

# 10 Commandments for Voters

Dear God, we are weak, but you are strong. We need your sanctifying power and strength in us so that we will faithfully defend the cause of the weak and maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed (Ps. 82:3-4a). Let "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Stir our vision of the great future day when we will celebrate the eternal feast in your glorious presence. Amen.

*From Feast Fit for a King - CRWRC's World Hunger prayers 2011*

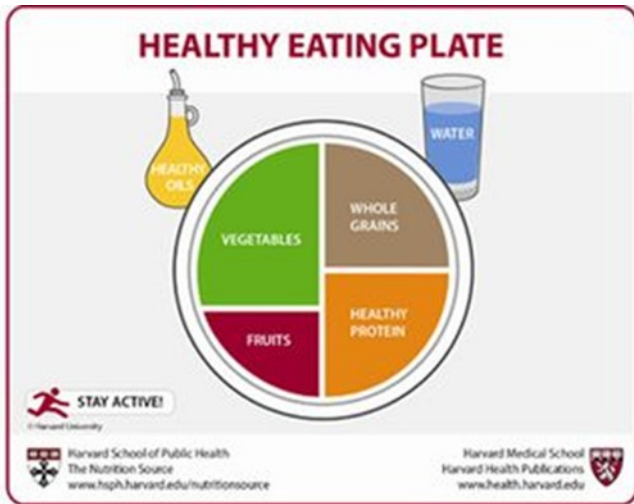
The provincial election is just around the corner. I've been thinking about how to vote. Naturally, my values and faith contribute to my decision. So

I've come up with a list of Ten Commandments for voters.

1. The Lord God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and—within memory—most of Ontario's voters or their ancestors from some other far-away land. Which parties make embracing new immigrants and their unique challenges a high priority?
2. The Judeo-Christian God doesn't want us to bow down to images. That's because humans are his real image bearers. And what did God create his image bearers to do? The prophet Micah says humans must act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. For that matter, they should so walk with their neighbors too. Which party's values best match that high, human calling to be like God?
3. The third command warns against misuse the name of the Lord. Language matters to God, and it should matter to politicians. Civility doesn't have much of a role in question period anymore, judging by my last visit to Queen's Park. Which candidates are committed to dialog rather than personal slurs and negative campaigning?
4. The fourth command mentions that God made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, including people. Then he told Adam and Eve to take care of it, nurture it, and keep it beautiful. When you vote, remember that according to the Creation Story God's first command to humans, even before the ten, was to take care of the earth and its creatures. Which parties take this responsibility for creation care as seriously as God does?
5. Honor your father and mother. They are getting older and so, by the way, are you. A host of policies impact our elderly neighbors. Which party will best protect universal health care for all, regardless of wealth? Which party will do the best job making sure that retirement homes, nursing homes, and home care for the elderly are designed to allows the elderly to be as independent, engaged, and healthy as long as possible?
6. You shall not murder. In my tradition we like to restate this command positively, like this. To keep the sixth command is "to love our neighbors as ourselves; to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly to them; to protect them from harm as much as possible; and to do good even to our enemies." Political parties seem to think that voting is about me, myself, and I. It isn't. Spiritual voters have the best interests not merely of themselves, but especially of their neighbors in mind when they vote. It isn't about my pocket book; it is about building a just
7. You shall not commit adultery. Vote for the party that is willing to make a long-term commitment to the people of Ontario, rather than a short-term affair until the writ is next dropped. Vote for the party willing to speak the truth in love and strive for the ideal rather than the one that falls into bed with the tempting policy flavor of the day.
8. You shall not steal: The Bible has more to say about how Christians should handle wealth than any other moral issue. Steven Colbert—not usually noted for his religious commentary--put it this way on network TV. "If this is going to be a Christian nation that doesn't help the poor, either we have to pretend that Jesus was just as selfish as we are, or we've got to acknowledge that he commanded us to love the poor and serve the needy without condition and then admit that we just don't want to do it." Vote for the party that puts the poor first, because most of us have way more than we really need.
9. Do not give false testimony. When you vote, don't just consider a party's promises about the changeable future; consider how they did—or did not—keep their promises in the unchangeable past
10. You shall not covet. Every party covets power. But when you vote, consider which party or candidate is nevertheless the most committed to serving those out of power: the least, the last, and the lost. For ultimately, these citizens have always been God's favorites.



