

Time to Deliver

Children's talk and children's church session: a leader's guide

2022

Will we follow the Good Samaritan's example and be good neighbours to people both near and far?

We're going to look at how some of our global neighbours are affected by climate change and how we could help them. This resource contains a range of options for use in an all-age service, as part of an ordinary Sunday service, or in a children's church or children's club session. So feel free to pick and choose the parts that will work for your church and adapt them for different ages or levels of knowledge. There is a separate adult sermon available too at tearfund.org/timetodeliverchurchresources

Contact us on campaigns@tearfund.org if you have any questions or need any further support.

Suggested reading

Luke 10:25–37

These verses could be used as the reading earlier in the service. If so, reference the reading in your children's session, which means you won't necessarily need to retell it.

For the talk you will need

- **A4 or A3 paper**
Create some duplicate signs that say 'True' on one side and 'False' on the other.



- **Slides**
Download the accompanying slides at tearfund.org/timetodeliverchurchresources

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10-minute children's talk

This section provides ideas for an all-age slot in the main service (before the main sermon) with adults present and before the children head off to children's church, or in children's church separate to the main service (though you may need to simplify or drop the true/false questions depending on the age of children). For an all-age service you may want to expand this talk using some of the material from the children's church session (below) or the adult sermon notes, and to include the *Time to deliver* petition for the adults to sign.

Ask for some volunteers – older kids or families – to come up to the front. Aim to have two small teams who can decide their answer together so no one person is being put on the spot. Give each team a True/False sign. Consider setting up who is going to come and help you before the service starts so that you don't lose too much time gathering your volunteers.



Script

We're going to start our talk today with a little quiz about climate change. Don't worry: it's not too difficult. You've got a 50 per cent chance of getting the question right because the question each time is: **True** or **False**? Volunteer teams will need to hold up their answer after each question is read out. Either True or False.

Everyone in the audience can play along too: just decide in your own mind what you think the answer is, and then see if you get it right.

[Slide 2]

Before we start though, let's settle on a definition: 'Climate change generally refers to changes in the planet's average temperature, and the resulting shifts in weather patterns, which includes more frequent and extreme weather events such as storms and droughts.'

OK, True or False?

[Slide 3]

True or False? The earth is getting warmer

*The answer is **True**.*

[Slide 4]

Show the warming stripes and add a sentence of explanation.

These are the warming stripes, a pictorial representation of how average global temperatures have changed since the mid-1800s. You can see that the hotter the earth gets, the redder the stripes, and that hotter years are at our end of history. In fact, five of the warmest years on record are between 2015 to 2020, and this is the warmest decade (2010 to 2020) on record too. So, yes, the earth is getting warmer

<https://showyourstripes.info//globe>

[Slide 5]

True or False? Climate change is only occurring as a result of natural causes

*The answer is **False**.*

[Slide 6]

There are some natural causes to climate change like volcanoes, but the leading cause is human activity. These human activities include: burning non-renewable energy resources, such as coal, oil and natural gas, chopping down rainforests, and pollution caused by transport and industry.

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/causes-of-climate-change>

[Slide 7]

True or False? We first discovered that adding carbon dioxide into the atmosphere increases temperatures in the 1800s

*The answer is **True**.*

[Slide 8]

The first person to discover that adding more CO₂ into the atmosphere will increase temperatures was a physicist called Eunice Foote in 1856. Maybe it surprised you how early that was. Nowadays, scientists agree that climate change is happening and is caused by human activity.

<https://climate.nasa.gov/faq/17/do-scientists-agree-on-climate-change/>

[Slide 9]

True or False? Climate change is affecting everyone on earth equally

*The answer is **False**.*

[Slide 10]

Climate change does affect everyone on earth but not equally. The environmental crisis is impacting the poorest the most, in the UK and around the world. Those who are reliant on rains at the right time so that they don't go hungry, or whose homes cannot withstand storms, are much more affected by the extreme weather climate change is bringing. Some places are also far more likely to experience extreme weather because of where they are in the world.

