

The MDGs – Straight from Scripture

One of the most wonderful things about the MDGs is they unite people, nations, corporations, organizations and religious groups from all over the world -- and invite each to bring its unique gifts to the table.

For us as the Church, that starts with prayer and that starts with our story. If our work with the MDGs isn't surrounded by prayer and rooted in our scriptural story then we might as well pack it in, because we have nothing to offer that the world can't get somewhere else.

Our efforts to achieve these MDGs are a mission rooted in God's mission. It is *that* mission -- God's dream of restoring all people to unity with God and each other in Christ -- that is the center of our lives. The MDGs are a vehicle for doing that, a vehicle that by its own remarkable nature links our efforts not only with God's dream but with the efforts and dreams of all humanity.

Think the MDGs are some new thing? Think again. Our scriptural story is full of accounts of God's people doing these things and of God calling us to do them, too. In summer 2007, EGR's Mike Kinman sat down with a bunch of fantastic Christian educators from the National Association of Episcopal Christian Education Directors and just off the top of our heads came up with this extensive list of where these goals naturally emerge from our scripture.

MDG #1 - Cut in half the proportion of people (starting at the 1990 proportion) whose income amounts to less than a dollar a day, and who suffer from hunger.

Scripture -- MT 25 "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Leviticus 9:9-10 - "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God."

Psalms 146:5-7 - "Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith for ever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry."

Isaiah 58:6-7 - "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?"

John 6:1-15 - Feeding of the Five Thousand.

Galatians 2:10 - "They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do."

MDG #2 - All children – both girls and boys – should be able to complete a full course of primary schooling everywhere in the world.

Luke 2:52 - "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour."

Mark 10:14 - "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.'"

Proverbs 22:6 - "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray."

Joel 2:28 - "Then afterwards I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."

Baptismal Prayer, BCP p. 308 - "Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works."

MDG #3 - Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education at all levels.

Galatians 3:28 "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

-John 4:1-30 – The Samaritan woman at the well

-Matthew 28:10 – "Then Jesus said to (Mary and Mary Magdalene), 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'"

-John 12:3 – "Mary (of Bethany) took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair."

- Stories of Esther, Lydia, Ruth, Deborah, Priscilla

MDG #4 - Reduce the deaths of children under five years old by two-thirds.

Scripture

-Matthew 18:3-4 "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

-Luke 12:6-7 "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. ⁷But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows."

-Jeremiah 31:15-17 – Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Thus says the Lord: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the Lord: your children shall come back to their own country. "

- Matthew 2:16-18 – "When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'"

-Exodus 12:12-13 – "'On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.'"

Exodus 2:1-10 -God guiding Moses in the basket

-Mark 5:35-43 – Jesus raising Jairus' daughter

-Luke 7:11-17 – Jesus raises the widow's son at Nain

MDG #5 Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters, so women need not fear childbirth.

Scripture –

- John 19:27 - “Then Jesus said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.”

-Genesis 10:11-13 – “Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, ‘After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?’ The Lord said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh, and say, “Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?” Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.’”

-Exodus 20:12 – “Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”

-Ephesians 6:2-3 – “‘Honour your father and mother’—this is the first commandment with a promise: ‘so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”

Gospels - Mary as unwed mother; Jesus born in barn.

MDG #6 - Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Scripture –

-Matthew 4:23 – “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.”

-Matthew 8:16-17 – “That evening they brought to him many who were possessed by demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah, ‘He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.’”

Psalms 103:2-3 – “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits— who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases.”

-Acts 9:32-34 – “Now as Peter went here and there among all the believers, he came down also to the saints living in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, for he was paralysed. Peter said to him, ‘Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed!’ And immediately he got up.”

-Mark 2:1-12 – Jesus heals the paralytic

-2Kings 5:1-14 – cleansing of Naaman the Syrian

-Exodus 15:26 – “I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you.”

-Jesus healing lepers, blind, deaf, woman with flow of blood,

MDG #7 - Make drinking water safer and improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers, while reversing the loss of environmental resources. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Scripture

-John 19:28 - "After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I thirst'"

-Isaiah 41:17-18 – "When the poor and needy seek water, I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

-Psalm 107:35 – "He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water."

-Isaiah 55:1 – "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;"

--Matthew 25:35 -- "I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink."

– Mark 9:41 "For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward"

-John 4:14-15 – "The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.'"

-Genesis 1:10 - "God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good."

-Genesis 9:15 – "I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh."

MDG #8 - Enable donors, governments, corporations, faith-based groups, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to work together to achieve these goals.

Scripture –

-Acts 2 – Story of Pentecost

-Psalm 133:1 "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"

-Mark 6:7 "He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two."

-John 12:32 "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

-John 10:16 "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice."

-1Corinthians 12:25-26 "that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it."

-Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken."

-Numbers 13:1-16 – Moses sends representatives of the 12 tribes together to spy on Canaan

-Matthew - 13:33 "He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'"

-Romans 13:1 "be subject to the governing authorities."