



# UMCOR

## Youth Resources for this Special Sunday



# Youth Group Resources And Ideas for **UMCOR**

UMCOR Sunday is for everyone — from the adults in worship to the tots in preschool. As you prepare to celebrate this Special Sunday, we've put together some resources that can spur good conversation and thought-in-action among your youth groups.

# **“HACKS”**

## **FOR THIS SERIES**

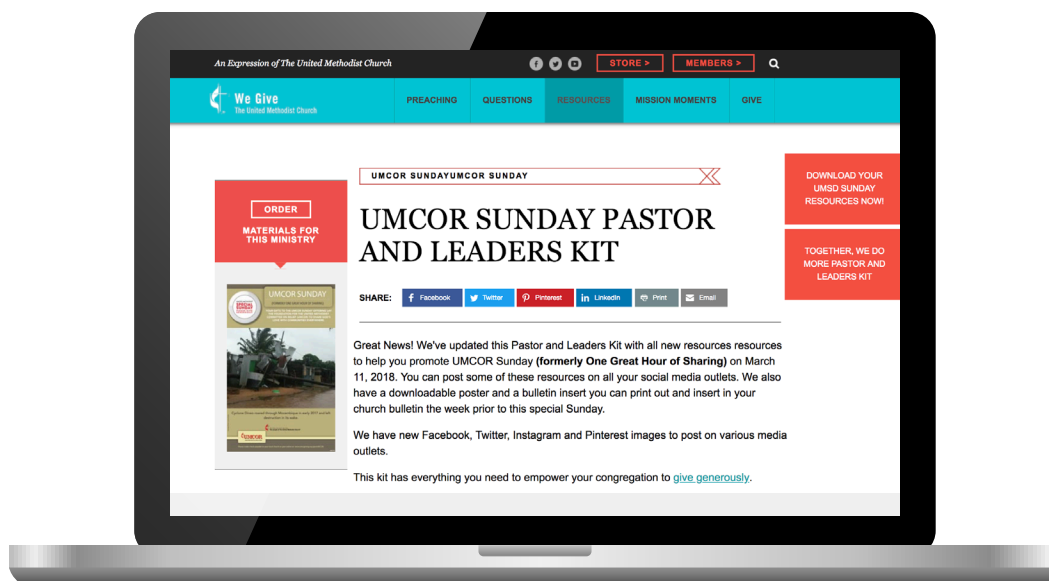
- Consider responding to UMCOR Sunday with a service project that focuses on collecting items for flood buckets.
- Bring in someone such as a conference disaster response person or volunteer who has traveled to respond to disasters with the United Methodist Church.
- Bring in someone who has gone through a natural disaster, and has needed assistance themselves.
- Consider using this resource the week before or the Wednesday before so that students can understand what UMCOR is before they take a special offering up.
- The format of our youth worship service is in the form of a sermon. If you don't do a “youth sermon” format, especially if you are in a smaller group context, feel free to break up the sermon with clarifying questions (we've included some from the Small Group Guide).



## Resources For The Weeks Ahead Of **UMCOR Sunday**

To make the experience more meaningful for your youth group, we suggest leading up to UMCOR Sunday by giving a teaser for a few weeks beforehand. Depending on the emphasis in your church and your context, here are three weeks of materials you can use beforehand.

You can trade out any of the media by visiting the [UMCOR Pastor and Leader's Kit](#).



# THREE WEEKS OUT

## SCRIPT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:

In three weeks, we are going to be taking a special offering, along with the rest of the church, for something called “UMCOR.” The United Methodist Committee on Relief, or UMCOR, is the humanitarian relief and development agency of the United Methodist Church. UMCOR seeks to transform people and communities in ways that support an abundant life. I encourage you to consider giving an offering.



**SHOW THIS VIDEO IN YOUR REGULAR  
ANNOUNCEMENT TIME:**

# TWO WEEKS OUT

## SCRIPT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:

In just two weeks, we are going to be taking a special offering, along with the rest of the church, for something called “UMCOR.” We talked a little about UMCOR last week. UMCOR is organized into programmatic areas focused on U.S. disaster response and recovery, international disaster response and recovery, sustainable development, and migration. We only have two weeks left—so begin thinking about what you can give to this important day!



