

## What Does the Lord Require of You?

### *Lessons in Social Justice*

#### **What Does the Lord Require of You?**

What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Based on the Bible verse Micah 6:8, this program is five four-part units on various topics in social justice. Students can learn about poverty, food security, the environment, immigration, and peace and nonviolence and how these issues connect to their faith. Through activities, scripture, and discussion students will learn concrete ways to be accepting, be aware, and create change in their society.

#### **Poverty: "One in Body and One in Spirit"**

Poverty is an issue that affects every community across the US. Help be part of the solution by learning more about poverty, the cliff effect, food security, and advocacy. These lessons help facilitate discussion and education on a difficult and very personal topic. Only when we all raise our voices can the problem of systemic poverty change for the better.

#### **Food Security: "Feeding Body and Soul"**

Food is a necessity for life, but many of our brothers and sisters in Christ struggle with food insecurity. These sessions on food insecurity will help students relate the issue of food insecurity to biblical text and inform them on what they can do to solve this issue. The lesson covers topics of food deserts, food waste, and free and reduced lunch programs. By the end of the sessions students will have an understanding on how to advocate for issues related to hunger.

#### **Environment: "Living With Our World"**

When it comes to looking out at our lush greens, vibrant trees, and thriving wildlife we sometimes ignore the presence of God in every living creation that is among us. The bible is filled with natural imagery but we rarely take the time to connect it to God's good creation. Whether it's by taking care of your dog, walking outside or picking up litter, this unit helps to teach students to love God while loving the land we live on.

#### **Immigration: "Breaking Borders"**

What happens when we break down the borders that separate us? This 4 part session, "Breaking Borders: Topics in Immigration", teaches students about diversity and community building. Students will explore immigration in their personal history along with the current immigration situation. With these lessons students will learn how to be accepting of immigrants and their struggles to move to a new place and adapt to new culture, language and people.

#### **Peace/Nonviolence: "Becoming Peacemakers"**

We are called to respect each other as part of God's creation. Yet humans throughout history have harmed one another with different forms of violence. This unit helps high-school-age students understand how we can be intentional in our use of nonviolence to solve conflicts and to fill the needs of our communities. They will learn to be advocates of peace.

### **Facilitator Notes**

- All of the units can be used together, or you can use one of the four-part focus units.
- Words in **bold** are what you should say.
  - Feel free to adjust the wording based on how your discussions develop. But please note moments of sensitivity and transitions between topics.
- Words in *italics* are instructions for you.
  - These include action directions, options for further discussion, and suggestions of possible answers.
- Some lessons include two options. One option requires internet, and the other can be done without.
  - We feel these materials are useful additions for adding visuals, personal touches, and engagement for students. But we understand that not every groups set up is the same. So please adapt as you are comfortable.

### **Creation Credits**

- These units were developed by the 2015 Micah Corps. We hope they lead to productive conversations for you and your students.
- Enjoy!
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## **One in Body and One in Spirit**

*Topics in addressing poverty*

### **Sessions in this Unit**

1. Poverty Overview
2. Cliff Effect
3. Budgeting & Food Security
4. Action & Advocacy

### **Letter to the Facilitator**

When using the material below, it is important for you to know the definitions that were used in constructing the lessons. In terms of “poverty line,” the Census Bureau definition has been used. The poverty line was developed in the United States and is determined by multiplying the cost of minimum food requirements in today’s money by three (Census Bureau, 2015). For example, a family of four would have to earn less than \$24,250 to be considered living in poverty by the federal government (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015). However, even if a family is technically out of poverty, they might have a difficult time making ends meet with basic necessities. These definitions serve as a reference point for you.

As you know, poverty affects every state and every community. Statistically, there is a chance that a student in your youth group lives in poverty. You know your students. Feel free to adjust the lessons according to what your student demographic is.

There are also potential opportunities that a student may disclose a family situation in class. At the beginning of each class, remind students that the room is a space of confidentiality. If a student discloses a personal story, students and adults are not allowed to share with others without the permission of the individual (unless there is a threat to the child’s safety, in which the adult is to take the proper course of action). If a student begins to disclose in class, allow the individual to speak without asking directive questions. If the student continues for a lengthy amount of time, you may ask the child (gently) to discuss more in private after class. Remember to offer after-class discussion in a natural break in the student’s narrative, so the student does not feel like their concerns are being ignored. As mentioned above, you know your students. Adapt to what you feel is appropriate. Remain supportive and reassure them that you are a person that they can safely disclose to.

Thank you very much for sharing poverty related issues with your youth group. We greatly appreciate your willingness to help us address this difficult subject matter. If you would like more information on the subject of poverty, there is a resource list at the end of the packet.

## **1. Poverty Overview**

### **Objectives**

- Discuss the different aspects and images of poverty.
- Dispel misleading images of poverty; to open our minds in order to see people who are impoverished as people and not simply “the poor.”
- Realize the problem of poverty does not belong to a single family or person but to all people
- Link advocacy and our faith life by understanding that charity can only feed a family for a week, while advocacy can change how we feed people for years to come.

### **Materials**

- A variety of dictionaries, enough for everybody
- Bible or a copy of Matthew 25:34-40 NIV
- White/black board or large sheet of paper
- Print out of game (below)
- Copy of discussion questions for group leader, if splitting into small groups

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Dictionary Activity – 10 minutes**

- *Have multiple types of dictionaries available for students. Then ask them to look up words such as “poverty,” “poor,” “hungry,” “impoverished,” “scarcity,” “shortage,” and “destitute” so they may see the various words and definitions related to poverty. Have a handful of students read out loud the different definitions to spark discussion.*

### **Discussion**

- **Poverty is something that isn’t easily explained. The United Methodist Church's Social Principles describe poverty as “[needing] food, shelter, education, healthcare, and other necessities,” while also calling Christians to “support the poor,” as we are able. Adding this definition to those we have already read out loud, let us try to better understand the multiple aspects of poverty, instead of looking at only one story of poverty. Let’s try to create a general idea of what poverty may or may not look like here in America.**
  1. **What did you think of the definitions or words?**
  2. **Do you agree with the definition? If not, why does the definition seem wrong?**
  3. **Personally define what you believe poverty looks like?**
  4. **What are some other words you think of when you think of people who are impoverished?**
    - a. **Would you look up the definition of these words for us?**

### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- **Matthew 25:34-40** (optional verses 41-43)
  - *The Bible passage can be read privately or out loud as a group. If in a larger group, split up into small discussion groups. Or for smaller groups, sit in a circle for discussion.*
- 1. **What jumped out at you the most from this particular passage?**
- 2. **What might this passage and the items from earlier indicate?**
- 3. **Are any of you already doing this?**
- 4. **Have any of you ignored somebody who might have needed help?**
  - a. *Point out here that we have all ignored and helped at some point in time.*

### **Exploring What it Means to Help – 10 minutes**

- **There are many different forms of helping those who are impoverished. The two main forms you might have already heard about are Charity and Advocacy.**
  - *Have students look up both words in the dictionaries provided and compare and contrast the definitions.*
  - *(Charity is “generous actions or donations to aid the poor, ill, or helpless,” while advocacy is “the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending; active espousal.”)*
- **What is the main difference between the two words? What actions correlate to both words? Are there any places around town that count as charity organizations? Any advocacy organizations?**

#### ***Charity or Advocacy?***

- **There is no ultimate form of aid. Both charity and advocacy are equally important. However, the advantages and disadvantages are very different as we just discovered. We will play a game that will help us sort out what counts as charity and what counts as advocacy.**
- *The examples below are demonstrations of organizations that are either charity or advocacy. Have students determine which they are.*
  - **Food banks are nonprofit systems and as thus they require people to donate foodstuffs. (charity)**
  - **Bread for The World is an organization that asks participants to write letters to Congress and to engage local churches and communities. (advocacy)**
  - **Dress for Success is an organization that asks participants to donate business casual clothing. (case advocacy)**
  - **Campaigns to Raise the Minimum Wage count as advocacy. (advocacy)**

### **Closing Prayer – 3 minutes**

- *End with a group prayer*

## **2. Cliff Effect**

### **Note**

- The Cliff Effect is the sudden drop that individuals in poverty experience once they are no longer eligible for certain programs.

### **Objectives**

- Become aware of the Cliff Effect and how it affects families.

### **Materials**

- Computer with Projector (If watching the documentary)
- Printed out copies of story (If not watching the documentary)
- Bibles or copies of the Bible verse

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Pray as you are comfortable with your class*

### **2a. Video – 25 minutes**

- *If the Internet is available, watch “Losing Ground: The Cliff Effect” found at:*  
<https://vimeo.com/68246853>
  1. **What was your reaction?**
  2. **What is the cliff effect?**
  3. **How does the cliff effect affect families?**
  4. **How could the government address this issue?**
    - a. *(More questions available at: <http://wfco.org/document.doc?id=515>)*

### **2b. Story – 20-25 minutes**

- *If the Internet is not available, read a testimony about the cliff effect and its impacts. One story can be found at:*  
<http://rockcenter.nbcnews.com/news/2013/05/23/15998838-working-single-dad-takes-pay-cut-to-keep-childcare-benefits?lite>
  - *(If you are unable to access the story from above, feel free to either substitute the name or create your own discussion questions):*
    1. **What are your thoughts about Dan's situation?**
    2. **Why was Dan not able to accept the raise?**
    3. **If you were in Dan's situation, would you have accepted the raise? Why or why not?**

### **Bible Time – 8 minutes**

- *After reading story/watching documentary and discussing, pass out Bibles or copies of Bible verse. Have students read the verse silently or out loud.*
- Proverbs 31:9 - “Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”
  1. **How does this relate to the documentary/story?**

**2. In what ways can we support or defend the poor?**

**Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

*You may use the one below or create your own*

***Prayer For The Poor By Mother Theresa***

**"Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those people throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands, this day, their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give them peace and Joy. Amen"**

### **3. Budgeting & Food Security**

#### **Objectives**

- Learn about money management for families living in poverty
- Simulate budgeting decisions families that live in poverty make every day.

#### **Materials**

- If playing online game, computers with Internet access (either one for each student or one per 2-3 students in a group, depending on the size of your group)
- Materials if not playing online game
  - 1 copy of instructions, discussion questions, and Skittles cards (found at <http://faithandfamilyhomelessness.com/recommended-models/experiences-simulation-exercises/>)
  - 10 paper lunch bags
  - 1 bag of Skittles or other small candy
  - Paper plate
- Bibles or copies of Bible verse

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Pray as you are comfortable with your class*

#### **3a. Online Game – 15-20 minutes**

- If available, play online game: <http://playspent.org/>
    - *This is an online game where players are given a \$1,000 for the month. Students may either be divided into groups of 2-3 or play individually. (Note: If you have enough computers available, it is encouraged that the game is played individually so more scenarios are available for discussion. However, if that is not possible, healthy discussion can still take place if the game is played in a group.) The player(s) must then make tough decisions in order to make ends meet.*
1. **Was it difficult for you to budget the money you had for the month?**
  2. **What expense did you have that surprised you (such as medical expenses, etc.; related to online game)?**
  3. **What were some decisions that you were hesitant about?**
    - a. *(Some answers may include: "Missing my kid's school play for work," "Leaving the scene of an accident," etc.)*

#### **3b. Skittles Game – 15-20 minutes**

- *If the Internet is not available, play the Skittles game. Full instructions, cards, and possible discussions can be found on the website:*  
<http://faithandfamilyhomelessness.com/recommended-models/experiences-simulation-exercises/>
1. **For those who had fewer Skittles at the beginning, how did you feel when you were drawing cards?**



- a. *(Possible answers may be “anxious,” “nervous,” etc.)*
- 2. **For those who had a lot of Skittles at the beginning, how did you feel when you were drawing the cards?**
  - a. *(More discussion questions may be found on the website link under “Discussion Questions for Skittles Game”)*

**Bible Time – 8-10 minutes**

- *After whichever game you use, gather in a circle and pass out Bibles or copies of the Bible verse and have students read silently or out loud*
  - Luke 3:11 – “John answered, ‘Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.’”
- 1. **How does the verse relate to the game/budgeting activity?**
- 2. **What are ways that we are helping those in need?**
- 3. **How could we share our resources with individuals who do not have them?**
  - a. *(This question serves as a platform for next week. Mention that we will continue to explore this question next week.)*

**Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

*You may use the one below or create your own. (Found at:*

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/churches/prayer/ending-poverty.aspx>)

**Loving God, you make us in your image.**

“Forgive us when we fail to see your image in each other,  
when we give in to greed and indifference  
when we do not question the systems that are life-denying.  
As we are made in your image,  
let us live in your image  
and be Christ-like  
in service, endurance and love.  
Amen”

## **4. Action & Advocacy**

### **Objectives**

- Understand that while advocacy is hard to accomplish, it can be done if we all work together.
- Acknowledge that every voice is important when calling for systemic change from our nation's leaders.

