



#connect2:
Nicaragua

Commitment
f | Life



The
United
Reformed
Church Youth

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Illustrations

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Nicaragua

Bienvenido a Nicaragua

Welcome to URC Youth's new-style mission magazine from United Reformed Church (URC) Children and Youth, produced in collaboration with our non-uniformed organisation Pilots, and with URC Commitment for Life which, in turn, partners with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now.

It has been customary each year for Pilots companies to have an 'Overseas Voyage' programme to explore a country which the London Missionary Society (LMS), later the Council for World Mission (CWM), served, or with which the URC has a link.

This year, to build stronger links with the international engagement of the URC and to enable more children, young people and adults to become more involved in mission and social justice, Pilots has joined forces with Commitment for Life to create this new resource.

Greta Globe is the mascot of Commitment for Life, and each year will invite children aged between 5 and 10 to 'Go with Greta' to one of the four regions that Commitment for Life supports through Christian Aid. The material in 'Go with Greta' is designed for leaders to use in planning their sessions. For the 11 to 14 age range, we have '#connect 2', which emphasises the increasing focus on our inter-connected world as we aim to build and explore the relationship between each of the four regions, the people who live there, and ourselves as a church and as individuals. Young people may choose to use this material independently, or leaders may use it in their planning. The four regions we will visit over the next four years are Central America (which includes Nicaragua); Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory; Bangladesh; and Zimbabwe.

Our part in that mission involves learning more about the problems facing the poorest people, by listening to the stories told by our partners and learning about the issues. We can pray, asking God to send the Holy Spirit to bring about justice. And we can act by working for justice, using our voices and writing to our MPs, joining in the campaigns hosted by Christian Aid and Global Justice Now, and also speaking up at school, work, in church and online. We can share our gifts and money to support the people in these four regions. Learn more by visiting:

Commitment for Life: www.bit.ly/urclfl
www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/our-work-young-people
www.christianaid.org.uk
www.globaljustice.org.uk/youth
www.fairtrade.org.uk

This booklet provides material for six sessions, including an intergenerational celebration. This might be used by a group meeting weekly to form the basis of a half term's sessions. Alternatively, the material might be used for a holiday club, or an event over one or two days within your church. It can be used in face-to-face gatherings, and could also be adapted for use in online groups. Each half of the magazine follows the same pattern, as this will allow mixed age groups to engage in the same theme but with slightly different



Nicaragua is in Central America, with Honduras to the north and Costa Rica to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and the Caribbean Sea to the east.

Nicaragua is home to six million people, and is the second poorest country in Latin America – one of the countries most affected by climate change in the world.

About 80% of the population depends on agriculture for survival.

It is a republic with a socialist government, where education and healthcare are free, unlike the countries like the US, for example.

About 97% of the population identifies as Christian, with the majority being Roman Catholic.

The population of Nicaragua is particularly diverse. The Caribbean coast is home to six different ethnic groups speaking four different languages. Can you find out how Nicaragua's history has led to so many different ethnic groups?

