicknesses and diseases and not many hospitals."

Though adjusting to life in Canada has brought its own set of challenges, now that they're here, the family members have fewer worries than when they lived in the refugee camp.

"The place where we came from was the hardest place to be—we were living a life full of worries," says Esperance. "But now we are happy, we are really relaxed and living peacefully here."

The family is extremely grateful for the assistance and support the Ecumenical Welcoming Partnership has provided in the areas of housing, food, medical appointments, schooling and more as they've settled into life in Canada.

"We thank the sponsors who have always been here for us whenever we need them," says Esperance. "We're very thankful."

*Shinga and Esperance were interviewed by CLWR/Ellen Paulley*

Photo: CLWR/E.Paulley



## MAKE ROOM AT THE TABLE FOR

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# Salam

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“I wish to become a teacher,” Salam says. The six-year-old girl has just started school and is one of the many children visiting the Peace Oasis in Za’atari refugee camp, Jordan. The Peace Oasis, a psychosocial centre run by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), offers peacebuilding activities and workshops to children and youth in the camp.

Salam’s father was arrested by the Syrian regime more than three years ago. The family has not heard from him since. Salam’s brother was killed at the age of 20 in military clashes between the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian regime in Dar’aa. Salam’s life in the camp consists of attending school and playing with the other children after school hours. Although she smiles most of the time, Salam says she misses her home in Syria and most of all, her father.

The LWF Peace Oasis provides psychosocial support to youth and children like Salam. It is a safe and child friendly space, where children and youth participate in activities such as drama, visual arts, games, group discussions and workshops on conflict mitigation skills. They learn communication skills, solve problems and build their self-esteem. There are clubs and activities such as art, music, karate, football and computer courses.

*Salam was interviewed by Dawid Odén, LWF Jordan. Edited by LWF Communications.*



Photo: Salam (left, in red T-shirt) with her grandmother and younger sister in their shelter in Za’atari camp. LWF Jordan/D.Odén

## MAKE ROOM AT THE TABLE FOR

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# Sarah

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Before they learned how to make soap, the 30 young adult members of the Kuny-derot group didn't have many options for earning an income. After three days of soap-making training they received a business start-up kit, and now the South Sudanese refugees have a reliable source of income.

In refugee settlements in northern Uganda, your support and funding from the Government of Canada make it possible for Canadian Lutheran World Relief to work with partner organization The Lutheran World Federation Uganda (LWF Uganda) to provide youth with employment training and support to begin small businesses and earn an income.

"We work the business so we can become self-employed," says Sarah, Kuny-derot's secretary. "It can help us in the case of sickness or school fees."

In December 2016, LWF Uganda hosted soap-making training for the group, whose name means "self-employment." The provision of a start-up kit, consisting of jerry cans and the chemicals needed to make soap, helped the group launch their business.

Choosing soap-making was strategic. As a product that is used daily, the group knew they would have a ready market. Kuny-derot sells a 20-litre jerry can of soap for 35,000 shillings, or about \$12. Though the group is young, they are hopeful about the future and would like to open a retail shop and have each group member begin their own business.

*Sarah and Kuny-derot members were interviewed by CLWR/Ellen Paulley*

**Photo: CLWR/E.Paulley**



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# Ration Meal Recipes

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You can add another dimension to *Make Room at the Table* by having a “ration meal.”

Ration meals remind us that many refugees rely on rations or food vouchers from aid agencies because they have no other way to get enough to eat.

Consider making one of these simple meals for a *Make Room at the Table* event.

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## RED BEANS AND RICE

Beans and rice are eaten daily around the world. Try this simple variation at home. Serves 5-6.

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups dried red beans  
1 quart water  
1 large onion, chopped  
1 bay leaf  
Pepper, to taste  
Salt, to taste  
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil  
3 cups rice

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## METHOD

1. Soak the beans overnight in cold water; drain.
2. Heat the beans in about a quart of water, add all ingredients except salt and boil for at least 2 hours.
3. When beans are tender, mash them up with a tablespoon of oil.
4. Serve on boiled rice.



Photo Credit: ACT/NCA/L.MacGregor



## FLAT BREAD

Chapatti, or flat bread, is commonly eaten around the world, including East Africa and northern India.

Makes 12.

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups whole wheat flour

2 tablespoons oil or ghee

3/4 to 1 cup warm water

1/2 teaspoon salt

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## METHOD

1. Mix the flour and fat together using your hands.
2. Stir the salt into the water and add the water, a little at a time, until you have a soft, kneadable ball.
3. Remove to a floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.
4. Remove the dough to a lightly greased bowl, cover and rest for at least 30 minutes (up to 2 hours).
5. Return the dough to a floured work surface. Roll the dough into a long piece and cut it into 12 separate balls.
6. Dust the dough balls with a little flour and roll each one out into a very thin round about 6 inches in diameter.
7. Heat an ungreased, heavy skillet over medium heat. Add a dough round and press down gently with a spatula or the back of a spoon.
8. Cook until lightly browned, flip and brown on the second side. Repeat with all rounds.

Recipes courtesy of Canadian Foodgrains Bank



Photo: Canadian Foodgrains Bank/E.Cain

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# Pray

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Gracious God, open our hearts to what we are about to receive.

Bless the farmers, the delivery people, the cooks and all those who have had a hand in the meal we are about to share.

Keep us mindful of those who seek a place of safety and new life; may our arms open wide in welcome that they may feel at home in our midst.

May we work together towards a day where all have a place at the table, and live in peace.

This we pray through the one who brings peace, Jesus Christ. Amen.