



May Connection Guide

What can I do?

CROSSWORDS OVERVIEW

This ministry year we want to emphasize these important “CrossWords” in our vocabulary, letting the language and ideas of scripture shape our relationship with God and with others.

Month	Relational Words	Worship Words	Related Psalm
September	I’m listening	Illumination	Psalm 119: 9-11
October	Bless you	Blessing	Psalm 103
November	Thank you	Thanksgiving	Psalm 136
December	Advent		
January	Help	Supplication	Psalm 86
February	I’m sorry	Confession	Psalm 51
March	Why?	Lament	Psalm 13
April	I love you	Praise	Psalm 95
May	What can I do?	Service	Psalm 116

We
are
here

WHAT’S IN THIS GUIDE

In each monthly guide you will find resources that can be used in many ways: personal reflection, small group discussion, or family devotions.

There are four main sections:

- CrossWords in Scripture – Read and respond to biblical texts related to the theme of the month
- CrossWords in Our Tradition – Learn more about our church’s related teachings
- CrossWords in Community and in Action – This month’s guide is slightly different. We will explore opportunities to learn, pray, act, give, and speak.

THIS MONTH – WHAT CAN I DO?

Most of the text of Heidelberg Catechism isn’t about salvation. Yes, recognizing our sin and receiving forgiveness through Jesus is the *first* part of our story, but it isn’t the *biggest* part. The biggest part of the catechism relates to our response of gratitude for God’s grace in our lives, it’s about our life of service in the Kingdom.

Our tradition leads us to be agents of change and renewal in a hurting world. There are no Christian Reformed monasteries; we have been called not to flee God’s world and shelter behind walls, but to engage, redeem, and restore that which is broken.

This month’s connection guide seeks to provide ideas and prompts to further inspire this life of service. Of course, there are countless ways in which we can work for the flourishing of our world and neighbors. In what ways is God inspiring *you* to act? There are big problems that need attention, brainpower, financial resources, helping hands, prayers, and strong voices.

The Bible and our tradition call us to fight poverty, promote civil rights, end exploitation, champion life, defuse violence, advocate for the vulnerable, feed the hungry, fix unfair systems, advance science and medicine, work diligently, educate the young, rest well, care for our creation, and be peacemakers. It’s big but beautiful vision!

Following Jesus can be difficult and messy at times, but we are called into this life, a life that reflects God’s love for his creation and the people created in God’s image.

In what ways can we be the hands and feet of Jesus out in the world God loves?

CROSSWORDS IN SCRIPTURE

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY AND YOUR RESPONSE

May	Text	Your one sentence takeaway
1	Psalms 116	
2	John 15:9-17	
3	Deuteronomy 15:7-11	
4	Matthew 5:38-48	
5	Romans 12:9-21	
6	Hebrews 12:1-2	
7	Colossians 3:12-17	
8	James 2:14-17	
9	Philippians 2:1-11	
10	Matthew 25:37-40	
11	Psalms 122	
12	Luke 22:24-27	
13	Zechariah 7:8-12	
14	I Peter 4:7-11	
15	Matthew 20:26-28	
16	Romans 12:1-8	
17	Matthew 5:7-9	
18	Hebrews 13:1-3	
19	James 1:22-25	
20	Matthew 5:13-16	
21	II Corinthians 8:1-15	
22	Galatians 5:13-15	
23	Acts 20:32-35	
24	Luke 6:25-36	
25	I John 3:11-18	
26	I Timothy 6:17-19	
27	Ephesians 6:1-9	
28	Psalms 40:1-8	
29	II Corinthians 9:12-15	
30	John 13:12-17	
31	Proverbs 3:27-29	

CROSSWORDS IN OUR TRADITION

OUR WORLD BELONGS TO GOD, PARAGRAPH 48-54

48. Our work is a calling from God. We work for more than wages and manage for more than profit so that mutual respect and the just use of goods and skills may shape the workplace. While we earn or profit, we love our neighbors by providing useful products and services. In our global economy we advocate meaningful work and fair wages for all. Out of the Lord's generosity to us, we give freely and gladly of our money and time.

49. Rest and leisure are gifts from God that relax us and set us free to discover and to explore. But we confess that often our addiction to busyness allows our tools and toys to invade our rest and that an internet world with its temptations distorts our leisure. Reminding each other that our Maker rested and gave us rest, we seek to rest more trustingly and to entertain ourselves more simply.

