

# Breads Around the World

## China

*UCC Hunger Action Office*

*United Church Board for World Ministries*

### ROOM FOR ALL, ENOUGH FOR ALL

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Office for Church in Society

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, held last year in Beijing, women's experiences and struggles became visible in unprecedented ways. Women from around the world had the opportunity to tell their stories about the particular ways their communities have been affected by hunger, poverty, violence and environmental damage. Too often, women are not present when decisions are made about economic policies and development strategies.

Yet if we take seriously the theme of the Non-Governmental Forum on Women, "Look at the World Through Women's Eyes," here is what we would see:

- 70 % of the world's poor are women;
- 80% of refugees are women and children;
- 66% of women's work is unpaid.

How important it is to listen for the unheard voices, to make visible the often invisible experiences of those struggling against devastating hunger and poverty. On the daily bus rides between the NGO Forum site and Beijing, the lives of Chinese men, women and children came only in quick glimpses. Those who had given up their public transportation, to make room for conference participants, were often invisible.



"Widow's Mite" by Zhang Guijie

China is a vast and diverse country, in geography, ethnicity and economic realities. Rural China still faces significant challenges with illiteracy, unemployment and farm production. As is true around the world, Chinese women in rural areas are particularly affected by these realities.

► 70% of those who are illiterate in China's rural areas are women. This makes it extremely difficult for women to gain access to the education and training needed for improving agricultural production.

► 60-70% of the farm work done in rural areas is done by women. It is highly demanding work - with a lack of adequate mechanization - and women often shoulder the double burden of food production and care of the household.

Yet women in China and throughout the world have responded to these challenges in creative and innovative ways. When we listen to the often unheard voices of those most immediately affected by hunger and poverty, new understanding emerges. New possibilities for change and transformation spring forth from the dialogue. The gospel image of the banquet feast calls to us - a table where there is room for all, enough for all.

## Chinese Almond Bread

*Rice flour is an ingredient used in the bread of the Chinese people. It can often be found in specialty and health food stores.*

### Recipe:

- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon almond flavor
- ½ cup coarsely chopped toasted almonds
- 2 cups rice flour

Cream butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Add eggs and continue to beat until the mixture is creamy. Add baking powder, almond flavor and nuts. Work in flour and form into a soft dough. Turn into a well-greased and lightly floured 8" x 4" x 2½" loaf pan. Decorate top with split almonds, if desired. Bake at 350F until a golden brown, and the loaf tests done. Cool well before slicing. (from *The Complete Bread Cookbook* by Ted and Jean Kaufman. New York: Gramercy Publishing Company, 1969. Used with permission)



"Five Loaves and Two Fishes" by He Qi

## Dai Bao

### (Dough for Steamed Buns)

*This dough is used with a variety of fillings, both savoury and sweet.*

Makes: 8-10 buns

- 2½ cups plain flour
- 3½ teaspoons baking powder
- 3 tablespoons caster sugar (*caster sugar is super fine*)
- 2 tablespoons softened lard
- about ½ cup lukewarm water
- ½ teaspoon white vinegar

Sift flour and baking powder into a bowl, stir in sugar and run in lard with fingertips until evenly distributed. Add water and vinegar mixed together and knead to a fairly soft dough. Shape into a smooth ball, cover and rest dough for 30 minutes.

To make buns, divide dough into 8 or 10 portions and mould each into a smooth ball. Roll out on a very lightly floured board to a circle about 40 cm (4 inches) across. Put a heaped teaspoonful of filling in center of circle and gather edges together, folding and pleating to make a neat join. Twist dough to seal. Put each bun, join downwards, on a square of greaseproof paper lightly brushed with sesame oil. Put in steamer, cover and steam for 20 minutes. Serve warm. The cooked buns can be refrigerated overnight and reheated by steaming for 3 minutes before serving. (From *The Complete Asian Cookbook* by Charmaine Solomon. Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1992. Used with permission.)

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Our thanks to Martha Stroot of Wichita, Kansas, for testing our recipes.

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*If you are planning ahead for a year, sow rice;  
for ten years, plant trees;  
for a hundred years, educate the people.*

--Chinese Proverb

## A Service for Breaking the Bread

This is presented to give you options for your own service of communion. You may choose prayers from other settings or use the service as a whole.

### Greeting

*Chi guo fan me you?* (Have you eaten yet?) is a priority question in China. That is what people say when they greet each other, rather than *ni hao* (hello). It is asked because in a country that until recently was ravaged by famines, daily life centers on food. People (most of whom have no refrigerator) shop daily in the market and spend hours in the kitchen preparing meals. Food is part of every family celebration.<sup>1</sup>

### Prayer of Petition and Intercession

O God, that we may receive your blessing, touch our brows, touch our heads, and do not look upon us in anger. In a hard year, offer us mercy; in a year of affliction, offer us kindness; dark spirits banish from us, bright spirits bring close to us; gray spirits put away from us, good spirits bring close to us; When we are afraid, offer us courage; when we are ashamed, be our true face; be over us like a blanket, be under us like a bed of furs.<sup>2</sup>

### Scripture

Isaiah 1:16-17

Every society has to examine its injustices and seek the welfare of those in need.

Matthew 14:13-21

Even in a miracle of enough, the men are still the ones who warrant being counted.

