

Live, Love, Fight

R e s o u r c e M a n u a l

2 0 1 9



Australia





LIVE
LOVE
FIGHT

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Foreword

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are living and doing ministry in an exciting time as we see God's word being fulfilled all around us: "See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."
ISAIAH 43:18-19 (NIV)

We live in a world of constant change but more importantly we believe in transformation. As we look forward to all that God has in store for us as women and ministering to women may we continue to live out our National Vision Statement that,

*Wherever there is hardship or injustice
Salvos will live, love, and fight alongside others
to transform Australia
one life at a time
with the Love of Jesus*

I encourage you to identify ways of reaching out into your communities and connecting with women who are facing hardship and injustice. Encouraging, equipping, educating, empowering and most of all sharing the love of Jesus so that lives will be transformed and creating faith pathways through the various ministries we have.

Let us continue looking forward to what new things God wants us to do in us and through us as women who share the love of Jesus. I believe God continues to connect people with The Salvation Army. Let's not miss the doors of opportunities to see what God is doing and join him there.

I know you will find this resource helpful and encouraging and that women and their families will be drawn to him through the various ministry opportunities in your local setting as you share the love of Jesus.

Our greatest resource is in keeping close to the Lord. May he continue to equip you with all the Spiritual resources you need in your service for him.

Blessings.

Tracey Tidd

Commissioner

National President of
Women's Ministries.

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Section One





Our Vision: **Live Love Fight**

Meaghan Gallagher

Décor

- *Live, Love, Fight* in letters with yellow, red and blue fabric draped through.
- Banner or flyers with the mission, vision and values displayed.
- Information for prayer stations.
- Paper/pens.
- Community information.

Live

We are called to live our lives with the love of Jesus, coming alongside others. So what is it that I do to practically live my life for Jesus? If I have given my life - my whole life - to Jesus, then I am to be fully involved in sharing the love of Jesus with those I meet. No matter where I am or who I am with, I am representing Jesus. What a great responsibility we have to share Jesus with others.

But do we even know how to share about Jesus? In our own private time with God do we seek out how he is asking us to live? When we say that we are a Christian, people will watch us intently, to see how we live our life.

What is a passion of yours? Maybe it's a sport, craft, cooking, meeting for coffee, fishing, bush walking or many other things. Is there a group you can join so that you are able to connect with others? If we are to come alongside others with the love of Jesus, how can we do that outside of our Christian circle? By connecting through our passions and interests we can live a Jesus life alongside others.



Our bodies are multifaceted and we are a physical, mental and spiritual being. Are you caring for yourself in each one of these areas?

Physical

Healthy diet and exercise.

Mental

We need to make sure we are caring for ourselves, putting good things into our minds and avoiding destructive things.

Spiritual

Living life in abundance. Growing in our spiritual life is necessary. God's word and prayer are necessary.

Activity: Prayer Stations on *Live, Love, Fight* theme.

Love

So we have this awesome love from God that we want to share with others by coming alongside them, but how are we doing this? Do we know of people in our community who need help, who need Jesus? How are we doing that already? Can we find different or new ways to share Jesus with the community?

It has often been said that the hardest people to share Jesus with are our families. Some members of our family may not know Jesus or may even have turned their back on Him. So how do we love them? How do we show them unconditional love?

Sometimes the people we have problems with are other Christians. If that is the case, how do we love; how do we care for them? And how do we show love to Christians in other parts of the world?

We are each unique in how we have been wired. Our personalities, the gifts and talents that we have and the experiences we have had in our life can all help us come alongside others and love them. Some of us say that we don't have gifts and talents; that is not really true. It may be that we don't know what our gifts are; or we may not see that, in what we say and do, we are using those gifts that we have been given.

Activity: Write a letter to someone, to let them know that you are thinking of them and care about them.

Fight

There are a lot of injustices in our world and even in our community. What are the injustices in our community? Local councils will often have on their websites useful information about the local community, which can indicate the needs of that community. There might be local events happening that you can become involved in.

As a corps, it may have been decided what hardship or injustice the people of the corps are going to be involved in. It might be a case of talking to people who come into your local Connect site. It might be chatting over food, serving coffee or tea to the person and making a connection with them.

Is there something that God has already placed on your heart? Is there something already being done about this that we can become involved with?

More importantly, what is God doing and how are we going to join Him in the work that is going on?

Activity:

- Seek out areas of need.
- Pray for God's direction.
- As an individual or group, take action.



Communities Transforming Communities

Julie Radburn

This resource consists of notes and a PowerPoint presentation, and identifies other resources fitting in with this theme such as social justice and international development. It outlines three community programs in which people in difficult circumstances *live, love and fight* to transform their communities.

This resource can be used:

- As inspiration for developing local mission initiatives
- As encouragement for existing mission initiatives
- To increase awareness of social justice issues
- To increase awareness of overseas initiatives
- To encourage prayer support for our overseas and local initiatives

Additional Resources

Social Justice

Salvation Army International Social Justice: *Go and do Something*
issuu.com/salvationarmyihq/docs/goanddosomething

salvosocialjustice.org/2016/06/27/justice-themed-song-list/

Australian website listing justice themed songs

Tear Fund Jubilee Bible Studies on Poverty and Justice learn. tearfund.org/en/about_us/jubilee/jubilee_50_bible_studies_on_poverty_and_justice/

International Development

salvos.org.au/international-development/ Australia website

www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/development IHQ website

Introduction

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.'

[JOHN 10:10]

What is this abundant life? And what does abundant life look like?

When we look around us, not everyone is experiencing abundant life. In our communities there are those who are missing out, not being treated equitably, not having access to the essentials of life, let alone experiencing abundant life.

In The Salvation Army our vision statement is one of action - *Live, Love and Fight* in the quest of transforming communities, so that they can experience more of that abundant life that Jesus came to bring

*Wherever there is hardship or injustice,
Salvos will live, love and fight
alongside others
to transform Australia one life at a time
with the love of Jesus.*

What can this *Live, Love and Fight* look like? How are people doing it?

Let us take a glimpse into three communities and be inspired by how they are *living, loving and fighting* to transform their community.

- Be inspired by their stories
- Be inspired to delve into God's word about our responsibility for others
- Be inspired to pray for these and other overseas and local community mission initiatives
- Be inspired to get involved or develop mission initiatives that *Live, Love and Fight*

Continue on to the next page...

Communities that live: Clean water

Caroline and her friends were often sick from water borne diseases and couldn't attend school. Through the WASH (*water, sanitation and hygiene*) program, their lives have changed for the better. They can now safely wash their hands, drink and cook with clean water.

Contaminated water was a huge problem at Kwa Kavit, a School in Kenya, where 11 year old Caroline attends as a grade 6 student. Knowing that it could lead to sickness, most children weren't drinking at all. Consequently Caroline and her schoolmates were often lethargic, with no energy to learn or play.

Also the school's latrines were old and smelly and provided no privacy for girls, who would refuse to attend school at certain times of the month.

Recently, the school became part of the Kenya WASH program. Using donations from sponsors, three 16,000 litre water tanks were installed to catch and store rainwater. Staff toilets, four new toilets for girls and three for boys were constructed and training in hygiene was given to all staff and students.

Caroline has become the President of the Hygiene Club and is now responsible for ensuring that all students learn and practice safe hygiene.

To celebrate the completion of this project, 120 people from the school and surrounding villages gathered for an opening ceremony. In her speech, Caroline outlined the previous problems - water shortage, old, dirty toilets and illness. She said that as a result of the WASH program, 'we can now boast an improved school population because water is available in the school ... the rate of absenteeism has greatly decreased' and 'the hand washing machines are doing a miracle. We are able to clean our hands after the toilet and before meals.'

Engagment with WASH is leading to an improved way of life for the whole community. The children have formed the habit of hand washing and are teaching their parents about hygiene. Some parents have started building a toilet at home. With large enough tanks to store rain, the school has clean water during the dry periods



Communities that Love: Blood donor groups

In Phyu, Central District of Myanmar, a community saw the need to develop a more effective way of donating blood to those who needed it. The people met that need by forming a blood donor group.

Prior to 2014 some people were individual donors, and assisted individually if a hospital or person needed blood. The community had been introduced to the idea of self-help groups, to work more effectively for the community, and young people were interested in charitable work.

The blood donor group commenced in 2014 with 20 members - and now has 119 members! The initial group has also 'planted' four other blood donor groups. The groups connect people with doctors, and tell the young people when the hospital needs blood. The young people in the group are mainly Buddhists, but there are also members of the Christian and Muslim faiths.

The groups are self-funded, with each member contributing a monthly membership fee to run the group. They raise funds to pay for travelling, transfusions and testing, and work together with the hospital and the family and other groups. They also have a self-help group to provide oxygen bottles, and they now have 13 bottles. The groups are also willing to help with other community needs, such as when the school needs help with decorating or teaching.

One lady helped by this group was from a small village. She came to the hospital and needed urgent surgery to deliver her baby, but had no money for this procedure. The hospital got in touch with our blood donor group and our group donated blood, and as a result the lady and baby survived.

What is their motivation? They would say, 'The first thing is that we love people. This is our basic motivation to do this kind of work. We want to help people who need help. The benefit is hand to heart. We feel happy and we feel joy in our hearts. When we help, they are happy and we also feel happy and joyful. It also helps our young people. They are careful with their health and habits. If they use drugs, they cannot donate. This group's love for people has spurred them on to meet a community need. From that group, they have multiplied, and are also using the same community model to meet other needs in the community, such as the need for oxygen.

A portrait of an elderly man with short grey hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, standing outdoors with green foliage in the background.

Ou An Ju
Blood Donor
Group President

A portrait of a young woman with dark hair, wearing a green top, smiling and standing outdoors with green foliage in the background.

Tin Tin Saw
Treasurer

Communities that fight: Empowering vulnerable and marginalised Women

In rural Tanzania, women fight. They fight to survive, to be heard, to provide, and to have equal opportunity. Gender inequality is an everyday reality, and women are seldom able to have financial independence.

The Salvation Army's *Village Savings and Loans Program* provides women in these rural communities with access to savings services and small loans that they would not normally have the opportunity to access.

Working together as a collective, women come together to support each other both financially and socially. Using pooled personal savings, women take out loans and invest the funds into income generating activities such as small shops and agricultural ventures. Over time they repay the loans, and any profits are returned to the group.

The ability to access funds such as these has seen women move from every day survival to planning for the future, investing better in family education and nutrition, improved living conditions, and the ability for women to make independent financial decisions.



A group member in one of the Lyang'oma community VSLA groups, with some of the items that comprise her shop.

The Live, Love, Fight Prayer Box

Julia Metcher

The prayer box set up

The prayer box will contain 8 personal prayer activities for individual use (next page).

Note: Instruction cards and other resources can be found on the **USB** attached to this manual.

Before you start

The activities will take an hour.

1. You will need to prepare a prayer box for each lady. (You can use noodle boxes or paper gift bags).
2. Decorate as you choose or just use the label supplied. (Cut out 'Red Shield' and stick to side of box with double sided tape. Attach *I'll Fight Quote* on top of Red Shield using mounting squares. Cut outs are included on the **USB**). Use a heart punch to create a heart to place on the top of the Prayer Box.
3. Each activity might have several parts - put all parts for each activity in a small zip-lock plastic bag to keep each activity separate.
4. Each lady will need a pen and enough space to find a spot by themselves.

The prayer box needs to be done in silence to allow a sacred space for all.

The 8 Prayer Activities:

1. Candle

You will need

- *Candle* instruction card
- *Candle of the Lord* poem (fold)
- A candle (battery)

2. Clay Prayers

You will need

- *Clay Prayers* instruction card
- *Clay Prayers - The Same Love* poem (fold)
- Small stick of modelling clay available in discount shops

3. Cross Prayers

You will need

- *Cross Prayers* instruction card
- *Cross Prayers* colouring sheet (Provide small coloured pencils in the box or have a colouring in station).

4. I Refuse

You will need

- *I Refuse* instruction card
- *I Refuse* lyrics (scroll and tie with curling ribbon)
- Small cardboard cutout hand for journalling

5. Radical Grace

You will need

- *Radical Grace* instruction card
- *Radical Grace* poem (fold)
- Piece of coloured string

6. Soap and Sin

You will need

- Soap and Sin instruction card
- Individual wrapped soap (place in small plastic bag and attach Instruction card)

7. Teabag

You will need

- Teabag instruction card
- Individually wrapped Peppermint Teabag (place in plastic bag and attach Teabag Instruction card)

8. The Parable of the Sower

You will need

- *The Parable of the Sower* sheet (fold)
- Feather (from discount shop)
- Small pebble (from discount shop or Bunnings)
- Small stem with thorns (rose or bougainvillea) from florist or personal
- Small Cardboard Eco Pots and Compost disks separately if you choose. (Bunnings)
- Seeds e.g. sunflower (Bunnings) Place feather, pebble, and seeds and *The Parable of the Sower* sheet in plastic bag and place with pot. Place small thorn stem in own small plastic bag and place inside pot.

See the USB for resources

Kingdom Tables

Miriam Gluyas

The art of conversation seems to be a bit of a lost art! I sit in coffee shops and watch couples, or friends, glued to their smart phones and very seldom engaged in conversation. And yet, people are desperate for depth in their lives, for meaning, for hope. Often people are feeling real isolation and loneliness and are longing for a friend, for someone who will go deep with them. There is an opportunity for each one of us to engage meaningfully ... and one way is in Community Tables.

This is what a Community Table is:

A Community Table is a regular meeting of 2-12 people who gather to have conversations about life, faith and ways to work together to serve others. They can meet in a home, at a coffee shop, in a Social Centre or anywhere.

Here are some of the markers, so we know if they are working or not ...

- Meets regularly—at least once a month
- Intentional conversations - the conversation stays on track
- Non-judgemental—freedom to share and explore
- Holy Spirit led—Jesus is introduced
- Authentic community is being created
- Pathways for faith are accessible—it's meet Jesus then believe Jesus
- Walking alongside others—sharing life
- Jesus is made the centre—Jesus is lifted up

- ❑ Safe space to be vulnerable
- ❑ Open invitation to others
- ❑ Awareness of the needs of others and opportunity to serve
- ❑ Prayer

Now here are two ideas of how you might engage and I wonder if you would “have a go”!

(Imagine if every lady in NSW/ACT began a group - WOW!)

Idea 1

Bring together 4-6 ladies who you want to have a conversation with, people that you find interesting, people you have some kind of relationship with. Preferably people who are not yet Christians. Ask them if they would like to meet fortnightly with you and do three things:

- Share a story of life
- Share a story of faith
- Do something together, on mission, that could change the world, something you know you can achieve. Decide together what that might be, e.g. buy some chickens for a family overseas, through *Salvos Gifts*. Take out a lady in a safe house for coffee. Serve at a *Community of Hope*.

Ensure that you have the markers in mind each week and watch what God does. Be praying for these ladies each day.

Idea 2

Bring together 4-6 ladies who you want to have a conversation with, people that you find interesting, people you have some kind of relationship with. Preferably people who are not yet Christians. Ask them if they would like to meet together once a month to see a movie, then have coffee together, then discuss some questions (such as the *Pass the Salt* question cards).

