

Basic MDG Educational Resources/Activities/Hints

Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation (www.e4gr.org)

Don't assume people know geography – Sad, but true ... most Americans don't know U.S. geography, much less world geography. If you can do a presentation with a computer/projector and internet you can't beat Google Earth (<http://earth.google.com/>) for a fun and interactive way to locate and bring to life the places you're talking about. A great page full of other geography resources can be found here: <http://www.geocities.com/enchantedforest/tower/1217/geo.html>

Don't assume people know the Bible – Again, sad but true. Many of the people in our churches are functionally scripturally illiterate ... and it's often worse for adults than children. For this to be a movement that is about being the Body of Christ, we have to put it in the context of our sacred story. Three resources (both in the Global Reconciliation Backpack) can help you do this:

- a. The MDGs – Straight from Scripture --
<http://www.e4gr.org/doc/The MDGs - Straight from Scripture>
- b. A comprehensive list of Peace & Justice scripture references from Eleanor Braun of the Diocese of Virginia - http://www.e4gr.org/doc/P__J_Scripture
- c. Why Should We as Christians Care about the MDGs – an excellent study piece by the Rev. Dr. Ian T. Douglas -
http://www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_83850_ENG_HTM.htm

Use them as cheat sheets in a large group conversation. Try going through each MDG and asking people where in scripture God's people either are doing embodying the core value in the goal or are commanded to do it?

When you use statistics, make them come to life – The numbers are important. They can shock in a good way but they can also paralyze. The truth is few, if any, people's hearts are ever "strangely warmed" by statistics. Turn them into stories. Use stories from your own life and travels or have people who have lived and traveled in the developing world tell stories ... or even use stories from books or newspapers or magazines that you've read. Some ideas:

- a. Take the statistics from "If the world were a village of 10 people" – and either show the video from the Miniature Earth Project (<http://www.miniature-earth.com/>) or, better yet, take the statistics and bring 10 people up to the front of the room and ask the crowd to guess. How many have improved sanitation? How many are hungry or malnourished? Then group and regroup according to the answers. Have fun with it.
- b. Use the out-of-proportion maps from www.worldmapper.org to turn heads and graphically show where poverty is.

- c. Instead of just saying “1.2 billion people live on less than \$1 a day” – start a conversation about what that would mean. Use these teachers’ experience as a guide -- <http://onedollardietproject.wordpress.com/>.

Be like Jesus – tell stories – We are relational people and an incarnational faith. Learn to tell *short* (make them 2-3 minutes or less each) stories of transformation in poor countries. Tell your own stories from travel. Tell stories of others. Find people in your community who have been to or are from or who have family from the poorest countries on earth and have them share their stories. Show pictures if you can. Short video even better. A great story will do more than a book of statistics.

Leave time for silence/reflection – Presentations on the MDGs tend to be big data dumps ... because there is SO much data/story/etc. to communicate. Even if you only have 45 minutes, make sure you take at least 5 minutes in the second half for people to sit in silence, close their eyes, and reflect on what they’ve heard and seen. If you’re doing a longer retreat, allow for 30-60 minutes – and give people questions to ponder. Then after they’ve had this time, move into...

Leave time for questions/conversation – The best resources for this work are the gifts of the people in the room. Engaging them in conversation with you and with one another will help bring those gifts to the surface and will also help build energy. Make sure you leave plenty of time for this ... you can always come back and dump more data later!

Make sure everyone leaves with at least one action step – This movement is all about What One Can Do. Make sure you challenge each person to direct action. Something that’s a good on-ramp to the movement. Something accessible enough that everyone can do it and yet sacrificial enough that it actually means something to do it (this is where 0.7% giving is a great mix of the two). If you can, get pledges and accountability systems in place. But even if the commitment is only to get together again next week or next month, give people a structure for what they will do next.