50. Grateful for advances in science and technology, we participate in their development, fostering care for creation and respect for the gift of life. We welcome discoveries that prevent or cure diseases and that help support healthy lives. We respect embryonic life, approaching each new discovery, whether of science or of medical technique, with careful thought, seeking the will of God.

51. We lament that our abuse of creation has brought lasting damage to the world we have been given: polluting streams and soil, poisoning the air, altering the climate, and damaging the earth. We commit ourselves to honor all God's creatures and to protect them from abuse and extinction, for our world belongs to God.

52. We obey God first; we respect the authorities that rule, for they are established by God: we pray for our rulers, and we work to influence governments— resisting them only when Christ and conscience demand. We are thankful for the freedoms enjoyed by citizens of many lands; we grieve with those who live under oppression, and we seek for them the liberty to live without fear.

53. We call on all governments to do public justice and to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals, groups, and institutions so that each may do their tasks. We urge governments and pledge ourselves to safeguard children and the elderly from abuse and exploitation, to bring justice to the poor and oppressed, and to promote the freedom to speak, work, worship, and associate.

54. Followers of the Prince of Peace are called to be peacemakers, promoting harmony and order and restoring what is broken. We call on our governments to work for peace and to restore just relationships. We deplore the spread of weapons in our world and on our streets with the risks they bring and the horrors they threaten. We call on all nations to reduce their arsenals to what is needed in the defense of justice and freedom. We pledge to walk in ways of peace, confessing that our world belongs to God; he is our sure defense.

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, Q & A 105, 107, 110, 111

Q. What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor— not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds— and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

Q. Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way?

A. No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly toward them, to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.

Q. What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

A. God forbids not only outright theft and robbery, punishable by law. But in God's sight theft also includes all scheming and swindling in order to get our neighbor's goods for ourselves, whether by force or means that appear legitimate, such as inaccurate measurements of weight, size, or volume; fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money; excessive interest; or any other means forbidden by God. In addition God forbids all greed and pointless squandering of his gifts.

Q. What does God require of you in this commandment?

A. That I do whatever I can for my neighbor's good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me, and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need.

- *Our World Belongs to God paints a beautiful picture of the type of lifestyle Christ-followers should adopt. Which of the values come most naturally to you? Which values do you think deserve more attention?*
- *Our tradition calls us to engage the world, recognizing all creation belongs to God. In what ways do we still isolate and insulate ourselves? In what areas might God be calling us into deeper engagement?*
- *In what ways can you use your gifts to advocate for the poor, widowed, lonely, vulnerable, and needy among us? In what ways can you advocate for the care of God's creation?*



CROSSWORDS IN COMMUNITY AND IN ACTION

In his bestselling book, *A Hole in our Gospel*, Richard Stearns offers a call to action in four different ways: learning, praying, acting, and speaking. His book is primarily about global poverty, so we've taken Stearn's framework and added more ideas.

For more on *A Hole in Our Gospel*, pick up a copy of the book and check out the study guide found here:

<https://www.worldvision.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/bible-study.pdf>

LEARN

EXPLORE GOD'S CALL TO JUSTICE

Check out the Bible Projects exploration of righteousness and justice:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/justice>

Read Tim Keller's book *Generous Justice* (or watch his talk on the book) - https://youtu.be/280nS1_p2Kk

BUY A WORLD MAP

Post it in a prominent place, and when a crisis happens – such as an earthquake in Haiti, a tsunami in Samoa, or a hurricane in El Salvador – use pushpins or stickers to note where they are and remind you to learn about them and pray for the people.

TUNE INTO POVERTY

Instead of playing music in your car, spend your commute time listening to educational radio programs or podcasts.

SPONSOR A CHILD

By sponsoring a child or family, you can experience a new country, culture, and context through the eyes of a little boy or girl. Many organizations offer child sponsorship opportunities, among them are:

- World Vision - www.worldvision.org
- Compassion International - www.compassion.com
- WorldRenew (a ministry of the CRC) – www.worldrenew.net/free-a-family
- GRACE Ministries - www.aglimpseofgrace.com
- Fito is looking for scholarships for a dozen kids in Zone 3. Connect with Amy Koetsier for details



FORM FRIENDSHIPS

God has brought world cultures to our neighborhoods. Get to know them. Visit ethnic churches in your area to get to know Christians from other places. Look for local programs providing refugee resettlement. If you have a college or university in your town, get acquainted with international students from developing countries and offer to help them with things like English skills.