### **Materials**

- Copy of "Game Topics" page in order to cut out topics for groups
- Bible or copy of Ephesians 4:2-4
- (OPTIONAL) Computers for researching advocacy groups or extra time for talking to the congregation

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Pray as you are comfortable with your group*

### **Advocacy Advantage Game – 18 minutes**

#### **Game Play – 10 minutes**

- *For this game you will be using the five topics that Micah Corps 2015 focused on during the internship. These are: Food Scarcity, Immigration, Environment, Poverty, and Peace/Nonviolence. All of these topics intersect at some point and they all have their own advocacy groups.*
  - *Divide students into smaller groups of 5-8, or one larger group if necessary. Have players sit in a circle and give them one of the topics/scenarios from below. Each member of the group should get the chance to read the scenario silently. There is to be no prior discussion about how they as a group will answer the question. Once everybody has read the question, they must pick a person to start speaking. From there, go around the circle, with everybody saying two words. Each person's words should connect to the words that came before them. The goal is for everyone's contributions to make one complete sentence after going around the whole circle. The size of the group will determine how many times round the circle it will take, the point is to complete the sentence.*
    - Ex: Sarah - "Food needs" --> Brookelyn - "to be"  
Te - "accessible to" --> Jack - "everyone, because..."
  - *Continuing on until the point is made or until the time runs out.*

#### **Game Topics**

1. Ending Food Scarcity = **Everybody has access to food no matter \_\_\_\_** **Because we as Christians believe \_\_\_\_**
  - a. Ex: (...no matter [their] skin color, religion, gender, income etc.... Christians believe every one is a child of God, Food is a basic human right, etc.)
2. Ending Poverty = **God's children are entitled to adequate food, employment, and \_\_\_\_** **We believe, because \_\_\_\_**

- a. *(Ex: ...employment, and housing, childcare, education, healthcare, etc. Because everybody is loved by God, these are basic human rights, etc.)*
3. Environmental Care = **We only have one earth and \_\_\_\_\_ taking care of her is important because \_\_\_\_\_**
  - a. *(Ex: ...one earth and it is struggling to keep up with the growing number of inhabitants, it is all we are going to get, God asked us to be caretakers, etc is important because God asked us to be caretakers, there are other creatures who depend on her as well, etc.)*
4. Immigration = **“And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you were foreigners in Egypt.” (NIV)** This passage refers to modern day life by \_\_\_\_\_, we can welcome the strangers by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. *(Ex: ...modern day life the new kid next at school, the person we met while at the grocery store, new friends, etc. welcome the strangers by inviting them to church/youth group, being kind, inviting them to join school clubs/pick up games, etc.)*
5. Peace/Non-Violence = **Violence doesn’t necessarily fix the problem, instead we can \_\_\_\_\_, because peace has the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ where violence does not.**
  - a. *(Ex: ...instead we can have peaceful protests, sit-ins, discussions, peace talks etc. help people not be afraid, go back to their homes in war torn countries, all music and art to flourish once again, spread a message of love and acceptance. )*

#### **Discussion – 8 minutes**

- **Advocacy isn’t the easiest or the shortest route to fixing a problem, but when all the hard work pays off, it is the one that has the longest effect on society. There are two types of advocacy, case and class. Class advocacy focuses on systemic change, meaning that it affects not just one person but many. While case advocacy focuses on representing the interests of an individual or group of people who may not be able to represent themselves. This particular game focuses on class advocacy and how hard it can be to work with a multitude of people. In our game, if just one person wasn’t paying attention it had the potential of messing up all the previous work that was accomplished.**
  1. **After playing the game, what are your thoughts? Were there any challenges or anything that set you back? How did the game end, did you come to a result or not? Why not? (Allow discussion to flow naturally if at all possible.)**
  2. **Advocacy is hard, but when everything works out, the impacts that it can make are amazing. Even though you are but one voice among many, never believe that your voice doesn’t matter. Every raised voice has the potential of helping the cause.**

#### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Ephesians 4:2-4:
  - “Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love, and make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit with the peace that ties you together. You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you in one hope.”
- 1. **How do you think Ephesians 4:2-4 and the game we just played are connected?**

- a. *(If discussion flows, allow it to do so as it will. If it doesn't, the following questions may help:)* **Did you feel as if you were working as a “one body and one spirit?”**
2. **We are to present ourselves with “humility, gentleness, and patience,” but often times while working as an activist it is hard to be patient with the systems we are trying to change. Can you foresee any problems arising in your scenario or ones to address before acting?**

### **What it Means to Help – 8 minutes**

- **In today’s media it appears that only large outrageous acts get into the popular news sites. Whereas the lesser-known acts by good people go unseen by the populace. Advocacy, and the actions that go along with it, involves lots of small actions that may seem weak all on their own. Such as writing letters to your state representatives; a single letter does not have the same impact that a whole group of hand drawn letters does.**
  1. **What little advocacy things can you do to help?**
    - a. *(writing letters, talking to local people about bigger problems, research to better understand the problem, etc.)*
  2. **What is happening in your local church or town that needs to be addressed?**
  3. **Not everything needs to happen at the state level either, the bigger picture can’t be addressed until the smaller picture is fully understood. How can we break down some of the bigger problems taking place in the world’s media today into smaller picture items?**
  4. **How do these affect your hometown?**

### **Local Advocacy**

- *Taking the scenarios from earlier, discuss how these problems could be and are being solved in your local community or state. (Remember the difference between charity and advocacy.)*
  - **If there are problems that are not being addressed, let’s talk about discuss what could be done to draw attention to these problems. This could mean doing research on the subject or talking to the locals. There are many experts on poverty in your town or church, such as teachers, doctors, pastors, and food pantry volunteers. They know what needs to be done on a local level. From these talks or other means of research, make a plan of action. This could entail letter writing to an official, a peaceful protest/sit-in, or anything else that will be peaceful and promote advocacy in and around your hometown.**

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *End with a group prayer or a group reading of the Bible verse*

***Game Topics***

1. Ending Food Scarcity = **Everybody has accesses to food no matter \_\_\_\_\_. Because we as Christians believe \_\_\_\_\_**
2. Ending Poverty = **God's children are entitled to adequate food, employment, and \_\_\_\_\_ We believe, because \_\_\_\_\_**
3. Environmental Care = **We only have one earth and \_\_\_\_\_ taking care of her is important because \_\_\_\_\_**
4. Immigration = **"And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you were foreigners in Egypt." (N/V) This passage refers to modern day life by \_\_\_\_\_, we can welcome the strangers by \_\_\_\_\_.**
5. Peace/Non-Violence = **Violence doesn't necessarily fix the problem, instead we can \_\_\_\_\_, because peace has the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ where violence does not.**

**Further Research**

- Census Bureau
  - Provides legal definitions for poverty
  - <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/methods/definitions.html>
- Kids Count
  - Data center for a variety of topics, including health, education, economic well-being. Data is sorted by state
  - <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>
- Voices for Children in Nebraska
  - Provides data, gives a list of supported state policies in the Nebraska legislature
  - <http://voicesforchildren.com/state-policy-agenda-2015/>
- <https://www.dressforsuccess.org/about-us/>
  - Dress for Success is a Case Advocacy group that helps individual women pull themselves out of systemic poverty. They provide the necessary clothing for job interviews and a support system.
- <http://www.bread.org/?referrer=https://www.google.com/>
  - Bread for the World is an advocacy organization that works towards eliminating hunger.
- <http://nijon.org/>
  - National Justice for Our Neighbors is a case advocacy group that helps immigrants have access to lawyers.

**More Ways to Take Action**

- [https://www.facebook.com/HalftheGame/app\\_203351739677351](https://www.facebook.com/HalftheGame/app_203351739677351)
  - This particular online game does need internet connection and a Facebook account. The purpose of this game is to build up points that will eventually add up and buy books. These books will then be sent all over the world to schools in need.
- <http://freerice.com/#/english-vocabulary/7205>
  - This online game requires internet connection. The purpose of the game is to answer questions, and every correct question earns ten grains of rice. The rice is then sent to people living in developing countries.

## **Feeding Body and Soul**

### *Defining and Addressing Food Insecurity*

#### **Sessions in this Unit**

1. Defining Food Security
2. Food Deserts
3. Food Waste
4. Child Hunger

### **1. Defining Food Security**

#### **Note**

- The facilitator explains and shares facts as well as brings the class to full participation for greater impact and better understanding of the topic in the United States.

#### **Objectives**

- Support the topics with Bible verses and the United Methodist *Social Principles*.
- Bring awareness and let the next generation find ways to make our country a place where all will be food secure.

#### **Materials**

- Selection of “junk food” and healthy food items
- Paper copy of USDA definition of food security
- Bibles or copies of verse

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group*

#### **Activity – 8 minutes**

- *Invite the youth to line up food items from least healthy to most healthy on a table.*
- *Then have youth read off some of the ingredients in each item.*
  1. **If you could choose two items to eat, which would they be and why?**
    - a. *Students may say they’d rather have the unhealthy options. If this is the case, remind them that too much of these items can make them sick. Encourage them to think about choosing healthy foods.*

#### **Learning Statements – 5 minutes**

- *Ask youth to read aloud the following statements:*
  - **The USDA defines food security as all people at all times having access to enough food for an active, healthy life.**
    - **The definition pinpoints too, the idea that ALL people ALWAYS need to have access to the nutritious food to live a healthy life style.**

- It doesn't say just one person having enough food, it says all people have enough food.
- Being food INSECURE, then, would mean a person is unable to know where her or his next meal is coming from and the food that they are eating may not allow them to be as healthy as they need to be. According to data from Feeding America, there are 49 million people in the United States. (That is 1 in 6 people.)
- The United States is ranked as the worst developed country for food security by the IMF (International Monetary Fund).
- (For more background information on the state of residency the facilitator can use this website: <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger/hunger-and-poverty/hunger-and-poverty-fact-sheet.html>)

### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Matthew 14:13-21 (NIV)
- These verses remind us what Jesus fed a crowd who spent their time following him. As Jesus followers, we, too, are called to feed those who are hungry. What are some thoughts about this event in Jesus' life?

### **United Methodist Church's Stance – 5 minutes**

- What does our United Methodist Church say about food insecurity and what actions are supported by the United Methodist Church?
  - "We support policies that increase access to quality food, particularly for those with the fewest resources. We affirm local, sustainable, and small-scale agriculture opportunities that allow communities to feed themselves. We decry policies that make food inaccessible to the communities where it is grown and the farm workers involved in its growth." (United Methodist *Social Principles*, the Natural World, Food Justice, pg. 22).
- Bread for the World is a faith-based movement endorsed by the United Methodist Church. This organization works with our policymakers to stop hunger in the country and worldwide. According to their website, "1 in 9 people around the world suffer from chronic hunger."
  - For more information, you can visit: <http://www.bread.org/>
  - Even though youth are not able to vote yet, they can still contact their leaders advocating on behalf of hungry people.

### **Closing Prayer – 5 minutes**

Form a prayer circle around the collection of junk food and healthy food you used earlier. Invite youth to respond to these words:

**God of abundance, we pray for all those who struggle to have healthy food, those who work in community gardens, and those decision makers whose laws impact the least of these. Amen.**



## **2. Food Deserts**

### **Objectives**

- Understand what it means to live in a food desert.
- Understand how this affects people's health.

