

NFWM House Party Sample “Ask”



Below is a sample “Ask” to use at a house party for NFWM. Don’t use it verbatim. “Asks” should be heartfelt, sincere, and based on your own personal experience and interests. So feel free to use this as a guide to stimulate your own thoughts—but know that the best “Ask” for you will depend on your own experience and your knowledge of the audience.

Some guidelines:

1. Speak from the heart
2. Include personal information
3. Explain how guests can donate (by check, via cc, become a sustainer etc.) and state your goal amount for the evening.
4. Make it clear there is no pressure to donate
5. Be sure to let folks know that NFWM is a 501(c)3 and all contributions are tax-deductible
6. When it’s time to give, have the group sit for 1-2 minutes quietly, so everyone who wants to has a chance to contribute.
7. If you have internet access, you may want to have a laptop or tablet available for those who’d like to donate via debit or credit card.

Sample

“I am really excited to see you all here today at our first annual UMC Soup Supper for Farm Workers to talk about the National Farm Worker Ministry and the great work they do.

As I look around this room, I see faces of those that are already connected with NFWM including Susan Smith, who first introduced me to the farm worker movement. Some are here because you’ve already supported NFWM at an event in the past, or signed post-cards to support the farm workers’ campaigns. Others of you were invited because we know your passion of working for peace and justice. I’m just thrilled to see so many friends and new faces of folks who came out to learn more about farm workers’ issues.

I first got involved with NFWM five years ago because Susan Smith invited me to participate in a walk for Peace and Justice during Holy Week. One of the day’s activities was walking in rural North Carolina with farm workers who were members of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). We learned about FLOC’s campaign for justice for tobacco farm workers. It was a hot and muggy day that spring. As we walked I imagined how hard it must be to wake up before dawn and work in the fields for 12 hours in sweltering, summer heat, cutting the tobacco by hand, then carrying its sticky leaves down a long row, trying not to let them touch the skin for fear of pesticides or getting nicotine poisoning. I imagined how it must feel almost impossible to make ends meet on farm workers’ wages.

That afternoon, we came to a non-descript farmhouse where we stopped walking. This was the house that a farm worker lived in who had died recently from heat stroke while working in a tobacco field. Overheated and disoriented, he walked out of the field in search of shade. Despite requests from his co-workers, his boss would not allow anyone to search for him. His body was found days later. We took a moment of silence and passed around a pitcher of water, each person pouring out a bit onto the dirt in honor of this man, who was a father, a husband, a son, a child of God, that died a death that was totally preventable. Farm workers deserve protections like shade, sufficient water breaks and safety gear while working. They also deserve dignity in their work.

Did you eat today? Thank a farm worker!

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That's why I support NFWM. For decades the Ministry has helped farm worker organizations win campaigns against powerful corporations. These successes have made significant improvements in farm work; like higher wages, better working conditions, and stronger safety standards. But, there's still a long way to go.

Recently, NFWM has taken on a new farm worker partner organization. NFWM supports worker-led campaigns in Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, California and Washington State. Currently, there are even two nation-wide boycotts! That's a LOT OF WORK! In order for NFWM to continue making an impact, it needs all of our help. NFWM works tirelessly with its farm worker partners on these efforts and I believe that NFWM with our help and the help of other people like us, can affect meaningful change and together we can achieve the justice in the fields and dignity that all farm workers deserve.

At NFWM, it is not a question of whether or not the farm workers' campaigns will succeed. It is only a question of when. And your donation is critical in helping make this work happen.

I am proud to be able to write a check today to support NFWM, in addition to volunteering to host this event. My hope is that together the caring people in this room can raise \$3,000 to support this important work. Remember that all donations are tax-deductible.

I am passing around the sign-up sheet again. Please be sure to sign-up for NFWM's mailing list, so that you can stay on top of all the developments with farm workers' campaigns. Also, please let me know if you'd be interested in hosting a house party or soup supper at your church like this one. I'd be happy to talk to you about it and help you in any way I can. Plus NFWM has a "House Party Planning Kit" that really helped us put together this event.

I'm also passing around contribution cards. The front side of the card that says, "National Farm Worker Ministry." Fill it out to make a one-time donation. Fill out the other side if you're interested in becoming a "Harvester of Justice," a member NFWM's sustaining giver program. Sustainers are very important to NFWM. It is these monthly and quarterly givers that allow NFWM to spend less time fundraising and more time working with farm workers.

So, now let's have a few quiet moments so that everyone can write a check or pledge. I'll also pass around the iPad for folks interested in making a credit card donation online. Just raise your hand if you need it. For those who have already given, please sit quietly for a moment while everyone else has a chance to catch up with you. When you have finished writing your check and putting it in the envelope, Bernadette will come along to collect them.

I thank you all sincerely for your time, your coming this evening and for your generous contributions to an organization and work that is so important to me. Last I want to thank National Farm Worker Ministry for doing this work and for giving us the opportunity to join them in this important fight for justice.

Did you eat today? Thank a farm worker!