This next paragraph may be above the heads of younger audiences, so there's no need to use it in the talk, but we've included it here for your information.

Geographically, some regions are impacted more negatively by climate change. The regions where people will be displaced because of climate-related disasters are among those least responsible for global emissions, and it will be mainly people of colour who will suffer. So, no, climate change is not affecting everyone equally.

<https://earthbound.report/2021/03/23/the-uninhabitable-parts-of-the-earth/>

<https://www.tearfund.org/stories/2021/07/climate-change-is-a-justice-issue>

[Slide 11]

Final question... **True or False? Tackling climate change should be a priority for Christians**

Give a moment for your team to show their answers, and then turn to the audience...

So, how did you answer this one? It's obviously more of an opinion than a factual question. Is it a priority for you and your family? And if not, should it be? That is actually a question we're going to look at a bit more now and later in the sermon and children's church session.

Thank the volunteers and let them sit down.

The Good Samaritan

Jesus told a story that's become very famous, and although you will probably know this story, please don't let that make you switch off. Take a moment now to enter into the story and think about who your neighbours in need today are.

A man was walking along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, so the story starts, when he was attacked and robbed and left lying on the side of the road, badly hurt...

Retell the story briefly or refer back to the reading everyone has already heard earlier in the service.

The two religious people, as we know, crossed over the road to avoid the injured man. Perhaps they thought: There are lots of people who get mugged on this road. I won't solve the problem by helping just one person. Or, I'll leave this problem to the government. They're much better equipped to help this man: it's their issue not mine. Or, this person is not from my family or my community or even my country. Therefore, it's not my problem. Perhaps they thought it was a trap, that the man was not really hurt and that robbers would ambush them if they went near him.

The Samaritan man, however, didn't let any of those excuses stop him. He didn't hesitate to help the injured man even though it cost him in time, money and inconvenience. It potentially put him in danger from the robbers too. Imagine for a moment just how time-consuming and costly it was for him to respond so generously.

Jesus told this story in order to answer the question: Who is our neighbour? Who is the one that I am supposed to love in order to fulfil the law to 'Love your neighbour as yourself'? And what does loving my neighbour look like?

If we were to apply this story today, we would probably think much wider than stopping to help someone who had been beaten up by robbers. Thankfully this is not a very common situation for us to come across.

Maybe we'd think about taking time to help someone at school who was being picked on. We'd be bandaging the hurts caused by unkind words and we might risk being bullied too.

Or maybe we think about an elderly person on our road who is lonely or sick. Perhaps we could take the time and trouble to visit them, maybe even spend some money to bring them food or flowers.

But I wonder whether you've ever thought about our neighbours who live all around the world and how we might need to help them.

Some of these people, our global neighbours, have been hurt and robbed by climate change. Flood or droughts, and in some cases both, have destroyed their crops and homes. They are hungry, hurting and they are in need of help. Fear over erratic weather patterns is taking away their hope for the future.

[Slide 12]

They include people like Korotimou who lives in Mali, West Africa, with her husband and children. Climate change means that they now experience more flooding during the rainy season and heatwaves during the hot season. All this makes her job as a vegetable-seller harder and more precarious.

How can we be good and loving neighbours to them?

Our children's church session and sermon today is going to explore this. But for now let's just remind ourselves of that last quiz question – **Tackling climate change should be a priority for Christians**. Perhaps the answer is tied up with the command Jesus gives at the end of the story of the Good Samaritan as he calls us to 'Go and do likewise' and to 'Love your neighbour as yourself' – including neighbours who are already desperately affected by climate change.

Children's church session

Aimed at 7- to 11-year-olds, but could be adapted for other age groups.

This selection of ideas is offered as a pick-and-mix: take what works for your setting and leave the rest. Please also feel free to adapt them to make them appropriate to the children in your group.