### **Materials**

- A large room
- A bag of groceries
- A paper copy of the facts and map of food deserts in the USA
- Healthy snacks to share
- (If a longer time is possible, internet access/projector to show video)

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Activities – 12 minutes**

#### ***Grocery shopping – 7 minutes***

- *The goal of the exercise is to explain how hard it can be sometimes for people to get access to healthy foods.*
- *Directions: (This is similar to a Simon Says game)*
  - *Invite the youth to the fellowship hall or church gym and encourage them to spread out and stand in different areas of the room. At one end of the room, there is a bag of groceries to symbolize a grocery store.*
- **In a moment I will give you instructions to take a number of steps towards the “grocery store.” Each step represents 5 miles.**
  - *Tell students to move toward the grocery store one step at a time. Count each step so they can calculate the total distance. You can stop before all the students reach the store as some will be starting from further away than others.*

#### ***Questions – 5 minutes***

- *After playing this for a few minutes, then ask youth to sit on the floor wherever they are and ask the following questions:*
  1. **How did it feel for those who made it to the grocery store? How did it feel if you did not make it?**
  2. **What are some possible reasons why some did not get to the store?**
    - a. *(Possible answers are: don't have a car, work two jobs and can't get to a store far away when it's open, it takes a half hour to get there and back and I need to pick up my kids from day care after work).*

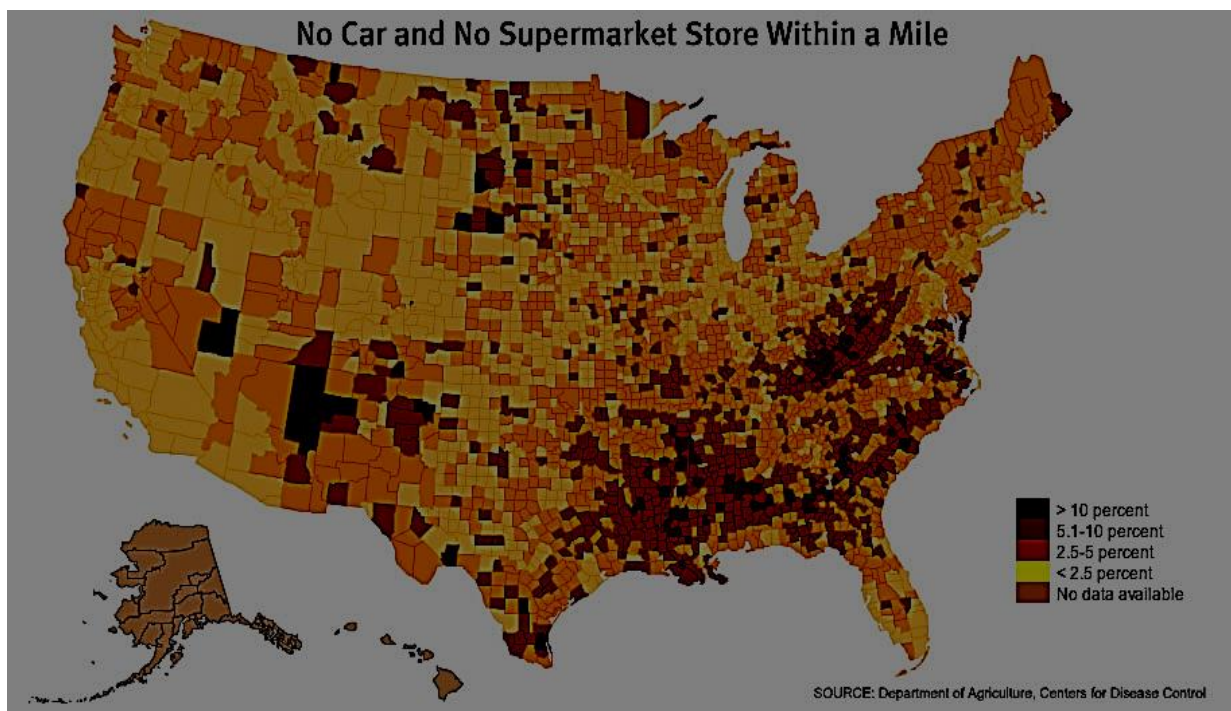
### **Learning Statements – 5 minutes**

- *Ask different youth to read aloud each of these facts:*
  - **Food deserts are defined as parts of the country void of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods. These areas usually occur in impoverished**

neighborhoods. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers. In 2013, the USDA reported that 23.5 million people live in these under-served areas.

- Approximately 2.3 million people (2.2% of all US households) live in low-income, rural areas that are more than 10 miles from a supermarket.
- Food insecurity has a high correlation with increased diabetes rates. In Chicago, the death rate from diabetes in a food desert is twice that of areas with access to grocery stores.
- In 2009, about 20 percent of rural counties lived more than 10 miles from a supermarket

### Food Desert Map – 5 minutes



- *Pass around a paper copy of this map.*
  - This map shows the percentage of people living without a car and with no supermarket store within a mile. Notice that the south eastern part of the country is mostly affected by food scarcity.
  - Notice, also, that many areas of the country are at least somewhat impacted by food scarcity.

### OPTIONAL Video – 8 minutes

- *If you have access to the internet and you have more time, show this video and ask for comments after viewing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrq95WwDohc>*
  - *This video is a trailer of the movie "A Place At The Table," that talks about food deserts*

### **Bible Time – 3 minutes**

- **Exodus 16: 24-25** (NIV)
  - “<sup>24</sup> So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?”  
<sup>25</sup> Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink.”
- **Just like the Israelites, there are a lot of people who cry to God so that God can provide them something to drink and eat. God is looking for every one of us to act at God's favor. We are God's hands and feet.**

### **How to Help – 5 minutes**

- **So who are God's hands and feet today? One example of people are YOUTH addressing food deserts in their communities:**
  - <http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2011/0926/Rural-grocery-stores-fade-but-some-towns-fight-back>
  - *Facilitator, you can summarize this article for the youth.*
- **What else could we do to help reduce food deserts?**
  - **Learn more! Plan extra sessions to learn even more about food deserts and then educate the congregation**
  - *Invite youth to brainstorm other ideas: (examples include: youth starting a community garden or school garden. Youth taking flyers around the community to promote supporting a nearby farmers market. Youth advocating for more healthy food at the school cafeteria).*

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

*Give each youth part of an apple, banana or orange and offer this prayer as they enjoy eating:*

**God of abundance, thank you for this delicious, healthy food we are eating. We pray that we might be your hands and feet to make real your vision when all of your children will enjoy delicious, nutritious food. Amen.**

### **3. Food Waste**

#### **Objectives**

- Understand how much food we waste here in the United States.
- Understand what we are called to do as Christians about food waste.
- Solve ways they can reduce waste on a personal level as well as national.

#### **Materials**

- 10 food items that are all the same (ex: 10 candy bars, 10 apples)\*  
*\*You can either bring in actual food items or you can bring in play food.*  
*\*\*If you have a smaller class, you can use 5 instead of the 10.*

#### **Resources**

- This article has a good chart on page 6 which shows which foods get wasted the most. You may want to print out this graphic to show the students or just look over it yourself.
  - <http://www.nrdc.org/food/files/wasted-food-ip.pdf>
- This article is where many of the resources and information can be found:
  - <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/26/us/food-waste-is-becoming-serious-economic-and-environmental-issue-report-says.html>

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

#### **Activity – 7 minutes**

##### ***Visual Representation of Food Waste***

- *This activity is intended to be a visual representation of how food is wasted in America. It should show the students how much food gets wasted every single day.*
- **Materials:** *You will need the 10 food items. We suggest bringing food or a snack for every student in the class, so those who get their food taken away during the activity don't feel bad. And so students who don't participate can have something as well)*

##### ***During the Activity***

1. *Once all the students are seated, invite 10 students to come up to the front of the room.*
2. *Hand each of the students in front one of the 10 food items.*
3. *Have them stand there so all of the other students can see the food.*
  - a. **The food that each of you is holding represents the food we have available to in the United States.**
4. *Tell the students they can eat the food but first you must inspect the food.*
  - a. **You can eat the food, but before you do so I have to take a look at it to make sure the food meets the right standards.**
5. *As they stand there, 'inspect' each of the food items and for **four** (If you have 5 students up there you will just pick **two**) of the students, you must take their food and tell them they do not pass the test. Use the reasons listed below for why they don't pass inspection.*

Reasons they don't pass:

- **Your packaging is printed in the wrong language.**
  - **Your food is a little deformed so we can't accept it**
  - **When your food was being brought to the store someone accidentally dropped the box, so your food is now ruined.**
6. *Those youth who don't pass the inspection will probably start to ask why or what is going on. They will probably also begin to complain that it is not fair.*
  7. **The reason you had to take their food is that 30-40% of all food in the North America goes to waste.**
    - a. **That equals more than 20 pounds of food per person per month. In a year that is equal to more than 240 pounds.**

**Discussion**

1. **How do you feel knowing that this food is going to waste?**
2. **What are some reasons food is wasted?**
  - a. *In production: For example, while the food is being processed.*
  - b. *In delivery: While the food is on the way to stores or other locations*
  - c. *At home: Throwing away food that could be eaten.*

**OPTIONAL Video Clips – 6-8 minutes**

- *If you have access to Wi-Fi, consider showing clips from the documentary "Just Eat It." You can find them at <http://www.foodwastemovie.com/video/>. The two deleted scenes on celery and cauliflower do a good job showing food waste.*
- *The trailer also talks about the movie and can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/88023628>*

**Video Discussion: {On the deleted scenes}**

1. **Do you think it is right for organizations to throw away food even if it is okay and edible?**
2. **What does this ideal, of having food look perfect, say about us?**

**Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- *At this point you can either read the verse out loud or have the students pick up a Bible and read it in small groups. It is up to you and who you want to read the verse – just make sure to give some background before you read it.*
  - **Now you may remember the Bible story of Jesus feeding the crowd of 5,000. This is one of the verses that follows this story. Hear what Jesus has to say:**
- John 6:12-13 (NIV)
  - *"<sup>12</sup> When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."<sup>13</sup> So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten."*
  - **Jesus clearly says "Let nothing be wasted." Jesus did not want anything to go to waste and called his disciples to pick up what was left over.**

**Discussion – 10 minutes**

- *You can either break up into small groups or have the discussion as a class depending how large your class is.*
  1. **What is one way you could reduce your food waste? *Let them share various things.***  
***If they need more help here are some possible ideas:***
    - a. *Buy only the food that you eat and will eat.*
    - b. *Eat what food you buy*
    - c. *Keep your food fresh and try to maximize freshness*
    - d. *Don't toss food that isn't spoiled. Just because food is past the expiration date doesn't mean it is bad yet.*
    - e. *Avoid the trash and try things like composting or sharing leftover food.**Information found at: [www.gracelinks.org/foodwaste](http://www.gracelinks.org/foodwaste)*
  2. **How can we here at this church do better on not wasting food?**
    - a. *Starting a compost pile, creating a program where leftovers will go to someone in need, etc.*
- *Here is a link to a website that is trying to bring awareness to food waste and to reduce it. Encourage students to possibly get involved with organizations such as:*  
<http://www.foodwastealliance.org/>

**Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

**Dear God, help us to be reminded of what Jesus says that nothing shall be wasted. Help us to instill this ideas in our own lives. Often times we think we need more and more but often we could use less. Thank you for all the things you give us and help us let nothing go to waste. Amen.**

**Additional Resources**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8xwLWb0ILY>
  - *This clip is from John Oliver's "This Week Tonight" it is about food waste in America. It is a 17 minute long video. **WARNING** there is a fair amount of profanity, but it does a good job of describing the issue of food waste.*

## **4. Child Hunger**

### **Note**

- This topic can be difficult to talk about because there may be students in the class who do qualify for this program. It is important to be sensitive and not force anyone to share things they do not feel comfortable sharing. Carefully monitor what students are saying to ensure no feelings are hurt.

### **Objectives**

- Discuss students in the community who do not have enough to eat at school.
- Understand how many students in the United States qualify for free and reduced lunch and how it relates to your class's schools.
- Understand what the Bible tells us to do for those who are in need of our help and how to show them compassion.
- Learn how to be an advocate and to actually stand up for those in their community on hunger related issues, especially related to school's free and reduced lunch programs.

### **Materials**

- Pens
- Paper
- Sample letters
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Bible or copies of verse

### **Resources**

- These links have more information on the topic of free and reduced lunch programs
  - [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/majority-of-us-public-school-students-are-in-poverty/2015/01/15/df7171d0-9ce9-11e4-a7ee-526210d665b4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/majority-of-us-public-school-students-are-in-poverty/2015/01/15/df7171d0-9ce9-11e4-a7ee-526210d665b4_story.html)
  - <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/newsroom/news/2014-15/20140722-01>

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Opening Discussion – 10 minutes**

1. **Have any of you heard of the free and reduced lunch program?**
  - a. *Use this question as a way of knowing who has heard of the program and knows what it does. Let students share what they may know about the program. Remind them to be kind when responding.*
  - b. **Free and reduced lunches are part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) which is a program started by the federal government to provide assisted meal programs to those at public and private schools. It was started in**

**1946 when Harry Truman signed the National School Lunch Act. Now it is used to help students.**

2. **Do any of you know how many students qualify for free and reduced lunch?**
  - a. **21 million children in the United States qualify for free or reduced lunch. From 2012- 2013, over 50% of students qualified for free or reduced lunch.**
  - b. *[If you know local statistics on the numbers in your community it would be a good idea to include them]*
3. **Why do you think we need these programs?**
  - a. *Discuss ideas such as food insecurity and the issues of poverty.*
  - b. *Also try to encourage them to think of things like the systems of society that causes people to get stuck in these cycles of poverty and food insecurity.*
4. **At your school are you able to tell who is on the program?**
  - a. *If students do say there are ways to spot it out then also ask them if they believe it is fair for those students to be singled out.*
  - b. *Hopefully with this follow up question students will start to think about treating people with respect.*

#### **Bible Time – 8 minutes**

- *For this scripture you can either have the students get into groups and read it from the Bibles or just read it out loud to them. Having students read it can often be a good idea.*
- **Luke 10:25-37 (NIV)** – The Good Samaritan

