



Episcopal Relief & Development

Healing a hurting world

The Parish Representative Toolkit:
Empowering YOUR Parish to Heal a Hurting World



Introduction: Getting Started

Welcome

Thank you for agreeing to serve as the Episcopal Relief & Development Parish Representative in your congregation. In this increasingly globalized context, your ministry is an extension of the Gospel mandate to love your neighbor as yourself. Episcopal Relief & Development is the compassionate response of the Episcopal Church to human suffering in the world. Hearing God’s call to seek and serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being, Episcopal Relief & Development serves to bring together the generosity of Episcopalians and others with the needs of the world.

Through Episcopal Relief & Development’s programs every Episcopalian is presented with an opportunity to encourage sustainable development in communities that are exposed to extreme poverty. By communicating these needs to your parish, we as a church are able to minister to “the least of these” and extend Christ’s healing to this hurting world.

In this toolkit, you will find answers to many of your questions about the expectations of your position as well as resources to assist you in your work as an Episcopal Relief & Development Parish Representative. If you have questions along the way, your Episcopal Relief & Development Diocesan Coordinator is always willing to provide guidance and training. If you are unsure who your Diocesan Coordinator is, consult the Episcopal Relief & Development [website](#).

The Parish Representative Position Description

Parish Representatives are appointed by their rectors to be the spokesperson for Episcopal Relief & Development in their congregations. Because every Episcopalian should have the chance to reach out and help those in need throughout the world, Parish Representatives are in place to share with their parishioners Episcopal Relief & Development's messages about eradicating poverty, responding to the needy in times of crisis and building communities around the world.

Parish Representatives work directly with their Diocesan Coordinator, receiving:

- » Frequent diocesan updates
- » Important news items sent by the Episcopal Relief & Development staff
- » Reminders of important events or dates
- » Examples of best practices from other Parish Representatives

Parish Representatives are encouraged to visit the Episcopal Relief & Development web site (www.er-d.org) weekly to stay current with Episcopal Relief & Development's ongoing work. Through its social media platforms--[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and its [Blog](#)--Episcopal Relief & Development provides updates on programs and other matters.

The Parish Representative will meet with his/her parish's clergy to map out a plan to promote Episcopal Relief & Development on a regular basis. It is important to arrange for the annual Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday. More details are available [online](#).

A list of current Episcopal Relief & Development publications is always available on the Episcopal Relief & Development web site. Parish Representatives will order a supply of appropriate publications for the parish tract rack and ensure the material is current and kept in stock. It is particularly important to maintain current and adequate supplies of the [Gifts for Life](#) catalog in tract racks. Orders of all materials can be made through by the Episcopal Marketplace [website](#) or by calling 1.866.937.2772.

Camera-ready bulletin inserts are available online and should be used in conjunction with calls for help following major disasters and to support Episcopal Relief & Development events. Parish Representatives should coordinate the copying and distribution of the insert with the church office.

Parish Representatives will encourage the support of Episcopal Relief & Development by and through various organizations and guilds present in their congregation.

[Bishop's Blend](#) is Episcopal Relief & Development's fair trade line of specialty teas and coffees, which serves as an excellent fundraising and awareness tool. Parish Representatives should try to make Bishop's Blend the coffee and tea of choice at Coffee Hour each week. Fundraising

opportunities are available for groups who wish to purchase and sell the coffee.

Episcopal Relief & Development's [Gifts for Life](#) catalog, which is available online as well as in print, provides gifts such as animals, emergency supplies, tools and seeds, clean water and sanitation, preventative health items and economic opportunities to families and communities in need. Parish Representatives will encourage their parishioners to use the catalog throughout the year as a way to give gifts or honor family members and friends at holidays, birthdays and other special occasions.

While there are many ways to be an advocate for Episcopal Relief & Development, the time requirement for Parish Representatives is relatively minor. Information received from the Diocesan Coordinator can usually be shared with parishioners "as-is" through the parish newsletter, a bulletin board, e-mail distribution or in presentations or conversation. Also, there may be occasional need to speak before the congregation, an Adult Education class or the Outreach Committee when there is a critical need for donations following a major disaster. Your involvement as an advocate and spokesperson for Episcopal Relief & Development plays a crucial role in the Church's efforts to heal a hurting world.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How much time is involved?

The time will vary based on what is happening in the world and during Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday (the first Sunday in Lent or a Sunday designated by your diocese). For instance, if there is a disaster someplace in the world, you'll be busier sharing information during that time. You should also be active in promoting Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday.