**SHOW THIS VIDEO IN YOUR REGULAR  
ANNOUNCEMENT TIME:**



**SHOW THIS VIDEO IN YOUR REGULAR  
ANNOUNCEMENT TIME:**

## ONE WEEK OUT

Next week is one of our “Special Sundays” in the United Methodist Church, where we take a special offering. Next week’s emphasis is on an organization called UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Watch this video to learn more:

### **SCRIPT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Next week, I encourage you to bring money for this special offering. Next week we’ll learn more about where our money goes.



# UMCOR SUNDAY

## ORDER OF SERVICE

**WELCOME YOUR GROUP AS NORMAL THEN SAY SOMETHING LIKE:**

Each week I've been giving you a "teaser" about today, UMCOR Sunday.  
We've got a great morning planned for you.



# GAMES & ICEBREAKERS

## GOOD SAMARITAN RELAY:

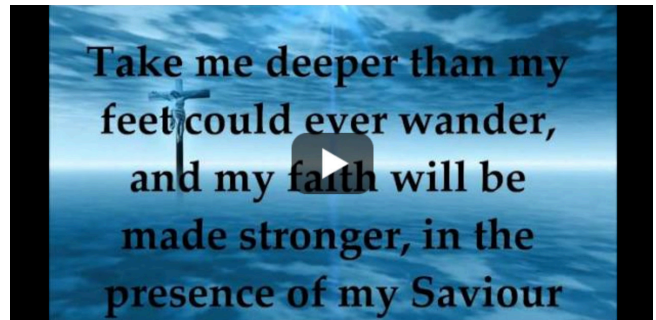
- Split students in four teams of four to ten people.
- Choose one person from the team to be at one end of the room, lying on the floor, “hurt.”
- On the other side, give each person in line a bandage. The last person in line will be given a cup of water.
- On “GO,” teams will race (either together or relay-style), with their supplies to the hurt team member. They must put their bandages on, have the hurt team member drink the water, and carry the person back to the starting point.
- The first team back wins!

## TURN TO A NEIGHBOR

(choose one of the following):

- Have students discuss with one or two friends who their “neighbor” is. Perhaps these are literal neighbors stories. If your group is smaller, open up the floor to talk about any crazy neighbors.
- Talk about a time when you needed help, but no one would help you.
- Talk about a time when you knew someone needed help, but you didn’t want to help them.

# SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS



- Build Your Kingdom Here - Rend Collective
- I Will Follow - Chris Tomlin
- Blessed be the Name
- Never Let Go
- Oceans - Hillsong

# SERMON SCRIPT

For the past month, I've announced to you that today is UMCOR Sunday. I've invited you to consider a special offering, and I told you a little bit about what UMCOR is...but you probably don't know what the big deal is, right?

The United Methodist Church votes on a specific number of "Special Sundays" where we take up an offering, in addition to our weekly tithes, that goes towards a special cause. UMCOR is one of those causes.

Special Sundays are "special" because all of the United Methodist Churches in the world come together to celebrate putting feet to our faith. On UMCOR Sunday, we do that by giving generously to the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

Other Sundays, any United Methodist church could be doing their own thing, but today is a day where all of our churches agree: It's a "special Sunday."

Let's watch this video to learn more.



Hopefully, that video shows you the heart behind UMCOR — to provide disaster relief to those in need. Not only does UMCOR help with United States disaster relief, but it also assists with international disaster relief. Currently, United States disaster relief works with the conference disaster response ministries to provide financial assistance, disaster expertise and connections with nongovernmental organizations, volunteers, experts, local government and other organizations. As for the International disaster relief, it serves as the primary channel for UM assistance. In the short term, UMCOR provides funds to our partners for basic needs to ease human suffering. In the long term, we work with local partners toward recovery and reconstruction.

Why is UMCOR such a big deal? UMCOR exemplifies the heart of what God teaches us: to take care of other people. I would argue that God prefers it when we sacrifice in order to take care of people that we have to work to learn more about — like refugees in other countries.

## **READ LUKE 10:25-29 NRSV TOGETHER AS A GROUP**

### The Parable of the Good Samaritan

*25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” 27 He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” 28 And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”*

*29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

We’ve all heard this verse before, and if you know your Bible, you probably know what comes next in the story. **But I’d love to walk you through this story a little differently today.**

A leader of religious law, a Pharisee, stands up to challenge Jesus. He’s not really asking an earnest question. In fact, the Bible says he’s testing Jesus. And Jesus gives him an answer that he probably figured: to love God with all of our hearts, minds, souls, and strengths, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.