- Bethany Christian Services is a leader in refugee care - <https://bethany.org/>
- Treetops Collective - <https://treetopscollective.org/>
- Grand Valley has over 350 international students - <https://www.gvsu.edu/istudents/>

LEARN AND TEACH

Consider how you might equip young people to become compassionate global citizens by teaching your children to group about poverty issues. Encourage them to learn about how the lives of children in other countries may differ from theirs, the challenges they face and do discover other cultures and traditions.

- www.worldvisionresources.com

CHECK OUT THE JANUARY SERIES

We have a world class lecture series right in our own backyard. Many speakers share their expertise on matters of creation care, race, stewardship, education, vocation, politics, technology, health care, science, and much more.

- <https://calvin.edu/january-series/>

READ AND START A BOOK CLUB

There are many wonderful books that help us understand poverty and justice at a deeper level. Some are factual and others tell real, human stories of struggle and triumph. See the “related media” section in this guide for some suggestions.

WATCH A MOVIE

Films are a powerful and influential medium in our culture. Watch movies such as *Blood Diamond* to learn about child soldiers and the diamond trade; *Hotel Rwanda* to see courage in the face of genocide; or *Slumdog Millionaire* to understand the plight of street children in India. Discussing the movies with others afterward enhances the experience. Go to www.theholeinourgospel.com for a list of other thought-provoking, films.

GET A REALITY CHECK

If you think you’re not rich, just compare yourself to someone who lives on less than a dollar a day. Global Rich List quickly shows you, based on your income, where you rank on a global scale of wealth. It’s an eye-opener.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200103064843/http://www.globalrichlist.com/> Or try a poverty simulator, it can be very eye opening for those of us who assume people in poverty just make bad choices.

https://unitedway.formstack.com/forms/breaking_the_cycle

LEARN FROM OUR PAST

Our church laments the attitudes and practices within our tradition that lead to discrimination and injustice. Confronting the truths of our past can empower a future of reconciliation and growth.

- The story of Joanna Veenstra - <https://www.thebanner.org/features/2019/11/the-true-courage-of-johanna-veenstra> Our church's repentance <https://www.crcna.org/news-and-events/news/synod-repents-sin-racism>
- Not Guilty, Just Responsible – article by James Bratt <https://blog.reformedjournal.com/2016/07/15/not-guilty-just-responsible/>

CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History Month, a time when people across the U.S. and Canada reflect on all the ways in which people of African descent have affected our culture and our world in big and small ways.

- Why Christians Should Observe Black History Month - <https://www.thebanner.org/features/2020/01/why-christians-should-observe-black-history-month>

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

Begun in the United States in 1970, Earth Day (April 22) has grown over the years to an international movement with year-round emphasis. Governments, environmental organizations, schools, and many more groups promote Earth Day. Largely absent from the list of celebrants, however, are the evangelical churches. Why should that be? Do we not have cause to discover and celebrate the world God has made and commit ourselves to its care?

- Earth Day Every Day - <https://www.thebanner.org/features/2011/01/earth-day-every-day>

PRAY

Many people find it helpful to incorporate prayer into ordinary tasks you do every day. Along those lines, here are seven steps toward integrating prayer for the poor in your daily life:

1. When you take your morning shower, pray for families in poor countries who do not have access to clean water, forcing mothers to spend hours collecting inadequate water and causing children to suffer and even die from water-related diseases.
2. When you pack your lunch or your child's lunch, pray for the one billion people who are chronically hungry in the world today.
3. As you commute to your job, pray for the adults around the world who can't find consistent work to feed their families, or pray for the millions of children forced into harmful or exploitative labor.
4. When you drop off your child at school, pray for children around the world who cannot get an education because of poverty or discrimination.
5. As you take a vitamin, pray for the families without health care, leaving them and especially their children vulnerable to preventable diseases.
6. When you arrive home after work, pray for the children and families who are homeless due to poverty, conflict, or natural disasters.
7. As you tuck your children into bed, guide them to pray for the millions of children who have lost their parents around the world - especially the fifteen million AIDS orphans around the world of whom must survive without guardians.