Games

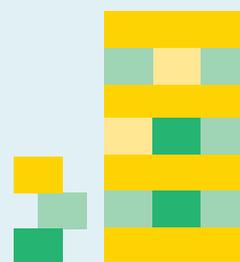
Jenga

Instructions:

Play one or more games of Jenga to let everyone take part. (If you've got wildly different abilities, maybe challenge the older ones to use their non-dominant hand.) Talk about how the earth is in balance. Just as our Jenga blocks fall when too much is taken away, the earth gets out of balance if we use up too much of its resources. Sometimes what seems like even a small change can lead to a big impact. Depending on the age of children, link this to climate change.

You will need:

- Jenga



Escape the flood

Instructions:

Can you escape your land being flooded by extreme weather caused by climate change? Get the children to pair up with a friend. Give each pair a piece of newspaper that is the same size. Tell them this is their raft to float across the flooded land: they both need to stand on it.

Then explain that when you ring the bell they will have ten seconds (or similar small amount of time) to fold the paper in half and both get back on to the newly halved raft. No feet on the floor.

See how many times they can halve the paper and still both be on the raft safely. You'll probably have to be the judge and tell pairs if they are out of the game.

As appropriate for the age in your group, you could explain that in some places climate change causes extremely heavy rainfall which can cause floods. Some of our global neighbours and some people in the UK have had their homes flooded. Balance this information with hope that although we caused climate change and it is having serious consequences, we can do something about it (and we will come to this later in the session).

You will need:

- Newspaper



Discussion

- Invite everyone to sit down together. **Refer back to the children's talk (above) or give the talk here.**

See [page 2](#) of your script template if you want to give the talk here.

- **Remind them** that Jesus told stories to help people understand important truths. One of these truths is that the best way to live our lives is by loving God and loving our neighbours as ourselves. Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan as a story of how to love our neighbours.
- **Ask for stories/examples.** Talk about any situations where they have actually been good neighbours – like the example in school or with people they know locally .
- **Explain.** The Samaritan was not the injured man's obvious neighbour. He didn't live near him and he was from a different nationality: people like them weren't generally friends with each other. And yet the Samaritan proved that being a good neighbour is not dependent on living nearby or being someone similar. Discuss the fact that we are all connected in the world and even those we have never met could be called neighbours.

Today we are thinking about climate change which is affecting our global neighbours: that's people who live all across the globe/world.

[Slide 12]

That includes people like **Korotimou who lives in Mali (in West Africa)** with her husband and children. Remember that we mentioned her earlier in the service? Climate change means that they now experience more flooding during the rainy season and heatwaves during the hot season. All of this makes her job as a vegetable-seller harder and more precarious. Roads she takes to buy the vegetables and go to the market can become flooded, and the heat makes travelling to market unbearable.

Thankfully, a Tearfund partner was able to help Korotimou and her family have a market garden of their own. (Korotimou was given a plot of 200m²: perhaps you can help the children imagine this by comparing it to a local area, the church garden or something they can picture.) Now, with help from some of her children, Korotimou grows vegetables such as onion, lettuce, okra and mint on the plot. Some of the vegetables are for the family to eat, and this is improving their diet. The rest are sold in the local market at a good price because they are organic. This has greatly improved the family income, and because the market is local, Korotimou doesn't have to travel far on the roads.

Korotimou feels happier and says: *'Before I was in misery, left behind, but God answered my prayers. Today I am a happy soul.'*

Activity 1 - Question

● Ask the following question:

Does anyone have any ideas of how we could be good neighbours to other people like Korotimou who are affected by climate change?

● Take suggestions.

You could write these on a board/big sheet of paper. Endorse each suggestion and add to them as necessary.