#### **Discussion questions**

1. **How does the story of the Good Samaritan relate to how we should treat those who different than us?**
    - a. *(Those of different classes, races, social group at school.)*
  2. **What would you do if you saw someone who was being bullied because of the fact they are on the free and reduced lunch program? What would Jesus do if he saw this happening? Would he turn away or reach out them?**
  3. **Have you ever been in a situation where you knew you needed to help someone but didn't know how?**
    - a. *Let them share their own personal stories. These don't need to directly relate to those on free and reduced lunch but just in general.*
  4. **How can we stand up for people who are on programs such as free and reduced lunch?**
    - a. *Let them discuss things they can do on a personal level such as trying to treat students at school better etc. Also encourage them to think about things on a larger scale.*
  5. **What are some ways we as a church can stand up for those on these programs?**
    - a. *Try to encourage them to think about more advocacy related things such as letter writings or engaging in rallies or petitions on these topics.*
- **One of the ways we can stand up for those who are different from us is by speaking up to our representatives and taking action. Today we are going to write letters to our senators to encourage them to put a focus on child hunger.**



**OPTIONAL Video Clip – 6-8 minutes**

- *If you have access to Wi-Fi this video is a good way to show students how to be advocates for certain topics. This video works best when shown before you start the letter writing activity. If you are not going to do the video, continue on to the letter writing activity.*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1Dd9Of6KEg>

**Video Discussion Questions**

1. **How do these people stand up for improving the school lunch program?**
  - a. **What sort of action did they need to go through to do this?**

**Letter Writing Activity – 10-15 minutes**

**Materials:** Pens, Paper, Sample letters, Envelopes, Stamps

- *This activity is intended to encourage the students to be advocates for hunger-related issues. It also encourages them to fight for programs that can affect themselves or their peers. A sample letter is on the next page. You can print these out and give the students an outline for how the letter should look. Encourage them, though, to create their own letters and not just copy what is on the page. It is best if each student writes their own letter.*
- *Once everyone has finished their letters collect them and you can have them either pre-addressed or have the students address them – this may depend on time as well. Be sure to tell the students you will mail them or to have them take them home and mail them.*

**Discussion**

1. **Was it difficult or easy to write these letters?**
  - a. *If students say easy be sure to remind them that they are capable of creating change and it can be as easy as writing a letter.*
  - b. *If it was difficult ask them why. Also tell them that advocacy is not always easy, but is still important. Struggle often leads to success.*
2. **Would you ever do this in the future?**
  - a. *Encourage those who may not want to that there are many other things to do besides just letter writing.*

**Wrap-up – 2 minutes**

- *Share the following quote with the students:*
- **“The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But...the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"** – Martin Luther King Jr.

**Closing Prayer – 3 minutes**

**Lord, help us to be reminded on how to care for those who are different to us, so that we may treat them the same as us. Help us to speak up for those who are hungry or in need of our help. Lord, remind us of what Jesus did for the least of these. Help us be the Good Samaritan to those at our schools. Thank you for all you do. Amen.**

*Sample Letter*

Dear Senator/Representative:

Hello! My name is Sally. I am a high school junior and today I am writing you on an import issue: Childhood hunger. Right now in the United States there are 15.8 million children who are food insecure meaning they do not get enough food to eat. That means many of my classmates are food insecure. Our Christian values encourage us to help those who are weak just like the story of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:25-37) Currently, we have programs such as free and reduced lunch which help those who are food insecure. I think it is important to continue support of these programs and expand on them to ensure more children can be food secure. Please continue to support these programs!

Sally Jones  
123 Main St.  
New York City, NY

## **Living with Our World**

*Addressing Our Impacts on God's Good Creation*

### **Sessions in this Unit**

1. How We Transform Our World
2. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
3. Sustainability
4. Advocacy

### **1. How We Transform our World**

#### **Objectives**

- Understand the benefits and costs of changes we make to our environment
- Locate and discuss the Biblical charge to protect the earth

#### **Materials**

- Poster board/paper/white board and Markers to write with
- Bibles or copies of Genesis 2:15

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group*

#### **Opening Discussion – 5 minutes**

##### ***How do we relate to our world?***

- *The following questions are examples of how to begin to engage youth in discussion and thought about our place in creation. Please adapt them to the needs or interests of your own group.*
  1. **When was the last time you were outside? What did you do?**
  2. **Have you grown a plant before? Do you have pets? What's your favorite animal?**
  3. ***Steering the conversation towards climate issues:***
  4. **What would you do if that animal was gone? Or couldn't go outside?**
  5. **How many of you have heard of Climate Change? What are your thoughts on it?**
    - a. *"Climate Change" refers to changes in weather at the global, continental, regional and local levels. Each place around the world experiences different specific changes in their climates, which will have unique impacts on local plants, animals and people.*
- **In 2008, The United Methodist Church passed a Resolution on Global Warming, one of the leading causes of Climate Change. In the resolution, they said:**
  - "...increase in future carbon dioxide concentration is very likely to cause significant warming of the Earth's climate, resulting in a variety of changes. Scientists have observed some changes already occurring, including: sea level rise, shrinking glaciers, changes in the range and distribution of plants and animals, trees blooming earlier, lengthening of growing seasons, ice on rivers

and lakes freezing later and breaking up earlier, and thawing of permafrost. Some of these changes, and other changes not mentioned, may have significant detrimental impacts upon human populations in the future; and unfortunately, many of the impacts may occur in nations with the least ability to adapt, given the economic and social challenges within those nations.”

- **Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?**

### **The Human Impact – 10-20 minutes**

#### ***How are we changing our world?***

- **Even if you don't agree that we cause Climate Change, there are other aspects of our environment that humans have altered and changed. For example, deforestation (the cutting down of trees), changing the course of rivers, introducing dangerous chemicals and fertilizers into farmlands and water streams all impact our environment.**
  1. **What are benefits and downsides of each of these things?**
  2. **Can you think of other impacts we have on our environment?**
    - a. *Feel free to create a cost-benefit (pros-cons) chart on poster board like the one below, or simply use the following chart to guide conversation.*

Impact	Benefits	Costs
Deforestation (The clearing of forest and other landscapes)	-New space for buildings -Lumber	-Destroys animal habitat -Means we have less trees to produce oxygen
Changing/Damming Rivers	-Could provide an alternate power source -Controls flooding -Allows for Irrigation	-Disrupts habitats -Leads to erosion -Could create unequal community access to water
Fertilizers	-Allow us to grow more crops -Makes farmers lives easier - Lets us grow food in more places	-Can contaminate water sources (can poison animals/fish) -Makes plants unable to grow without them (weakens the soil) -Expensive - Creates a cycle of dependency, where you need fertilizers to grow crops

- **While not everyone in the United Methodist Church is united in a belief in Global Warming or Climate Change, our Social Principles (a book of rules, guidelines and beliefs of the international United Methodist Church) tell us that: “... all creation is the Lord's and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it” (pg. 60).**

- While many of the impacts we have on our environment may not seem to directly harm us, we still have a responsibility as Christians to care for our environment. Some of our impacts do directly affect people. Sea level rise has caused the farmland of people living on islands to be flooded with salt. Unable to support themselves off the land, they are forced to leave their traditional homes behind and live as climate refugees. Moreover, issues like pollution and severe weather disproportionately impact low income neighborhoods. Because people living in poverty can't afford to move when things get ugly or take legal action against the companies or policies causing the problem in the first place. We are called to address these injustices and care for not only our neighbors, but the rest of God's creation.
  - Further information on climate refugees can be found at: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e4a5096.html>

### **Bible Time – 10 minutes**

#### ***How are we called to care for our world?***

- As a group, locate and discuss the verse and read it aloud.
- Genesis 2:15
  1. A different translation of the verse from *The Green Bible* reads “God took Man and put him in the garden to *serve and preserve* it”.
    - a. How does the message of the verse change with this translation?
    - b. What does it mean to be stewards of the earth?
    - c. Do you think we are doing a good job as of now?
    - d. How can we, as Christians, do better?

### **Closing Hymn – 5 minutes**

#### ***Finding a Musical Connection to our earth***

- Music is a great way to get closer to God, but not all youth groups are familiar with the following songs, or even comfortable singing. Feel free to substitute this section with a prayer or just read the lyrics as a poem.
- Select one of the hymns from “The United Methodist Hymnal” listed below. Choose one you feel most comfortable with and sing it as a group.
  - #707 - Hymn of Promise
  - #92 - For the Beauty of the Earth
  - #144 - This Is My Father's World
  - #145 - Morning Has Broken

## **2. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

### **Note**

- This session contains two possible activities, one involving the internet. They are designed to be independent, so choose the one which fits best with the interests and resources available to your group. If you do not have an internet connection in your church, consider meeting in a setting (like a coffee shop or member's home) that does.

### **Objectives**

- Understand the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling
- Identify strategies to lessen their impact on the environment

### **Materials**

- **2a (with access to the internet and computers)** Computers or another way to access the internet for each of your group, and Bible
- **2b (alternate discussion)** Youth and Bibles

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group*

### **Introduction – 2-5 minutes**

#### ***How well do you know the 3 R's?***

1. How many of us are familiar with the three Rs? Where have you heard this before?
2. Do you follow them? How else do you work to help the environment?
3. What do you recycle?
4. What do you reuse?
5. How do you reduce?
6. Why do you do those things?

### **2a. With Internet – 20 minutes**

#### ***Introduction***

1. Do you think of yourselves as living an environmentally friendly lifestyle?
2. If everyone lived like you, what do you think the world would look like?

#### ***Calculating our impact***

1. Go to <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/> and have everyone calculate their environmental footprint (including the teacher).
  - a. Everyone may be able to answer each question. This simulation does not account for everyone's experiences, so approximate to the best of your ability. Have them leave the ones they aren't familiar with in the middle of the sliding gauges. For questions about how much is spent on services, the bar can be slid all the way to the left for "I don't know." Access more information about each step by clicking the blue question mark icon.

2. *Debrief*

- a. **What Questions couldn't you answer?**
- b. **How did your results compare to what you thought you'd get? Is that what you thought would happen?**
- 3. *Compare footprints and talk about what changes you'd be willing to make*
- 4. *Show how many worlds we would take up if you put all of the categories at zero.*
  - a. **Why is your impact still so high?**
  - b. **In addition to the behaviors we do each day, like driving to church or eating meat, each person's footprint also includes the "services," such as roads, energy sources, public services, and the military of the country that they live in. Everyone is allocated their share of these societal impacts.**

**Bible Time – 8-10 minutes*****Putting our consumption into perspective***

- Read Matthew 6:26-30
  - **One of our largest impacts on the world is through our use of energy or buying the best and newest products. This verse, however, reminds us that we don't need more things. We already have been provided for. We just need to learn how to more effectively use what God has already given us.**
- **To quote Gandhi: "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."**
  - **Taking this perspective in mind, how can we (as a country) reduce the number of worlds we use?**

**Closing Prayer – 5 minutes**

*You can ask a youth to speak their own or create one like the example that follows:*

**Beloved creator, help us to remember that our faith is a renewable, never ending resource. Guide us in using it to reduce our impact upon this world, reuse the love you have given us to reach others, and recycle hope each and every day.**

**2b. Discussing the Three R's – 3 minutes**

- *Be sure to ask the Youth the indented questions and leave room for discussion.*
- 1. **As consumers in the U.S., we have a lot of power. Recognizing many people's desire for a healthier planet, brands have started marketing green products that have lower environmental impact.**
  - a. **If you had the choice of buying a bottle made from recycled tires or one made from all new material, which would you choose? Why do you want that one?**
  - b. **What about not buying it at all? Can you find a different form of transportation?**
- 2. **It takes resources to manufacture and transport *all* products, even those made from recycled content. At the very least, energy is spent. And the more resources**

**we spend the less we'll have in the future. This is why it's important to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.**

### **Reduce – 8-10 minutes**

- **There's a reason this is the first R we say – it's the most effective of the three R's and a great place to begin. However, it's also the least talked about, and sometimes the most difficult to do. Our culture tells us that bigger is better and that we always should get the newest product and the fastest devices. We end up spending a lot of money to buy the most powerful and most convenient products, even when we don't really need them.**
  - **How much of the stuff in this room do you use every week? Go find something in the room you've never used. Why do we have it? What about in your own room at home?**
- **Now, reducing doesn't mean you have to stop shopping all together. It just encourages you to do it differently.**
  - **What do you currently look for while shopping for clothes, food, toys, or any other product?**
  - **What are things you could be looking for to reduce waste?**
- **Look for things that will last – things that are not just durable and well-made, but useful and beautiful enough to please you for a long time. These things may be more expensive upfront, but they will last longer.**
  - **Aside from changing how we shop, how can we reduce waste?**
- *The following list contains other actions you can take to reduce waste, adapted from the Natural Resources Defense council. You can touch on each of the points in discussion or print them out as a handout (<http://www.nrdc.org/thisgreenlife/0802.asp>) :*
  1. **Buy products that don't have a lot of packaging. Some products are wrapped in many layers of plastic and paperboard even though they don't need to be. You can also look for products packed in materials that don't require a lot of energy or resources to produce. Some products will put that information right on their labels.**
  2. **Instead of buying something you're not going to use very often, see if you can borrow it from someone you know. Sharing is caring.**
  3. **Cars use up energy and cause pollution. Some ways to reduce the environmental damage caused by cars include: carpooling with friends, walking, taking the bus, or riding your bike instead of driving.**
  4. **Start a compost bin. Some people set aside a place in their yard where they can dispose of certain food and plant materials. Over time, the materials will break down through a natural process called decomposition. The compost is good for the soil in your yard and means that less garbage will go to the landfill.**
    - a. *Further information on composting: <http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/howdoescompostingwork/>*
  5. **You can reduce waste by using a computer! Many newspapers and magazines are online now. Instead of buying the paper versions, you can find them on the**



Internet. Also remember that you should print out only what you need. Everything you print that you don't really need is a waste of paper.

