

Act on Poverty

DIY banner-making guide



Make your own Act on Poverty banners in 2024.

With a general election coming up, show the people vying for your vote that your church cares about action on poverty.

Read on for ideas on how to make and hang a banner that has a lasting impression on your candidates.

This activity can be done with all ages, in small or large groups. You could do it as part of Christian Aid Week, or later in the year. You can make banners, posters or something else visual. **The key goal is to show that your church cares about action on poverty.**

The resource includes

- Banner and poster making practicalities
- A group reflection
- Advice for what to do with your banners and posters
- Optional activities for unlocking creativity

Banner & poster making practicalities

You will need

For posters: A3 paper, colouring pencils/pens

For indoor banners: Long roll of paper or fabric, pens/fabric pens, paints/fabric paints – you may need to think about how you will attach/display your banner – string, zip tie etc.

For outdoor display – fabric, waterproof pens/paints etc. Consider how and where you will display the banner.

Reflection for the group



Before you start, ensure that everyone involved has had an opportunity to reflect on WHAT you are doing and WHY you are doing it.

Share this reflection with everyone taking part:

Poverty describes the living conditions of people who don't have access to the resources and materials to meet their basic needs. These can be things like access to clean water or having a safe and secure home.

Poverty strips people of their dignity and denies them the power and resources to make important decisions that could improve their lives. **Poverty is unjust.**

Communities the world over are affected by poverty, but they are not defined by it. Like all human beings, they are made in the image of God. **As we make our posters and banners, let's celebrate people's *dignity* and treat their stories with *love*.**

Poverty is rooted in unfair rules and systems, that make the world an unequal place in which poverty occurs. **But poverty was not God's original plan.** Political choices, often made in the global North, have created these rules and systems that are stopping people and communities living full lives.

The banners and posters we're making today can help us to share our commitment to a world where everyone can live full and flourishing lives.

This year, there is going to be a general election in the UK. We will have the opportunity to show our local candidates what we care about. **Our banners will let them know - that if elected - we will expect them to work to end poverty in the UK and globally.**

Let us love, not in words or speech, but with actions and in truth
1 John 3:18

What to write on your posters and banners

Get creative! Make them look great and put all your creativity and passion into them.

The banners and posters don't have to use particular words or images – but should communicate the hope and vision that together we can end poverty – and that we want our politicians to play an active role in making this happen.

What to do with your posters and banners



Once you have made your posters and banners, hang or display them somewhere prominent, where your wider community can see and engage with your creative calls to act on poverty!

Think about a visible place- where will visitors see it?

Show off your banner! Take photos and upload them to social media using #ActOnPoverty and tag @christian_aid.

Think about impact: are there any key moments or opportunities to use your banners and posters? Do you have local election candidates or your local MP attending the church? How can you share the story of your banners and posters with your wider congregation and community?

Get more ideas at caweek.org/campaign

Unlocking creativity activities

Below you will find 3 activities to help people think creatively about the posters/banners they will be making.

Use whichever one(s) will best help your group to create their banner.

Activity 1: Guided reflection through the 'forest' (10 mins)

This guided reflection is designed to invite participants to consider their relationship with the wider world, whether they see themselves as a disconnected individual, or as connected and interdependent with the world.

Read the following:

I invite you each to close your eyes and imagine you are walking through a forest. Take a moment to imagine the smell of the trees and the soil. Listen closely to the noises you can hear. Do you hear the wind blowing gently through the leaves. Do you see the sunlight shining through the branches overhead? What different colours can you see?

(Note: You may wish to give participants the opportunity to share some of the sights, sounds and smells that they are imagining to bring it to life for the group).

As you walk through the forest touching each tree that you pass, it is easy to think of each tree as one single tree, separate from all of the other trees. Each tree is tall, majestic and unique. Above the surface, this is what the forest looks like. There are lots of tall and beautiful but separate trees.

Now, let's allow our imaginations to journey beneath the surface of the forest to notice if we might begin to see a different story. What will you notice if you look beneath your feet into the darkness of the soil below? Consider the worms, bugs and tiny living things you cannot see.



Deep beneath the soil, all of the tree roots of the forest's many trees reach out to each other. The roots connect and grow into each other so they can share nutrients and food. They connect so the trees can communicate with each other – knowing when to drop their leaves, when to bloom their flowers and even sharing warning signs for danger.

Can you picture in your mind the trees sharing life through their roots? Can you imagine this web of life joined up together through the roots in the soil beneath your feet?

Now, picture the journey that nutrients must take in order to travel from the roots, up through the tree to the leaves. As you travel to the top of the tree, what do you notice? Who else lives there? What animals make the tree their home? Do you see birds nesting? Squirrels dancing through the branches? Do you see small spiders making their webs? Or bugs living in the tree bark?

From the top of the tree perhaps you can see the whole forest. Notice how the trees are not only connected to each other, but the whole life of the forest is connected. From the worms and fungi in the soil that help to bring nutrients to the roots of the tree, to the animals that need the trees for food and shelter, there is a concert of life working together in harmony.

Following the reflection, invite the young people to open their eyes and share their experience. The forest might look like it is made up of lots of individual things, but when we dig a little deeper, we start to see a different story.

Invite the participants to think about how they are connected to other people through relationships. What roots do they have in the community around them? Who are the people that their lives have an impact on? Who are the people who help shape who they are?

While they take a moment to think about the questions, you could read/paraphrase the following:

Nobody lives in isolation. We are who we are because of the people around us. Our communities help shape who we are and who we are becoming. The people that we laugh with, cry with and celebrate with are all part of the forest of 'us'. These networks go deep and far.

Consider when you eat your favourite food, who are all the people you have never met that help to make this possible – the farmer who grows it, the people who transport it, the workers in the shop where you buy it, the cook who prepares it.

We live in a world that is deeply connected far beyond what we can see. And we are all a part of it. Who we are and what we do matters. We are part of a bigger world, and when we work together, we can have a deep and far-reaching impact on the world. Let's end poverty together!



Activity 2: Collage activity (20 mins)

Resources required: old magazines & newspapers, scissors, glue, A4 paper.

Make a collage using the old magazines, newspapers or other images you can find. At the middle of the collage, have something that represents yourself, then think about the ways you are connected to the wider world and choose images/words that represent your connections to the world beyond your immediate community.

The goal of this exercise is to think about how you can visually and creatively explore your connection to others in the world. Reflect on our shared connections with people all over the world; the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the things we love – sports music etc. If we are globally connected, we can act globally too – this is the goal of Act on Poverty – to show our political leaders that together we can end poverty in the UK and globally!

Activity 3: Mind Mapping (5-10 mins)

Thinking about your banners, make a mind map placing words, and values, that you want to reflect on and communicate through your banners and posters. It can be really useful to reflect positively about why it is a good thing to tackle poverty sharing positive visions of people and a world that can flourish.

