



Next Stop: Naivasha Adult Lesson

Our Prayer is that this lesson will:

Introduce Panua Partners In Hope, a partnership that originally started as a ministry between United Methodist Churches in the US and Naivasha United Methodist Churches of Kenya,

Encourage participants to explore God's call on their lives to love our neighbors, and

Expand their understanding of missions.

Note: Depending on your group size and available time, you may wish to select sections of this curriculum to discuss or expand it to more than one session.

Ice Breaker

Break into small groups to discuss all or some of the following questions:

- Have you ever travelled internationally before? If so, where?
- What is a "bucket list" destination for you?
- Have you ever been on a mission trip? If so, where? If not, what is keeping you from going on one?
- Choose which mission project you'd be most interested in joining for a week: a well digging project in Costa Rica, a Vacation Bible School in Jamaica, a health clinic in Africa, other?

When we journey to other places we learn that many people live differently than we do in the United States. They have different languages, foods and customs. It can be a challenge to learn to appreciate these differences and have compassion for people who live differently than us.

Today we are going to learn about the mission work that began in two churches – one in Winter Park, FL and another in Naivasha, Kenya - that partnered together to create hope and help build a future for orphaned youth and children who are very poor. That initial partnership has grown to more churches in both the US and in Kenya in the past 6 years. Together they are making a difference, and you can too!

Lesson

Read the following Scripture: Matthew 22: 34–40

The Greatest Commandment

³⁴ Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

These verses tell us that the most important thing to God is that we love God and love our neighbors. Richard Stearns, President of World Vision, puts it like this... “If we truly love God, we will express it by loving our neighbors, and when we truly love our neighbors, it expresses our love for God. The two loves are fully interconnected and intertwined.”

Panua Partners in Hope was created by some ordinary people who responded to this call to love God and their neighbor. Here’s a very brief history of how this whole project began:

Rev. Paul Matheri, Dean of Superintendents of the United Methodist Church, Kenya, has been working with orphans and vulnerable children, many of them street children, for all of his adult life. He is passionate about helping these young people build a bright future. Paul did not have a sustainable program to make that happen until, through a chance meeting, God opened a door.

In April 2004, in an over-crowded sandwich shop in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Paul met Dr. Bob Bushong, then Senior Pastor at First United Methodist Church Winter Park (Florida, USA). Both were attending a United Methodist Church conference and ended up eating lunch at the same table. They enjoyed their serendipitous meeting and committed to staying in touch. Over the next few years, as the relationship between their home churches in Naivasha, Kenya, and Winter Park, Florida, grew stronger, the concept for Panua was shaped.

In 2010, after much prayer, work and deliberation, Panua Partners in Hope was founded. Naivasha United Methodist Churches, under Paul’s leadership, and First United Methodist Church Winter Park, inspired by God’s love for the children of Naivasha, committed to transforming the lives of these orphaned and vulnerable children in Kenya. In September 2010, the three-year pilot program began with 90 households, representing 470 orphans, vulnerable children and youth. The September 2013 graduates of Panua affirm our belief that through the love of Jesus Christ, lives can be transformed.

In September 2016, over 150 youth were graduated from the second 3-year class cycle. Together with their family members, over 700 family members have benefitted from Panua.

In January 2017, we will launch our third 3-year class cycle, and with the support of several new partner churches, we will be able to grow again by serving and loving 200 new youth.

Watch: “[Munene](#)” Video (located at bottom of panua.org/curriculum page)

Discussion Questions:

- What caught your attention in this video?
- What is one question you’d like to ask George if you could call him on the phone?

State: “The specific reality of many of the youth in Kenya is that:

- There are 2.5 million orphans (25,000 in the city of Naivasha)
- 43% of people live in poverty
- 18 million people are earning less than \$1.25 per day
- 40% of the population is unemployed
- 50% of boys and 35% of girls don’t continue school after the age of 16.”

ACTIVITY 1

“If the World were a Village of 100 People” (see [PDF](#)).

Have copies available or put information up on the board.

State: “It may be hard to believe that there are many people just like George who are still living in poverty. To better understand the makeup of the human race, imagine that all 6.7 billion people on earth could be represented by a single “global village” of just 100 people. If you can picture this then you can begin to see how differently the world looks depending on where you are born.”

Have the group read through the statistics.

Ask:

- Which statistic surprises you the most?
- Which issues speak most to your heart and why?

Note: You may wish to take a break or divide the session here.

ACTIVITY 2

Panua Partners in Hope: The Good News!!

(Optional: listen to [Samuel’s Story](#) from the Panua audio experience at soundcloud.com/Panua)

State: “Think back to George and the video – This partnership ministry has found a sustainable solution.”

Ask the group to finish the question (either orally or on note cards):

I think that people need _____ to have a hope-filled life.

The 3-step process is outlined in the brochure “Panua Field Guide” (see [PDF, panua.org/curriculum](#)) Break back into small groups and as you read through Steps 1, 2, 3, use the following discussion questions.

Ask:

Step 1 – Hope Restored: Christ and Community

Many Panua youth feel isolated and alone before starting the Panua program.

- How have you experienced the love of Christ through small groups, church or your community?
- How have you extended this sense of community and love to others?

Step 2 – Life Skills Training

We learn many life skills from our parents and teachers at school. Most of the Panua youth have lost their parents and aren’t in school, and therefore lack the typical adult mentors available to young people.

- What life skill would you like to teach if you became a mentor for an underprivileged child or youth? Choose one or two: listening skills, anger management, money management, how to make friends, stress relief, group dynamics, health and hygiene, other.

Step 3 - Vocational Training and Entrepreneurship

- Did you know when you were a teenager or very young adult exactly what you wanted to do to support yourself and a family? How did you go about figuring that out?

Ask the group again to finish this question (how has their viewpoint changed?):

I think that people need _____ to have a hope-filled life.

Response

Watch: “[3 Stories](#)” video (located toward bottom of page on [panua.org/curriculum](#))

Ask: As Christians we are called to respond and love our neighbors. How are we going to respond?

Discuss the back of the “Welcome to the Panua Experience” brochure, where participants can learn how they can:

- Give financially (see brochure for examples)
- Connect your church or small group by sponsoring a Panua youth

- Go on a mission trip
- Share the good news of Panua by becoming Panua social media ambassadors. Post what your small group is doing using the hashtags #panuaprayerday and #mypanuastory. Follow Panua on Facebook ([Panua](#)), Instagram ([panuaorg](#)) and Twitter ([@panuaorg](#)).

If making a financial commitment, discuss how funds might be raised as a group. Those engaging in sponsorships may to choose write letters to their sponsored youth at this time.

Closing

Prayer Station Activity:

Respond in prayer by preparing the **Prayer Station Activity** (see [PDF](#) for instructions). You may choose to have the group write prayer requests on butcher paper or chalk boards.

A FRANCISCAN PRAYER

May God bless you with a restless discomfort
about easy answers, 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 to 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.