

Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday

Presented to Church School Children and Young People
Trinity Church, Northport, NY 11768
March 1, 2009

Target Audience: Primary school through high school, ages 6-17

Time Frame: Approximately one hour

Primary Focus:

- To provide a simple overview of Episcopal Relief & Development and its work throughout the world
- To introduce the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the purpose of a global response to immense human suffering
- To introduce the *NetsForLife*® program as a specific opportunity to participate in response to some of the MDGs

Essential Understandings:

- Awareness of Episcopal Relief & Development as an Episcopal partner organization involved in a compassionate response to human needs
- Exposure to the eight internationally developed MDGs and the reasons these goals can improve the lives of impoverished people, particularly in undeveloped and developing countries
- Action is possible to alleviate suffering through simple acts here in our homes and communities through raising awareness among friends and family, as well as financial contributions to nonprofit organizations that help

Essential Knowledge:

- Episcopal Relief & Development is the international relief and development agency of the Episcopal Church of the United States, guided by the Episcopal Church's principles of compassion, dignity and generosity working to heal a hurting world. Episcopal Relief & Development works in over 40 countries throughout the world, including the U.S., and reaches close to 2.5 million people.
- Emergency relief is defined as providing critical assistance in times of crisis as well as long-term support to rebuild communities caused by natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes. Development is defined as assisting communities and individuals in escaping poverty through grassroots-based programs including education, micro-finance, preventative healthcare and access to clean water, among others.

- The MDGs were adopted in the year 2000 by the United Nations. Leaders from the U.S. and 190 other countries vowed to actively work together to cut extreme poverty by 2015. The goals are:
 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education for Children
 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
 4. Reduce Child Mortality
 5. Improve Maternal Health
 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases
 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
 8. Create A Global Partnership for Development
- One child dies every minute in Africa.
- Malaria is a preventable disease. It is caused by being bitten by an infected mosquito found in warm climates such as sub-Saharan Africa. Nearly one million people die from malaria every year.
- Malaria can be eliminated through education and the use of insecticide- treated mosquito nets. One mosquito net can save three people from being infected with malaria
- *NetsForLife*[®] is a partnership for malaria prevention in Africa, of which the Episcopal Church is a member. Other members include corporations, foundations and other faith-based organizations.
- One net costs only \$12 and can save three lives. It includes training and education on how to correctly use the net.

Tools/Materials:

- Episcopal Relief & Development map of the world
- Laptop computer
- Projector and connection cords
- Two PowerPoint presentations
- Mosquito net
- Large dry erase board or tripod easel with pad
- Markers
- Hope Chest box for each child (available at www.er-d.org/Lent/ or by calling Episcopal Books and Resources, 800.903-5544)

Presentation:

At the beginning of Church School, all the children were invited with teachers into the parish hall, where the laptop and projector were set up in advance. All sat on the floor facing the presenters. The map of the world, from Episcopal Relief & Development materials, was taped to one wall, near where the projector was oriented. Nearby was a mosquito net hanging down to the ground with a mat underneath.

Jane Appleyard Roel spoke about Episcopal Relief & Development and its connection to the Episcopal Church, as well as its two-pronged emphasis on international relief and

on development in efforts to respond with compassion to the human suffering throughout the world. Questions were asked of the children regarding Christ's call to reach out and help the poor and helpless to engage them in understanding the mission of Episcopal Relief & Development and its relationship to the Christian faith.

Ellen Hatch then used the PowerPoint presentation produced by her son, David Hatch, on the Millennium Development Goals to teach the basic elements of the Goals. Each MDG was discussed so that all ages could understand the vocabulary used and the reasons each MDG was developed. Questions were asked to elaborate on how to achieve each one of the MDGs.

Ellen then introduced the *NetsForLife*[®] program as a way for each child to act to save lives through simple activities during Lent. She talked about malaria as a preventable disease that the Episcopal Church was committed to supporting. The focus was on what we can do to save one child's life. This was communicated in part through the second PowerPoint presentation illustrating *NetsForLife*[®], also produced by David Hatch. Following the presentation, there was discussion of the specific MDGs that are addressed by the *NetsForLife*[®] program through its mission.

A few of the younger children were then encouraged to climb inside under the mosquito net and demonstrate that more than one person could fit under one net. It was reinforced that one net could save as many as three lives through the provision of education, training and the insecticide-treated net at a cost of only \$12 each.

There was discussion of what the students could do to raise awareness and money during Lent in order to buy one net or two - doing jobs at home, giving away part of their allowance, talking with family and extended family members and asking for donations, selling cookies at coffee hour, etc. The Hope Chest boxes were given out to each person and the older ones helped the younger ones to fold and construct them. The children were asked to take the boxes home, to save whatever they could during Lent and to bring them in by Easter Sunday to be added to a community-wide Church School collection.

The conclusion of the presentation was writing a communal prayer for the Millennium Development Goals together as a large group. The children were invited to offer a one-line prayer for each MDG in their own words. Children of different ages were chosen for each MDG and together, the group formulated each line of the prayer by first repeating what each child said and then discussing it until it was understood to represent the specific MDG. When each line was completed verbally, it was written on the large tripod easel at the front of the room.

Follow-Up Actions:

At the conclusion of the presentation, the communal MDG prayer was produced on the computer and reproduced so that each child and other adults could have a copy to pray at home during the weeks of Lent.

The children were encouraged to pray and work to save children's lives through the donations they collected over the 6 weeks.

The Vestry of Trinity agreed to match the donation raised by the children.

There was a Church School parent meeting during the Church School classtime on the following Sunday and an overview of the presentation was shared with interested parents, encouraging their support.

Additional materials were provided for the parents and adult parishioners during Lent including:

- A list of suggested reading materials taken from the Episcopal Relief & Development website
- A summary sheet providing information about Episcopal Relief & Development, MDGs, and *NetsForLife*[®], including a list of websites for further information
- Hope Chest boxes and coin folders
- *NetsForLife*[®] brochures
- Episcopal Relief & Development Gifts for Life catalogs
- MDG magnets
- The Children's MDG prayer

*Respectfully submitted by Jane Appleyard Roel, Trinity Church, Northport, NY
11/19/2009*