- What you buy, believe it or not, has an impact on other people, Even those who live around the world. As a superpower nation and one of greatest consumers, the demand we create for goods has the power to shape the way they are produced and designed. By shopping responsibly, we encourage businesses to practice responsible behavior.

### Reuse – 3 minutes

- Another way to make sure products last longer is to use them as often and as responsibly as possible. Reusing keeps new resources from being used for a while longer, and keeps old resources from entering the waste stream. Using old materials may sound unglamorous, but it's important.
  1. How do we reuse in our own lives?
    - a. (*Shopping at Goodwill, reusing water bottles/dishes, )*
  2. How can you do this more?

### Recycle – 2 minutes

- Recycling is the "R" that has caught on the best. Partly because there are so many curbside recycling programs today (8,660 as of 2006, according to the EPA) that make recycling so darned easy.
  1. Do you have Recycling programs in your neighborhood? How do you decide what needs to be recycled?

### Bible Time – 10 minutes

#### *Putting our consumption into perspective*

1. Why do we have so much stuff?
2. Why do we worry about having the newest, best things?

#### Verse: Matthew 6:26-30

3. *Ask the group to find and read the passage.*
4. We don't need more things. We already have been provided for. We just need to learn how to use what God has already given us more efficiently.
5. To quote Gandhi: "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."
  - a. Taking this perspective in mind, how can we put reduce, reuse, recycle to use in our lives?
  - b. How can we use these in our church?

### Closing Prayer

*You can ask a youth to speak their own or create one like the example that follows:*

**Beloved creator, help us to remember that our faith is a renewable, never ending resource. Guide us in using it to reduce our impact upon this world, reuse the love you have given us to reach others, and recycle hope each and every day.**

### **3. Sustainability**

#### **Objectives**

- Acknowledge the increase of discarded waste on our streets.
- Ponder how we can work with God to decrease the littering problem.
- Discuss possibilities for reducing your carbon footprint.

#### **Materials**

- Trash bags or grocery bags to put trash in
- Sanitary gloves if desired
- Internet access for further information if possible

#### **Group Exercise: Trash Walk – 15 minutes**

- *A trash walk focuses on getting closer to God while cleaning our earth.*
  - *Enlist a no talking rule – unless, of course, it's with God.*
- 1. **Explain: This is a prayer walk. Not only are you actively helping the earth or your home, but you are also getting closer to God with each step.**
- 2. *Provide youth with grocery bags or trash bags. Have them then walk in a group, or split the group into two and have them walk each side of the road.*
- 3. *Start picking up garbage on the sides of the roads (plastics, aluminum cans, litter, etc...). You may wear sanitary gloves or decide to just pick up trash without them. Walk around a block or two.*
- 4. *Afterward, the bags should reflect how much trash we throw out in the land.*
  - a. **We may not see littering and throwing waste as such a big deal, but when we can gather more than a few bags in the radius of a block, we see the serious impact we have on the environment.**
  - b. **Were you surprised by how much you found?**
  - c. **How much of the trash you found could be recycled?**

#### **Sustainability – 15 minutes**

- **What is sustainability?** Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, conditions that permit fulfilling the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations. Sustainability is important to making sure we have – and will continue to have – the water, materials, and resources to protect human health and our environment.
- **Scenarios:** *Discuss these scenarios with students to help them understand different options for living sustainably.*
  1. **You wake up a little early for school on this particular Monday. You remember you have an assignment with a partner who is in the same class as you, lives on the same street in the same neighborhood, and is also on the football team with you. You take different cars to school even though you arrive at the same time. What's**

**one way you can reduce the carbon gases you emit each day going to and coming back from school?**

- a. *By asking for a ride or maybe suggesting a carpool schedule, you would not only help reduce gas emissions, but you save money from gas consumption and wear/tear on your vehicle.*
2. **You recently watched a documentary on how we pollute the earth and throw away too much of our trash when we could be recycling more. Walking into science class on this particular Monday morning, you notice there isn't a recycling bin in the room. On further inspection you notice there isn't a recycling bin in any of the rooms throughout the school. What could you do? Who can you talk to?**
  - a. *You can suggest a recycling plan with your principal or classroom teacher.*
3. **You notice the number of water bottles filling up the trash cans each morning. As student president for the school you have a little influence on swaying the masses on an idea or decision. Any ideas come to mind for fixing this problem? What would be a strategy to reduce, reuse, or recycle?**
  - a. *Informing students and persuading them to try and bring Bottles they can carry around with them, while reusing can take place by filling up in the near water fountain instead of individually buying plastic bottles. Implant a recycle bin near the trash cans on each destination.*

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Close with prayer as you are comfortable.*

### **Further Resources**

- *If you have time before closing, you can explore these materials for further discussion.*
  - This link helps connect teens with resources on Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle: <http://storyofstuff.org/resources/faith-based-program-for-christian-teens/>
  - This link directs you to the United Methodist Women's page for sustainability: <http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/sustainability>
- *Discuss the few excerpts taken from the "United Methodist Social Principles"*
  1. "We urge development of international agreements concerning equitable utilization of the world's resources for human benefit so long as the integrity of earth is maintained." (pg. 20)
    - a. **Can you bring up headlines in our news as an example in our world today?**
  2. "The use of nuclear power is no solution for avoiding CO2 emissions. Nuclear power plants are vulnerable unsafe and potential health risks." (pg. 20)
    - a. **Do we you agree with this social principle? If so, why? Why not?**
  3. "We call for policies that encourage and support a gradual transition to sustainable and organic agriculture." (pg. 19)
    - a. **What problems (if any) will arise when transitioning to an organic agriculture? Price?**

## **4. Advocacy**

### **Objectives**

- Show the interconnectivity of environmental issues in our nation and the world
- Inspire insights on how young people can take up active advocacy in their churches

### **Materials**

- Large ball of yarn
- Paper for name tags
- Internet for video if possible

### **String game – 20 minutes**

#### ***Show the interconnectivity of environmental issues***

**Materials:** Large Ball of yarn, paper for name tags, patience and basic hand eye coordination

1. **What are some environmental issues you've heard about on the news, or impacts humans have on our earth?**
  - a. *(ie: deforestation, littering, endangered animals, oil spills, carbon emissions, ocean acidification, food security, agriculture, GMOs, erosion, overpopulation, flooding global warming, water pollution, consumerism, logging, toxins (from wars), resource wars, etc.)*
2. *As each person says a thing, write that down on a name tag. You want as many impacts as there are people.*
  - a. *Place the name tags in a hat and have the group randomly draw out a slip. That is the issue they will be representing.*
  - b. *Make a name tag for yourself. The facilitator represents Humans.*
3. *Have the group form a circle in an open/spacious classroom. Hold onto the end of the string and toss the yarn to a youth.*
  - a. *Have them say their issue and toss it back to you.*
  - b. *Repeat (Holding on to a piece of yarn each time the ball reaches you, encourage them to do the same).*
4. *After you have a strand of yarn connecting you to each person, ask them to make connections between their issues (ie: how they contribute or cause or relate to each other).*
  - a. *The person holding the ball of yarn must explain how their issue connects to someone else in the circle before throwing the ball of yarn. Anyone can help them make connections. Try to make sure everyone has at least three connections to different issues.*
5. *Once you run out of string or ideas, talk about the web you've formed.*
  - a. **Did any of you think that we'd have this many connections?**
  - b. **How difficult would it be to wind the ball of yarn back up again? Is this tense? How many of you have trouble holding on?**
  - c. **Sometimes when we look at how connected our problems are, we become overwhelmed. We want to stop and give up. But what would happen if**

**humanity gave up and just let go? (*Let go.*) The issues don't go away. We aren't any closer to solving them. We just get farther apart.**

### **Discussion – 10 minutes**

- **So we are called as Christians and United Methodists to stand up and address the issue by being advocates and speaking up for what we believe.**
  - **What is advocacy as people of faith? We do this all the time when approached with a curious bystander who may want to know more about the Christian life or a bystander who doesn't understand it and speaks falsely on the issue. As advocates you will most likely spend a good portion of the time learning and spreading awareness to others who will (hopefully) agree with your viewpoint and contribute in some kind of way.**
  - **What are some ways we advocate?**
- *Show video of large action advocacy.*
  - <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/taking-climate-change-court-teens-suing-states-force-environmental-action/>
  - **What ways can you administer advocacy throughout the places you work? go to school? or Worship?**
- **Sharing information and making a website about causes you believe in are only few of the many ways you can spread your vision to others. Sharing facts, experiences, and visual representation are a few of the many ways you can grab others.**

### **Putting this into action**

- *Make an advocacy plan for your church! (You can print this section for students.)*
  - Ask about creating a green team group that can meet once a week. You can share with each other while learning more about environmental theology.
  - Your team can take up activities around the community and also try attending workshops and conferences dealing with green advocacy.
  - Start enforcing or suggesting commitments and programs in which your green team can practice on a daily level. This can eventually lead to the congregation and their participation in a new and cleaner future.
  - Remember to link Christian faith and teachings to environmental theology while taking up these prayer groups.
  - Make a presentation to your congregation on why and how we should take up these programs.
  - Place signs all around your church reminding people to keep up their commitments. Also placing them about trash bins and recycle bins will give them a flash of remembrance.
  - Talk to your pastor or board of trustees about recycling, reducing, and reusing programs that your church may adopt as a whole. In other words, spread your movement and teaching to affect the rest of the congregation.

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Close with prayer as you are comfortable. Perhaps ask for guidance with your future environmental endeavors.*

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**More Fun:**

A computer game which teaches us how the recycling center works:

<http://iwanttoberecycled.org/game>

A great source for more resources:

<https://acespace.org/students>

**More Knowledge:**

How your church can adopt environmental views:

<http://www.eco-justice.org/Greening-Leadership.asp>

A Pastoral Letter from the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church:

[http://s3.amazonaws.com/Website\\_Properties/council-of-bishops/documents/grc\\_letter\\_english\\_1010.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/Website_Properties/council-of-bishops/documents/grc_letter_english_1010.pdf)

UMC's 2008 Resolution on Global Warming:

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/resolution-on-global-warming>

An article on Reducing reusing and recycling:

<http://www.nrdc.org/thisgreenlife/0802.asp>

The United Methodist Women's Guide to Sustainability:

<http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/sustainability>

Other Youth Curriculum:

<http://storyofstuff.org/resources/faith-based-program-for-christian-teens/>

**More Stories: (Many are available on Netflix)**

TEDTalks: Environment: Project Makeover

General Orders No. 9

Yert

Showing your class the Documentary **Trashed** will also be a great resource and help open there eyes to the rest of the world and show them images that they may not be able to witness.

It can be found and purchased on Google play, iTunes and YouTube.

However, the one section of the documentary shows some graphic content, including stillborns/mutated fetuses in jars, severe birth defects and dead animals. If you feel this is too intense for your group do not show it.

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## **Breaking Borders**

### *Topics in Immigration*

#### **Sessions in this Unit**

1. Diversity
2. Language Diversity
3. The Least of These
4. Community Building

### **1. Diversity**

#### **Objectives:**

- Acknowledge others and their different backgrounds (language, food, music).
- Acknowledge that people from different cultural backgrounds react differently.
- Respect others and their backgrounds/ beliefs.

