

Episcopal Relief & Development

Communities of Learning

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Introduction

This **four-session curriculum** is intended for small group gatherings, online or in person. The objective is to help participants to grow in awareness of, and desire to, serve the populations and priorities aligned with the mission of Episcopal Relief & Development. As a faith formation curriculum, it offers group support and asks participants to be open to where God may be leading, in terms of how to grow in empathy and to respond to your new learnings in daily living. We know that our strengths come from pursuit of the things we are interested in and, so, we trust that our strengths relative to this good work will be revealed in the prayerful learning process.



Prayer

We ask you, loving God, to open our eyes to what is happening in communities at risk around the world. Guide us as we review the transformative responses of Episcopal Relief & Development.

Open our hearts to see where we might feel led to be of service, too.
Amen.

Group Rule of Life

- Group Prayer
- Guided Meditation
- Intercessory Prayer at Home



We will explore Episcopal Relief & Development's work in **Disaster Response & Resilience** and how we can apply this in our daily lives.

Disaster response & resilience includes preparedness, mitigation and response. Episcopal Relief & Development works with local Anglican and Episcopal Church partners to build resilient communities that are better able to respond when disasters occur.

Opening Prayer - Youth session

We ask your blessing on this learning community, Loving God, that we may be attentive to the movements of your Spirit. Guide us as we grow to understand how we might participate in the global priorities of Episcopal Relief & Development to empower women, nurture children, and meet the challenges of climate change and disaster resilience. We offer to you our open hearts and our desire to promote the dignity of all people. In your name we pray. *Amen.*

Opening Prayer - Adult session

Loving God, We ask your blessing on this learning community, gathered for mutual formation in the ways of love. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may open our hearts to the needs of women and children at risk, as well as the challenges of climate change and disaster resilience. Guide our efforts, we pray, as we discern what is ours to do in Your plan for human flourishing among all people. May we strive to be your Good News in the world. *Amen.*

Introductions

Share your name,
[location], and *one*
word for what is on
your heart today.



Scripture Reading

The Lord upholds all who are
falling, and raises up all who
are bowed down.