The leader presses Jesus: “Who is my neighbor?”

If I asked you, “Who is your neighbor?” What would your first response be? Maybe you’d talk about the cute older couple that lives next door or your friend down the street. Maybe you’d talk about your small group here at church or your soccer team. Maybe you’d talk about the kid at the lunch table who sits by themselves. For you, you’d be thinking about proximity. Who is close to me? But Jesus’ answer stuns them.

### **READ LUKE 10:30-37 NRSV TOGETHER AS A GROUP**

*30 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ 36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”*

Let’s break this down a little more: A Jewish man — remember, Jews are the same people group that Jesus, the Pharisees, and his disciples were a part of — was walking along the road, when he’s attacked by bandits. He was beaten, robbed of his clothes and belongings, and left on the side of the road, half-naked. He’s left for dead.

A priest came along. Mind you — this was a Jewish priest. This was someone that perhaps this man could have known. In the priest’s defense, there are all kinds of rules within Jewish laws about not touching dead people, naked people, or even someone else’s blood. But this Jewish priest forgot the

most important teaching: **Love your neighbor as yourself.** And so, he moved on.

Then came along a temple assistant. Same deal happened. This temple assistant was a JEW — he could have even been someone close to this man. But the temple assistant moved on. He didn't want to get his hands dirty. He didn't want to have to go through the trouble of getting "clean" again after touching something "unclean." He didn't want to love his neighbor as himself. He just wanted to love himself. And so, he moved on.

Last, a Samaritan comes along. Now, you and I know that this is the "good Samaritan" of the story. When you and I hear "Samaritan," we probably think it means "a good person." But Samaritan is actually a people group, much like the Jews.

And, get this — Jews and Samaritans did not like each other. In fact, they despised each other. For a Jew to get caught with a Samaritan was worse than touching a dead or naked or bloody body — it was fraternizing with the enemy. No "cleanliness" ceremony could rid you of that reputation. And the same was true for the Samaritan: If he helped this man and word got around, he'd be cast out.

But the Samaritan not only helped this man, but he put the man on his own donkey. He took care of him himself, and when he had to move on, paid for his treatment. He went above and beyond to make sure that this man was cared for.

Often when I hear this story, I get mad. I get mad that we are not taking care of each other. I get mad at how we often put our own needs ahead of others. I get mad that we won't go the extra mile to help someone in need, enemy or friend, near or far from us.

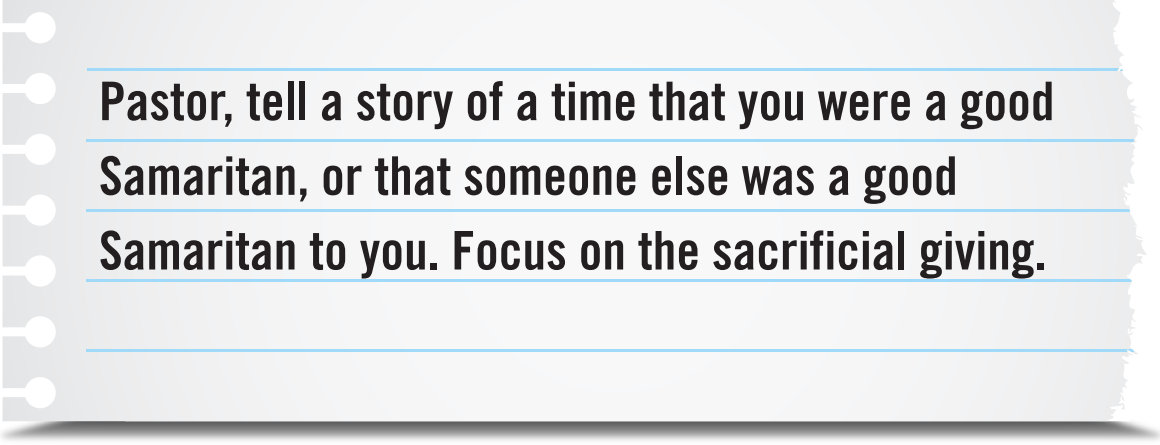
When I think of UMCOR Sunday, I think of the Samaritan. I think of the sacrificial giving to help someone who I don't know, in another part of the world, who has been beaten up and battered like the Jewish man in the story.

