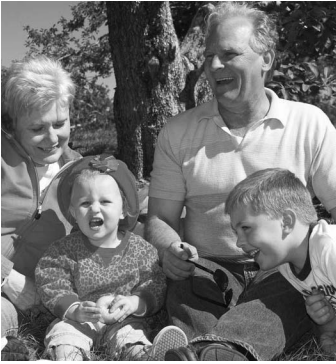


## Case Study for Session 1 » Hunger at Our Doorstep



### CASE STUDY #1

#### The Hagen Family

The Hagen family lives in a small town in rural Wisconsin. There have been many farm failures in the area in the past couple of decades, and the town has lost most of its businesses. Mr. Hagen wasn't able to find work in town, so he has to commute to a town twenty miles away to his job, which pays more than minimum wage but not enough to lift them out of poverty. Mrs. Hagen stays home to take care of their toddler. She also helps her elderly mother-in-law, who lives in the same town, with housework, meals, and doctor visits. Their one vehicle is a beat-up old car that gets poor mileage and breaks down regularly, which Mr. Hagen uses to get to work. Their two school-age children eat cereal for breakfast at home, but are hungry after their hour-long bus ride to school, where they can get a reduced price lunch, but not breakfast. They receive SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), but the country store in town where they can get groceries has a limited selection and little fresh produce. It is relatively expensive, owing to high delivery costs and low sales volume, but they can seldom make it to the supermarket in the nearest city. The local food pantry in a neighboring community provides them a box of groceries twice a month, which usually lasts them 2-3 days.

1. What particular challenges do the members of the Hagen family face because they live in a rural community?
2. Where might they turn for help? How could a local congregation help the Hagens and other members of the community who are also facing food insecurity?
3. What resources are the Hagens able to access? What political or economic developments might threaten – or lead to improvements in – those resources and benefits?
4. How would you feel if you were Mr. Hagen? Mrs. Hagen? One of the older Hagen children? What do you think you would pray for if you were in their situation?