This is one of Richard Stearns' favorite prayers. He encourages us to pray this Franciscan benediction, and to reflect on the message of hope contained within:

*May God bless you with a restless discomfort
about easy answer, half-truths, and superficial relationships,*

so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

*May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression,
and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for
justice, freedom, and peace among all people.*

*May God bless you with the gift of tears so shed with those who suffer
from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you
may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.*

*May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that
you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able,
with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.*

*And the blessing of God the Supreme Majesty and our Creator
Jesus Christ the Incarnate Word Who is our Brother and Savior,
and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Guide, be with you
and remain with you, this day and forevermore. Amen*

ACT

You might remember the popular Nike slogan from a few years ago: Just do it. There probably isn't a more pithy way to exhort people to get up, get going, get active. And that applies to serving the poor. You don't have to have money and power or education and advanced skills to make a difference. Everyone can do something. Those "small things with great love" (in Mother Teresa's words) bring great joy to our Father. Here are some ways you can act, wherever you are, wherever you live.

VOLUNTEER IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

If you look around your own city or town, there are plenty of things you can do that require little more than time. Volunteer at a soup kitchen or AIDS hospice; give to, or volunteer at, a food bank; teach English to refugees; mentor an at-risk child; serve at the local Ronald McDonald House (www.rmhc.org); visit lonely patients at a nursing home.

- Holland Rescue Mission - <https://hollandrescue.org/>
- Degage Ministries - <https://www.degageministries.org/>
- Guiding Light - <https://guidinglightworks.org/>
- Mel Trotter – <https://www.meltrotter.org/> Georgetown will likely have an opportunity to sort items in their donation center this May
- Habitat for Humanity – <https://www.lakeshorehabitat.org/> Georgetown is helping on Wednesday, May 19 from 1-4pm.

HELP WITH YOUR CHURCH

You can work through and with your church to increase involvement with the poor. Get your small group to take on a service project. Connect with Amy for lots of ways to get involved: amyk@georgetowncrc.org

- Help with Feeding America
- Volunteer with our clothing or food pantry ministry at Micah's House
- Serve as a Deacon or with Volunteer Service Ministry

TAKE A SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP

These up-close-and-personal experiences can open your eyes and put you on a path to greater involvement. Our church has many opportunities to serve the poor in hands-on ways.

- Lake City Helping Hands trip
- Travel to Guatemala to serve with GRACE Ministries
- Connect with the work of WorldRenew – www.worldrenew.net
- Youth with a Mission - www.ywam.org

DO YOUR BEST WORK PRO BONO

Developing countries often have a shortage of highly trained professionals such as doctors, dentists, contractors, or business consultants. When you volunteer your time, you make a big investment in God's kingdom. Look for opportunities through your church or professional association. Also, a great contact for Christian medical professionals is Medical Teams International (www.medicalteams.org). For a local connection check out gracemedicalguatemala.org

RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY

I don't know a charity or nonprofit that couldn't use enthusiastic volunteers to help them meet new supporters and raise money to support their work.

DONATE BLOOD

- <https://www.redcrossblood.org/>
- <https://www.versiti.org/> (Grand Rapids-based Michigan Blood became Versiti Blood Center of Michigan in January 2019)

LOOK FOR ON-THE-JOB WAYS TO SERVE

You don't have to work for a faith-based organization to do the Lord's work. Perhaps you've got access to people who would give to a cause if you asked. A fun example: Ted Mettelstaedt, the community services supervisor of Bellevue, Washington, used his position in the Parks and Recreation department to coordinate the collection of more than five thousand soccer balls from around Washington state. The new and lightly used balls were sent overseas to children who otherwise would have had to improvise with balls made out of plastic bags and string.

USE YOUR ATHLETICISM

Running a marathon or climbing a mountain is a great accomplishment in itself, but by incorporating a cause, you can make the experience even more meaningful. For example, a team of eight students from Wheaton Academy in Warrenville, Illinois, climbed Mt. Rainier, raising \$1 for each of the mountain's 14,410 feet, for drilling wells in a water-starved area of Zambia. For more information and inspiration, visit www.worldvision.org/teamworldvision.

JOIN AN ASSEMBLY LINE.

Many organizations collect new or used goods to send overseas; all of those items need to be organized and packaged. You can volunteer to sort and pack at warehouses or collection centers.