#### **Materials**

- Bibles or copies of 1 Corinthians 12:12
- World map poster/printout
- Pins/markers/colored pencils
- Paper

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as your group is comfortable.*

#### **Icebreaker – 6 minutes**

1. *To ensure group engagement, have the youth stand in a circle for this activity.*
2. *Youth leader or a volunteer can begin the activity by stating his/her name followed by their favorite (sport/animal/action).*
3. *The next person has to continue the trend by repeating what the previous player said in addition to their own information.*
  - a. *For example: "My name is Ama, and I like basketball." The next player is Amy and she says, "My name is Amy, and I like Hockey. Ama likes basketball."*
4. *Continue until you reach the last person.*

#### **Scripture – 3 minutes**

- 1 Corinthians 12:12 - Unity and Diversity in the Body
  - *"<sup>12</sup>Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ."*
  - **Just like diverse body parts make one working body, diverse people make one working community.**

### **Exercise: Who are we? – 12 minutes**

**Materials:** World map poster/printout, pins/markers/colored pencils, paper

1. *Print out the set of questions (next page), projector them, or write them on a board.*
2. *Have a world map and pins so that students can pin countries they've visited on the map, or print a small map and have them color in countries.*
3. *Have youth work in twos or threes (depending on number of members present) with people they're not sitting next to or aren't familiar with.*
4. *Each person will ask their partner the questions on the following page. Based on the responses they receive, they will create a word cloud to represent their partner.*
  - a. *To create a word cloud write words in different directions, sizes, colors or fonts. Example on following page.*
5. *After everyone has asked, answered, and marked the map, call group back to order.*
6. *Ask for volunteers to start sharing*
  - a. *Sharing will involve introducing your partner to the rest of the group and providing all of their answers to the questions.*
7. *Continue until the entire group has had a chance to share*

### **Questions for Who are we? Exercise**

- What is your name?
- Where are you from? (Hometown).
- Do you have relatives from other parts of the world? If yes, where? Have you been there? If yes, what was your experience?
- Do you speak any languages besides English? If yes what?
- Have you travelled to a different country? If yes, where?
- Do you play an instrument? If yes, what? If no, what do you wish you to play?
- Do you have a pet? If yes what? If no what would you like to have/ why?
- Do you play sports? If yes, what? If no, what is your favorite sport?
- What is your favorite Bible story? Why?
- What country would you like to visit? Why?

### **Discussion – 5-10 minutes**

1. **Do you have friends from other parts of the world? Where?**
2. **Why do people migrate?**
  - a. **OPTIONAL Video: 5 minutes** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXQd21to6xg>
  - b. **This video is about why people migrate**
3. **How are we treating others from different cultures?**
4. **How can we best treat our neighbors and others who are from different cultures/ countries?**

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *The closing prayer can be a prayer for diversity, inclusion or understanding.*



## **2. Language Diversity**

### **Objectives**

- Understand that language is part of culture
- Respect language diversity

### **Materials**

- Pens
- Paper
- Timer
- Bible or copy of Acts 2:1-12

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Icebreaker / Introduction – 7 minutes**

**Materials:** Pens, paper, timer

#### ***Game – 5 minutes***

- *Divide students into teams of 3-5. Give them a pen and paper and give them three minutes to write down the names of as many languages as they can think of. At the end of three minutes, see which group has the most!*

#### ***Wrap-up – 2 minutes***

- *Have students guess how many spoken languages exist*
  - **There are 6,909 distinct languages in the world!<sup>1</sup>**
  - **As of 2009, at least a portion of the Bible had been translated into 2,508 different languages.<sup>2</sup>**
- **Today's lesson will be about language diversity. Language diversity means having a variety of languages spoken in one place**

### **Scripture – 7 minutes**

- Acts 2:1-12 - Pentecost
  1. **What happened in this scripture?**
  2. **Why did the disciples start speaking other languages?**
  3. **How did the people react when the disciples started speaking?**
- *The students should begin to understand why the disciples started speaking in other languages instead of in their own and why that is important. This idea will be fully developed later in the lesson, but this is the starting point.*

### **Language diversity in the US - 8 minutes**

#### ***Exercise – 3 minutes***

- *In this exercise, students will be asked to divide based on their ancestry. Ask students to go to different areas of the room based on the continent they, their parents, or their*

*ancestors are from. Ask each student what country their family comes from, as well as what language is spoken in that country.*

- *If available, use a map and pushpins or color in a small printed map to show global representation. This activity shows diversity in the group even though all of the students live in the same place.*

#### **Discussion – 5 minutes**

1. **Look at how many languages were represented by your heritage!**
  2. **How many of you speak a second language? A third language? More?**
  3. **The US has no official language. Why is that important?**
  4. **What languages are spoken in the US?**
- *Here the students should start thinking about language diversity in the US. There are over 6,000 languages and more than one is spoken here. The US is a very diverse place and by not having an official language it's implied that all languages are important here.*

#### **Why is language important? – 7-9 minutes**

##### **Option A – 2 minutes**

- *Watch the Coca-Cola Superbowl commercial where “America the Beautiful” was sung in several languages: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ry6aFSK6UEk>*

##### **Option B – 2 minutes**

- *Sing a hymn (i.e. The Faith We Sing #2186, “Canto de esperanza”) in Spanish, then in English*

#### **Discussion – 5 minutes**

1. **What were your thoughts during the activity?**
  2. **Why do you think the video or hymn uses more than one language?**
  3. **What does language mean to the people who speak it?**
  4. **Reconnect to scripture - Why is it important that the disciples spoke in several languages?**
  5. **How can we appreciate language diversity?**
- *This exercise and discussion sums up the lesson and ties it back to the scripture. By showing students important cultural songs in other languages, you are showing them the importance of having these things in your own language. Language allows you to relate to something more personally, which is why the disciples spoke in tongues.*

#### **Wrap-Up – 4 Minutes**

- *Use this time to make any closing points you feel are necessary*
- *Review objectives*
  - *Students understand that language is part of culture*
  - *Students respect language diversity*
- *Closing prayer*
  - *Prayers for understanding and appreciation of other languages, cultures and people are good here. The students could pray in another language if desired.*

<sup>1-2</sup> <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/content/how-many-languages-are-there-world>

### **3. The Least of These**

#### **Objectives**

- Students understand immigrants are some of the least of these are in today's world
- Students understand how the scripture asks us to treat the least of these
- Students have ideas for real-world application

#### **Materials**

- Small trashcan
- Scrap paper
- Candy or small prizes
- Bible or copy of Matthew 25:31-46
- Copies of additional resources

#### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

#### **Icebreaker/Introduction - 8 minutes**

**Materials:** Small trashcan, scrap paper, candy or small prizes for everyone

#### **Game – 4 minutes**

1. *Place a waste basket at the front of the room.*
2. *Have the youth sit so that some are only a few feet from the basket, others are 7-10 feet away, and the rest are 15-20 feet away.*
3. *Give each student a piece of paper to crumple into a ball, then have them throw it into the trashcan from where they are sitting.*
  - a. *If you would like to lengthen this activity, give each youth 2-3 pieces of paper.*
4. *Those that succeed get candy or some kind of small reward.*

#### **Discuss – 3 minutes**

1. **Did you think this activity was fair?**
  2. **Why or why not?**
  3. **How could it be made fairer?**
- *Announce that anyone who has not received the candy or small reward will get some, and pass it out accordingly. If you want to extend this activity further change the game and play it according to the suggestions made by the youth on how to make it fairer.*
  - *This activity gives the students an introduction to privilege, which can be very hard to talk about. Privilege is an abstract concept with concrete effects and in this activity the students can see the concrete effects on a smaller scale. By placing the students farther away from the trashcan a concrete representation of being at a social and economic disadvantage is created.*

#### **Transition – 1 minute**

- **This activity demonstrates privilege and disadvantage. Jesus spoke very clearly about how we as Christians should treat those who are financially or socially disadvantaged.**

**Scripture – 8 minutes**

- Matthew 25:31-46 – Parable of the sheep and the goats
  - *This is a longer passage, so students can take turns reading, or read in another way if desired.*
- 1. **What are your initial thoughts?**
- 2. **What does Jesus ask us to do in this scripture?**
- 3. **Who are the least of these in the scripture?**
- 4. **Any other thoughts?**
- *This scripture does mention hell, so some questions about it may arise. Focus significantly more on being compassionate than on being punished. Steer students both towards charitable compassion and compassion with justice. (ie. food banks to help feed the hungry; policy changes to food stamps and the minimum wage to prevent hunger in the first place).*

**Immigrants as the Least of These – 10 minutes****Read – 3 minutes**

- *Read the following immigrant story from Justice For Our Neighbors. **Bolded words are defined after the story.***

**Julio's Story**

Julio was born in a small village in Guatemala in the 1950s. When he was a young man, the civil war in his country intensified and he was eventually forced to join the Civil Patrols in the fight against the guerrilla. This placed his life in extreme danger, and he eventually was forced to flee Guatemala in the early 1990s. Shortly after his arrival in the U.S., he filed for **asylum** using a **notario**. However, like so many other Guatemalans, he missed a crucial deadline which would have made his path to residency much easier, and thus his prospects were limited.

The U.S. government agency charged with **adjudicating** asylum claims was plagued with backlogs in processing these applications and thus he did not receive his asylum interview until 2007, 15 years after he filed. At the time of the interview, the government denied his application, reasoning that during the 15 years that they made him wait for his “day in court,” conditions had improved in Guatemala and the government concluded that he no longer qualified for asylum. Consequently, they started the process of seeking his **deportation**. At this point, Julio came to **Justice for Our Neighbors**-Nebraska for help. While in removal proceedings, he met and married his wife, who was born in the U.S. Additionally, his brother, a U.S. citizen had filed a **petition** for him in 2000, and this provided him with an exception to the normal rule that would **bar** his adjustment of status because of his manner of entry.

JFONNE assisted Julio and his wife with a family based petition and requested that his removal proceedings be terminated. This cleared the path for him to obtain his first interview with USCIS last month. At that interview, we were extremely happy to learn that after twenty years of living in the U.S., working in the U.S., and paying taxes, Julio's hard journey had finally concluded. He was granted **Lawful Permanent Residence** status. Julio is happy with his family, knowing that they no longer need to fear being separated.

From the desk of Charles Shane Ellison, Regional Attorney - From website May 2014

**adjudicating** - pronounce or declare judicially, decide in court

**asylum** - the protection granted by a nation to someone who has left their native country as a political refugee, declared in court after entering the new country

**bar** - being forbidden to re-enter the country

**deportation** - expel (a foreigner) from a country

**Justice for Our Neighbors** - “a network of 14 state chapters offering more than 35 legal clinics for immigration services. All JFON projects across the country are staffed by local full-time, paid attorneys. The foundation of our work is to provide immigration legal services in a wide, genuine, and compassionate sense—welcoming and helping immigrants who are often scared and confused by the systems and ways of the United States, and with no other sources of immigration legal assistance because of their low income. Our attorneys provide free, professional legal services to low-income immigrants in weekly consultations and monthly legal clinics held at host partner locations.”

**lawful permanent residence** - is the immigration status of a person authorized to live and work in the a different country permanently.

**notario** - a notary or person with legal experience, but not an immigration lawyer or someone with legal authority

**petition** - a request by a citizen of a country to allow a family member or spouse to move to that country with a visa (green card)

### ***Discuss – 5 minutes***

1. **Do you have any questions?**
  2. **What were your initial thoughts? What surprised you?**
  3. **Did this story sound fair?**
  4. **How could things be made fairer for immigrants like Julio?**
- *After 15 years in the US, Julio was going to be sent back to his home country. Steer the students towards understanding the effects of that on him, his family, and his community. It is important to note that Julio had a petition filed for him by a US citizen and married a US citizen who could file a new petition for him. Had this not been the case he would not have been able to stay and would have been sent back to Guatemala regardless of what he had established here.*

### **Application - 5 minutes**

#### ***Call to action – 3 minutes***

- *Tell students that they will be voters in a few years and their voices matter. Provide copies of the postcard below. Let the students know that they can call after hours if they would rather leave a message, and say that they can tell their representatives that in a few years they will be able to vote.*

- *The resources below from Nebraska Appleseed can also be provided. For more action ideas, ask the students! Can they think of ways to help immigrants?*

**Wrap-up – 2 minutes**

- Matthew 25:40
  - “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’
- Closing Prayer
  - *For the closing prayer you can read the excerpt on immigrants from the United Methodist Social Principles and/or say a prayer of compassion for immigrants.*

## It's time for common-sense immigration laws that uphold our values and move us forward.

**Your voice makes a difference!** Take a moment to call your senators and your representative and leave a short message (after hours is fine!).

Hi, my name is [your name] and I live at [state your address]. [Add a short sentence....choose your message:]

- I'm calling to urge you to pass common-sense immigration laws this year with clear process for citizenship for aspiring citizens.
- It's time to fix our decades out-of-date immigration laws to align with our values, recognize immigrant contributions, and support our future.
- Let's create a common-sense process that keeps families together, has a clear and direct path to citizenship, and supports Nebraska communities and businesses.