2. What exactly are the responsibilities?

Your primary job will be to share information with your congregation. Every congregation is different and you know what will work best in your church. Talk with your clergy, vestry and any other parish leadership to find out how would like to support this mission. Some ideas:

- a. Bulletin board with the latest news from Episcopal Relief & Development
- b. Include the bulletin inserts periodically in the bulletins
- c. Announce specific needs for Episcopal Relief & Development during a disaster or just general needs during announcement time
- d. Organize an event utilizing the Gifts for Life catalog or other resources
- e. Give a talk during the sermon time or during adult education



- f. Involve the Sunday school classes (they especially like the [Gifts for Life](#) catalog)
- g. Is there a specific area or need your church is especially interested in? If so, show how Episcopal Relief & Development helps to alleviate suffering in that area or for that need
- h. Work with other groups in your church (Episcopal Church Women, youth, Daughters of the King, vestry, etc.) for support and ideas
- i. Promote the new Christian education programs – share with Sunday school teachers

and youth leaders. Go to www.er-d.org/formation for more information.

- j. Use the Lenten books as part of a book study or Lenten discipline.

3. What resources are available?

In addition to this manual, you should receive regular mailings (such as the *Seek and Serve* newsletter), special Church Campaign mailings at your church regarding Episcopal Relief & Development and should also receive email updates.

[Bishop's Blend](#) coffee and tea are fair trade items with 15% of the proceeds going to Episcopal Relief & Development. You can also sell them with a little higher markup as a fundraiser for your church.

The [Gifts for Life](#) catalog is a resource that has many items you and your congregation can “buy” (cows, pigs, seeds, etc.). The catalog explains how the various funds help people and is available on the website or can be ordered through Episcopal Media Center.

Episcopal Relief & Development materials, such as brochures, posters and buttons, are available for order from the Episcopal Media Center. Please visit the Episcopal Marketplace [website](#), call 1.866.937.2772 or email sales@episcopalmedia.org. A minimal shipping and handling fee will be added to orders, which are otherwise free of charge.

4. When is Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday and what do I need to do about it?

Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday is the first Sunday in Lent (or a Sunday designated by your diocese). If your diocese does not have an Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday, you could work with your clergy on choosing a Sunday to promote the work of Episcopal Relief

& Development. You and your clergy should work together on how to share information for Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday. You could take a special offering on that day and designate it for a certain program or take a special offering for undesignated funds. Undesignated funds are used for immediate disaster relief. They are also very important! More details are available [online](#).

5. What else should I know to effectively promote the work of Episcopal Relief & Development?

The overhead costs for Episcopal Relief & Development are very low. In 2009, Episcopal Relief & Development spent 85% on programs versus 5% on administration and 10% on fundraising. Because of the support we receive from the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in the form of contributed services as well as our own investment income, 91% of every donor dollar goes directly to programs.

Episcopal Relief & Development is an independent nonprofit organization and your contributions are tax deductible under U.S. tax regulations. Episcopal Relief & Development is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Episcopal Relief & Development is governed by a 19-member Board of Directors that includes bishops, clergy and lay leaders from around the country.

Our Staff consists of highly qualified experts with extensive management and field experience who work cross-functionally across three divisions:

- » Finance and Administration
- » External Affairs
- » Programs

Grant and funding-priority decisions are made by the Board of Directors.

Learn More about the Work

A Brief History

Episcopal Relief & Development was established in 1940 by the Episcopal Church in the United States as the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. It was created in response to the request of General Convention to assist refugees fleeing Europe during World War II.



A Network of Diocesan Coordinators and Parish Representatives was established to help share information throughout the church. Training meetings were established and interest in the mission and ministry of The Presiding Bishop's Fund grew.

At the 2000 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the name was changed to Episcopal Relief & Development to emphasize ongoing emergency relief work and the focus on long-term development and rehabilitation.

In 2002, with approval from the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, Episcopal Relief & Development was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and received 501(c)(3) status.

In 2003, the Board of Directors and leadership of Episcopal Relief & Development decided to shift from administering small grants for local program support, both domestic and international, to implementing long-term development programs and partnerships in the areas of food security and primary health. Episcopal Relief & Development's domestic program focus on emergency relief and rehabilitation.

Episcopal Relief & Development's Board of Directors is made up of bishops, clergy and lay Episcopalians who are chosen by the Board, approved by the Presiding Bishop and elected by the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church.