Answers could include:

- **Send them food/clothes/etc.** (Explain that money is most useful so people can buy food/building materials there.) Agree that, yes, we could help by raising money for a charity that works in these places. If your church or children's church would like to raise money for Tearfund's climate justice work, you would be helping families like Korotimou's. You could take up a collection or perhaps get creative with climate-themed sponsored events around reducing carbon (eg a 'walk/cycle to church' Sunday or a carbon fast of some sort), or events that ask for donations but also help people repurpose things like clothes, or plant swaps or a repair cafe.
- **Pray for them.**
- **Do something about climate change.** (If no one comes up with this, prompt it.) Then ask them for suggestions on what we can do about climate change. This could include:
 - Reduce carbon emissions by walking/cycling instead of driving, turning down heating, cutting food waste, using less single-use plastic and always recycling, buying less new stuff, eating less meat
 - Plant more trees, care for creation, grow things.
 - Talk about climate change, so that it raises the issue. Maybe chat it through with your family and work out what you can do together.
 - Support anything your church is doing on climate change. (Find out if anything is planned and ask if the children can get involved.)
 - Write to your MP/the government, go on a 'climate strike', influence people with power. (If the church is using Tearfund's *Time to deliver* resources for the adults too, then they will be asking people to sign a petition to the UK Government about climate finance. Depending on the age of the children, you might want to explain what it means to sign a petition and show them the postcard that parents might be signing.)

Activity 2 - Loving my neighbours near and far

You will need:

- Printed activity sheet
- Printed stock phrases sheet
- Colouring pencils
- Glue sticks



- Give each child an activity sheet.
- Explain that they can draw a picture of people they consider neighbours in the first two boxes under the heading **'Who is my neighbour?'** (these do not have to be people who are geographically close, but it could be people they know) and the third box has a line drawing of Korotimou from Mali that they can colour in.
- Under the **'How can I love them?'** heading they can write their own ideas for showing love to each of the neighbours, or they can choose phrases you've cut up from the stock phrases sheet. They can take this activity sheet home as a reminder of the fact that we are to love our neighbours near and far.
- Print off a number of copies of the stock phrases sheet and cut the sentences up ahead of time so that children can choose the phrases they want to use:
 - Pray for them
 - Send them money to help them buy food
 - Cook them a meal
 - Help them around the house/garden
 - Reduce my carbon emissions so that climate change is reduced
 - Do the recycling
 - Don't waste food
 - Help look after their pets
 - Take part in church activities to make the world fairer
 - Send them a card to cheer them up
 - Phone them
 - Write to the government to ask them to tackle climate change
 - Spend time with them
 - Raise money for a charity that tackles climate change

Activity 3 - Group collage and prayer activity

You will need:

- Big sheet of paper
- Magazines to cut up
- Printed picture of Korotimou from Mali
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Optional - pictures of people in the congregation or your children's group



- Write at the top of a big sheet of paper, 'Our Neighbours, near and far'. You can add Luke 10:25-35 if you would like.
- Allow the children to cut pictures from magazines of all sorts of people. You could include some photos of people in the congregation/locality, or even of some of the children in the group. Add a print-out picture of Korotimou from Mali. Glue these pictures onto the sheet to form a big crowd scene.
- Spend time praying for neighbours you know and neighbours affected by climate change across the world.

Our team in Mali sent some prayer requests through too, so please join us in praying with them:

- **Praise God for Korotimou who has felt the love of God through our partner's work.**
- **Pray for Korotimou's health so she may continue to provide for her family.**
- **Pray for people like Korotimou who are suffering from the effects of climate change.**
- **Pray that the project continues to reach hundreds of people in rural areas of Mali.**

Group prayer

Dear Lord,

Thank you for showing us that the best way to live is by being loving. Show us when our neighbours both near and far need our help, and give us kind and caring hearts to respond.

We pray for all those affected by climate change, who may be going hungry because of droughts or who may be fearful about flooding when the storms come. Please enable the church in those places to respond. And please show us in our church family here what we can do to tackle climate change too and show our love for these faraway neighbours.

Amen

Activity 4 - Act the story out

This is an optional extra if you have time for another activity.

- Choose a narrator and have some of the children act out today's Good Samaritan story.
- Then get them to act out some of the other personal/local examples of being a good neighbour, or to make some up. Maybe suggest they choose one in a school setting, another in their road with local neighbours and another in the local town centre.

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