Luke 18:1-9

A persistent voice for fairness and righteousness will prevail.

*The ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings.*

- Chinese Proverb

### Doxology (Old 100th)

One in heart our thanks we tell,  
Our rice each meal won from the soil.  
A gift of God and farmer's toil,  
In joy partake; serve people well. Amen

Wo men hui shi tong xin gan xie,  
Yi zhou yi fan lai chu bu yi,  
Shang di en ci tong bao xue han,  
Huan xi ling shou wei ren fu yi. Amen<sup>3</sup>

### Share the Elements

Use several kinds of breads or variants to represent the many manifestations of "the Bread of Life." Also, use tablecloths from other countries and possibly chalices - glass, pottery, wood, etc. These may be available from SERRV or a local import shop.

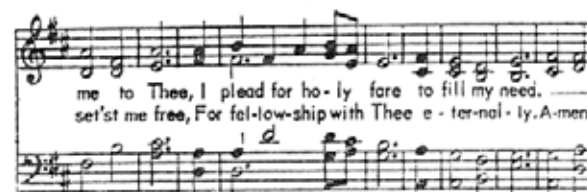
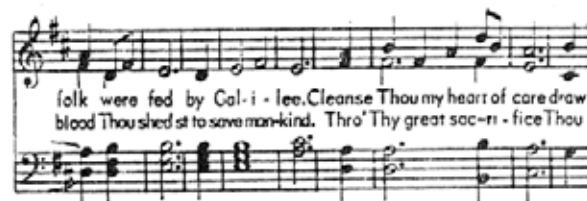
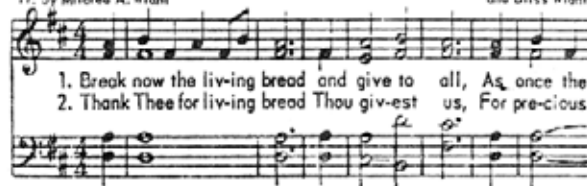


### Break Now the Living Bread<sup>4</sup>

Communion

John 6:35-40  
Liu Ting-fang  
Tr. by Mildred A. Wiant

Arr. by Wang Chin-lin  
and Bliss Wiant



Melody from the Ling Yin Buddhist Temple, Hongchow  
© 1965, Bliss Wiant

## Benediction

Where the Church is corrupt, O Lord, cleanse it,  
where it is mistaken, correct it,  
where it is lacking, enrich it,  
where it is divided, grant it love,  
where it has lost the capacity to witness to Christ,  
bring it back,  
where it is presumptuous and complacent,  
grant discipline,  
where it has humility, goodness, unity and mutual love,  
bless and strengthen it.  
All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ,  
the head of the church.<sup>5</sup>

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*The Chinese character for peace, wa, means harmony. It derives from the combination of two words: rice and mouth. When no one is hungry, then truly there is peace. - Anonymous*

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## World Ministries in the U.S. and Canada

Your congregation can participate in a variety of ministries with Christians in China. If you are interested in establishing a partnership with a congregation in China, please write for global church partnership materials. Also ask for information about international youth programs, global education and advocacy, and multicultural projects.

**Church Partners in China**  
**China Christian Council**  
with National Council of Churches, USA

**World Ministries**  
**in the United States and Canada**  
**United Church Board for World Ministries**  
700 Prospect Ave., 6th Floor  
Cleveland, OH 44115  
(216)736-3210

## Hunger Action

*The Campaign to End Childhood Hunger* continues to be a major domestic focus of the UCC Hunger Action program. With over 13.6 million children who are hungry or in danger of hunger in the United States, the need calls us to respond.

*Breads Around the World* is a collaborative effort between the UCC Hunger Action Office and the United Church Board for World Ministries. It is an expression of Hunger Action's responsibility to provide the United Church of Christ with education and worship resources on hunger and poverty.

*Breads: China* is the fifth in a series. To receive *Breads: Africa; Breads: Middle East; Breads: Caribbean; Breads: India*; additional copies of this resource; or materials on the Campaign, please contact:

**UCC HUNGER ACTION**  
700 Prospect Ave., 3rd Floor  
Cleveland, OH 44115  
(216)736-3290

## Sources

"Widow's Mite" by Zhang Guijie. Mission and Promotion of the Presbyterian Church, 1993-94 Presbyterian Planning Calendar. Used by permission.

"Five Loaves and Two Fishes" by He Qi. *Gifts of Many Cultures: Worship Resources for the Global Community*, edited by Maren C. Tirabassi & Kathy Wonson Eddy. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1995. Used by permission.

<sup>1</sup> *Balancing Act: Growing Up in China and Hong Kong* by Krystin Granberg, New York: Friendship Press, Inc., 1995. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup> *Gifts of Many Cultures: Worship Resources for the Global Community*. Used by permission.

<sup>3</sup> Study Guide for *The Enduring Church: Christians in China and Hong Kong* by Camille Anders; New York: Friendship Press, Inc., 1996. Used by permission.

<sup>4</sup> *The Pagoda: 25 Chinese Songs*; copyright 1967 by Cooperative Recreation Service, Inc.

<sup>5</sup> *No Longer Strangers* by K.H. Ting; New York: Orbis Books, 1989. Used by permission.