Episcopal Relief & Development brings healing to a hurting world.

Episcopal Relief & Development's Program Focus Areas

Episcopal Relief & Development is the international relief and development agency of the Episcopal Church of the United States. As an independent 501(c) (3) organization, Episcopal Relief and Development takes its mandate from Jesus' words found in Matthew 25: 37-40: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40). Its programs work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Together with the worldwide Church and ecumenical partners, Episcopal Relief and Development strengthens communities today to meet tomorrow's challenges. We rebuild after disasters and empower people by offering lasting solutions that fight poverty, hunger and disease, including HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Alleviating Hunger and Improving the Food Supply

Worldwide, one billion people live in extreme poverty and go hungry everyday. Episcopal Relief & Development's programs to alleviate hunger and improve the food supply help people living in poverty meet this most basic human need.

With our worldwide Church and ecumenical partners, we:

- » Supply seeds and tools to support efficient and more effective farming
- » Provide healthy animals such as cows, goats and chickens to feed families and generate income
- » Promote farming techniques that increase food production
- » Train communities in sustainable agricultural techniques such as crop rotation and dry-season farming

By implementing these initiatives, our programs develop reliable, nutritious and long-term sources of food for people living in poverty around the world.

Promoting Health and Fighting Disease

Lack of access to basic health care, drinkable water and disease prevention information cause millions of preventable deaths every year and keep people mired in the cycle of poverty. Episcopal Relief & Development's programs to promote health and fight disease support community-based health care so that people are able to live healthy and productive lives.

With our worldwide Church and ecumenical partners, we:

- » Provide immunizations and medicine in local health clinics and mobile units
- » Offer maternal and child health programs

- » Train community health workers in disease prevention
- » Distribute long-lasting insecticide-treated nets and provide training in malaria prevention and identification
- » Deliver health care and education to children who have lost their parents to AIDS
- » Build wells, latrines, water stations and other sanitation systems
- » Provide smokeless stoves to prevent acute respiratory infection

When people are healthy and have access to clean water, they are more productive, able to attend school and be the architects of their own positive change.

Creating Economic Opportunities and Strengthening Communities

Over two billion people in the world survive on less than \$2 a day. Since the majority of these people are women and their children, we devote a significant portion of our micro-finance initiatives to enabling women to earn a fair wage by participating in income-generating projects. Our micro-finance work is one way that we engage people living in urban and semi-urban environments to improve their income potential.

With worldwide Church and ecumenical partners, we:

- » Help people to develop small businesses in a variety of fields including catering, candle-making, jewelry and clothing design
- » Promote cooperatives so people can pool their resources and make larger capital purchases of equipment like food processors and refiners that create more markets for crops
- » Work with farming communities to increase crop yield, ensure water for irrigation and practice sustainable agriculture so that surplus crops can be sold for income

By giving people tools to earn an income and help their families, these programs break out of the cycle of poverty.

Responding to Disasters and Rebuilding Communities

More than 30 million people are forced to flee their homes every year because of war, floods, famine, hurricanes, earthquakes or other disasters. These disasters and civil unrest take a toll on human life and hinder development.

With our worldwide Church and ecumenical partners, we:

- » Respond quickly and supply critical supplies like food, clean water, medicine and shelter when disaster strikes

- » Conduct needs assessments with devastated individuals and communities to create recovery plans
- » Assist in the long-term rebuilding process
- » Offer trauma counseling and psychosocial services for survivors
- » Rebuild and repair homes, schools, churches, clinics and other civic buildings
- » Restore the social and economic fabric communities by supporting small business development and home ownership programs
- » Train and equip local churches domestically to respond to disasters in the United States

Our programs support people as they create a new future for themselves and their families – in the process, strengthening their communities today to help them meet tomorrow’s challenges.

See the Episcopal Relief & Development website, www.er-d.org for detailed information on the program areas.

The Millennium Development Goals

The Church’s mission, according to our Catechism found in the Book of Common Prayer, is to reconcile the world to God and each other in Christ. That vision of a healed and restored world is what you and I are charged with being and doing in this world. That dream of God reverberates throughout our long history of encounter with God – in the Hebrew Bible and in the second covenant in Jesus.

In today’s hurting world we, the Church, continue to build a world of shalom. That vision of shalom includes all those other versions of God’s dream – adequate food, clean water, housing, employment, health care, education, equality, and the peace that comes only when justice is present and available to all.