Make sure that each time you meet the markers are kept in mind, and watch what God does. Be praying for the ladies each day.

People are longing for *real community*.

- Loving and being loved
- Serving and being served
- Knowing and being known
- Celebrating and being celebrated
(Dr Bilezikian)

I sense that this group will become a delight and that God will use you beautifully!

Enjoy!



Activity: Bring out the *Pass the Salt* cards and help the women learn to use them (Instructions are contained on a card in the box. *Pass the Salt* cards can be ordered at salvos.org.au/passthesalt/). Give them plenty of time to play and converse using the cards and dice.

Then ask for feedback on whether they found this a useful way to start a conversation.

- ▶ *Was the conversation deeper than it might have been if the cards were not used?*
- ▶ *Did the questions make it easy to bring faith into the conversation?*
- ▶ *Did anything particularly valuable come out of these conversations?*

Doing Life Together

Beth Twivey



This resource is for a gathering of women across an Area to bring awareness of the Local Mission Delivery model which is now rolled out all across our nation. It could also be used for a corps-based women's gathering.

Liaise with the Area Officer/s nearest to you (contact your Divisional Leader if you don't know who that is) to bring women from all expressions together. Think widely - don't be limited to where you are connected only.

These gatherings reinforce the biblical principle that we were created for community and to flourish - individually and corporately.

Scripture | *Colossians 3 verses 12 to 17*
The Passion Translation

- ▶ *What does it look like when all mission expressions of The Salvation Army are flourishing, effective, connecting with one another and demonstrating the love of Christ to one another?*

Ideas

1. Have a panel of women involved in different expressions e.g. a local *Moneycare* employee, a Corps Officer, a volunteer from the nearest *Salvo Connect* site, a Chaplain from the nearest Aged Care or Recovery Centre or a local site assisting those experiencing homelessness. Who they are? Explain their role. Ask them questions around how they collaborate with other expressions in their Area.
2. Choose 2 clips from the *Live, Love, Fight* series produced by the NSW/ACT Division to show. These are great stories of transformation.
vimeo.com/album/5086576
3. Identify and interview a woman who is a follower of Jesus in your area who ministers in more than one expression; e.g. a woman from a Corps expression who mentors women in the local social expression, or volunteers in the *Salvo Connect* space.
4. Have those gathered sit around tables - place some *Pass the Salt* questions on each table for them to use as an icebreaker (*Pass the Salt* cards can be ordered at salvos.org.au/passthesalt/). Some great questions include:
 - ▶ *Share about a time when helping someone has brought you happiness or joy.*
 - ▶ *Share a story of someone who has been a role model to you.*
 - ▶ *What advice would you pass on to someone younger than yourself?*
 - ▶ *Share about a relationship that has helped shape who you are today.*
5. Think about a 'project' that the women gathered could contribute to; e.g. women experiencing homelessness, a local refuge for women escaping domestic violence, or giving a gold coin to contribute to buying a Kids in the Kitchen pack for a local Corps to use.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15 (NIV)



If I Only...

Debbie Bust

Introduction

Hollywood movies are made to be a source of entertainment.

Every once in a while though, a cinematic gem comes to the screens and we are captured by its creative genius.

The wizard of Oz is one such gem.

Through this story many lessons are learnt and taught.

This Home League meeting will look at just three characters from this well-loved story. Using our theme of *live, love, fight* we will use:

The Scarecrow = LIVE

The Tin Man = LOVE

The Lion = FIGHT

Table cloths

- Yellow (yellow brick road)
- Sparkly green (emerald city)
- Blue and white check (Dorothy's dress)

For room or table décor:

- Hearts
- Straw
- Thought bubbles
- Valour awards
- Oil cans
- Soft lion toys

You can use any significant symbols from The Wizard of Oz book or movie.

The Lion, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man are the focus of the meeting so anything you can find to represent these three characters will enhance the meeting and give focus.

Song suggestions

- *The world for God*
- *I simply live for you*
- *Just let me say*
- *I could sing of your love forever*
- *Home League Army* (HLSB 44)
- *Jesus the name high over all* (SASB 60)
- *I must have the Saviour with me* (HLSB 41)

Extras

Photo booth

props for photo booths can be purchased at [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com) or if you are crafty you can make your own (Lion mane, a Scarecrow hat, a Tin Man hat)

Magnets or hand outs

You can make magnets with the pictures which have scripture printed on them. (See Graphics for *If I Only* on USB)

You could also just use them as a take home gift.

The Lion

This poor fellow needs a lot of encouragement to become all he was created to be. The world has made him believe that he is without courage and cannot put up any kind of fight.

Having fight within us does not mean that we go charging headlong into every battle known to man. When we have fight within us we will want to stand up against injustices and the inequity of this world.

The world is full of people who will try to make us feel inadequate or unskilled or unworthy. They do this to boost their own ego and to present themselves in a better light. Just like the Lion, we can choose which direction we take. We can fight for what we know is fair and right or we can let what the world thinks of us get us down. Sometimes it's not just a cowardly Lion in a beautiful story that needs encouragement.

The Tin Man

In this world of fear, loneliness, pain, heartache and devastation, the one thing we can be certain of is that people are looking for love. People are good; the Tin Man shows us that love is the most important part of a person's being.

The Tin Man believed he was hollow on the inside. The empty feeling that he had, he believed was because he was made of tin and had no heart.

In his tin state the Tin Man had lost hope. He lost hope of ever being found, he lost hope of ever being loved and he lost his hope of ever loving another person.

Just as we see with the Scarecrow and the Lion, the Tin Man needed someone else to show him that he is very lovable. Sometimes life knocks us around and we decide that we will not put our heart out there again. We close off our affection and emotion to the outside world so as not to get hurt any further.

This can make us feel as though we don't have a heart.

The Scarecrow Man

The Scarecrow is the first character that Dorothy meets on her journey to find her way back to Kansas. Dorothy forms an instant liking to him and even as she helps him down off the post, he is giving her instructions.

The Scarecrow has lived his entire existence on a pole in a corn field. He hasn't lived, he hasn't experienced life in its fullness, and now after meeting Dorothy it seems that a new life has presented itself. A life worth living.

Throughout the movie, the Scarecrow is very protective of Dorothy and stands by her side, making every effort to get to the Emerald City without incident. Scarecrow's love and support and help throughout their journey shows that Scarecrow will live his life to protect another. He lives so that others will benefit. His actions in this movie show us that unselfish living is its own reward. We can live like the Scarecrow, providing support to those who are distressed, being of comfort when others' lives need support. Just like Scarecrow, we can live our best lives and help others to live their best lives.

Activity: Celebrity head

You can play this game in teams or individually, depending on the size of the group.

You can use stickers on foreheads to hide the name of the celebrity, or make headbands, or buy the game. Anything that hides the identity from the player can be used.

Taking it in turns the player must ask questions about their character, and can only be given a 'yes' or 'no' answer from the other players. If the answer is no, the game moves on to the next player. If the answer is yes, the player keeps

asking questions till they either get a 'no' answer, or guess their character. If someone guesses their character, they are the winner. The game may stop there, or can continue until everyone has guessed their character. You can have prizes, but that is not essential.

Character suggestions for celebrity head:

Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion, Wicked witch, Glinda, OZ, Aunty Em, Toto, Winged monkeys, Miss Gulch, Uncle Henry, horse of a different colour.

Activity: Apple stack

This game requires players to stack 6 apples on top of each other and the stack must remain standing to win the game. You can play this as a 'minute to win it' game or as a race.

Devotions

When we consider our theme we can't help but recognise how important each element is - we need to *live, love and fight*.

Today as we have looked at our three characters we can see that the spirit of *live, love, fight* dwells in each of us.

GALATIANS 22 asks a question, "But what happens when we live God's way?" The answer to this question is right there in the scripture too. He brings gifts into our lives much the same way that a tree bears fruit - things like affection for others, exuberance for life and serenity.

As Jesus followers we are tasked with bringing life, love and hope into our dark world where fear-mongering and sin control so much of what we see and hear. We are implored by the scriptures to live a life that is holy, to love without discrimination or prejudice, and to fight for those who cannot fight for themselves, those who society has cast aside, the least, the last and the lost.

William Booth penned a beautiful poem entitled *I'll fight*. This poem is an amazing reminder of why we do what we do. So as we reflect on our three friends today - the Lion, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man - we can learn from them that the most wonderful gift in life is to have people to *live, love and fight* right alongside us.



Live Well, Love Deeply, Fight Faithfully

Jan Cairns

The Australia One vision statement calls us to *Live, Love and Fight* alongside others so that people will be transformed with the love of Jesus. What a challenge for each of us to put into practice! There are different degrees of living, loving and fighting so I've added a single word to each verb so that our study reads: *Live Well, Love Deeply and Fight Faithfully*. I believe these descriptive words will enhance our study and help us understand what it means to *Live, Love and Fight* for God and others.

LIVE WELL

The Macquarie Dictionary describes the word “live” as “to continue in existence.” That’s a good thing - I’m sure we would all rather be alive and enjoying life than experiencing the alternative! But there are degrees of living seen as we look around our world - from the refugee camps of Africa to the heady lifestyle of Hollywood. The comparisons in living standards are heart-breaking and not acceptable to us.

Living well seems to be the flavour of the month - you only need to watch TV for a short time before advertisements appear extolling the virtues of living well. It seems that everyone wants to live well and that might mean different things for different people. So we see advertised Live Well health clubs, Live Well medications, Live Well exercises, Live Well Together websites, Live Well gyms, etc., etc. Whether it’s talking about physical well-being, mental health wellbeing or living well spiritually, this is a lifestyle that we would all want for ourselves.

What do we mean by *living well*? Does living well depend on our status in society? Does living well depend on our bank balance? Does living well depend on us being athletic and fit enough to win the marathon? Of course not! There are many people who have very little in the way of worldly goods who would say that they live well

despite their struggle often to provide basic food or health care for their families. Living well is not dependent on the material goods we may or may not have, but on our relationship with God.

For us to really live and to live well means we have to give God first place in our life and trust him with our todays and tomorrows. The Old Testament character Joseph is someone who lived well despite many challenges coming his way.

- ▶ *READ GENESIS 37: 17A - 28 to see the first challenge that was thrown at Joseph.*
- ▶ *What do you think was going through Joseph's mind as his brothers stripped him of his beautiful robe, threw him in the well and then sold him to the Ishmaelites?*
- ▶ *Do you think he blamed God for his misfortune?*
- ▶ *When difficulties come your way do you blame God?*

After the Ishmaelites took Joseph to Egypt he was bought by Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials. GENESIS 39:2 (NIV) says that "the Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered."

- ▶ *In what way do you think Joseph prospered?*
- ▶ *If we're saying that "living well" means trusting our God with our todays and tomorrows, trusting him to lead us through life, then how do you think Joseph continued to "live well" despite finding himself in prison?*

Despite these unexpected and unfair experiences Joseph continued to trust God. He eventually was released from prison to become second in charge of that great nation of Egypt.

- ▶ *How did Joseph live well in the midst of unreal accusations by Potiphar's wife?*
- ▶ *READ GENESIS 39: 20B - 23*
- ▶ *What do these verses say to you about Joseph and his relationship with God?*

But the picture isn't complete; in GENESIS 42 we read how Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food because of a terrible famine in Israel.

Joseph's life journey took him to places, and through experiences, that he never would have imagined - into the well of despair, across a desert, a period of time enjoying the luxury and splendour of Pharaoh's palace, time spent in prison, then leadership of a vast nation until finally the end of his journey as recorded in GENESIS 50:26: "Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten."

- ▶ *As you think over your life, when did you most experience God's presence with you? Was it in the hard challenging times, or during periods of relative comfort?*

Part of living well means not carrying the burdens and stresses from yesterday into



today, and not allowing the concerns of tomorrow to prevent us living well today. As the apostle Paul wrote in ROMANS 8:38 (NLT): *“I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love ... neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow”* - that’s trust!

A psychologist walked around the room while teaching stress management. As she raised a glass of water everyone expected they’d be asked the “half empty or half full” question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she asked, “How heavy is this glass of water?” The answers ranged from 8 ounces to 20 ounces.

She replied, “The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute it’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour I’ll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed. In each case the weight of the glass doesn’t change but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes.” She continued, “The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed - incapable of doing anything.”¹

Let’s remember to put down our glass of water and not carry unnecessary stresses and worries into the future - then we can truly live well.

Love Deeply

We are called to love God and love one another, but loving God and loving others is very different to loving your dog or loving the roses in your garden.

- ▶ *Can you explain the difference?*

Mother Teresa said, “It is not the magnitude of our actions but the amount of love that is put into them that matters.”

- ▶ *Do you agree with this statement?*
- ▶ *Can you give an example of when you have done a kindness for someone with love as the basis for your action?*
- ▶ *How is this different to helping someone without love as the basis but simply because you saw a need and felt sorry for that person - can you give an example?*

It is out of our love for God that we can in turn love others - this is a commandment in the New Testament and is an essential characteristic for Christ followers.

- ▶ Look up these verses to remind you of your obligation to do just this:

JOHN 13:34 + 35 | JOHN 15:12 | JOHN 15:17 | ROMANS 13:8
1 THESSALONIANS 3:12 | 1 THESSALONIANS 4:9 | 1 PETER 3:8 | 1 PETER 4:8
1 JOHN 3:11 | 1 JOHN 3:23 | 1 JOHN 4:7 | 1 JOHN 4:11 | 12, 2 JOHN 5

1 This story can be found on a number of websites; origin unknown.

Jackie Pullinger is a wonderful example of someone who has loved deeply. Since 1966 she has worked in the Walled City of Hong Kong, with drug addicts, gang members and prostitutes. In talking about her work she has said, *“God wants us to have soft hearts and hard feet. The trouble with so many of us is that we have hard hearts and soft feet.”* Nicky Gumbel goes on to say, *“God wants us to have soft hearts - hearts of love and compassion. But if we are to make any difference to the world, this will lead to hard feet along tough paths to face challenges.”*

Nicky Gumbel also tells how he tries to follow the example of a missionary he once heard who would every day read 1st Corinthians chapter 13:4-7 - the list of the sixteen characteristics of love. For the word ‘love’ she would substitute her name and when she reached a characteristic which she knew she wasn’t showing she would stop and ask God to help her be more Christ-like in that particular characteristic of love.

- ▶ *READ 1ST CORINTHIANS 13: 1-8A. Choose one characteristic of love which you would like to show more of. Write a short prayer asking the Holy Spirit to help you do this.*

Here’s a quote from the famous evangelist D. L. Moody: ‘The one great need in our Christian life is love, more love to God and to each other. Would that we could all move into that love chapter (1ST CORINTHIANS 13) and live there.’

May God help us to move into the love chapter and live there.

Fight Faithfully

In his second letter to his protégé Timothy, Paul encourages him to be strong, knowing that Timothy would need God’s strength and endurance to fulfil God’s calling on his life. To fight against Satan and the evil in this world we need both strength and endurance - two characteristics that soldiers in both the military army and God’s army need in great measure. Such is the importance of these qualities that twenty-five times in Paul’s letter to Timothy he encourages Timothy to be strong, to endure and to be faithful in his work in Ephesus. God also calls us to be faithful, just where he has placed us.