- Feed My Starving Children - <https://www.fmsc.org/>
- Kids Food Basket - <https://kidsfoodbasket.org/>
- Sus Manos Gleaners - <https://www.smgleaners.org/> Georgetown will have a work morning on Saturday, May 15 from 8:30am to 11am at Sus Manos Gleaners for a group of 10-15 people.
- Georgetown will be hosting a Hand2hand snack drive and assembling of snack packs for the 3081 students in 81 Ottawa county schools who receive weekend food assistance.

GO HUNGRY

Most of us think we know what hunger means. But if you spend thirty hours without food - all while serving others or learning about poverty in the developing world-it makes an impression. The 30 Hour Famine (www.30hourfamine.org) is a popular youth movement to fight hunger and raise awareness.

CONNECT WITH PEOPLE EXPERIENCING IMPRISONMENT

John and Jeanne Arends are two volunteers from our church who, through virtual letter writing, are building relationships with people who are experiencing incarceration. There are many in our own backyards who are desperate to hear the Good News!

- Forgotten Man Ministries - forgottenman.org/
- Crossroad Prison Ministries <https://cpministries.org/>

GIVE

In the New Testament story about the feeding of the five thousand., Jesus asks, "How many loaves do you have?" That's still a relevant question today. What do you have that Jesus could use, and what could He do with it? Each of us has resources beyond money that can be used in creative and compassionate ways to serve the poor. Here are some examples of how ordinary people took what they had in their hands and saw amazing things happen when they gave it to Jesus.

SET A NEW GIVING GOAL

Whether you already tithe or you don't, determine a percentage of your income you will give this year to God. Then next year, increase it a little. You might also designate an annual pay raise or bonus to this purpose.

GIVE BEYOND THE GRAVE

You can designate your favorite charity in your will so that your treasure will continue to be used in compassionate ways after you've passed from this life.

- Barnabas Foundation – www.barnabasfoundation.com

GIVE AT THE OFFICE

Many companies match charitable donations - does yours? It's an easy way to give twice as much. Or you can rally your employees to raise money for a cause, adopt a charity, or sponsor a child group Equip and inspire your

colleagues with facts and stories tied to the cause. If you're a CEO and you haven't already taken the plunge into corporate philanthropy, start now - it's good business. An example: Larry Dahl, owner of Oil Stop Oil-and-Lube stores in California, invites his customers to donate an additional \$1 for digging wells in West Africa through World Vision. He matches it... and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation matches it again – raising more than \$6,000 a week.

FIND TREASURE IN TRASH

Fundraising ideas can come from anywhere. Tara Paul of San Diego had a "duh!" moment when her twelve-year-old daughter wrote an essay suggesting that funds from recycling bottles and cans be used for worthy causes. So Tara started a ministry called DUH- Desperate, Underprivileged, and Hungry-and organized her church, The Rock, to bring their bottles and cans in with them each Sunday. The ministry raises about \$4,500 monthly and currently sponsors 100 children. Not only do they collect at church, they are proactive in supporting and matches it again- collecting at other Rock community outreach events.

"SELL" YOUR TIME

After all, time is money-and you can creatively auction it for a good cause. A great example: Instead of spending his Thanksgiving leave with his family, a Marine from North Carolina "sold" the hours for \$25 per hour to raise money for a local homeless shelter. He spent the four days living among the people the shelter serves. You can auction your time and skills to the highest bidder and donate the proceeds to your favorite charity.

TAX YOURSELF FOR LITTLE LUXURIES

This is an ingenious idea from The Journey Church in San Jose, California, a congregation of 225. The church printed "Luxury Tax" cards based on the board game Monopoly and asked members to "tax" themselves based on luxuries they take for granted, such as the number of water taps or toilets in their homes. They've raised more than \$25,000 for Limpopa, an AIDS-devastated community in Zimbabwe.

GIVE MEANINGFUL GIFTS

Let's face it: We all have more stuff than we need. At Christmas and other major holidays, do your loved ones really need another gadget or gizmo from you? Instead, give them something meaningful. Many charities have alternative-giving catalogs; probably you've seen the one from Heifer (www.heifer.org).

- WorldRenew - <https://worldrenew.net/gift-catalog>
- Heifer International - <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html>
- WorldVision - <https://donate.worldvision.org/giftcatalog>

DONATE A DAY'S WAGES

Whether your daily wages amount to a big number or a small one, anyone with a job can do this. Eugene and Minhee Cho, a pastor and his wife in Seattle, invited their family, friends, and the rest of the world to donate one day's wages and to renew that pledge every year on their birthdays. For this they created the Web site www.onedayswages.org, which includes information on global poverty and a handy wage calculator.