The Millennium Development Goals are a vision of that kind of shalom for the world. They focus on extreme poverty – the kind of poverty that prevents children from developing their mental capacity fully because their bodies and brains are malnourished, and the kind of poverty that cuts people down in the prime of life and makes them far more susceptible to disease.

In September 2000, 191 Heads of Government from developed and developing countries came together at the 2000 UN Millennium Summit. The U.S. and other world leaders unanimously signed the Millennium Declaration that firmly committed them to work together to reduce global poverty and established the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to guide that work. The goals commit rich and poor governments to eight ambitious time-bound and measurable targets that put people-centered development at the heart of the global agenda. In essence, the Millennium

Goals are about halving the number of poor and hungry, getting all girls basic education, drastically reducing child and maternal mortality, fighting HIV/AIDS & other preventable diseases and ensuring sustainable development, all by the year 2015.

The Episcopal Church and the MDGs

Seizing on the MDGs as a blue print to work towards global reconciliation, the Episcopal Church has committed itself to assist in the achievement of the MDGs. At the 74th General Convention in 2003 the church initially resolved to encourage the Church to promote the MDGs. At the 75th General Convention in 2006, the Church gave some teeth to their resolution that each diocese, congregation and parishioner be urged to commit to .07% giving towards these goals all Episcopal entities to pledge .07% of their income in support of the MDGs. Through the work of Executive Council, the Episcopal Church, created a MDG Inspiration Fund from its pledge of .07% of the Church's budget to support the work of Episcopal Relief & Development. At the 76th General Convention in 2009, the success of the MDG Inspiration Fund was affirmed by the passage of a follow-up resolution which also pledged .07% of the Church budget to create a *NetsforLife*® Inspiration Fund.

Episcopal Relief & Development and the MDGs

Over the next two years, from 2010-2012, Episcopal Relief & Development will identify additional contributions to reach a goal of \$4 million for the *NetsforLife*® Inspiration Fund. The \$1 million will be used to “inspire” individuals, congregations and dioceses to contribute \$4 million with the aim of raising a total of \$5 million by 2012.

The Fund focuses specifically on achieving MDGs 4, 5, and 6 by implementing malaria prevention programs in Africa.

- MDG 4: Reduce child mortality
- MDG 5: Improve maternal health
- MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases

Achieving these three goals will save millions of lives.

Although the *NetsforLife*® Inspiration Fund specifically targets MDGs #4, 5 and 6, support is also provided for MDGs # 1, 3, 7 and 8 through this initiative. To find out more about what the Episcopal Relief & Development, in partnership with the Church, is doing to achieve the MDGs visit: www.er-d.org. Also, you can read about Episcopal Relief & Development partnership with Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation and the Office of Government Relations Public Policy Network on our [website](#).

Parish Program Ideas: Getting to Work

Marking Special Occasions

Each year offers many opportunities to inform your congregation about the work of Episcopal Relief & Development and to actively involve them in the mission to extend Christ's healing to the hurting world. At the 76th General Convention in 2009, a resolution passed designating the first Sunday in Lent as Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday. This is a perfect time of year to highlight the global reach of The Episcopal Church's mission through Episcopal Relief & Development. The website has great ideas and a check list to help get you started. **Important:** Please consult your clergy and vestry before you begin any plans. Find resources for both here: www.er-d.org/Lent/ and www.er-d.org/ERDSunday

Other possible occasions:

1. US World Water Day March 22. Use the Sunday before or Sunday after to illustrate the importance of clean water. For more information visit [Water Day](#) and a find way to contribute [Clean Water](#)
2. World Health Day is April 7. Established by the World Health Organization to highlight specific health themes that are areas of concern for the [WHO](#) and a way to contribute to [Preventing Disease](#)
3. [World Malaria Day](#) is April 25. Consider being part of The Episcopal Church's *NetsforLife*® Inspiration Fund: www.inspirationfund.org
4. Early September work with Sunday School Coordinator to educate children about the plight of children in third world countries. The [Gifts for Life](#) catalogue offers opportunities for children to give to other children. Consider using the [Abundant Life Garden Project](#).
5. December 1 is [World AIDS Day](#). It is estimated that 33.3 million people are living with HIV, including 2.5 million children. [HIV/AIDS Prevention Education](#)
6. Late November/early December make [Gifts for Life](#) catalogues available to your congregation. Consider holding an [Alternative Gift Market](#).