National Anthem

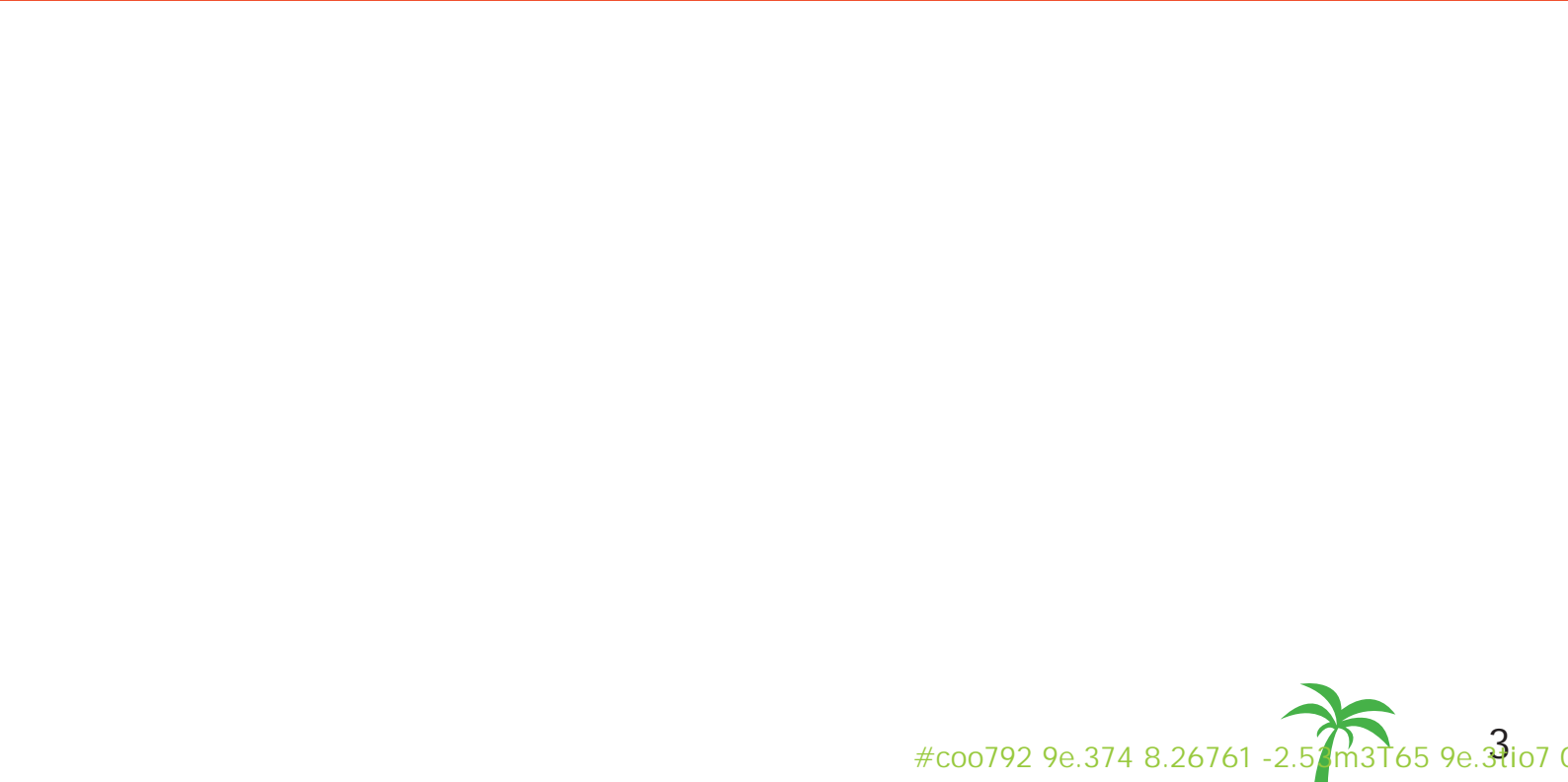
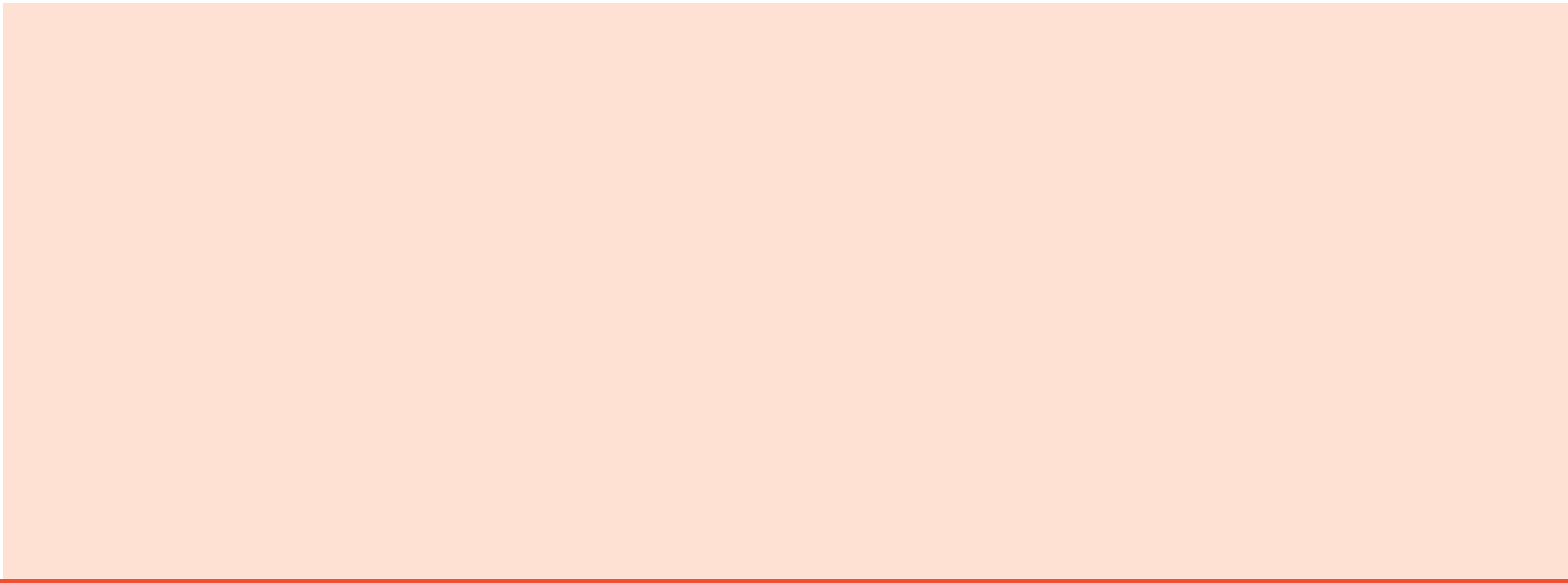
Listen to the Nicaraguan National Anthem youtu.be/J3C4dwc9vRw

Hail to thee, Nicaragua (Ei · a l)

Hail to thee, Nicaragua! On thy land
roars the voice of the cannon no more,
nor does the blood of brothers now stain
thy glorious bicolor banner.