- ▶ *In what area of your life is God calling you to endure, to persevere and to be faithful?*
- ▶ *How have you experienced God’s strength and endurance?*

READ 2ND TIMOTHY 2: 1-4.

At the time of writing to his young friend Timothy, Paul was held captive in a Roman prison, chained to a guard day and night - he knew well about suffering, endurance and faithfulness to his God.

- ▶ *What were Paul’s instructions to Timothy?*
- ▶ *What do you think Paul meant when he wrote, ‘Soldiers don’t get tied up in the affairs of civilian life?’ (NLT)*

- ▶ *Soldiers are expected to obey their commanding officer - who is Timothy's commanding officer?*
- ▶ *How can we obey our commanding officer?*
- ▶ *As Christians we are expected to fight against those things that are not part of God's kingdom - name some of these evils.*
- ▶ *How can **you** be a faithful fighter against these things?*

READ EPHESIANS 6:10-11. God makes his resources available to us so we can fight faithfully but we have an active part to play. Paul says **put on** the armour of God. What does this mean for you to *put on the armour of God*?

- ▶ READ VERSES 13-17.

When clothed completely with God's armour we can stand strong, we can persevere, we can endure and we can be faithful.

- ▶ *Choose a piece of armour that you would like to be strengthened in - then ask God to cover you completely with his armour and know that you can fight faithfully in his strength*

In 1905 or 06, an elderly missionary couple who had been working in Africa for years were returning to New York City to retire. They had little money, no pension, their health was broken and they were defeated, discouraged and afraid. When they boarded the ship they discovered that President Teddy Roosevelt was also on the ship.

No one paid any attention to them but they witnessed the tremendous fanfare that accompanied the president's arrival with the band playing and passengers placing themselves at vantage points to catch a glimpse of the great man.

As the ship neared America, the elderly missionary became more depressed - 'It's not fair ... we have served God for so long and yet no-one knows we exist.' The ship docked with a band waiting to greet the President. The mayor of the city and other leaders of the nation were present but no-one noticed the missionary couple slip off the ship. They eventually found a cheap flat hoping the next day to see what they could do to make a living in New York.

That night the man's spirit broke. He said to his wife, 'I can't take this; God is not treating us fairly, we don't know anyone to help us or where to go. If God is a faithful God, why doesn't he meet our need and send someone along?' His wife replied, 'Why don't you go into the bedroom and talk to the Lord about the whole situation?' A short time later he came out from the bedroom but now his face was completely different. His wife asked, 'What happened?' The old man said, 'The Lord settled it with me. I went in and knelt beside the bed and poured out the whole situation to him. I said, Lord, it's not fair. I told him how bitter I was that the president should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no-one met us as we returned home. And you know, when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put his hand on my shoulder and simply said, 'But you're not home yet.'

May God help us be faithful fighters until God calls us home.

Section Two





Live Well

Jan Condon

Décor

- Everything pertaining to living well.
- Exercise equipment.
- Healthy foods. Bible.
- Praying hands.
- Perhaps using a green theme (green and growing.)

For the purposes of this meeting on Living Well, I have chosen 6 things beginning with the letter F that assist healthy living - physically and spiritually.

1. Food

Healthy

For morning tea serve:

- Sandwiches, cheese and biscuits, fresh fruit
- Cold water with lemon in it - tea/green tea
- You could also bring in a dietician to speak on eating well.

2. Fitness

Exercise - take 10 minutes or so to do some of the exercises on this site

www.vivehealth.com/blogs/resources/chair-exercises-for-seniors

Sing some old fashioned action choruses e.g. *I'm too young*, *Deep and wide*, *He's got the whole world in His hands*

3. Fun

Laughter is the best medicine

Share some jokes or ask the ladies to share the funniest thing that happened to them.

Or ask each lady to tell one true thing about themselves and one untruth/lie, and the others have to guess which is the true thing. Can be quite funny depending upon the group.

4. Fellowship

Use *Pass the Salt* cards - have the ladies sit around small tables and share using these cards (*Pass the Salt* cards can be ordered at salvos.org.au/passthesalt/).

Or make up your own cards with a phrase or quote on it and ask ladies to respond with what came to their mind when they read the card

Some examples that might help you are on the Live Well cards (see USB).

5. Friendship

A few suggestions to choose from:

1. Ask the ladies to share the qualities of a good friend.
2. They could make an acrostic using the word **friend**.
3. Make a list of good friends - Biblical or others.
4. Make as many words as possible in a set time from the word **friendship**. Letters may only be used once.
5. Challenge the ladies to bring a friend along and maybe you could give them a small welcome gift or flower.

Song

My Forever friend

CHARLIE LANDSBOROUGH

www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOql1c-Ytjg

reFRESHMENT

Devotions

Rest and refreshment are vital to living well. Everyone needs to take time to rest and relax and be refreshed in body, mind and soul.



PSALM 23 provides a beautiful picture of how the Good Shepherd wants us to be refreshed and whole. But we need to spend time with Him and allow Him to lead us to that time of rest and restoration.

Too often we live with the regrets of yesterday and the fear of tomorrow and then we are unable to enjoy the rest of today.

Sheep have to be led; otherwise they will wander away and get into all kinds of danger such as becoming prey for wild animals, falling down a cliff face or even getting lost from the rest of the flock.

Scripture reminds us in ISAIAH 53:6 - "All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own." (NLT)

So if we want to live well spiritually, we need to stay close to the Good Shepherd and allow him to lead us and listen to what He says. We also need to get to know the Shepherd by reading His word and obeying/ following its teachings, and also talking to Him in prayer and listening as He speaks to us.

(The above thoughts can be expanded.)

I would also print off copies of PSALM 23 in the Voice Translation and the Passion translation - or put them on PowerPoint - and ask the ladies to read them and then share what stood out to them.

Conclude with the following YouTube clip and ask the ladies to watch it in silence and reflect on it.

The Lord's my shepherd

STUART TOWNEND

www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN4tPkX0MG0

Other songs

*He came to give us **life in all its fullness***

*How wonderful it is to **walk with God***

*There is a place of **quiet rest** near to the heart of God*

Alive!

Fay Foster

If possible, have the ladies sit at tables in groups of 4-6.

Ask the group, *What makes you feel most alive?*

Ask them to think about their answer or answers, then take turns at telling the others at their table what makes them feel most alive, and why.

Then ask them to tell how long it has been since they last did that thing that makes them feel alive.

Feeling Alive

Give out the Handout, *Feeling alive* (see USB). Here are some of the situations and opportunities God gives us to make our lives full and help us feel alive.

- ▶ *Which ones do you value most?*
- ▶ *Are there some that you don't enjoy now, but would love to have in your life? Discuss at tables or as a whole group.*

When we think about being fully alive, we need to consider all aspects of our lives: the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Each of these aspects affects the others.

A Full Life

Have a look at the sheet headed *Looking after myself so I can live a full life*.

In each set of statements, tick the box next to the ones that you already do.

If there are some activities that you don't do regularly, but that you think would help you to live a full life, underline them and try to include them in your daily life this week. If you find that they make your life better, and you'd like to do them every day, let them become habits by doing them for 21 consecutive days.

While there are lots of different things that can contribute to us having a full life, Scripture tell us that we can *choose* life, and to do that we have to choose to live the way God made us to live.

Scripture | Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 (NIV)

¹⁵ See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶ For I command you today to love the **Lord** your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the **Lord** your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other Gods and worship them, ¹⁸ I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

¹⁹ This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰ and that you may love the **Lord** your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the **Lord** is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Message

If we want real life, we have to choose 'to love the LORD our God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws'.

So how will we do that?

1. Keep the 10 commandments (see handout on USB). Remember that it is what goes on in our heart and mind that counts, not just our outward actions.
2. Keep what God tells us is the greatest commandment - to love Him with our whole heart and soul and strength, and to love others as we love ourselves. 1 JOHN 2:3-4 tells us that we love God if we keep his commandments.
3. Show mercy, act justly, and walk humbly with our God. (MICAH 6:8)
4. Listen for the Holy Spirit's guidance and follow it.

Which of these do you find the most difficult to do in your daily life?
(You don't need to tell this to anyone else - unless you'd like to - but do take a minute now to ask God for His help to do these things that He has commanded.)



Living Letters

Louise Mathieson

You are our letter, every word burned onto our hearts to be read by everyone. You are the living letter of the Anointed One, the Liberating King, nurtured by us and inscribed, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God—a letter too passionate to be chiselled onto stone tablets, but emblazoned upon the human heart.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:2-3

Setting up the scene

Possibilities include

- Paper and pens, envelopes, stamps - these can also be used for writing activities through the session or for reflection.
- Fancy pens/quill pens
- Bunting styled like 'air-mail' or envelopes

Introduction/Discussion

- ▶ *When was the last time you wrote a real, physical letter?
or when was the last time you received one?*
- ▶ *Have you ever been asked to be a referee/write a reference for someone? Did you find it easy or difficult?*

Activity: (see USB for more information)

- **Mix and Match Quiz**
Randomize a list of celebrities and products they endorse (a sample is provided but feel free to customize and choose celebs well known to your community).
- **Employee of the Month** (provided).
- **Funny Testimonials** (sample provided).
Using random words to fill in a 'standard' reference letter.

Devotional outline

1. Key Idea

In 2 CORINTHIANS 3, Paul described the early Christians as 'living letters'- testimonials to the goodness of God, whose lives are being 'read' by all those around them. While this can feel an intimidating challenge to live up to, we can be encouraged that God equips us with all we need to be effective references for Him. And when we draw on our personal experience and personal relationship with God, we have all the story we need to share.

2. Key Scriptures

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-6 / 4:7-17 / 5:11-21

3. Key Challenge

What message is being read by others in the 'letter' of my life?

Full devotional outline is provided on USB.

Reflection

The Florist (Media clip)

RightNow

www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/118605

Song

Take My Life (I Am Yours)

MICHAEL NEALE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqkW4XINwms

ALSO ON IWORSHIP AT HOME VOL. 11

Song

Build My Life (Christy Nockels)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJCxe0cd15A

Other suggested songs

- *He Lives!* (SASB 847)
- *I Want To Tell You What The Lord Has Done* (SASB 852)
- *A Miracle Of Grace* (SASB 857)
- *You Can Tell Out The Sweet Story* (SASB 200)
- *We Are The Hands Of Christ* (SASB 687)
- *Happy Day* (BEN CANTELON AND TIM HUGHES | CCLI #4847027)
- *Tell The World* (HILLSONG UNITED | CCLI #4451310)

Resources: Sample Images

See USB for a selection of images that can be used for song backgrounds, reflection or prayer focus or incorporated into flyers or handouts. All images have been collated from www.freelyphoto.com or www.unsplash.com and can be used without restriction under Creative Commons License 0.



The *She Is* Project:
**Honouring The
Story Within You**

Linda Pesavento

*'The Lord announces the word,
And the women who proclaim it are a mighty host.'*

PSALM 68:11 (NIV)

The air was filled with laughter and chatter, as more than 4000 women took their seats in the auditorium. Everywhere I looked I saw women hugging one another 'hello', squealing with delight as they located a friend, beckoning her over, 'I saved you a seat, come sit with me'. We were all there for a women's conference. A celebration of friendship, purpose and love and yet I felt utterly alone. No one had saved me a seat; there were no smiles of recognition as my gaze connected with other women in the crowd. I was there on my own. After 10 years of living overseas, our family had returned to Australia, in part because our seven-year old son was being treated for an aggressive form of leukaemia at the nearby children's hospital. New to this city, it was a last minute decision to attend the event and it seemed like everyone had a friend except me.

The session began with a time of incredible worship but even that did not succeed in lifting my dark mood. When the host of the conference took to the stage to welcome us, she finished with this dreaded request, 'Before you sit down, turn to your neighbour and give her a kiss'. My stomach was churning. I didn't want to make small talk with a stranger and I certainly didn't want to kiss her. But I dutifully and reluctantly turned to my right and met Jean.

Jean's eyes were red, her cheeks tear-stained and, as she clasped my hand with her own, I felt her tremble. She was at least 70 and told me that she too was here on her own. She had almost not come. She was still fragile after the death of her husband of 50 years, only six weeks ago. And then this sweet, grieving woman asked me, 'How are you doing, dear'? In the few precious minutes that followed, I shared just

a little of my story with her. And so, a grieving widow and an anxious mother of a desperately sick child reminded each other that no matter how alone we might have felt, we were actually not alone after all.

I gladly hugged and kissed Jean as we sat down ready to hear from the guest speaker. It was then that I sensed the Holy Spirit nudge me ever so gently.

'You're never the only one' he said. 'This auditorium is filled with women just like you and Jean, and they all have their own story to share, if someone will take the time to listen.'

As those words penetrated my heart, I began to look at the auditorium differently. Instead of seeing a crowd of confident, connected, got-it-all-together women who intimidated me, I began to see them for who they really were; uniquely beautiful, nervously expectant and extremely precious individuals, who were probably a lot more like me than I realised. God gave me a glimpse of what I think He sees when He looks at us. *Not a label or stereotype in sight but rather a powerful gathering of living, breathing stories of grace.*

That moment marked the beginning of a new journey for me. Many years after my conversation with Jean at the conference, I was praying about my future when I clearly heard God say, *'I want you to bear witness to what I am doing. Share my stories of grace'*. So I began to ask and listen. I'll be honest; neither of those things comes naturally to me. But the more I have inclined my ear to listen to other peoples' stories, rather than looking for an audience for my own, the more I have discovered how compelling and inspiring these stories are.

With every story, I am reminded of how creative and relentless God is, in pursuing His children. How passionately He desires us to experience His grace and freedom. How much wisdom, courage and strength there is to be found in the lives of everyday women. The more I hear other people's stories the less fixated I become on my own. Not that it isn't important - it is, but when I see it in the context of the greater story that God is authoring, my perspective is clearer and healthier.

The She Is Project exists to give a platform and a voice to these stories. To honour them, share them and build a community based on authenticity, vulnerability and grace. The women whose stories we share may never grace a platform or be on the cover of a magazine, but I know that their story has the power to heal, encourage and transform regardless of whether they ever become 'famous'. Every story we share reveals more of God's grace and reminds us of how delightfully diverse and beautiful His daughters are.

Resources:

To read stories, receive free weekly inspiration and resources or purchase the first print collection of stories, visit www.thesheisproject.org and join the online community. If you are interested in having Linda Pesavento (founder and editor) speak at your church or women's events please email linda@thesheisproject.org

Activity:

If someone were to ask you how you are going right now, what would you tell them?

Would you tell them the real story of your life right now - not just your physical health, but how you are feeling and what is going on in your life?

Take a piece of paper and write your answers to these three questions:

- 1. What are the things that you are most grateful for right now?*
- 2. What are the things that most concern you right now?*
- 3. When you look to the future, what do you look forward to, and what do you fear?*

Now find a partner in the group and share your answers with them. You only need to share as much as you are happy to share, but do be honest. Don't feel that you have to pretend anything at all. None of us is perfect; none of us has it all together or lives in ideal circumstances.

