

Session 6

Let's celebrate Nicaragua



Decorate your hall or your Zoom backgrounds with images of Nicaragua, such as flags, banners, coat of arms, pictures of animals and birds. Can you make a big banner to say 'Welcome' in Spanish, the language of Nicaragua: *Bienvenidos a Nicaragua*? During your celebrations, perhaps you could try saying please and thank you in Spanish too: *por favor* and *gracias* (grah-see-ahs)



Make a marimba

You need seven A4 sheets of firm paper (used paper is good), string, glue, scissors, tape, a pencil and a ruler. Take your first two sheets of paper, and roll each of them around a pencil to make long narrow tubes. Then tape the edge and remove your pencil.

Roll each of the remaining sheets of paper in turn around a large glue stick to make shorter, thicker tubes. Before rolling your second tube, cut 2cm off the side of the sheet of A4, then cut 4cm off the next sheet and so on so that each tube is shorter than the last.

Make a sideways V-shape with your two narrow tubes, then fasten each of the wide tubes to them with string at top and bottom of the tubes (see picture). Put a dab of glue at each point where the string is tied then turn your marimba over and glue it to a firm piece of cardboard as a base. Now play your marimba by gently hitting the bars with pencils, like you would play a xylophone.

Make maracas

You need two paper cups, some tape, rice or lentils, and pens, paints or stickers to decorate. Put a handful of rice or lentils into one paper cup. Turn the other cup over and tape it firmly to the top of the first cup so that the rice or lentils are contained inside. Now decorate your maraca. Use your marimba or your maracas to play along with some typical Nicaraguan music. Why not dance along? youtu.be/hSqbaQJ-kEU

To drink – arroz con piña

What you need: 1 large pineapple, 1.5 cups of rice, 1 cup of evaporated milk, vanilla essence, cinnamon and sugar to taste.

What to do: Cut the top off the pineapple – you could plant this and see what grows! Put the base of the pineapple, the peel and the core in a pan, cover with water, add the rice and a stick of cinnamon, and boil until the rice is soft. Meanwhile, chop the rest of the pineapple into chunks. You can add sugar and vanilla essence to the hot liquid to taste at this point, if needed. Remove the scraps of peel and cinnamon stick from the mix and discard, then add evaporated milk and some of the flesh of the pineapple to the mix and blend in a blender or by pushing it through a sieve. Drink with ice, and eat up any remaining pineapple chunks.



To eat – quesillo snacks

Meaning 'little cheese', these are popular snacks in Nicaragua, and are usually served with a little bag to hold the vinegar.

What you need: A corn tortilla, soft white cheese, finely chopped onions soaked overnight in vinegar, salt and sour cream.

What you do: Cover one side of the tortilla with cheese, and heat in the microwave until the cheese is melted. Add a pinch of salt, some onions and a bit of sour cream. Wrap and serve.



For other recipes, see the resources page www.urc.org.uk/go-with-greta-and-connect.

Share all you've learned about Nicaragua with each other and any visitors. Close with a prayer – what do you think is most important to talk to God about when you think of all you've found out about life in Nicaragua? What can you praise God for and thank God for? What might you want to ask God, and what might God be asking of you?



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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 sapodilla.

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.