# World Hunger: Buy & Eat



Eating is an inescapable part of our lives. But rarely do we ask questions about how to eat well: discerning ways to purchase, grow, cook, share, consume, and think about our food in ways that honor God.

There's no such thing as a free lunch, but what about one that's almost free? Especially when you're pinched for time, that juicy burger on the value menu is looking like a great idea. But if we stop to take a moment to consider the *real* cost of our purchase, will we find that the value menu doesn't necessarily line up with our values?

Or what about the can of ground coffee, or that bunch of yellow bananas in the supermarket? Could the fruit, coffee, burgers - any and all of the food we purchase and consume possibly have anything to do with our faith-fueled commitments to feeding the hungry, or loving our neighbor, or stewardship of creation? Can food

say something about the way we want to live with others and with creation, or is it just...something we eat?

So when it comes to spreading the table for your next family feast, ask some questions about your food. Who harvested the vegetables on your plate and is a fair wage reflected in their cost? Where did it come from and how far would it have had to travel to reach your table? If it is an animal product, how was the animal fed and housed? Were conservation or sustainable practices used? Is the farm or factory where the food was produced good for the community where it is

housed?

**“More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us.”** Richard Foster, *The Celebration of Discipline*

*It's clear that food is a justice issue when we consider that hunger is rampant not only around the world but right here in our own country.*

## Redeemer CRCs plans for reflections on World Hunger (Oct16-Nov6)

- Sunday October 16th World Food Day—introduction of plans for World Hunger
- \* Encouragement to fast (do without something in your life)
  - \* Ideas for focusing on world hunger in family devotions and life-style choices during this 4 week period
  - \* Details for a meal together focusing on local poverty
  - \* Children's resources re. poverty for children's worship
  - \* Encouragement to attend local Stand up for Poverty event at City Hall
  - \* Sunday, Nov6) Worship Service & special collection for World Hunger
  - \* Resources:
    - ⇒ Fast for Change—Canadian Food Grains Bank [http://www.fastforchange.ca/fast\\_for\\_change.aspx](http://www.fastforchange.ca/fast_for_change.aspx)
    - ⇒ A Feast Fit for a King—CRWRC World Hunger focus [http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwrc\\_worldhunger.cfm](http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwrc_worldhunger.cfm)

- ### October/November Calendar
- World Habitat Day (Oct3)
  - Ontario Provincial Election (Oct6)
  - World Food Day (Oct16)
  - Stand up for Poverty (Oct14) noon
  - Citizenship Week(3<sup>rd</sup> week in Oct)
  - Persons Case Day(Oct18)
  - World Hunger Week (Oct 31– Nov6)
  - International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (Nov6)

**CRC Justice Seekers**  
*let justice roll on like a river*  
[JusticeSeekers.ning.com](http://JusticeSeekers.ning.com) is an online community for Christian Reformed folks to discuss, inform, and share their thoughts on justice with others in the denomination.  
<http://justiceseekers.ning.com/groups>

This newsletter is a publication of the Social Justice Team of Redeemer Christian Reformed Church, Sarnia ON  
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- Articles in this newsletter mainly excerpted from the webpages of:
- **Office of Social Justice of the CRC:** [www.crcjustice.org](http://www.crcjustice.org)
  - **Kairos**, an ecumenical justice initiative of 11 mainline churches [www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org)
  - **Citizens for Public Justice** <http://cpj.ca/index.html>
  - **CRC Centre for Public Dialogue** [http://www.crcna.org/pages/ccg\\_mobilejustice.cfm](http://www.crcna.org/pages/ccg_mobilejustice.cfm)