Prayer

It is possible that some of the women will express emotion during this time of sharing. You might or might not know what is prompting this.

Lead a time of prayer in which the women can pray for themselves, for their families or acquaintances, and for each other. Pray with them that their needs will be met.

Whose Hands?

Fran Everitt

Welcome and Announcements

Introduction of theme

In the book of ISAIAH, CHAPTER 49 VERSE 16 we read, 'I have engraved you on the palms of my hands...' or from the New Living translation, 'See I have written your name on my hand.'

This verse tells us that we hold an esteemed place of honour and distinction in God's heart; he proudly engraved us on the palms of his hands for all to see. He proclaims to the world that we are his cherished children ... his prized possessions.

Whose hands? is our theme for today, so we are focussing on different types of 'hands' ... God's hands, and our own 'crafty' hands.

- **God's hands**

Bible verses about being in God's hands

- **Song**

I'm in His Hands

- **Opening prayer**

- **Continue in prayer**

Read Helen Steiner Rice prayer, *No Prayer Goes Unheard*.

This can be found online at bsimplybeing.com/2018/08/07/unexpected-treasures/

- **The praying hands story**

This story can be found on many websites, including

www.moralstories.org/the-praying-hands/

Crafty hands

- **Share craft items and stories about them** (bring home made craft to share about)
- Craft competition (Handout - see USB)
- **The story of the tablecloth** (see USB)
(You may like to give an overview - it's a long story!)

God's Hands

Whose hands?

POEM

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19.

A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6.

A baseball in Mark McGuire's hands is worth \$19 million.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A tennis racket is useless in my hands.

A tennis racket in Venus Williams' hands is a Wimbledon Championship.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A rod in my hands will keep away a wild animal.

A rod in Moses' hands will part the mighty sea.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A sling shot in my hands is a kid's toy.

A sling shot in David's hand is a mighty weapon.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

Two fish and five loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches.

Two fish and five loaves of bread in God's hands will feed thousands.

It depends on whose hands they're in.

Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse.

Nails in Jesus Christ's hands will produce salvation for the entire world.

It depends on whose hands they're in.

As you see now, it depends whose hands they're in.

So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your

*Families and your relationships in God's Hands because...
it depends on Whose Hands they're in.*

THIS POEM APPEARS ON MANY INTERNET SITES,
ORIGINAL AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

Devotions | *Devotions and/or play the song My Life is in your hands (Kirk Franklin)*

In the book of JOHN, CHAPTER 10, the whole chapter is dedicated to Jesus' description of himself as the Good Shepherd. Earlier in the chapter he talks about how he is the gate by which the sheep enter the fold, and he is the shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, and he is the one who calls each of us by name and whose voice we hear and recognise. In VERSES 27-30 it tells us:

*²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can
snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to
me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's
hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."*

In the hand of God is our place of safety - our place to rest. No matter what happens in this frightening and uncertain world, we can be assured that the hand of God holds us fast. We have a Saviour who has taken up our sins, who knows us all by name, and by whose wounds we are healed. But the hand of God that holds us is not a perfect and unblemished hand; it is a hand that still bears the wounds from the nails on the cross. As the Good Shepherd, God's hand is not only our foundation and strength, but our guiding force. The shepherd's job is to guide us so that we will follow in the right way. Knowing that we stand securely in God's hands, we can step out into the world in faith: to follow Jesus' teachings and his example of humility and love for all people. In chapter 13 of John's gospel, Jesus says that everyone will know you are my disciples if you have love for one another. Churches today are not for sitting on the premises but standing on the promises of God, hearing the Word, and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to help one another in this world. If we know where we stand in God, we can trust God to lead us by his hand. May we know the peace of being held in God's hands and may the strength we find there help us to reach out and be God's hands in the world.

Prayer of a Reluctant Leader (see USB)

Song

God's love to me is wonderful

Prayer to conclude



Let's Go Camping

Louise Beamish

Décor

Place chairs in a circle, make a campfire in the middle with logs, pine cones, red, orange and yellow cellophane with a small torch underneath to create the image of a lit fire. Place a billy near the fire.

Make up some popcorn, bring marshmallows, or have someone make up some damper with golden syrup and cream for morning tea.

Anything you might eat on a camping trip.

Welcome

*Has anyone been camping? Where did you go? What did you do?
Who did you go with? How long did you stay?*

- **Song**

Travel along in the Sunshine SASB 685

- **Open in Prayer**

- **Announcements**

- **Birthdays or word for the day**

Flea Fly Flo

Teach the ladies Flea Fly Flo - they repeat the words after you.

(There are several versions of these words, so if you know different ones, use the ones you're comfortable with. To get an idea of the tune:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=corDS0dyRAU)

Flee! [Flee]

Flee Fly! [Flee Fly]

Flee Fly Flo! [Flee Fly Flo!]

Cumala Cumala Cumala Fista! [Cumala Cumala Cumala Fista]

Oh no no no not the Vista! [Oh no no no not the Vista]

Enny miney Desa miny ooooo ah la Wallaminy
[Enny miney, Desa miny, ooooo ah la Wallaminy]

Beep diddley open dopen ooo ah nuton dash
[Beep diddley open dopen ooo ah nuton dash]

SSSSHHHHHHHHH.....

Camp fire story

Make up a camp fire story

Let one of the ladies start with a few words, such as 'one fine day' then the next lady continues with 'one fine day, we hopped into the bus and went camping' and so on, each lady repeating the story so far and adding onto it with their own thoughts. These stories can be very funny.

Time for another campfire song

(CHECK OUT www.youtube.com/watch?v=rA1Ynm4cqTg FOR THE TUNE)

Ging Gang Goolee, Goolee, Goolee, Goolee Watcha
Ging Gang Goo, Ging Gang Goo,
Ging Gang Goolee, Goolee, Goolee, Goolee Watcha
Ging Gang Goo, Ging Gang Goo.

Hayla, oh Hayla Shayla, Oh Hayla Shayla Hayla Ho-o-o!
Hayla, oh Hayla Shayla, Oh Hayla Shayla Hayla Ho-o-o!
Shalawally Shalawally Shalawally Shalawally!
Oompah, Oompah, Oompah, Oompah!

Scripture | *Psalm 23* Verses quoted below are from NIV version

Message: Beside Still Waters

Whenever I have gone camping PSALM 23 comes to mind, and I often take time to sit somewhere nice and just have some time for me and to contemplate this psalm.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I lack nothing. v.1

He leads us, He guides us, He's always with us, and we can be assured and feel safe under His protective care. The Lord promises that He will never leave us or forsake us, He is our Good Shepherd.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. v. 2-3A

He knows where true rest and blessing are found, and leads us there. He restores, He refreshes, He brings peace and goodness to our lives.

He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake. v.3

He leads and teaches us the way to walk in His footsteps. He shows us what is right and wrong. He forgives us and guides us into a fruitful life serving Him.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. v.4

Though life is uncertain and we may suffer with illness, loss or pain, our God of comfort, our Lord who holds all power over death and disease walks with us. Always. He is the only one who can take us by the hand through life's darkest moments of suffering, bringing freedom and healing from the pain of this life, straight into glory and the hope of heaven that He has reserved for those who love Him. We never have to fear, in life or in death, for He is with us, our constant strength and Shepherd.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. v.5

We have a place at His table, He makes room for us, He wants us to stay close to Him. Through history, hosts were expected to protect their guests at all costs. God's protection is real; in the midst of the traps and attacks of enemy forces, we can find



security and refuge in His great care. It doesn't mean that we won't ever face huge battles, but that He covers us with His Spirit of anointing and power, to live out our days with His strength and blessing.

When we search out the scriptures and find all of our Lord's promises for us, then our cups will overflow and praise will be on our lips and in our hearts.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. v.6

The word for follow here, means to chase, to pursue. We can be assured He pursues us today and every day, with His goodness and love.

When we look back on our lives we can say that because the Lord is my Shepherd, goodness and love have been mine all the days of my life.

And it doesn't end when our earthly life is over; we have the promise that we will spend eternity with the Lord in His house.

Wherever you camp, be it by the sea, by a river, in the mountains or just in a beautiful patch of country side, take time to be with God and let the Holy Spirit remind you of all your benefits you have in Christ Jesus.

Prayer

Thank you that you are our good Shepherd and we can trust you with our lives. Thank you for your leadership and sovereignty.

Thank you for your guidance and care all the days of our lives. Thank you that you restore our souls, give us peace, and bring us hope in all of our tomorrows. Thank you for your protection and strength that surrounds us like a shield. Thank you that we never have to fear. Thank you for your goodness and love that follow after us, chase us, even when we are unaware. Thank you Lord, that you are trustworthy and able, that you are our Refuge and Hope.

In you alone is rest and peace. We praise you for the assurance that we will dwell with you forever. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Song

Simply trusting every day SASB 892

Benediction

The Four 'D's

Trevor Nicol

Décor

Deck the room out with sporting equipment.

Activity

Broom Hockey

Equipment - 2 Straw brooms, balloon or tennis ball, 2 chairs

1. Divide into 2 teams, sit on opposite side of room
2. Each given a number
3. 1 Chair at either end of room (goals) with broom beside chair
4. Ball/Balloon placed in middle of room
5. Number is called out and the player from each team goes to their goals picks up broom and has to score in their opponent's goal.

Activity

Game find-a-word and quiz (see USB)

Scripture | *1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

Songs

Message

The four 'D's

To play any sport, whether it is an individual or a team sport, you need the 4D's. Whether you play at a club level or on the international stage, you need the 4D's.

One of my early hockey coaches instilled these principles into my life as I was progressing through the ranks in my chosen sport of hockey.

Not only have I applied these principles throughout my sporting career but I have also applied them to my spiritual walk with God.

The 4D's represent: Discipline, Devotion, Dedication, Determination.

In the sporting world players need to apply these four 'D's to succeed in their chosen sporting field, especially if they want to be the best. They don't just turn up at a game thinking this will be easy. They need to train hard, persevere and be prepared for obstacles.

Most coaches and sport scientists would agree that you are unlikely to succeed without a mix of factors, including hard work, to catapult you from potential to podium. And this blend is likely to be quite unique to each sport.

So for the sportsperson they need to be:

Disciplined in how they treat their bodies;

Devoted to their chosen sport;

Dedicated to hard work;

Determined to overcome obstacles that will come.

So how do we apply these principles in our Christian walk?

Give out take-home bookmarks with the four 'D' words on them.

Discuss each word and have the ladies read out the Bible verses pertaining to each one.

Discipline

Throughout Scripture we read how important discipline is for us, especially the discipline that comes from God.

2 TIMOTHY 1:7 | PROVERBS 10: 17 | PROVERBS 12: 1 | PROVERBS 29: 17
REVELATIONS 3: 19 | TITUS 1:8 | HEBREWS 12: 10-11.



Devotion

Devoted to God's Word and living His way.

COLOSSIANS 2: 6-8 | JOSHUA 8: 33-35 | LUKE 1: 3-7 | 1KINGS 8: 61

Dedication

Dedicated to serving Him.

1 SAMUEL 1: 28 | ROMANS 12: 1 | 1KINGS 7: 51

Determination

To be the best for God.

1 CORINTHIANS 9: 24-27 | 2 TIMOTHY 4: 7 | 2 CHRONICLES 15: 7 | 1 CORINTHIANS 2: 2

Conclusion

Whether it is sport or our daily walk with God these same principles apply if we are to be the best we can.

Facing The Storms

Bev Beeson

The story of the storm on the lake can be found in three of the Gospels in the New Testament (the second half of The Bible).

Matthew Chapter 8 verses 23-27

Mark Chapter 4 verses 35-41

Luke chapter 8 verses 22-25

Facing the storms is a study intended for individuals who are committed to meeting weekly for five weeks in a group setting. The greatest value will come from meeting weekly and sharing *with one another*.

The workload in this study is meant to be relatively light and easy - there is only one question per day. This is to give participants time to read the question in the morning then reflect on it *all day long*, allowing for deeper reflection, insight and responses. This will also hopefully allow for more learning and blessing.

I suggest that you print the study (see USB) as a booklet, and package it with a set of post-it notes. (I found starfish shaped ones - see the presentation guide on USB.) The notes are for participants to write down the daily question and take it with them to work or put it up where they will see it regularly during the day, as a prompt to keep thinking about it.



Game Of Life

Joycelyn McIver

Welcome and introduction

Today I want to delve into the Game of Life with you. My hope is that we can share and find some encouragement in joining in authentic community together in this game we call life.

Ice breakers - card games

Go Fish

Slap Jack

Crazy Eights

Video Clip

Skit Guys, The cards you've been dealt

www.youtube.com/watch?v=61uFF9MNqTk

God uses everything to His glory. I don't know about you, but when I have been through difficult seasons and haven't been able to see or feel any joy in those spaces, that was the last thing I wanted to hear!

Write some of your own key events on individual cards, then tell the women what God has shown or taught you through each of these events.

Activity: Design your own life cards. (See cards template on USB.)

On each card, write a key event that has shaped your life. What has God shown you through these events?

Sharing and prayer

In groups, share some of the events that you feel safe sharing, and tell how they have shaped you. Take some time to pray together.

Game - Bubble catching

When we are in the midst of trials and struggles, we tend to grasp onto things that give comfort. Unfortunately some of these things are hard to grasp and leave us running around like children at a birthday party as we try to catch and hold onto things that cannot be held.

Video Clip

Skit Guys Tug of War

skitguys.com/videos/tug-of-war - Costs US\$15.99 to buy

Activity: Tug of War

Divide the women into two teams, one team taking each end of a rope - The World vs Things of God. (If some of your ladies are not physically able to take part, they could be the cheer squad for their team.)

The World represents characteristics such as materialism, bitterness, anger, relationship breakdowns, crime, addiction, abuse, abandonment, rejection, financial hardship, family breakdown, depression, health issues, job dissatisfaction.

The Things of God include acceptance, love, healing, wholeness, hope, wisdom, joy, peace, mercy, justice, self-control, faith, kindness, gentleness, patience, goodness, faithfulness, kingdom perspective.



Sharing and prayer

- ▶ *What are some of the struggles that are currently pulling you towards the things of the world? What do you need, from God or from others, to help and support you in this?*

Summary and prayer

As much as I said I hate it, I know the truth - God really does use everything for His glory, when we choose to allow Him to. The cards we have been dealt indeed shape us, but we have a choice, to allow them to make us bitter or better. There is so much in life that is out of our control but we can control how we respond to things.

Our experiences shape us. They form us. And yes, life is a struggle.

Today I want to encourage you to reach to Scripture and prayer to firm up your foundations, and press 'stop' on those tapes that threaten to pull you in a negative direction.

With God we walk out our own blueprint, and we do it in the context of community. The people you have around you today, for example. We don't do it alone.

But we can only pull that rope in the right direction when we are brave enough to be authentic and vulnerable and real with one another. That's when we find Christ embodied in his believers, providing hope, love, acceptance, peace, mercy and so on.

Prayer

Never Too Old To Learn

Fay Foster

Décor

- World globe
- Text books
- Musical instruments
- ‘Do-it-yourself’ tools
- Photos of people singing, playing instruments, dancing, making things, writing, etc.