**Senator Fischer:** (202) 224-6551 or (402) 441-4600

**Senator Sasse:** (202) 224-4224 or (402) 476-1400

**Rep. Fortenberry:** (202) 225-4806 or (402) 438-1598

**Rep. Ashford:** (202) 225-4155 or (402) 916-5678

**Rep. Smith:** (202) 225-6435 or (308) 384-3900

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## It's time for common-sense immigration laws that uphold our values and move us forward.

**Your voice makes a difference!** Take a moment to call your senators and your representative and leave a short message (after hours is fine!).

Hi, my name is [your name] and I live at [state your address]. [Add a short sentence....choose your message:]

- I'm calling to urge you to pass common-sense immigration laws this year with clear process for citizenship for aspiring citizens.
- It's time to fix our decades out-of-date immigration laws to align with our values, recognize immigrant contributions, and support our future.
- Let's create a common-sense process that keeps families together, has a clear and direct path to citizenship, and supports Nebraska communities and businesses.

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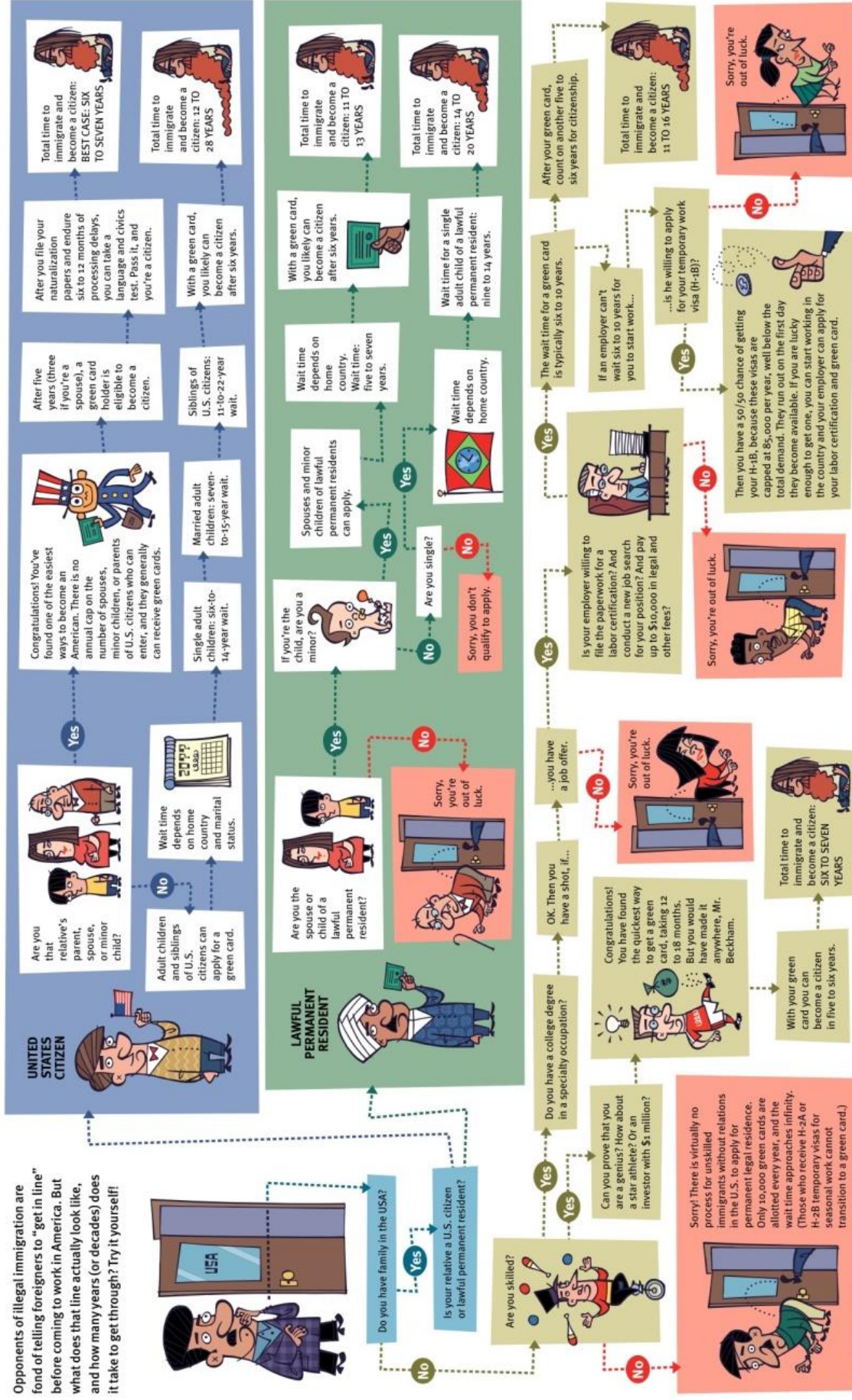


# What Part of Legal Immigration Don't You Understand?

Mike Flynn and Shikha Dalmia

Illustrated by Terry Colon

Opponents of illegal immigration are fond of telling foreigners to "get in line" before coming to work in America. But what does that line actually look like, and how many years (or decades) does it take to get through? Try it yourself!



(Flynn is director of government affairs and Dalmia is a senior policy analyst at Reason Foundation. This chart was developed by Reason Foundation in collaboration with the National Foundation for American Policy.)



# ONE EVENT CAN HAVE MANY CONSEQUENCES



Jorge Garcia is an undocumented resident of the U.S. He came here in search of a better life. He lives with his partner Elise, a U.S. citizen. Because Jorge entered the country without documentation he cannot gain status through marriage.



## THE GARCIAS ARE A PART OF THEIR COMMUNITY



Jorge works at a factory.  
Elise is a teacher.



He pays rent to a landlord.



Elise buys food and clothing at the local store.



Their children, Nina and Ben go to grade school in town.



They volunteer with their local church.

## BUT, THEN ONE DAY ...



Jorge is pulled over for having a broken taillight. The police realize he doesn't have papers and he is arrested.



He is detained for several months in an out-of-state prison.



He is eventually deported, never to return.

## SO...



Jorge stops coming to work. Other workers are afraid they might get picked up. Some stop coming to work too.



Without the support of Jorge's income, Elise cannot afford the rent. She is evicted and moves in with cousins who live in a different town. The psychological strain is enormous because she is financially strained and her kids have become despondent and worried.

## AND...



Employers lose experienced workers. Families lose income. Landlords lose tenants. Storeowners lose revenue. The small town starts to lose its tax base, people begin to leave and the town's economic activity declines.



Nina and Ben switch schools suddenly because of the move. They feel abandoned and isolated in their new environment.



Nina and Ben's friends and former classmates hear of the deportation, become fearful and miss days of school.



Elise's cousins are stretched thin and overcrowded with three new family members, their household goes from four to seven overnight.\*

\*Nina and Ben were lucky to have two parents present. At any given moment 5,000 foster care children are children of deported parents.

## DEPORTATION POLICY CREATES A CLIMATE OF FEAR AND PARALYSIS IN COMMUNITIES.



People are afraid to drive,



afraid to use parks and exercise outdoors,



afraid to use public services like clinics



and afraid to get involved in their communities.



June 2013  
familyunityfamilyhealth.org

## **4. Community Building**

### **Objectives**

- Define a community.
- Identify the importance of a community.
- Identify what the community means to us.
- Identify ways to involve and include others in our community.

### **Materials**

- 12 Solo cups
- Pack of playing cards
- Box of bendy straws
- Timer
- Bibles or copies of Jeremiah 29:7
- Internet access for videos if possible

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Icebreaker – 10 minutes**

#### ***Working together for the community – 5 minutes***

**Materials:** 12 Solo cups, pack of playing cards, box of bendy straws, timer

1. *In this activity, number off from 1-3 and have all 1's in a team, 2's in a team and 3's in a team.*
2. *Put each group in a different space so they cannot see what the other teams have to build with.*
3. *Instruct each team to build the tallest standing structure with their resources in 3 minutes.*
  - a. *Provide team 1 with 12 red solo cups, 2's with playing cards, and 3's with straws.*
4. *Afterwards, ask each team to share how they achieved the final product and discuss*

### **Questions – 5 minutes**

1. **Did you feel it was fair that each team had different materials?**
  2. **What prevented you from asking other teams for help?**
  3. **How would working as a community have helped you?**
- *At the beginning of the discussion, hold the losing teams responsible for their failures with comments like "Why didn't you try harder?" and "I think you're just lazy." This helps them see that we don't always look at what disadvantages or advantages people may have when judging them. This game also encourages them to question inequality in separate groups and to put smaller groups aside and work as a large community.*

### **Scripture – 3 minutes**

- Jeremiah 29:7 (NIV)

- “Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”
- 1. **What does this verse say about community?**
- 2. **Why is community good for you?**
- 3. **How can we seek peace and prosperity for our communities locally? Nationally? Internationally?**
- *This verse says that we should pray for and care for our communities. If they do well, than we will too! Steer the students towards understanding the benefits of community and how they can impact the communities to which they belong.*

### **Videos on Team Work – 10 minutes**

*Select at least two of the videos (all four are recommended) and watch them with the group*

- **3:27** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzF23qI3Djw>
  - Kid President pep talk about teamwork and leadership
- **2:12** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm1gh5GAmWc>
  - Team work motivational video
- **1:22** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9j3-ghRjBs>
  - Funny animal teamwork
- **2:48** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S02D9QzDe4s>
  - Remember the Titans clip about teamwork

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. **Name a theme that was present in all activities/videos**
- 2. **What are you thinking after watching these videos?**
- 3. **What are qualities of a good team/ community?**
- 4. **What are ways in which we can build an inclusive community?**
- *During the discussion, steer students towards thinking about their communities on a local, national and international level. Try to transition from team work to community during the third question and use the fourth question as a way to talk about being inclusive on a local, national and international level.*

### **Ending Team Activity – 10 minutes**

- *Play “the human knot”*
  - 1. *Have students stand in a circle*
  - 2. *Students hold hands with two different people who aren’t immediately next to them*
  - 3. *Without letting go of each other’s hands, the students must disentangle the knot until they are standing in an untangled circle*
  - 4. *Video instructions: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjhxce\\_D2MI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjhxce_D2MI)*
- *The human knot is an excellent opportunity to record some great video of the students! For larger groups (12+), split students into two groups and have them compete to see who can untangle the fastest! The task may also take longer than 10 minutes.*

### **Closing Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *The closing prayer can be a prayer for community diversity, inclusion or understanding.*

## **Becoming Peacemakers**

### *Finding the Need for Peace in Our Communities*

#### **Sessions in this Unit**

1. Building Awareness
2. Causes of Conflict
3. Providing Healing
4. Plan of Action

### **1. Building Awareness**

#### **Objectives**

- Understand the types of conflict that occur between individuals, local and global communities.
- Understand what commitment to nonviolence means.
- Use a song to maintain hope when working for peace and unity in our commitment to this work.

#### **Materials**

- Sticky notes (all the same color)
- Bibles or copies of Genesis 1:27
- Internet access or copy of the song
- Copies of song lyrics and missing lyrics sheet
- Materials for students to take notes if desired

#### **Opening Prayer – 3 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

#### **Introduction**

- **Welcome, everyone. Over the next couple of sessions we're going to learn about what it means to be peacemakers. Peacemakers are people who use nonviolent methods to solve conflicts. Let's get started.**

#### **Examples of violence – 5 minutes**

1. *Pass out sticky notes (all the same color)*
2. *Ask students to write down examples of violence in the world and in your communities. Be both broad and specific.*
3. *Put sticky notes on the front board or spread them out on the table, whatever works for everyone to see.*
4. *Discuss common themes such as gun violence, bullying, international conflict, etc.*
  - a. *Be mindful of topics that may be personally difficult for students*

#### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Genesis 1:27 "So God created humankind in His image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

- *Read the verse aloud as a group or ask for a volunteer.*
- 1. **What does it mean to be created in the image of God?**
- 2. **Everything made by God is valuable as part of God's creation, therefore how can we treat God's creation with respect while wrestling with conflicts?**
- 3. **Knowing that all human beings are part of God's creation, we should stand up by taking actions that honor the dignity and worth of every human being. Why does this not work with using violence?**

#### **United Methodist Social Principles – 4 minutes**

- **Have you heard of the “The United Methodist Social Principles” before?**
  - *If yes, ask them to share what they know with the group.*
- **The Social Principles are the official stance of the church and serve as guidelines for United Methodist. They are developed by the General Conference, which is a global collection of clergy and lay people who meet every four years.**
  - **One of the principles says: “As disciples of Christ, we are called to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as reconcilers of conflict” (pg. 50)**
- **While each member can choose for themselves how to follow these, they are a good example of how we can define our work as members of the United Methodist Church.**

#### **Defining Nonviolence – 3 minutes**

- **Since both the Bible and our Social Principles say that we should reconcile conflict without using violence, we have to decide what we can do instead. What does the word ‘nonviolence’ mean to each of you?**
  - *You can have students share their responses out loud or give them a couple minutes to write. Some may think nonviolence is passive, but the goal is to draw out the fact that it doesn’t cause harm and that it actively and intentionally works against violence.*

#### **Musical Activity: A Song of Peace – 10 minutes**

- **The song can be found via YouTube under the title “‘A Song of Peace’ with lyrics”**  
<http://youtu.be/mxidrVmwznU>
  - *Play the song at least twice and ask students to pay close attention to the lyrics.*
  - *While the song is playing, ask students to draw what the song makes them think about or feel.*
  - *After playing the song twice, pass out the song lyrics so students can look at them later.*
  - **So we want to respect each other and stop violence from happening. In the next lessons we’ll talk more about why this is important and what we can do to help.**

#### **Closing Review – 5 minutes**

1. **Do you feel you have a better grasp of the difference between violence and peace?**
2. **Do you understand why nonviolence is important to God’s will?**
3. **What do you think peace and nonviolence looks like in word and action?**

### **“A Song of Peace” Lyrics**

If I could write a magic song that everyone could sing  
I would write of love, of hope and joy, and things that peace could bring  
And when we sang my magic song, all hate and war would cease  
If I could write a magic song, I'd write a song of Peace  
    One song for all of us  
    One song could bring us peace  
    One song could make a miracle for all us .  
    A song of peace.  
    With just one song,  
    One magic song that everyone could bring  
We could sing of love, of hope and joy, and things that peace can bring.  
And we sang our magic song all hate and war would cease.  
With just one song, one magic song, the world could fill with peace.