Episcopal Relief & Development Christian Formation Programs

As a humanitarian organization, Episcopal Relief & Development tends to mainly focus on the last question of the Episcopal Church's Baptismal Covenant: "Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?" As this goal is at the heart of Episcopal Relief & Development's mission, such a focus is warranted and justified. And yet there

are four other questions comprising that Baptismal Covenant.

With the launch of its Christian Formation programs for children, youth, young adults and adults, Episcopal Relief & Development is demonstrating its commitment to support congregations as they also “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship,” “proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ” and “seek and serve Christ in all persons.” Work with your clergy, Christian formation committee, youth minister, or Sunday school superintendent to put these formation programs into use. More information is available at www.er-d.org/formation.

Other Ideas

The monthly series, [Friends of Episcopal Relief & Development](#), features a story of about a congregational effort to support its work. In reading these stories you can acquire creative ways to galvanize your congregation into action. Perhaps you might hold a [Wine into Water](#) or [Wedding at Cana](#) event. Or find away to employ your [Talents](#). Or you could come up with your own ingenious idea and be profiled as a “Friend of Episcopal Relief & Development.”

Perhaps you would rather organize a parish campaign. Consider the many resources the *NetsforLife*® Inspiration Fund has available to assist you: www.inspirationfund.org



Episcopal Relief & Development Offering Guidelines

1. Members of a congregation may send their offering in the red Episcopal Relief & Development Offering Envelope directly to Episcopal Relief & Development at the address on the envelope. Members should be encouraged to include their name, address and church (parish/mission) on the inside flap of the envelope. This will ensure that the parish/mission and the diocese receive credit for the contribution, and it allows Episcopal Relief & Development staff to thank donors individually.
2. Members of a congregation may put their offering in the offering plate at each service using the Episcopal Relief & Development Offering Envelope. Counters should open the envelopes and do the following: (refer to attached chart)
 - a) If the envelope contains cash then remove the cash and write the cash amount on the inside of the envelope. If the name, address, etc. is not on the inside of the envelope then write in the parish name and address as the donor.
 - b) If the envelope contains a check then write the amount on the inside of the envelope. If name, church and diocese are not written on the inside of the envelope, then write that information from the check information. Return the check to the envelope.
 - c) If a contribution was made by credit card, the information should be included on the inside flap of the envelope.
 - d) If a check made payable to Episcopal Relief & Development is put in the offering without an envelope then take an Episcopal Relief & Development gift envelope and follow the instructions given above in point (b).
 - e) If the envelope contains a check but the check is made out to the parish then follow the instructions given in point (b) and also endorse the check over to Episcopal Relief & Development (on the back write 'For Deposit Only to Episcopal Relief & Development'). Return the check to the envelope.
 - f) Deposit all cash contributions in a parish account (operating, outreach, etc.) and write a check from that account for the cash amount deposited. Make check payable to Episcopal Relief & Development.
 - g) The check (for the cash amount) and all envelopes should be sent to: Episcopal Relief & Development, P.O. Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058

3. Donors may contribute to specific programs. Please visit the donation page on Episcopal Relief & Development’s website (<https://www.er-d.org/donate-select.php>) for a list of funds. Donors are requested to designate these specific gifts on the inside flap of the envelope.

Thank you very much for your assistance. _

Counters receive offering plates with Episcopal Relief & Development envelopes		
Cash	Check	Credit Card
Remove cash and write cash amount on inside flap of envelope. If donor’s name and address are not provided, then write the parish name and address as the donor.	Write the amount on the inside flap of the envelope. If donor’s name, church and diocese are not written on the inside flap of the envelope, please do so according to the information on the check. Return the check to the envelope.	If the donor has chosen to donate via credit card, check that all necessary information (name on card, card type, card number and expiration date) are written on the inside flap of the envelope.
Deposit all cash contributions in a parish account (operating, outreach, etc.) and write a check from that account for the cash amount deposited. Make check payable to Episcopal Relief & Development.	If a check is made out to Episcopal Relief & Development but is not accompanied by an envelope , please take an envelope and fill out the necessary information as instructed above.	
	If an envelope contains a check but the check is made out to the parish , fill out the necessary information on the inside flap of the envelope and endorse the check over to Episcopal Relief & Development by writing “For deposit only to Episcopal Relief & Development” on the back. Return the check to the envelope.	
<p>Forward the following to Episcopal Relief & Development: -check written for cash donations -all envelopes from cash donations -all other checks inside their envelopes</p> <p>Make all checks payable to: Episcopal Relief & Development</p> <p>Mail to: Episcopal Relief & Development, PO Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058</p>		