In some cases, these people aren't getting aid from their own people. In countries where war or conflict may be rampant, their people may actually be part of the problem.

But in other areas, their people may not even be able to help them. In towns hurt by storms or famine, they're out of resources. They're waiting for a good Samaritan to come along, giving their own money (and donkey) to help someone out.

Of course, it is hard to be the Samaritan. The Samaritan had to give his money and his time. He even promised to come back to check on him and pay up his bill with the innkeeper.

But Jesus says, this is the number one commandment I have for you: To take care of people in such a way, that it is sacrificial. That it costs you something in order to take care of someone else.



**Pastor, tell a story of a time that you were a good Samaritan, or that someone else was a good Samaritan to you. Focus on the sacrificial giving.**

# OFFERING

Today, we're going to take up a special offering. Today, we're talking about a literal "it costs something."

If you didn't bring an offering, or if you are feeling inspired to think about this more, pray about other ways you can help. Maybe your small group can put together a flood bucket to help survivors. Maybe you can volunteer with a local disaster relief organization, and help next time there's a disaster. I've even heard of people hosting blanket drives, which could be a creative and fun way to help people. There are all kinds of ways to help, and today's offering is just a piece of it.

## OFFERING PRAYER

Creator God, we know that you created each person on earth in your image. The Bible tells us that you knitted us together while we were still in our mother's womb. The Bible tells us that you know everything about us, including how many hairs are on our heads. And okay, God, that's kind of a strange thought. The point is, you know us well, all of us. God, we confess to you that we don't always do a good job of thinking of others—especially people who aren't right next to us. The Samaritan was given a special opportunity to serve someone different. God, may we use today as our Samaritan moment to give to someone in need.



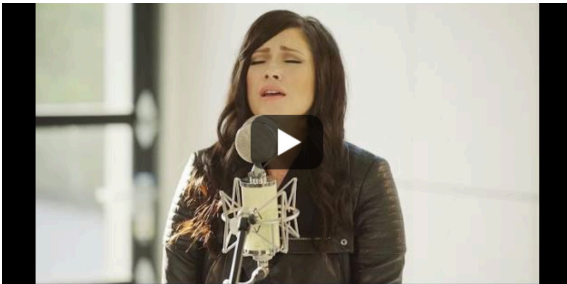
# CLOSING ACTIVITY & SONG: OFFERING

## TAKE THE SPECIAL OFFERING

Place the offering basket at the front of the room, either on the altar or with you holding it. Play music and invite students to sing along.

## SUGGESTED SONGS (Choose one or two):

- The Cause for Christ - Kari Jobe
- Hills and Valleys - Tauren Wells
- Come Thou Fount, Come Thou King - Gateway Worship



**PRAY OVER THE OFFERING,  
AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSION OR DISMISS FOR THE DAY**



# SMALL GROUP GUIDE



A wooden desk with a silver keyboard, a white mouse, and a spiral-bound notebook with a pencil. A white rectangular box containing text is centered on the desk.

## QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS:

1. Today we discussed the story of the good Samaritan. Did you learn anything new? How does it connect to giving to UMCOR?
2. Did you give today to UMCOR? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think it is important to the United Methodist Church to give to others who have experienced natural disasters or war?
4. How does giving line up with the “Great Commandment” that Jesus gave us: To love God with our hearts, soul, strength, and mind; to love our neighbors as ourselves?
5. Why do you think Jesus summed up our faith to “Love God, Love Others?”
6. Go around the circle:
  - What is one way you can love your immediate neighbors better?
  - What is one way you can love distant or global neighbors who are far away from you better?

# TAKE THE UMCOR CHALLENGE

- Consider collecting items for a flood bucket. The instructions are found at:  
<https://www.umcor.org/umcor/relief-supplies/relief-supply-kits/cleaning>
- For an activity at a fraction of the cost of a flood bucket, consider collecting items for a cleaning, hygiene, or school kit. The instructions are found at:  
<https://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies>





Visit [www.umcsgiving.org/UMCOR](http://www.umcsgiving.org/UMCOR) for more  
free resources and information about  
UMCOR Sunday.