Let peace shine beautifully in thy sky,
and nothing dims your immortal glory,
for work is thy well earned laurel
and honor is thy triumphal emblem!





Marlon Lopez, a Soppexcca technician, says:

In the communities, boys used to leave school at 12 to work on the coffee plantations but, because of Fairtrade and a change in the law, they usually go and work on the coffee plantations at 16, but still leave school at 12 or 13. It really depends if the school is close to their house. Around 12 to 13, girls and boys start looking around to get married, and the average number of children is five or six.

Discussion Does anything surprise you about what you have read? Do you think your life is easier, or harder, than Johaira's? Why do you think that?

Johaira says that she is worried about the impact of climate change on her baby's future. It may not seem that we can do anything about the climate in Nicaragua, but is that right? What changes can we make to our own routine that might make a difference?

Activity





3. Mudslides and erosion

'My daughter and son's farms are seriously affected by the weather and my daughter's coffee (farm) is really small. When the rain came in August, we had a mudslide because of the very heavy rain. It was a new coffee plantation, wiped out. ' Yolanda Amador Morales

Mudslides occur when a period of intense rainfall happens, and the great volume of water mixes with soil, causing it to turn to mud and move downhill. During Hurricane Mitch, more than 60cm of rain fell over the Castitas volcano, causing one side of it to collapse. The resulting mudslide was ten miles long and five miles wide. Nearly 1,000 people lost their lives, and many more homes and towns were lost.

Game Cherry landslide

You will need a pudding basin, a plate, a knife, a bag of flour and a cherry. Completely fill the bowl with flour, and place the plate over the top. Quickly and carefully turn the bowl over on to the plate, creating a mound of flour. Place the cherry on the top of the mound. The aim is for each player in turn to cut away a section of the flour without the cherry falling off the top. The person who is responsible for the drop has to pick up the cherry with their teeth.

4.

Are you proud of where you live? If you were hosting a visitor from another country who had never been here before, what would you want to show them? What would you recommend they do, or eat, or experience to give them a taste of the UK? What's iconic about the UK, and what are the stereotypes that really are not true?

Nicaragua is a tourist destination. People come to see the architecture in the cities, the beautiful lakes, the beaches, the nature reserves and wildlife, the volcanoes and to take part in activities such as hiking, climbing, camping, and swimming in the crater lakes.

Activity







Christian Aid and Soppexcca are some of the heroes in combating the effects of climate change. They encourage organic farming, the planting of trees, and diversification to ensure farmers grow a variety of crops more resistant to climate change. Young promoters like



Session 6

Intergenerational Celebration



The intergenerational celebration is for all ages together. You may wish to invite families to join you. Or perhaps you could use these celebration idea to host an event for your church, and invite members of the congregation and the leadership to think about whether they could become a Commitment for Life congregation.

Games

Play a runaround quiz game. Label the four corners of the room A, B, C and D, and ask some multi-choice questions about Nicaragua of varying degrees of difficulty, but all covering things we've learned together. Participants go and stand in the corner they think is the right one for the answer. They are given a chance to change their mind (the leader shouts 'runaround'). Anyone who gets the wrong answer is then out.

Alternatively, put the group into mixed-age teams. The leader has a list of words about Nicaragua. A runner from each team is given the first word, and has to run back to the group and act out the word for the team to guess. Then the next team member runs to get the next word. Every member of the team must take a turn being the runner.

See the Nicaragua resources page www.urc.org.uk/go-with-greta-and-connect for some sample questions. No cheating!

More recipes

See the Nicaragua resources page www.urc.org.uk/go-with-greta-and-connect for the recipe for a savoury and a sweet recipe from Nicaragua. Gallopinto is a meal eaten daily in Nicaragua, especially for breakfast. Tres Leches cake is a popular festival cake, but this recipe is for cupcakes. Both recipes take a little longer to prepare, so will need to be made in advance.

Weaving prayer

Weaving is one of the artisan crafts that you will find in Nicaragua. Patterns are often colourful, especially when they weave hammocks. Tie each end of nine equal-lengthed pieces of string to a piece of dowel or a broom handle or the back of a chair. Give each person a ribbon or a long strip of coloured paper. Each person should write on their ribbon/paper their own prayer for Nicaragua, thinking of something that has really resonated with them during the sessions. It could be a thank you prayer, a sorry prayer, a please prayer, or a combination of these. Then, in turn, each person can weave their prayer in and out of the strings to make a colourful prayer hammock that can then be hung on the wall.

Watch

The Hillsong song 'So will I' being sung, with a background video of a visit to Nicaragua. youtu.be/N4XEQmSWlqY

Fruit salad

A lot of different fruits grow in Nicaragua. Why not use some of them to make a fruit salad, or blend them together to make a fruit smoothie? You could try banana, mango, plantain, pineapple, papaya, orange, lemon, mandarin orange, passion fruit, cantaloupe, or even coconut. If you can find them, you could also try pitaya (dragon fruit) or saposilla.

Drama

Group members may like to create a drama – or maybe a documentary as though for CBBC or Netflix – about Nicaragua, featuring some of the things they have found out during the course of the topic.