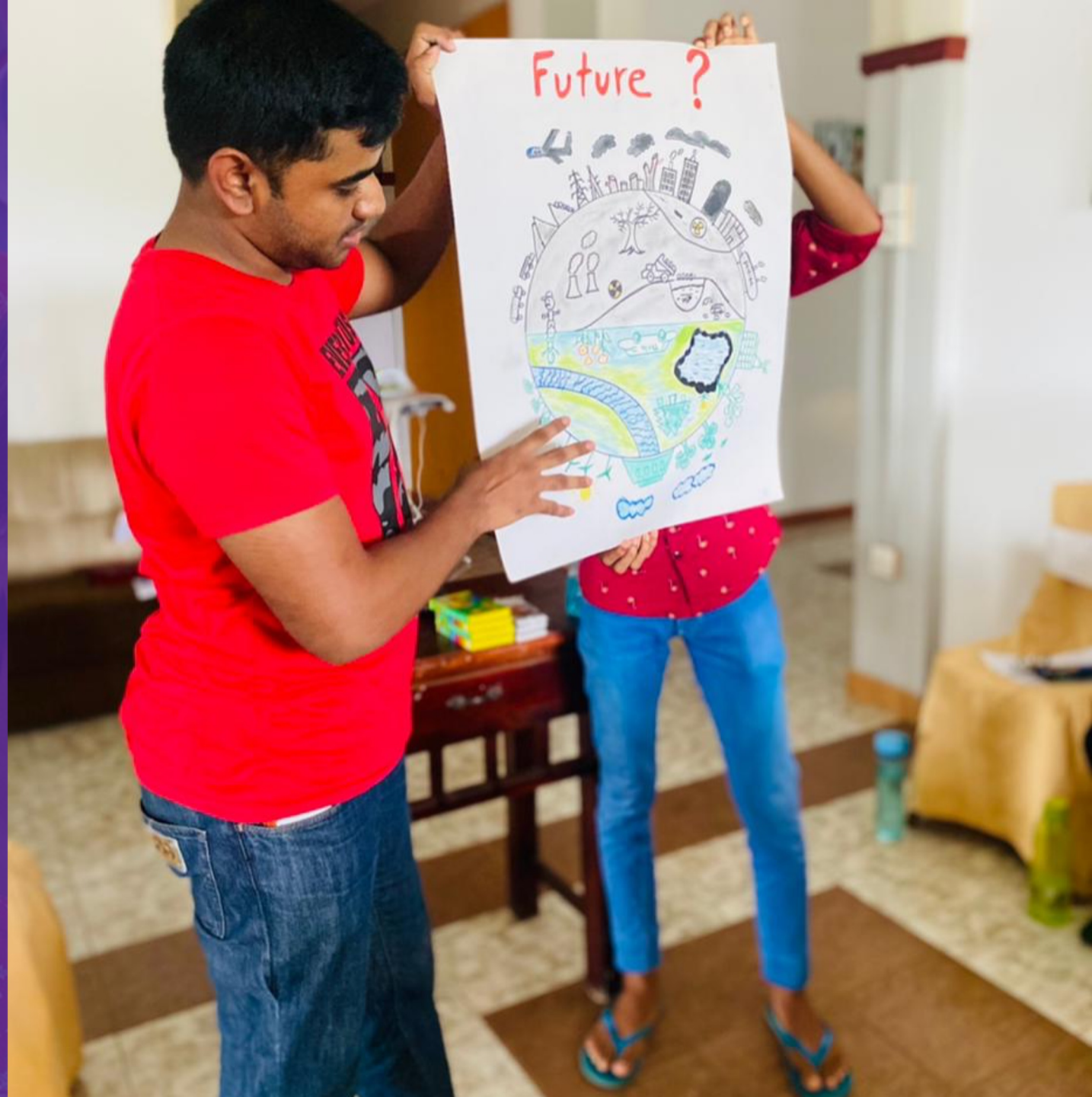
Psalms 145:14 NRSV



Guided Meditation

Close your eyes or soften your gaze, whichever feels more comfortable for you.

Learning Together



The Lesson

1. Reducing the Impact of Disasters
2. Managing Environmental Preparedness

Reducing the Impact of Disasters

If communities are prepared and ready to adapt when a climate-influenced disaster occurs, they are much more likely to successfully recover. Our work is designed to help communities anticipate, resist, cope with and recover from climate-influenced hazards and events. In all of our programs, we provide critical assistance to help alleviate suffering, restore dignity, build resilience and jump-start economic recovery.

Reducing the Impact of Disasters

Using a wide network of Episcopal dioceses and other church institutions in the US, we offer resources and training to help people prepare for disasters and provide emergency support so vulnerable communities can make a full and sustained recovery. Globally, our disaster programs help people prepare for crises through the coordination and training of local partners and communities so they are better able to serve and care for at-risk populations.

Managing Environmental Preparedness

The best defense against climate-influenced disasters is to be as prepared as possible before disaster strikes. Our staff and partners are committed to properly safeguarding land and other natural resources to protect the environment, lessen the impact of disasters and minimize suffering and damage that often hinder the recovery process.

Managing Environmental Preparedness

Working in diverse local contexts and disaster situations, our programs promote tree planting and support other sustainable practices such as preventing deforestation and soil erosion. We also train communities to understand and identify where they are most vulnerable and how to protect themselves in advance of disasters. Activities may include providing tools and resources, installing early warning systems or protecting homes in flood-prone areas.

Instructional Video



Using Mutual Invitation for Sharing

When Mutual Invitation is used, it encourages deep and holy listening to one another, because there are no interruptions or refutations allowed until everyone has spoken.

Questions for Reflection - Youth session

1. What does this information have to do with me?
2. How does it challenge or inspire me?
3. What small step can I take in response?

Questions for Reflection - Adult session

1. What moved you in your learning?
2. Did it stretch or challenge you in some way?
3. How might your new learning change who you are becoming as a Christian disciple and enrich or equip your witness?

Group Reflection/Brainstorm

What would support your
ongoing formation in this
area?



Pray in this coming
week for the people
we met today and for
one another in this
Community of
Learning.

Let us pray.



Closing Prayer

Loving God, We thank you for drawing us into the work of justice and flourishing, envisioned by Episcopal Relief & Development.

We ask your blessing upon this learning community, seeking to grow in understanding and commitment.

Guide us, we pray, to walk in your way, so that we may embody the world that we deeply desire and long for.

Bless our loving actions in our daily lives, our families and partnerships, our communities and connections,
for the Family of God and for all of God's creation. *Amen.*

At Home

Choose one or more to links to explore before our next meeting. If you feel called, find a resource on your own and share how it affects you with the group before our next session.

Ted Talk

<https://bit.ly/3sshit0>

Music

<https://bit.ly/3PatFnY>

Poetry

<https://bit.ly/3N41Ewz>



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Working Together for Lasting Change