    ( Part 1 )

    One song for all of us.

    ( Part 2 )

    One song for all of us.

    ( Part 1 )

    One song could bring us peace.

    ( Part 2 )

    One song, peace.

    ( Part 1 )

    One song could make a miracle

    ( Part 2 )

    One song, miracle

    ( Part 1 )

    for all of us. A song of peace

    ( Part 2 )

    for all of us. A song of peace

    ( Part 1 )

    A song of Peace

    ( Part 2 )

    A song of Peace

    ( Solo )

    A song of Peace

## **2. Causes of Conflict**

### **Objectives**

- Identify several causes of conflict
- Understand the impact of violence on individuals and on the community
- Realize why it is important to find and use nonviolent methods
- Recognize the need to talk about violence and identify it in our lives

### **Materials**

- Bibles or copies of Matthew 5:38-39
- Collection of different sized boxes. As many as you can gather to help students visualize the activity. In each box, put a piece of paper or other label with one resource on it: Oil, Grain, Land, Metal, Gold, Minerals, Weapons, Religion, etc.
- Internet access or review of South Carolina story

### **Opening Prayer – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Matthew 5:38-39
  - *Read aloud as a group or ask for a volunteer.*
  - “<sup>38</sup>You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’  
<sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also”
- 1. **This is a verse many of you probably have heard before. How have you heard this verse used in the past?**
- 2. **What does this verse mean to you individually?**
- 3. **Thinking about our discussion last time, how do you think this verse relates to nonviolence?**
- 4. **Do you think “turning the other cheek” means not doing anything?**
- 5. **Or does it mean reacting in a different, more helpful way?**

### **Example**

- **Let’s think about a recent example of this. How many of you heard about the shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina? How many of you heard that the families of the victims forgave the shooter?**
  - *Story and video: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/families-show-forgiveness-for-alleged-church-shooter/>*
- 1. **What do you think about their choice to forgive?**
- 2. **What do you notice about their language, using words like ‘love’?**
- 3. **Do you think you could do the same in a similar situation?**

### **Resource War – 10 minutes**

1. *Place a pile of empty boxes of various sizes in the middle of the room.*

- a. *Tell students can take a minute to brainstorm things they would be willing to fight for (iPhone, family pictures, pets, etc.)*
2. *Split students into Group A and Group B and have them stand on opposite sides of the room.*
3. *Give Group B almost all of the boxes. Group A is left with only a few small ones.*
  - a. **Group B, prepare defenses to protect your boxes. You don't want to lose any of them. You can use tables, chairs, and the boxes. Just be careful not to hurt yourselves.**
  - b. **Group A, in a minute, you're going to go over, knock down Group B's defenses, take the boxes, and bring them back to your side of the room. Don't actually hurt anyone. And Group B, you can't physically fight back. Ready? Go.**
4. *Once Group A is back on their side of the room:*
  - a. **Group B, since you don't have any boxes, you now have no power to take back what you've lost.**
5. *Tell students to open the boxes.*
  - a. *Slips of paper inside have words written on them: Water, Oil, Grain, Land, Metal, Gold, Minerals, Weapons, Religion, etc.*
  - b. **What you were willing to fight for might be different, but these words and boxes show some of the things community groups often fight over. When one group is left with nothing, they may want to fight for revenge or for survival.**

### **Discuss**

1. **What was Group A's motivation for taking the boxes?**
  - a. **What was Group B's motivation for defending them?**
2. **Group B, how did you feel when you were left with nothing?"**
  - a. **What would they like to do in revenge?**
3. **What would have been different if Group B had offered to share their boxes? Or if Group A hadn't taken all of them away?**
4. **Let's look back to our sticky notes from last time. Were any of these examples of violence caused by something found in these boxes?**

### **Impact of Violence – 2 minutes**

- **As we just discussed, neither group was happy about being left with nothing. Group B may even want to do something worse to Group A to get back their boxes and get revenge for having them taken away. Similarly, when groups are hurt by violence they are left without the physical things they need to support themselves and they may have psychological trauma from what they've experienced.**
- **The fact is violence is a short-term solution with long-term consequences. It leaves all groups feeling hurt and struggling to survive. Violent retaliation against injustice would only continue this pattern. So not only do we have a Biblical call to use nonviolence, it's also a logical choice.**
  - *For more information on the psychological impacts of violence, you can use:*  
<http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/indexa9e2.html?pageId=2026>



**Closing Review - 5 minutes**

1. **What are some of the reasons people chose to fight each other?**
  2. **What effect does this fighting have on people's lives and communities?**
  3. **Why is it important to find and use nonviolent methods?**
  4. **Why is it important to talk about conflict resolution? How does it present itself in our daily lives?**
- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*

### **3. Providing Healing**

#### **Objectives**

- Recognize what are our churches, schools, governments, and families are doing to fill needs and prevent violence.
- Brainstorm what we can do to help while respecting individual dignity

#### **Materials**

- Bibles or copies of Matthew 5:9
- Pile of boxes from previous lesson but half should be given new slips of paper. Slips should have words typically given in charity: Shelter, Food, Water, Clothes, etc. There does not have to be an equal distribution of words. For example, you can have lots of Clothes boxes but few Shelter boxes. The other half can have the same words as before, keep the two piles separate.

#### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers"
  - *Have students look up the verse on their own or read it as a group.*
  - **What does it mean to be a peacemaker? Come up with at least five behaviors you believe a peacemaker possesses.**

#### **Avenues of Healing – 20 minutes**

##### ***Transition – 5 minutes***

- Thinking back to our illustration last time, we're going to brainstorm some ways to solve conflicts without hurting one another.
  - *Write student responses on a front board if possible.*
  - **After Group A took the boxes from Group B, what might Group B need to survive?**
  - **How can we get these things to people in need?**

##### ***Activity – 5 minutes***

1. *Have students split back into Group A and Group B but pull a few from each to form Group C.*
2. ***Give the boxes with the words from the previous session to Group A. Give the new boxes to Group C.***
3. **Group A, you hang out and hold onto your boxes.**
4. **Group C, take about half of your boxes to Group B. Don't worry, you have your own boxes at home. This is you helping out Group B.**
5. **Group B, open the boxes, read what you've been given, then set them aside. You've used them up.**
6. **Group C, bring the rest of your boxes to Group B. Open them and see that these include some more helpful things, but they also get used up.**

##### ***Discussion – 10 minutes***

1. **Resources don't last forever, right? So even though Group C can give Group B some boxes, the boxes get used up and Group B still doesn't have enough to survive.**

2. **And what if the boxes Group C gives to Group B aren't the ones they need? What did the words in the boxes say? Did you have more of one supply than another?**
3. **What happens to groups if they have lots of shelter but no food? Or lots of clothing but no political power to influence how their country is run?**
4. **If Group C helps Group B without talking to them, has either group learned anything?**
5. **This is why it's important not only to help with immediate needs but with long-term needs. And to pair this with building relationships. As we will talk about tomorrow, building connections and understanding each other helps a lot with stopping conflict from happening in the first place.**

**Closing Review – 5 minutes**

1. **What did Group C giving to Group B remind you of?**
    - a. *Hopefully charity work.*
  2. **Do you see how giving cannot be maintained over time? And how something it isn't what a group needs most to live?**
  3. **Do you see how even when a group like Group C gives with love, they can fail to understand the perspectives and needs of the recipients?**
- *Please close with prayer as you are comfortable with your group.*

## **4. Plan of Action**

### **Objectives**

- Make a plan for what to do moving forward

### **Materials**

- Bibles or copies of Jeremiah 29:7
- Action Handout - copies for every student if possible

### **Introduction – 2 minutes**

- *Please pray as you are comfortable with your group.*
- **The last couple days we've done a lot to learn why people get into conflicts and how charity is one form of helping victims recover. Today we're going to talk about other things you can do to contribute to peace.**

### **Bible Time – 5 minutes**

- Jeremiah 29:7 “seek the shalom of the community because it is in shalom that you will find your shalom”
  1. **What does the word ‘Shalom’ mean?**
    - a. *Students can look it up if they don't know.*
  2. **What does the word ‘community’ mean to you?**
  3. **What does it mean to live in communion?**

### **Causes of Violence –**

#### **Transition – 5 minutes**

- **Thinking back to our illustration, what would have stopped Group A and Group B from fighting in the first place? Besides resources, what are reasons people fight?**
  - *Responses will likely include both resources and attitudes, e.g. not liking someone's religion or race.*
  - **Since there are a lot of reasons and it's hard to plan for each one, we need to work on overall attitudes as well as individual conflicts.**

#### **Brainstorming – 10 minutes**

1. **Since we saw yesterday that violence is hard to recover from and has a lasting impact, what can we do to stop violence from happening in the first place?**
2. **What are some of the things your church, school, or community are doing to fill community needs and stop people from fighting?**
  - a. *Have students brainstorm what they already notice people or groups they know are doing. However much or little they come up with is fine. The more possibilities, the better.*
3. **Those are a good start. Since communities are unique and we feel comfortable getting involved in different ways, let's look at some other possibilities.**
  - a. *Pass out Action Handout. Give students time to read it over.*

- b. *If you have time, you can have students write down other suggestions on the back of the paper.*

***Action Plans – 3 minutes***

- **Before we leave today, I would like each of you to write down one or two actions you're going to take in the next week. Think about: These are the things I will do to help stop violence in my own life and community.**

**Closing Review – 5 minutes**

1. **Do you have a sense of what you can do as an individual to contribute to nonviolence?**
  2. **Do you think some possible actions are easier to achieve than others?**
- *Please close with prayer as you are comfortable with your group.*

# What I can do to support Peace and Nonviolence

## Individual Actions

- Gaining Knowledge
  - Share your culture and learn about different cultures.
  - Watch or read the news to stay up to date on important issues.
  - Talk to your family and classmates about global issues that matter to you.
  - Watch documentaries and other films to learn more about important global issues.
  - Challenge your own perceptions! Talk to someone with a different point of view.
  - Pay attention to sources. What information are they leaving out? How might they be biased?
- Building Community
  - Practice cooperation by participating in team-building sports or projects.
  - If people in your neighborhood need help, offer assistance with yard work or grocery shopping.
  - Say hi to people you wouldn't usually talk to.
- Offering Support
  - Put encouraging messages on people's cars or around your school.
  - Help tone down an argument at home or at school.
  - Tutor or mentor younger children.
  - Find a community organization that is working on a cause you support. Sit in on meetings. You don't have to take a leadership role right away.

## Group Actions

- Hold a bake sale, carnival, walk-a-thon, Olympic Peace Games, or other event to raise money for a charity that works on issues that are important to you.
- Raise awareness about an important global issue through a movie screening or a play or a display of artwork at your school."
- Find volunteer opportunities in the local community, or projects that can have a global reach, like preparing care packages for troops overseas, collecting books for needy schools, etc.
- Connect with a school in another country to learn more about that culture and to help provide support if there's a need.
- Take part in a Model UN initiative, and learn about global issues and about negotiation skills that are important in peacebuilding.
- Host a series of guest speakers at the school and then write a short article or speech about what you learned, and share it with others.
- Make a poster about peacebuilding and share it throughout the community.
- Practice resolving conflict peacefully through role plays.

**If something in your community is bother you, speak up! Talk about how to fix it!**

Actions adapted from: <http://www.buildingpeace.org/peacebuilding-ideas-by-youth-for-youth>