Preparation

- Research and list learning opportunities in the local community. E.g. U3A; TAFE colleges.
- Private teachers for music, dance, art, etc.
- Classes held at neighbourhood centres, swimming pools or libraries
- Online courses. The list is to be given as a handout during discussion. (There are some great free online courses; I recommend those at open2study.com)

Song

- *Don't assume that God's dismissed you from His mind* HLSB 16
- *God is our light and God is our sunshine* HLSB 23

Introduction

Have you ever wished that you could learn something, but think it's too late? Maybe you started to learn something as a child - dancing perhaps, or how to play the piano - but you stopped taking lessons, and now you wish you could do those things.

Or maybe as an adult you've seen classes advertised, or seen people using particular skills, and you've thought, 'I'd like to do that.'

The truth is, it's never too late to learn! Our learning doesn't have to be connected to career or family goals. If we **want** to learn or know about something, that is a good enough reason.

Research shows that learning - whether that is taking up a new interest, or learning more about something you learned a long time ago - can enhance wellbeing, give a more positive outlook on life, increase confidence and delay the onset of dementia.¹

In 2008, a group of people in England realised that people in care situations such as aged care facilities are not usually offered opportunities to continue their education and learning. So they set up a program called Learning in the 4th age, or L4A, where people in care facilities were asked if there was anything they would like to learn about, or learn to do. If they did want to do this, a tutor was found to give either private or group lessons at the care facility. Most of the tutors were volunteers. Some of the things that people in care are now learning are art, music, singing, playing instruments, story writing, textile art, baking, gardening and using computers.

So ... let's talk about learning in our own lives. (Discuss the following questions in small groups or as a whole group.)

For discussion

What kinds of things did you learn when you were a child or a young adult?

What made you stop learning these things?

As an adult, what would you really like to learn?

*That could be learning **about** something (such as history or science or how politics works), or learning to **do** something (like playing guitar, crocheting or mending a fence).*

1 www.l4a.org.uk/about/

What opportunities are there in our local community for you to learn these things? (Give out the list of local learning opportunities that you've prepared.)

Look through this list and see if there are opportunities you'd like to find out more about.

If two people would like to investigate the same opportunities, maybe you could go together to enquire about them. Or you could phone the provider and ask for information to be sent to you both.

Which of these providers will you contact this week?

In his book *Leadership 101*, John Maxwell cites the results of a study in which fifty people over the age of 95 were asked,
"If you could live your life again, what would you do differently?"

After analysing the results, researchers found that three answers came up repeatedly. They were:

- 1. If I could do it all over again, I would reflect more.**
- 2. If I could do it all over again, I would risk more.**
- 3. If I could do it all over again, I would do more things that would live on after I am dead.²**

How can we live so that we don't have these regrets when we get to 95?

What will we do now to make room in our lives for more reflection?

What risks will we take?

(Taking a risk often involves trying something new.)

What will we do that will live on after we are dead? (Suggestions: Get help to write your life story; invest in younger people; volunteer)

Would anyone like to share the ideas they have had as we talked about these things?

Prayer

For wisdom to know how best to spend the rest of our lives, which opportunities to take, and whose lives we can invest in.

.....
2 www.kevinhalloran.net/heart-of-wisdom/



Salvos Funerals: **Championing The Bereaved**

Kate Smead

In 2016, *Salvos Funerals* was established in order to care for the families of those recently deceased. Currently operating in Sydney and the NSW Central Coast, *Salvos Funerals* is entirely owned and operated by The Salvation Army, and all profits go directly back to the community work of the Salvos. Known for our humanitarian and charitable work helping those most in need, our funeral services are a natural extension of the care we provide both in the community and through our aged care facilities.

We have found that there is a huge need in our city after the death of a loved one. Many people cannot afford the services that we offer, even though we try to keep costs to an absolute minimum. If this is the case we try our best to refer these people to the right places to gain help and to find solutions. We try to offer hope and compassion to all.

At Salvos Funerals we aim to Live, Love and Fight for our client families.

What makes us different from other funeral companies?

From the first call that comes in to us, we try to show the love of Christ. We actively listen, and acknowledge loss and despair. It is a rare privilege to be able to offer compassion, hope and real assistance at such a difficult and delicate time.

There are many people looking for assistance that they cannot afford. Recently we assisted a local corps to love one of their own. They were fortunate to be able to donate side by side graves to a refugee family who were struggling to be able to afford a funeral and not in any position to purchase graves. It is a very expensive exercise and some families cannot come to terms with the cremation option.

At Salvos Funerals we are looking into being able to assist more families who find

the cost of a funeral a real imposition. We try to assist wherever we can to direct families to access funds to support the funeral expenses.

We go the extra mile. We spend time with families, listening to their story, and we offer prayer in response to listening. We respect differences and look for opportunities to point our client families and mourners to Jesus. Where possible we will link up families to local clergy and church connections.

We are always looking for new ways to serve our families better with prompt and effective response to enquiry, keeping communication clear and being transparent with our client families with information that is helpful. There are many ways that we can improve in working effectively, training up new people and having clear policy.

We try to encourage our client families to include their children where ever possible especially in the difficult areas such as being present, viewing and participation in the service.

At *Salvos Funerals* we are all on a learning curve - we learn new aspects of the business and the funeral industry on a daily basis. We learn how to better serve our client families and we learn how to support each other, each and every day. As a new business we are always looking for ways to grow. We see that our core intention, to serve others with compassion, spurs us on to care for those with whom we come into contact. We hope that one day our care will extend to all of Australia and beyond. This takes us out of our comfort zone and helps us to look for new opportunities to succeed.

We are engaged in our work - it is a vocation for us, not just a job. We have a clear vision, and our mission fits so well with The Salvation Army mission. We are always encouraging our team to put our God given skills and strengths to the best use at work.

Holiness is being set apart for Christ. This is the essence of *Salvos Funerals*. We are intrinsically different because we are set apart to do his work.

How do we care for ourselves and our families?

Working with distressed people can be stressful and time-consuming. In order to give our clients the best possible care, we need to look after ourselves and our families.

We try to care for ourselves and each other in our team by talking to one another, debriefing and sharing our learnings and growth opportunities. We try to speak with grace and kindness to offer assistance and feedback. We pray for each other and share prayer points for our clients. We encourage each other to move and be active; engaging in physical activity has many fitness and mental health benefits.

It is our first mission to look after our own families and to not give them the worst parts of us, having spent our energy all on our (intense) work.



For discussion

- ▶ *What do you know about Salvos Funerals? Have you used their services?*
- ▶ *Salvos Funerals is a business. How do you think that the way they operate might be different to other businesses?*
- ▶ *Do you think it is a good idea to have a funeral plan in place as you get older? Why or why not?*
- ▶ *What do you think are the main personal qualities that a family would expect to find in someone they consulted about a loved one's funeral?*
- ▶ *What do you think would be the best and worst parts of dealing with a family in grief?*

For more information about *Salvos Funerals*, please see their website salvosfunerals.com.au/, or phone Sydney (02) 9119 9010 or Central Coast (02) 4300 3023.

Section Three





Appreciating Jesus

Craig Harlum

Introduction

Jesus prays for us, goes with us and joins us in this journey we experience called life. Today we are going to take the time to appreciate those that have been there for us and those that continue to be there for us. We are going to discover how we can be there for others and how God is there for us when he prays for us, goes with us and joins us as we journey with him.

Theme possibilities:

- Mother's or Father's day
- ANZAC Day
- Remembrance Day
- Certificate Presentation
- Shared meal

Opening discussion questions

- ▶ *Can you name one person who has been there for you?*
- ▶ *What happened and how did they meet your need?*
- ▶ *How can you show your appreciation?*

Possible Activities:

- Card making
- Sharing memories
- Memorial
- Participants could bring photos of those they appreciate
- Write a letter of appreciation
- Invite those that are appreciated and share fellowship/celebrate
- Certificate presentation

Devotional outline

Big Idea: Appreciating Jesus

MARK 6:45-56

Message

Introduction

Mother's Day - appreciating Mum

- Retell the story of MARK 6:45-56
- Include - hardness of hearts

Move 1 - Jesus prays

Retell the story - when Jesus prays (V. 46)

- JOHN 17 - prayer
- Forgive them Father for they know not what they do
- Prayer in the garden
- Always for us even when it was about him

Move 2 - Jesus goes

Retell the story - when Jesus walks on water (MARK 6:47-50)

- Jesus goes the extra mile
- The cross

Move 3 - Jesus joins

Retell the story - when Jesus gets into the boat (VV. 51-52)

- Walk to Emmaus
- The Holy Spirit
- Groans that words cannot express (ROMANS 8:26)

Songs

Worthy is the Lamb

Thank you Lord



The Look Of Love

Louise Mathieson

*Then He turned towards the woman and said to Simon,
'Do you see this woman?'*

LUKE 7:44

*Most of all, love each other steadily and unselfishly,
because love makes up for many faults.*

1 PETER 4:8

Setting up the scene

- 'Love' associated décor - hearts, red and pink features, etc.
- 'Looking' props - glasses, telescopes, kaleidoscopes, etc. or images of these (see USB)
- Pictures of many different women (see USB)
- Background music of love songs (including The Look of Love of course!)

Introduction/Discussion

Who wears glasses? What do things look like to you without them?

How would things look if you swap glasses with a friend?

(You can also have a stash on hand from Family Stores)

Can you find someone whose glasses help you see as well as your own (or better!)

What's it like trying to survive without glasses (or with the wrong glasses)?

Activities and Resources:

- Love song pop quiz / Name That Tune / vote or poll for your favourite love song
- *Love Coloured Glasses* (see guide on USB)

Devotional Outline

Key Idea

God's love enables us to see others differently so that we can fulfil His call to love.

Key Scriptures

1 CORINTHIANS 13 | LUKE 7:36-50 | 1 PETER 4:8

Key Challenge

How do I need to apply the lens of love to the way I interact with others?

(Full devotional outline is provided on USB.)

Continue on to the next page...

Reflection

Reading

And Yet

1 CORINTHIANS 13 PARAPHRASE - SEE USB

Song

For The One

BRIAN AND JENN JOHNSON

www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_bj6mjUj7k

Build My Life

CHRISTY NOCKELS

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJCxe0cd15A

Other Suggested Songs

- *Be Thou My Vision* (SASB 573)
or You Are My Vision
(REND COLLECTIVE | CCLI# 6054533)
- *Joyful, Joyful* (SASB 39)
- *Boundless Love* (see USB)
- *I Believe* (SASB 34)
Can also be sung to the tune of The Rose.
- *Someone Cares* (SASB 10)
- *I Love You With The Love of the Lord*
(JIM GILBERT, CCLI# 10130)
- *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus* (SASB 445)

Resources: Sample Images

See USB for a selection of images that can be used for song backgrounds, reflection or prayer focus or incorporated into flyers or handouts. All images have been collated from www.freelyphoto.com or www.unsplash.com and can be used without restriction under Creative Commons License 0.

Selfless Love

Danielle Starr

Décor

A number of decorations or props could be used. Anything that points to the theme of Love would be appropriate.

One suggestion is to have previously asked attendees to bring along an item that represents 'love' to them. It might be a gift they received, something hand made by a child, an encouraging letter they received from a friend, a photograph, a poem etc.

Have a table available for items to be placed on.

Introduction

Introduction can be used as a brain storming activity, or as rhetorical questions.

- ▶ *Why do we love? Are we motivated to love for our own personal gain? Or is our love motivated by a deep desire to place another's needs above our own? To express a selfless love to others?*
- ▶ *What makes us feel loved?
What actions/words assure us that we are loved?*
- ▶ *How do we express our love for others?
What actions/words do we use to express our love for others?*

Bible

When we look at the book of Job, we see a man who experienced deep and unimaginable grief. He was a man who was hurt, who was broken. A man who had lost so much in his life. And while his story is unique, it is a story that might be familiar to us. All around us we see broken and hurt people. On our streets, in our schools, in our neighbourhoods, in our communities, in our church. We have all suffered and been broken in some way, and we interact with other hurt and broken people every day.

Jesus tells us in JOHN 13:34 (NIV) to “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Our mission is to love others.

So how can we truly love and serve those around us?

Let’s take another look at Job.

Job had three friends who desired nothing more than to ease Job’s pain. As we read through the book of Job, we see these friends showing their love in many ways. They try so hard to fill every space of silence with their words. We see them speak words of affirmation over Job (JOB 8:5-6, 20-21) in an attempt to comfort. We see Job’s friends searching for a reason as to why Job finds himself in his current situation, and then attempting to problem solve it for him (JOB 11:13-16). Every attempt they make to comfort their friend is unsuccessful. While their intentions were sincere, their acts of love towards Job were ineffective and they were unable to express love for their grieving friend. No words could comfort Job.

In JOB 2:13 (NIV) we see Job’s friends take another approach to comfort their friend. In this passage we read that they “sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.”

You see, for Job in his deepest time of despair, no words could bring comfort. What Job needed was for his friends to just sit with him in ‘compassionate silence’. Their silent companionship brought Job the love and comfort he needed the most. Through this action of silent companionship, these friends expressed their selfless love for Job.

Application

We can act like Job’s friends sometimes when we don’t understand the most effective way for a person to receive our love. A big part of loving others is learning how to really listen to understand them and their situation better. And then operating out of that space, rather than our assumption of what they need or how we are best to love them.

This is true for every relationship in our lives. Our family members, our church, our neighbours, our community.

To love others with a selfless love means we take the time to listen, and listen with the intention of better understanding their needs and situation. We then express our love in a way that is most beneficial and meaningful for that person.

Really, it comes down to getting to know each other on a deeper level and valuing the relationship we have with them.

- ▶ *How can we better understand ourselves and the way we want to receive love? How can we better understand those around us, and the most beneficial way we can express our love to them?*

Love Languages

Gary Chapman is the author of the *5 love languages* of book series. He says that “we tend to speak our primary love language, and we become confused when ... others do not understand what we are communicating. We are expressing our love, but the message does not come through because we are speaking what, to them, is a foreign language.”¹

Let’s take a closer look at each of these love languages in Gary’s book, *The five love languages*:

1. Words of Affirmation

These are words that encourage and build others up.

We might use words of affirmation through verbal compliments. E.g. “Wow, thank you for cleaning up the kitchen today. You did a really great job.”

We might also use encouraging words. Encouraging words express our belief in another person’s potential and their capabilities, even when they don’t believe in themselves. Through encouraging words, we are saying “I know. I care. I am with you. How can I help?”²

While we often assume words of affirmation are expressed through spoken communication, we can also express this love language through written words, perhaps in the form of a letter or poem.

2. Quality time

Quality time means to give someone ‘your undivided attention.’³ Putting away all distractions so you can focus solely on that individual. This might refer to an activity you are participating in together, (such as a father playing catch with his son), or it might refer to a quality conversation you are engaged in. A quality conversation requires both parties focused, listening and equally contributing to the conversation. Quality conversation is where ‘two individuals are sharing their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context.’⁴ Perhaps you could meet up for morning tea, or organise to prepare a meal together. Each person is present, focused, engaged and contributing to the conversation or activity.