DONATE SOMETHING OF VALUE - MAKE IT EVEN MORE VALUABLE

Many of us have expensive possessions sitting around our house that we could live without, but we're hesitant to part with them. That was Art Tascone, a North Carolina doctor and self-described "motorhead" who had twelve rare automobiles in a warehouse near his house. But one day, Art had a revelation when he thought, "What am I

doing with these things? I could be doing something better." He donated the most prized vehicles in his collection 1960 Lincoln Continental, a 1961 Cadillac, and a 1962 Ford Thunderbird-to World Vision to sell to help the poor. He now drives a Toyota minivan and has no regrets.

GLVE UP A REGULAR EXPENSE

This could be your morning latte or a deluxe car wash - the point is to give the money to a good cause instead. A creative example comes from a stay-at-home mom who decided to give up her usual lunch for a year and donate the money to World Vision. Instead she's eating a bowl of cornmeal porridge – highly nutritious but not very tasty, she says on her blog. She's humbled by the daily reminder that this porridge is the only food many people have, and they walk miles get it.

PETS VS. CHILDREN

Living in an affluent society, it's easy to fall into spending patterns that don't hold up when compared to the dire poverty the world. For example, I love my dog, but I spend a lot on her care, food, and kennel costs. Another reader of my book commented, "My dogs eat better and are better taken care of than most children." Commit to giving as much to help the less fortunate as you spend on your pets. You may be surprised that it substantially boosts your giving to the poor!

CREATE A DIFFERENT KIND OF GIFT REGISTRY

If you have a special event, such as a birthday, wedding, anniversary, graduation, or retirement coming up, it's the perfect opportunity to raise funds for a favorite charity in lieu of presents you probably don't need. For example, the Web site www.globalgiving.org offers a gift registry that you can set up, choosing from a wide range of charitable projects, including poverty relief.

SPEAK

Being an advocate is a powerful way to pursue justice for the poor, and it can take many forms. In this wonderful democracy we live in, you and I can influence elected officials--when we speak, they listen. With the right message and the right tools, you can speak through the media. Or you can raise awareness about poverty in your own community. Here are some ideas on speaking up for the world's poor:

SHARE YOUR STORY

In what ways have you served, given, or been involved? How has it touched you? Connection with Amy to have your story featured in her "Our Faith in Action" newsletter. amyk@georgetowncrc.org

SEND A MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

Voice your support to political leaders for funding or legislation alleviating global poverty. The three best ways to deliver a message are sending e-mails, writing letters, and making phone calls.

SEEK MEDIA COVERAGE

If you're passionate about a cause and you want to talk about it to the widest audience possible, there's nothing better than the media. The three best ways to generate news coverage are pitching a human-interest story, writing opinion editorials (op-ed pieces), and writing letters to the editor. You can get local media to cover your story by showing them that local people are actively working to be part of the solution.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA WISELY

You can use a blog, your Facebook profile, Twitter, or YouTube to spread the word about important justice causes.

Be mindful though, social media should always be used with care and wisdom. Most schools have posters like this encouraging us to “THINK” before we post. These are five simple, but important questions to ask yourself before your post.

Social media can be a chaotic place sometimes, but how can we use it to the glory of God? In [this video](#), Phillip Holmes, Vice President for Institutional Communications at Reformed Theological Seminary, gives three tips on how to best use your social media platforms to shine a light in a digital world. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuFqw3gjaCl>

Also, check out Quentin Schultze’s new book, *Communicating with Grace and Virtue*

- What do you encounter online that is the most helpful and edifying for your spiritual life?
- What strategies or principles could you adopt to improve the health of your social media use?



SPEAK OR INVITE A SPEAKER TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL OR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Charities or other organizations in your area have knowledgeable people who can speak from deep experience on global or local poverty issues. On a national level, get connected with advocacy organizations such as Bread for the World (www.bread.org), the ONE Campaign (www.one.org), or Results (www.results.org).