3. Receiving Gifts

refers to a visible symbol of expressing love. A gift is ‘something you can hold in your hand and say “Look, they were thinking of me” ... You must be thinking

1 Gary D. Chapman, *The Five Love Languages* (Chicago: Northfield Pub, 1992), 16.

2 Chapman, 45

3 Chapman, 59

4 Chapman, 65



of someone to give them a gift. The gift itself is a symbol of that thought.’⁵ Gifts can be objects that have been purchased, found or made. They do not need to hold any material value. A gift may be an item that was purchased, but it may also be as simple as a flower picked on the side of the road. A gift can be any visible object that is given as a reminder of the love one person has for another.

4. Acts of Service

Acts of service means to do/serve someone in a way you know they would like you to. You seek to please others by serving them, to express your love for others by doing things for them.⁶

You might decide to make a cup of coffee for someone, or offer to visit them at home and assist with a load of laundry if they’ve been sick. You might offer to babysit for them, or cook them a meal. Acts of service require ‘thought, planning, time, effort and energy. If done with a positive spirit, they are indeed expressions of love.’⁷

5. Physical Touch

‘We have long known that physical touch is a way of communicating emotional love. Numerous research projects in the area of child development have made that conclusion: Babies who are held, stroked and kissed develop a healthier emotional life than those who are left for long periods of time without physical contact.’⁸ In his book, Gary Chapman refers to Jesus’s words in MARK 10:15-16 (NIV). The verse says ‘Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them, and blessed them.’

Human touch is a nurturing and comforting form of expressing our love for another person. However, it is also important to recognise that expressing love through physical touch is not always appropriate. For those of us who express love through physical touch, it is important for us to understand that this is not the case for every person. Perhaps a friend of ours is journeying through a difficult season in their life. We want to comfort them by embracing them in a hug as a gesture of reassurance and a symbol of the love and support we want to lavish on them. To ensure we are not encroaching on their personal space and making them feel uncomfortable, we could first ask them if they would like a hug. For people who are uncomfortable with the love language of physical touch, perhaps just simply being present with them and sitting next to them (remember, this was the most successful expression of love and support Job received from his friends) is the most effective form of love we can offer to them at that time.

5 Chapman, 82

6 Chapman, 97

7 Chapman, 97

8 Chapman, 115

Activity:

Sharing time - each person sharing the story behind the item they have brought that represents love to them

Love Languages Quiz

(please note: this is a children's quiz, but would work well for a women's ministry activity). Choose the answer that best describes you for each question.

www.homeschool-life.com/989/file_retrieve/51669

- Have 5 different sections in the room (one for each love language) and ask each person to go and stand in the love language they scored the highest for. This will assist the group in getting to know each other's love languages.
- Brainstorm ideas for each love language category
Using a white board or butcher's paper, discuss different ways to express love under each different love language category.
E.g. Words of Affirmation - write an encouraging poem

Prayer Time/Response

1. Consider one person and reflect on what you think their love language is.
2. Pray for them as you reflect over some ways you could express selfless love towards them.
3. Spend some time writing out words of affirmation that you want to share with another person.

Possible Songs

- *Come, let us all unite to sing*
(SONG 8 - SASB 2015)
- *God's love to me is wonderful*
(SONG 25 - SASB 2015)
- *Have you ever stopped to think How God loves you*
(SONG 29 - SASB 2015)
- *Amazing Love*
(SONG 185 - SASB 2015)
- *How deep the fathers love for US* (SONG 32 - SASB 2015)
- *All for Love*
HILLSONG
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNAti01dDWM
- *Love so High*
HILLSONG
www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbRd3fidDis
- *Love so great*
HILLSONG
www.youtube.com/watch?v=59-PQeL8E08



The Door To Hope

Maggie Ingham

Clip 1: LOVE - Doorways song from Frozen

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPlmqZo0D74

- ▶ *Have you ever thought of love as being a doorway to hope?*

There are many times in life when we face challenges and we feel that every way we turn, doors are closing - but the truth is that all the right doors are opening.

- ▶ *Are you one of the doors for someone? Or do you tend to turn away from people when they are struggling?*

Sheila Walsh wrote in her book, *Loved Back to Life*:

I now think it takes more faith to name our need than to keep believing that something will happen and not doing anything about it. It takes faith, and great courage, to get help, to take the first painful step toward the dream that is in our hearts.

Finding the right door to open, or even being the door for someone, takes great strength and at times the road that is journeyed still has many ditches to go through.

Do not underestimate that shoulder that people lean on; it is a doorway for helping someone in despair. And do not trivialise your need for a shoulder to lean on; it may be helping you through a very rough time.

Your actions and could be the doorway that people need to help them on their journey.

One corps has done this in a way which is so simple but has had a great impact on the community.

Small answer to a big problem in Sydney's East

The Salvation Army's base in Maroubra connects with many members of the Eastern Suburbs homeless community, along with other marginalised and socially isolated people. In June 2018, God spoke to Grant Emans, from Designer Eco Tiny Homes, instructing him to give away one of the tiny homes made by his company. That tiny home, which now sits on The Salvation Army's Maroubra site, will house a homeless person until they are able to access more permanent accommodation.

Discussion

- ▶ *Can you recall a time when someone has been your doorway to hope?*
- ▶ *When have you been a doorway to hope for someone else?*

Have you noticed that when you see someone perform an act of kindness for someone, you are prompted to perform acts of kindness for other people? This clip shows how each act of kindness can become a doorway of love through which other people can walk.



Lieutenant Matthew Gluyas and Grant talk about the tiny home donated to Maroubra Salvos

Clip 2: LIVE - Changing one life at a time

Clip 3: If you give a little love you can get a little love of your own

www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBI2TVtI

Let's think outside the box and see what doors of opportunity we can open for us all today. Here's an example of how one woman stood up to defend someone who was being harassed on a train.

Clip 4: FIGHT - Social Justice - The Woman Who Defended a Muslim Subway Rider Meets Ellen

www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_DhUaQ__IA

Challenge

- ▶ *Who do you know that could use some hope right now?*
- ▶ *How might you be the doorway through which that hope comes?*

Prayer



Be A Faith Shaper

Heather Unicomb

This could also be a family or intergenerational event.

Preparation

- Playdough - enough for each woman to make their own family or a family.
- Print Directions for playdough activity
(see Table signs, *Directions for playdough activity on USB*).
- Tables to sit around (easier for the activities).
- Print Pictures to mime - DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7
(see *Miming family activities on USB*).
- Print Prayer Handout (see Prayer on USB).
- Materials to make bracelet.

Activity: Playdough

Using Play dough / Make your family.

As you are making your family or a family with playdough,

1. Talk about your family.
2. Tell the person beside you their names, where they live, what they like.
3. What are your dreams for your family?
4. Acknowledge all sorts of families - extended, single, nuclear, childless, step, grandparent.

In DEUTERONOMY 6 Moses is speaking to the entire nation and calling everyone to be responsible for how the next generation is raised.

Moses says in VERSES 5-7,

⁵ So love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength. ⁶ Memorize his laws ⁷ and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning.

GNB

These words are called the *Shema*. The Shema was fundamental to the Jewish faith and was recited morning and night. Doing this connected the generations, every family and every individual. Moses directed the nation to do everything possible to remember these commands and to incorporate them into everyday life.

Activity: Miming

Need: Pictures representing “sit down”, “walk”, “lie down”, and “get up”, etc. (These are from DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9)

Directions:

- Give a picture to those who are willing to act - don't show anyone.
- You can't speak; you have to perform the actions illustrated on your piece of paper.
- Others guess what you are miming.

Discuss: What parts of the day fit your actions from Deuteronomy

E.g. “Sitting” could be eating or watching TV.

E.g. “Lie down” could be reading a bed time story, praying, intimate conversation about the day.

Choose one thing that you can do this week to naturally pass on your faith to your family. Tell that thing to your neighbour. Then pray for each other.

Moses said these words: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength.* Over the next few chapters he restates this command more than a dozen times. He is fighting for something that is more important than lifestyle. He is fighting for the **heart**.

Make a heart with your playdough

Moses is warning about the danger of a generation losing their faith. If you want to pass on a legacy to the next generation, it has to be transferred relationally with Love.

The concept of family has different expression in every generation.

But however the family is represented, the heart of the family affects the direction of every child and the future of every nation.

List and Discuss Family Values

Listening, compassion, treating others as you would like to be treated, honest, trustworthy, patient, forgiving, always doing your best, saving money, respect others, seeking God first, fun, laughter, generous. There are so many more.

Being a Faith-Shaper sometimes means just being there. Family values are not only taught, they are caught.

Our Heavenly Father wants us to be there with Him.

Read

www.warcry.org.au/single-post/2018/06/09/A-walk-in-the-rain

First published in The *Salvation Army War Cry* magazine June 9th, 2018

Prayer Handout to take home

See Prayer on USB.

I promise to share my **faith**, my **life** and my **love** with my family, even when it involves extra effort ... even if it means I will step out of my comfort zone ... even though I might have to rearrange my current priorities to do so.

I will model all that is important to me, so that my **family** will know what a life of faith looks like.

Through my actions and my words, **I will** turn my family's eyes towards Jesus.

Songs

- *Hear our praises - May our homes be filled with dancing* (HILLSONG)
- *He knows my name (I have a maker)*
Refer to playdough people.
- *There are many hearts just full of God's sunshine* (HLSB 108)
Relating to heart
- *Oh, what a wonderful, wonderful day* (HLSB 78)
Relate verse 2 - born into God's family divine.



Activity: Make a **bracelet**, using different kinds of beads representing different members of your family or a family.

Discuss

1. Who cares what it looks like - that's the family God has given you.
2. Each person is unique.
3. God chose to give us different personalities and preferences, so we should value and enjoy those differences, not merely tolerate them.
4. God wants unity, not uniformity.
5. But for unity's sake we must never let differences divide us.
6. We must stay focused on what matters most - learning to love each other as Christ loved us.



Loved And Loving

Jo-Anne Brown

Loved by God, loving God and others

Ideas for a mini-retreat or prayer/worship service:
Group worship, interspersed with personal experiences.

We are loved...

Call to Worship

Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. DEUT. 7:9

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Ps 36:5

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. PS 118:1

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. Ps 103:8

Prayer

How great is your love toward us, Lord, and your faithfulness endures forever.

Lord, I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.

From PS 117:2 - PS 59:16

Song/quiet music

Scripture | *John 3:16*

Reflecting on the Word

Choose one of the following Bible passages and read it through slowly and thoughtfully. Read it through once, then pause. Ask the group to notice what word/s or phrase stand out for them. Read through a second time. Invite the ladies to silently focus on the verse that stood out to them - and when they are ready, to read that verse out loud (for those who wish). Read the passage through a third time and invite the ladies to quietly talk to God about the verse they have been focussing on. Finish with a brief time of silence to allow God's word to settle in people's hearts and minds.

ZEPH. 3:17 | HOSEA 11:4 | PS. 103:8-12 | PS. 36:5-9

(Invite sharing on this, if appropriate.)

Prayer

Father God, who holds us all in your hands, I come to you now as your child.
I climb upon your lap and lay my head against your chest.
I know with you I am loved, I am accepted. I belong.

Here I am at home. I breathe out and find rest in your arms.

As I rest, my heart is filled with praise and thanksgiving for you and the way you love.
Abba, Father, my heart returns your love.

Time for personal exploration and experience

Suggested activities: Can be done as guided group activities or individual activities.

Creative materials can be set up in different spaces round the room.

Create a collage to express how you love God or how you feel to be loved by him.

- Look through some magazines and gather any images, words, pictures that grab your attention. When you feel like you have enough, begin pasting them to a sheet of paper, keeping in mind what you want the focus of your collage to be.
- Draw, paint, or use clay to express what you think and feel about the love of God.

- 
- Write a love letter to God, expressing your love for him and thanking him for his love for you.
 - Imagine: What does God's love look like to you? Think of a way you can finish this sentence: *God's love is like* _____
(This could become a psalm, poem or a prayer.)
 - Think of a Bible verse about God's love and some actions/movements to it. Pray this verse, with the movements, any time you need to remind yourself how much God loves you.



Lee's Story

Cilla Bone

Let me introduce you to Lee (not his real name). He has been part of my life since he was born. When he was eight days old I accompanied his parents straight from the hospital to the children's court, from where he was taken into foster care. For three months his parents battled their addictions and had access visits with their tiny newborn who had to battle the ramifications of those addictions. Once a week I accompanied them.

By the time Lee was able to go home to his parents, his mother was already pregnant with his brother. There are just 11 months between them. After the birth of Robin (also not his name) I had Lee in my home regularly, giving the parents some respite. Damaged by his mother's alcoholism, he did not talk or walk till he was two, but he had loads of personality and laughed a lot.

In July of 2015 I was called to the hospital at 3am because the children's mum was not expected to live the night. Her liver and kidneys were failing. I prayed with her as she was taken to surgery, simply asking for a miracle. Three years later she has not had another drink and has out-lived all the doctors' predications.

But the going has been rough. The children were placed again in foster care for more than a year. The parents participated in the Positive Lifestyle Program and regularly attended a Salvo House Church. Eventually they regained their children, and respite visits started again at my home - this time with two little boys. For the parents, years of addictions mean that they are erratic, their memory is damaged and sometimes there is too much anger. They love their boys. In their best moments they want to understand faith and they have talked to their sons about Jesus.

(I dedicated both boys at the local Salvation Army corps.)

Recently I had the following conversation with Lee. It was a day on his own as his brother was at kinder and he was on school holidays.

We had made cakes in the morning, and had just finished icing them. Now it was time to put his shoes on and take the cakes home to the family. Sitting on my lap he asked, 'Where does Jesus live?'

'In Heaven.'

'Where's Heaven?'

'Well, you can't see it.'

'Why not?'

'Because it's not here.'

He looks out of the window. 'Is it up there?', pointing to the sky.

For want of a better answer, 'Yes'.

'How did Jesus get up there? Is there a ladder?'

'No, Jesus just lives there. It's his home.'

'Does he have a house?'

'Yes.'

'Will I go there one day? Will I have a house?'

'Yes.'

'How will I get there if there isn't a ladder?'

By now I am thinking that it is time to put the shoes on and take him home! But more than anything, I want him to know there is a safe home waiting for him. He sees enough not so good stuff in the one where he lives. So it was so good to tell him that 'Jesus will come and hug you and scoop you up in his arms and carry you there, just not yet!'

A conversation with any child about Jesus is a sacred trust. We must facilitate them in our playgroups, on *Mainly Music* day, in our pastoral care of young families.

Grandmothers have an enormous responsibility here but sometimes may feel out of their depth. How about using this conversation in Home League, anywhere where older women are together, and let it be a means of helping women explore what they would say.

Lee's mum told me one day that they always read 'the Jesus book' we gave him at bedtime. Are there children around your corps family who could do with a 'Jesus book'? You could raise money to provide some, perhaps for families who come for welfare.

And pray. For Lee and Robin specifically. Their mother's health will not hold out forever and dad will not cope alone. But also for the many other children they represent; children who experience more sadness than they should.

And a P.S. to this story: the boys' mum has a daughter from another relationship who lives in residential care. At 15, in the care of the state, she has become pregnant. By the time you read this she will have added another child into this world of confusion and insecurity. And so the story continues...

For discussion

- ▶ *Why do you think people become addicted to legal or illegal drugs?*
- ▶ *Do you know anyone who is addicted to drugs? How do you know they are on drugs? What symptoms do they exhibit?*
- ▶ *Are you tempted to judge people who are addicted?*

William Booth, in his book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, wrote as follows:

When in the streets of London a Cab Horse, weary or careless or stupid, trips and falls and lies stretched out in the midst of the traffic, there is no question of debating how he came to stumble before we try to get him on his legs again. The Cab Horse is a very real illustration of poor broken-down humanity; he usually falls down because of overwork and under feeding. If you put him on his feet without altering his conditions, it would only be to give him another dose of agony; but first of all you'll have to pick him up again. It may have been through overwork or under feeding, or it may have been all his own fault that he has broken his knees and smashed the shafts, but that does not matter. If not for his own sake, then merely in order to prevent an obstruction of the traffic, all attention is concentrated upon the question of how we are to get him on his legs again. The load is taken off, the harness is unbuckled, or, if need be, cut, and everything is done to help him up. Then he is put in the shafts again and once more restored to his regular round of work. That is the first point. The second is that every Cab Horse in London has three things; a shelter for the night, food for its stomach, and work allotted to it by which it can earn its corn.

Booth, William, 1890, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, International Headquarters of The Salvation Army, Melbourne, pp. 19-20



Put simply, 'when the Cab Horse is down he is helped up, and while he lives he has food, shelter and work'. Booth observed that being helped up, and being provided with food, shelter and work, were 'absolutely unattainable' for millions of men and women in England.

How does this idea of helping people, without judgment, apply to our attitude to people in addiction?

- ▶ *What would you say to a child who is not from a Christian home, who asks you, 'Where does Jesus live?'*
- ▶ *What else might you tell the child about Jesus?*
- ▶ *What would you pray for a family affected by addictions?*



Blessing Baskets

Erica Cossington

Décor

Baskets of all shapes and sizes, bread and rolls.

PowerPoint Picture of Mother Teresa with quote, “Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love” on screen as the women come into the room (from USB).

Materials

Soap, toiletries, treat sized chocolates, tissues, bookmarks, homemade pouch for phone, wrapping paper, glue, and scissors

(Optional) Demonstration basket already made from clothes line rope and brightly coloured material. See “how to make clothes line coil fabric bowls” online.

Songs

Praise and Worship

- *Freely, freely you have received*
- *Standing on the Promises* HLSB 95
- *There shall be showers of blessing* HLSB 115
- *Break Thou the Bread of Life* HLSB 7

Discussion

Share a story about a time when someone or something brought you an unexpected blessing. How did it make you feel?

What sorts of things have you done that have brought blessing to others and also blessed you?

Scripture | *Matthew 14:13-21*

Message

Jesus needed some time alone. He had just heard that his cousin, John the Baptist, had been beheaded, so he got into a boat to go to a private place. Unfortunately, the people worked out where he was going and a large crowd of 5,000 men, not counting women and children, were there waiting for him. Jesus put aside how he felt to care for those around him, healing the sick. He then challenged the disciples to meet the people's physical needs by feeding them. They brought Jesus what they had - five loaves and two fishes. Jesus took these and blessed them, and the disciples fed the people. In John 6:12, Jesus instructs the disciples to "Gather up the pieces that are left over so that nothing will be wasted." (TPT) Left to themselves, the disciples could have left the pieces where they were! They had just finished feeding 5,000 people and they were probably exhausted. However, they did as Jesus requested and filled 12 baskets, a whole basketful for each disciple! Jesus blessed them. We are also blessed as we give.

Jesus was deeply moved with compassion for the people, so he healed all the sick. The Aramaic term means that "he nurtured them in love and cured their frailties" (The Passion Translation). We, as women, may not be able to heal the sick, but one of the things we can do very well is [nurture people with love](#).

Who in our community needs to be [nurtured with love](#)? A glib answer would be that we all need to be nurtured with love. The sad fact is that many in our community very rarely experience what it means to be "nurtured with love." As you look around your community, who needs that special touch of love? There are people who are lonely, those who are sick, those experiencing heartaches in their families, and those who are grieving. Many of these do not attend our corps but we become aware of them as we reach out through our Doorways, our thrift shops, our Mainly Music programmes, our neighbours, our volunteers, etc. In Mandurah, where I live, many lonely people come into our thrift shop because they know it is a safe place where people care. Mother Teresa said, "The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved."



Many of these people don't want to hear about God's love, but they do want to feel and experience God's love. As the people came to Jesus, he GAVE them what he could. It is often in generous giving that the people around us can experience God's love. Many corps do this in different ways; e.g. through cupcake ministry. We have started giving [Blessing Baskets](#).

So what is a blessing basket? It can be anything you want it to be. In our case, we make a clothes line rope basket from clothes line and cover it with strips of brightly coloured material which are then sewn together using a sewing machine. We wrap small gifts like soap, chocolates, tissues, notebooks, bookmarks, etc. and put a different verse or encouraging quote on each one. It comes with a card that says, "This is especially for you. In this small bowl are seven gifts, a gift to open each day for seven days. With each gift is a message of love, hope and encouragement to lift your spirits and let you know you are very special and you are loved."

We have invited the lonely from the thrift shop to come and help make the blessing baskets so that they meet new people and feel connected, giving them purpose in helping other people. We are giving a small blessing basket to our Doorways clients. We have given them to those who are terminally ill, those who are sick and hurting and those for whom life seems too hard. Some churches give them to nursing homes or as Mother's Day gifts. One volunteer in our thrift shop was given a blessing basket when her daughter-in-law had cancer. It moved her deeply. One of her gifts was a cheap notebook that the ladies covered in bright material and attached this verse:

"Use your voice for kindness, your ears for compassion, your hands for charity, your mind for truth and your heart for love."

She told us that she keeps the notebook with her all the time but she will never use it. The verse makes her cry. She said, "If only everyone would do this, how different the world would be."

Who do you think got the biggest blessing, the one who gave the gift or the one who received it?

Paul says, *"All praises belong to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he is the Father of tender mercy and the God of endless comfort. He always comes alongside us to comfort us in every suffering so that we can come alongside those who are in any painful trial. We can bring them this same comfort that God has poured out upon us."*

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4 (TPT)

Be encouraged. God has already gone before us. As we listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit, God can move through us to do small things with great love.

Prayer

Pray in small groups for the people in your community and listen for the Spirit's prompting for the people He would use you to reach out to with love.

Activity: Have the group wrap up the different gifts and attach encouraging verses to them. Put them in small baskets, either made as per internet instructions, or gathered from thrift shops. Pray over them that the people who receive them will be blessed. Add a card with a hand-written message such as the one above, suggesting that the receiver could open a gift a day. ("This is especially for you. In this small bowl are seven gifts, a gift to open each day for seven days. With each gift is a message of love, hope and encouragement to lift your spirits and let you know you are very special and you are loved.") Please see the **USB** for suggestions for encouraging sayings and scripture verses to include with your baskets.





Love

Louise Nicholson

Song

Here is Love

Sing or watch on YouTube - one version (with words) is at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8YOPj5TnUM

Introduction

I am sure that we have all heard people say of a child, 'God bless him' ... 'only a Mother could love him'.

The good news is that Jesus loves all of his children, no matter what. He died for us while we were still sinners.

His love is so extravagant that he looks at all of his children, rebellious or not, naughty or not, opens the floodgates of his love and pours it out on every one of his children.

Let me tell you a story about a cute, well-behaved little girl.

Story: The Pearl Necklace

From the *Stories of the Heart* series, Multnomah Books, 1996

The full text of this story can be found at

Godslittleacre.net/inspirationalstories/the_pearls.html

Bible Reading

ROMANS 5:1-8 (NIV)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Message

We are reminded that at a very young age we learn to desire things that we think will bring us great joy. These things can become the things we worship in our lives.

It is difficult to fathom that, for a while, this cute little girl loved her necklace too much to give it to her Daddy.

For a while we may strive to get everything we want and for a while we feel wonderful. And then we ask, 'Why am I so sad?'

Knowing that she was deeply loved, she still struggled to do what her Daddy asked, but she learned that the love that she had for her Daddy was stronger than the love she had for her necklace. And the love that he had for her was not only bigger than she could possibly imagine, but it was extravagant love.

We can allow things or people to be more important to us than God or we can put God first and find an inexhaustible supply of love that only He can give.

As with Jenny, we are prompted by God to exchange the dime store stuff for the genuine article, God's love and grace. There we will receive the indescribable gift of God's love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and walk in holiness.

On this exciting faith journey we will have joy in our suffering or hard times, which leads us to the reality of having more than we had ever hoped for. The price Jesus paid has given those who believe an inexhaustible supply of his love where we can stand in the hope and glory of his grace.



Exploring Your Backyard

AUE Multicultural Ministry Team

How can we best engage with our very multicultural communities?

One way is to provide an outing in which people from diverse backgrounds can get together to enjoy places of interest in our local area.

Many people new to Australia have difficulty making connections that lead to friendships. Our Salvation Army expressions can help to facilitate these connections and make people new to the area feel at home.

Objectives

- To create meaningful relationships with community members that create opportunities to share God's love and messages of hope, thereby enabling faith pathways.
- To facilitate a sense of belonging in Australia for migrants and newly arrived community members through meaningful relationships.
- To address social isolation amongst newly arrived populations, especially those who are seeking asylum or from refugee backgrounds.
- To provide a friendly and safe environment for new community members to learn Australian culture and English skills for daily life, which is essential for successful settlement and community cohesion.

Implementation

- Take a small group of new community members in your area on an outing. Please take into account gender and culturally appropriate ways when planning.
- Invite people from the community who you are not regularly engaged with. Follow up the outing by seeking out additional connection opportunities.

Costs

Costs are variable depending on locations, transportation arrangements and catering requirements. For example, an outing to the beach may require only petrol costs, while a trip to an amusement park would need to include ticket costs.

Checklist

- Identify a culturally diverse group. The Multicultural Ministries team can assist.
- Choose a date and location. (See the ideas list below.)
- Arrange transport. The Multicultural Ministries team has a corps bus list available.
- Organise any additional activities for the day. For example, if going to the beach you might want to arrange a beach safety presentation.
- Send out invitations and attendance forms
- Collect the RSVP's
- Organise catering if required.

The following is a list of ideas for outings in the Sydney area. You probably have opportunities similar to some of these in your local area.

Saturday sports event	Barbecue in Bicentennial Park (DFO)
Zoo	Botanical Gardens / Parks
Manly/beaches/beach safety	Royal National Park / Wollongong / South Coast
Museum of Contemporary Art / galleries / museums	Maritime Museum
Bondi to Coogee walk / Spit to Manly walk	Government House
Amusement Park	Local Markets
Blue Mountains	Sculptures by the Sea
National Parks / Centennial parklands	Sydney Observatory
Aboriginal Sites	North Head Lookout / Manly
Cockatoo Island	Camp Cover / Jenolan Caves
	Hunter Valley



Flavours Of The World

AUE Multicultural Ministry Team

Description

Flavours of the World is a medium to connect local community members from diverse cultural backgrounds to Salvation Army corps and expressions through provision of multicultural food.

Goals

Flavours of the World aims to connect people from diverse backgrounds with The Salvation Army for mission purposes, while at the same time enhancing community inclusion and cohesion in Australia by facilitating rich cultural expressions through food.

Objectives

Salvation Army Mission

- ▶ To provide local TSA expressions with opportunities to meet community members from diverse background and form connections. From these connections, TSA will be able to share God's love and the message of hope.
- ▶ To provide TSA officers, Salvationists and staff with diverse multicultural experience and knowledge required to minister to people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This will break down cultural barriers and hence, further enhance ministry impact and outreach.

Community inclusion and cohesion

- ▶ To facilitate community members from diverse backgrounds to share their culture through traditional dishes. This will enable them to feel a sense of belonging in Australian community while maintaining their cultural identity.
- ▶ To encourage community members from non-English speaking background to converse in English. This will increase their confidence and proficiency in the English language, which is essential for successful community inclusion and cohesion.

Implementation

- A group of TSA conversation class participants will prepare and explain the traditional dish at a TSA corps. This may be arranged with the Multicultural Ministry team.
- Invite people from the corps and/or other TSA expressions and community.
- The Multicultural Ministry Team will organise an initial cultural meal at the corps to model and pilot the concept. The Team will be available to train and equip corps / women's ministry members on cross-cultural engagement for this initiative.
- As the corps or women's ministry takes ownership of the initiative, The Multicultural Ministry Team will provide support and guidance.

Costs

Approximately \$200 for each occasion. The Multicultural Ministry Team will fund an initial cultural meal. On continuation, the funds will need to be budgeted for by the corps.

Section Four



A Hill Worth Dying On

Louise Mathieson

Keep in mind that we who belong to Jesus, the Anointed one, have already experienced crucifixion. For everything connected with our self-life was put to death on the cross and crucified with Messiah.

GALATIANS 5:24 [TPT]

Your quest is for justice, Godliness, faithfulness, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11 [VOICE]

Décor

- Décor props like boxing gloves or weights could be used. Armour props referencing EPHESIANS 6 are also relatable.
- If using a movie clip, décor can be connected with that (see next page).

Introduction/Discussion

- ▶ *What would you be prepared to do for \$1,000,000? Bungee jump? Shave your head?*

Activities and Resources

- **Jenga or Pick Up Sticks** - games that offer a physical demonstration of the impact of small actions, patience and focus.
- **Movie scenes** related to persistence and dedication e.g. Karate Kid (wax on/off or jacket on/off scenes); Finding Nemo (just keep swimming).
- **Overcoming Obstacles TedEd clip**
ed.ted.com/lessons/there-s-no-dishonor-in-having-a-disability-steven-claunch
- **List of famous people who succeeded after lengthy failure and struggle - great for quotes and reference**
www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/OnFailingG

Devotional Outline

Key Idea

When we think of fighting battles, we often equate it with something large, dramatic, noble or extreme. Yet it is more often persisting with the small daily skirmishes where our war is actually fought and won. God may be calling us to die to self on some very ordinary and overlooked hills - and they can be as challenging as any mountain.

Key Scriptures

ROMANS 12:1-2 | GALATIANS 5:16-25

Key Challenge

What 'hills' have I overlooked where I need to die to self?

Full devotional outline is provided on USB.

Reflection

Be Intentional

(RIGHTNOW MEDIA)

www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/118318

Lord I Need You

(MATT MAHER | CCLI #5925687)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuvfMDhTyMA

I Am Yours/Take My Life

(MICHAEL NEALE | CCLI #4940766) ALSO ON IWORSHIP AT HOME VOL. 11)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqkW4XINwms

Other Suggested Songs

- *My life must be Christ's broken bread* (SASB 610)
- *Oh Jesus I have promised* (SASB 613)
- *I would be true* (SASB 648)
- *For This I Have Jesus* (SASB 700)
- *I Surrender All* (SASB 636)

Resources: Sample Images

See **USB** for a selection of images that can be used for song backgrounds, reflection or prayer focus or incorporated into flyers or handouts. All images have been collated from www.freelyphoto.com or www.unsplash.com and can be used without restriction under Creative Commons License 0.