RELATED MEDIA

BOOKS

POVERTY

- *The Hole in our Gospel* by Richard Stearns - [Link](#)
- *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical* by Shane Claiborne - [Link](#)
- *Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes Us Just* by Timothy Keller - [Link](#)
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and John Perkins - [Link](#)
- *Geography of Grace: Doing Theology from Below* by Kris Roke and Joel VanDyke - [Link](#)
- *Don't Invite Them to Church: Moving from a Come and See to a Go and Be Church* by Karen Wilk - [Link](#)
- *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* by Jeffrey Sachs
- *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty* by Peter Singer
- *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* by Paul Collier
- *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity* by Ronald J. Sider
- *Revolutionary Generosity: Transforming Stewards to Be Rich Toward God* by Westly K. Willmer
- *Philanthro-Capitalism: How the Rich Can Save the World* by Matthew Bishop

- *Beyond Humanitarianism: What You Need to Know About Africa and Why it Matters*, Princeton N. Lyman and Patricia Dorff, editors,
- *The Volunteer Revolution: Unleashing the Power of Everybody* by Bill Hybels
- *Up and Out of Poverty: The Social Marketing Solution* by Philip Kotler and Nancy R. Lee,
- *The CEV Poverty & Justice Bible*, American Bible Society, 2007.
- *Good News About Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World* by Gary A. Haugen
- *Halftime: Changing Your Game Plan from Success to Significance* by Bob Buford
- *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* by N.T. Wright
- *Stewards in the Kingdom: A Theology of Life in All Its Fullness* by R. Scot Rodin
- *Glocalization: How Followers of Jesus Engage in a Flat World* by Bob Roberts
- *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn
- *Strength in What Remains: A Journey of Remembrance and Forgiveness* by Tracy Kidder
- *Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan* by Greg Mortenson
- *Under the Overpass: A Journey of Faith on the Streets of America* by Mike Yankoski
- *Voices of the Poor - Can Anyone Hear Us?* by Deepa Narayan
- *Take Your Best Shot: Do Something Bigger Than Yourself* by Austin Gutwein with Todd Hillard
- *Warrior Princess: Fighting for Life with Courage and Hope* by Princess Kasune Zulu

RACIAL JUSTICE

- *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice* by Jemar Tisby - [Link - Review](#)
- *Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation* by Latasha Morrison - [Link](#)
- *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* by Beverly Daniel Tatum - [Link](#)

VOCATION

- *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* by Timothy Keller - [Link](#)
- *Redeeming Work: A guide to Discovering God's Calling for Your Career* by Bryan J. Dik - [Link](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

- *Communicating with Grace and Virtue: Learning to Listen, Speak, Text and Interact as a Christian* by Quentin J. Schultze - [Link](#)

CREATION CARE

- *Caring for Creation: The Evangelical's Guide to Climate Change and a Healthy Environment* by Paul Douglas and Mitch Hescox - [Link](#)

FILMS

FEATURE FILMS

- Hotel Rwanda (MGM/United Artists, 2004)
- Blood Diamond (Warner Brothers, 2006)

- Slumdog Millionaire (Fox Searchlight Pictures/Warner Brothers, 2008)
- Invisible Children (Invisible Children, Inc., 2003)
- Amazing Grace (Samuel Goldwyn Films, 2006)
- The Constant Gardener (Focus Features, 2005)
- City of God (Miramax, 2002)
- Beyond Belief (Principle Pictures, 2006)
- Lost Boys of Sudan (Actual Films/Principle Pictures, 2004)
- The Kite Runner (Dreamworks, 2007)

DOCUMENTARIES

- Living on One Dollar – [Link](#) – Amazon Prime
- The White Helmets - Netflix
- Reparando – [Link](#) – Amazon Prime

ADVENTURE

Look through your home and gather items that you might want to donate to a good cause.

Visit a thrift store and drop off your donation:

- Revive - 3675 Baldwin St, Hudsonville, MI 49426
- Love Inc. - 3300 Van Buren St, Hudsonville, MI 49426
- Bibles for Missions - 7359 Cottonwood Dr. Suite A, Jenison, MI 49428

Talk to someone who works at the store. Ask them what happens with the money they earn from selling donated items. Ask why that is important to them.

PRAYER – WORSHIP SOURCEBOOK

God, Our Father, with these gifts

We offer you our lives

To do your work in the world.

Take our bodies and our minds

Our work and our leisure,

Our relationships with other people,

Our friendships and our family life,

Our dreams and our doubts,

Our faith and our plans for the future.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,

We bring them to you. Amen.

RESPONSE

Color the images on the following page. Below each image, write a way you could serve others with that item!