The Kitchen

Bryce Davies

RUTH 2:2-7 NIV: RUTH MEETS BOAZ IN THE GRAIN FIELD

¹ Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.

² And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor."

Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter."³ So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

⁴ Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The Lord be with you!"

"The Lord bless you!" they answered.

⁵ Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"

⁶ The overseer replied, "She is the Moabite who came back from

Moab with Naomi. 7 She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

This extract from the story of Ruth demonstrates an interesting element of the ancient 'welfare system' in place in those days. The poor were given an opportunity to find food, but they had to work for it. It was not presented to them on a plate.

In many Salvation Army centres, there are generous and devoted women who love to serve and be hospitable. This is a lovely gift and a great source of blessing and comfort to many hungry folks in our fellowships and in our communities. I have been on the receiving end of many such efforts and have the waist line to prove it! The fellowship in a kitchen, working to a common goal, is special and often forges great friendships and shared experiences. The prevalence of cooking shows on TV is evidence of this.

There is an opportunity here to develop a ministry for newcomers in a creative and special way. Let's open our kitchens up to anyone and be careful to actively welcome and invite new people to serve in this way. Let's step aside and let others take charge, plan and be highly involved. Not assisting the main leaders on the side, but central and celebrated in the middle.

Some people say that people working in a kitchen need to adhere to OH&S standards and that someone needs to be in charge of cleaning, etc. I agree, and let's adhere to these requirements in consistent and helpful ways, always looking to include people if we possibly can, rather than finding ways to exclude them. Not many Home League ladies have actually done a formal food handling course, so let's not make waves for a newcomer unless we have the same standards for everyone. Many people have the capacity and desire to cook, serve and experience the blessing and camaraderie of a kitchen, if they were only given a chance. Maybe there is a master chef in our midst and we just never really gave them a chance to shine.

If there is a community meal or a fellowship lunch at your place coming up, let the mature Christians in the corps step aside and find a way to encourage someone new to cook, serve and be celebrated. Perhaps with this strategy we could increase our capacity and have community meals more regularly and bless even more people. Maybe there would be menu changes that reflect our multicultural society and modern cuisine. I personally hope we keep some of the classics like a nice sponge and scones, but I quite like falafels and traditional Syrian Shawarma also!

If possible, have a special multi-cultural lunch together. Ask each person to bring a dish to share, something that they learned to cook in their homeland.

Continue on to the next page...



For discussion

- ▶ *Imagine that you have arrived in a new country and haven't met many people there yet. What would you like the people there to do to help you feel at home?*
- ▶ *When you see people working together in a kitchen, how do you see them interacting? Are they having fun, or bossing each other around, or ?*
- ▶ *How many new women have started attending your corps or women's group in the last year? Have they been offered ways to minister to the rest of the church?*
- ▶ *What is your favourite food that originated in another country?*
- ▶ *Are there people at your corps or centre who have recently arrived from another country? If so, how are they currently allowed to serve there?*
- ▶ *How many people currently do the cooking and serving at your corps or centre? How do you think they would feel about handing over these jobs to newcomers, at least half of the time?*
- ▶ *Who do you think would be the best person or people to help newcomers get to know the kitchen?*
- ▶ *What can you, as a group of women, do in the next month to help welcome newcomers into the life of your church?*

Courageous

Robyn Black

Introduction

To truly *live, love and fight* takes great courage. Today we will hear stories about people who faced difficulty, but courageously kept going against the odds. More importantly, we will hear of our great God, who is always with us, helping us to face life with courage and strength.

Prayer

Courage

Definition of Courage

en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/courage

The ability to do something that frightens one; bravery.

‘She called on all her courage to face the ordeal.’

Strength in the face of pain or grief.

He fought his illness with great courage.’

Common Phrases using the word ‘courage’

Have the courage of one’s convictions

Act on one’s beliefs despite danger or disapproval.

‘Lead your own life and have the courage of your convictions.’

Pluck up (or take) courage

Make an effort to do something that frightens one.

'I plucked up the courage to go out by myself.'

Take one's courage in both hands

Nerve oneself to do something that frightens one.

'Taking her courage in both hands, she knocked on the door.'

Where it comes from ... Middle English - denoting the heart, as the seat of feelings, from Latin 'cor' meaning heart.

Song

Courage Brother Do Not Stumble,

NEW SONG BOOK NO. 488 (TUNE 361, BLAEWERN OR TUNE 370, HYFRODOL)

Poem

Climb 'Til Your Dream Comes True, Helen Steiner Rice,

www.poemhunter.com/poem/climb-til-your-dream-comes-true/

Two Short stories of Courage - Desmond Doss and Irena Sendler

mentalfloss.com/article/56157/11-incredible-acts-courage

Bible Verse

NIV Bible verses about **being** courageous to read out - or take home to ponder.

DEUTERONOMY 31:6

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

DEUTERONOMY 31:7

Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance.

DEUTERONOMY 31:23

The Lord gave this command to Joshua son of Nun: "Be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them on oath, and I myself will be with you."

JOSHUA 1:6

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

JOSHUA 1:7

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

JOSHUA 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

JOSHUA 1:18

Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey it, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!”

JOSHUA 10:25

Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the Lord will do to all the enemies you are going to fight.”

1 CHRONICLES 22:13

Then you will have success if you are careful to observe the decrees and laws that the Lord gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged.

1 CHRONICLES 28:20

David also said to Solomon his son, “Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished.

2 CHRONICLES 32:7

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.

Your stories of everyday courage

- ▶ Tell us about your neighbours, friends, family, that have struggled and shown great courage in life?

Scripture | *Joshua 1:1-9*

Joshua ... a quick summary

Following Moses’ death, Joshua is appointed by God to lead the children of God into the Promised Land. God gave Joshua three promises - that he would possess the land of Canaan; that no-one would be able to stand against Joshua; and that God would never leave him or forsake him (JOSHUA 1:2-6).

God knew the challenges that Joshua would have to face. And so God prepares Joshua for his God-given purpose with this verse in JOSHUA CHAPTER 1.

God says to Joshua, “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you



may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” (JOSHUA 1:7-9).

God commands Joshua to be strong and courageous, because God knows that Joshua will need every ounce of courage to face overwhelming situations and perplexing problems.

Maybe you and I aren't leading people into the Promised Land, but we often face difficult and overwhelming situations in life. God didn't just say to Joshua 'don't be afraid'... he gave him some practical tips to live life with courage.

1. Be careful to obey all the law - that is, do what God asks you to do. Live life loving God and others.
2. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night - keep reading your Bible! Without even realizing it, God will transform you as you keep reading His Word. It gives hope and life, and brings light into dark situations.
3. Remind yourself every day that “the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” You are never alone, you always have the ultimate source of wisdom on hand, you are loved beyond measure.

So, don't be afraid and don't be discouraged. God is always with you and will help you to be stronger and more courageous than you could ever imagine.

Song

The Power of Your Love

NEW SONG BOOK NO. 601 (TUNE 868)

'Find a Word'

Find each word of JOSHUA 1:6 hidden in the letters.

www.pinterest.com.au/pin/64457838388818329/?lp=true

Song

God will make a Way

NEW SONG BOOK NO. 492 (TUNE 639)



Prayer for Courage

Heavenly Father, sometimes the difficulties of life seem to sneak up on us, and at times the struggles overwhelm us.

Sometimes, we're unsure of what to do. Our worries for people we love, our concerns for our health, decisions about our future, sometimes leave us feeling uncertain of which way to turn. Yet the one thing we know is that giving up is not an option. Give us courage and strength to face the future with You, and to trust You to walk with us every step of the way- for we know that the Bible tells us that You are with us every moment of the day.

Give us the courage to take our eyes off the worries of life and to unreservedly anchor our faith in You. And God from this day forward, as we step into an unknown future, may we have the courage to put our hand into Your hand, and not to fear, knowing that You will never leave us or forsake us. Thank You in Jesus' name, Amen.



The War Against Waste

Rowena Smith

Introduction

Our Creator God has given us a truly amazing planet to live in. We show Him honour by caring for the world He has created. We live in it with others, we share it with others. Showing care for the earth also demonstrates our care and respect for everyone who shares it with us. But all around us there is evidence that the practice of care and respect is overlooked and disregarded. As we live and love in this beautiful world God has created for us, we also need to be active in a fight ... a fight to preserve it ... a fight to change the damaging practices that have come with our modern lifestyle.

Note: Some of the material in this outline was used in a meeting I presented as I visited several corps in South East Queensland in 2018 using the theme, “God of Wonders.” Additional material, ideas and resource suggestions have been added for you to select from.

This meeting could be held at any time of the year or you might like to use it at the time of one of these significant dates:

- Clean Up Australia Day - March 3rd
- World Earth Day - April 22nd (celebrated in 193 countries)
- World Environment Day - June 5th
- World Oceans Day - June 8th

Décor

Display a large world globe. Use soft blue fabric around the base of the globe to represent the ocean. Place pieces of plastic rubbish amongst the folds of the fabric. If you have a small group, you could spread lengths of the fabric on the floor and make the display on a larger scale for greater impact. The group could be seated in a semi-circle around the display with a view of the screen for the PowerPoint presentation. Display leafy indoor plants of various sizes to create a green space.

Another idea

See **USB** for a photo of a hand sculpture holding a small globe containing a plant. Perhaps you could create something similar using white gloves with stuffing and joined together to form cupped hands. The small globe could be purchased from a bargain store. Cut off the top. Fill with stones. Insert a small live plant cutting.

Display the following items on a table (see photo on **USB**):

- A sustainable shopping bag
- Sustainable KeepCups
- A sustainable drink bottle
- A basket of soft plastic waste e.g. frozen pea packets, confectionery packets, plastic bread bags, etc. (Refer to the slide on the PowerPoint for what is acceptable in the Soft Plastics Bins at Coles and Woolworths)
- Sustainable bamboo toothbrush*
- Sustainable produce bags*
- Sustainable bamboo cutlery*
- Metal or bamboo drinking straw* or paper straw
- Bees wax wraps*

*These sustainable products can be purchased from eco-friendly stores. They will be spoken about later and it would be good to have the actual products on display as well as the photos seen in the PowerPoint presentation provided on the **USB**.

If you are near Brisbane in Queensland, you are welcome to borrow the This Is My Father's World banner, as seen on the **USB**, from DHQ. Contact the Salvos Women Department.

Song suggestions

- *This is my Father's World*
- *All creatures of our God and King*
- *Joyful, joyful we adore thee*
- *O worship the King*
- *All things bright and beautiful*
- *For the beauty of the earth*
- *Morning has broken*
- *O mighty God!*
When I thy works consider
- *How great thou art*
- *How great is our God*
CHRIS TOMLIN
- *Indescribable*
CHRIS TOMLIN
- *Build your Kingdom here*
REND COLLECTIVE

Scripture | *Psalm 104*

Select specific verses. Prepare a responsive reading on a PowerPoint presentation with images relating to the verses. You may have a keen photographer in your corps who could share some images for this presentation.

Quotes

Visit the link below for 23 of the greatest environmental quotes. Use pictures of nature as background for the text on a PowerPoint presentation.

earth911.com/inspire/earth-day-23-quotes/

Alternatively see **USB** for a PowerPoint presentation of 18 of these quotes with photos by Major Steve Dorman. (Used with permission)

Give the group an opportunity for some reflection time to read the quotes as some recorded instrumental music is played.

Plastic attack

This segment uses three short video clips to show how plastic is impacting our oceans. The scripted narration (in italics) will help connect the clips. You will need to save the clips into your PowerPoint presentation or have the links ready to open as required.

David Attenborough has produced an incredible series of documentaries in recent times called The Blue Planet 2. Let's take a look at this next video.

(Blue Plastic II Plastic Pollution Awareness 2018) 2.56mins

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLx4fVsYdTI

The oceans are indeed full of amazing wonders ... and if we did not have the likes of David Attenborough we would miss out on knowing about these wonderful creatures. But as we saw in the clip we have just viewed, these creatures are sharing their home with our rubbish. You would have noticed on that video clip, written comments sent in by viewers. One wrote: "Blue Planet 2 is a call to arms. Somebody do something about the state we are leaving our planet." A call to arms? ... That sounds like a fight. A fight to save something that is under attack. Here is another quite confronting video that will reveal the enormity of the issue. (Plastics in Every Part of the Ocean) 3.45mins.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=N91X-EqhQGw

And now I would like to show you the trailer for a movie called The Plastic Ocean, directed by an Australian journalist Craig Leeson. It took four years to make and was filmed in 20 locations around the world ...

and David Attenborough has said this movie is “the most important film of our time.” (The Plastic Ocean Trailer) 2.08mins

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zrn4-FfbXw

Craig Leeson wanted to change the world’s attitude towards plastic within a generation. He was asked by one interviewer, “Is it possible?” Craig responded that after he had finished making the movie he was very depressed by what he had seen. It wasn’t until the film started to be screened that he realised it was absolutely possible for attitudes to be changed. With the film being No 1 on iTunes, and the reaction from politicians to children to plastic producers, it indicates that people’s eyes are being opened and people are all asking, “What can we do to change this?”

There are two options for the next section.

1. Show a 5 minute video clip of school girl Mollie Steer delivering her inspiring talk about how the movie impacted her into action.
E.g. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rr5Py1r9xjw

OR

2. Give a short summary of her response to the movie similar to the one below. (It would be best if you watched the video clip yourself to prepare your summary)

Well ... a 9 year old girl called Molly Steer was one of the children who viewed the movie. She is quite an inspirational little girl who is having a big impact in her community. She lives in Cairns. After seeing the movie she was wondering, “What can I do to help make a difference?” (At this point you can show the clip or continue with the summary.) She decided to start the Straw No More campaign to ban all plastic straws from her school canteen. She got all the teachers to support her and the canteen stopped using straws. Then more schools in Cairns got on board ... and now Molly’s message is spreading to other schools and places around the country and even overseas.

How can we join the fight?

In this segment share the three quotes below on PowerPoint, then lead into three ways we can fight to make a difference for our environment. (see USB)

Quote 1.

Small changes can make a big difference.

Quote 2.

Small acts when multiplied by millions of people can transform the world.

Quote 3.

I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that, then I realised, "I am somebody."

Remember the comment by the viewer of Blue Planet 2 who wrote, "Somebody do something." Everyone can do "something."

See **USB** for the PowerPoint for this segment - **3 Small Changes We Can Make**. Use the script provided on the **USB** to narrate through the slides.

Devotions

This link may provide some thoughts to share in your devotional time.
20 Reasons why Christians Should Care for the Environment
gavinortlund.com/2008/03/08/20-reasons-why-christians-should-care-for-the-environment/

Here is another link for you to explore that may provide you with something to share in your devotional segment.

www.webofcreation.org/Worship/devotions/CreationCare.pdf

Short Devotional Thoughts

These suggestions from Our Daily Bread could be used throughout your program, interspersed between the other segments.

This link is about verbal pollution and the problem of criticism.
odb.org/2010/04/08/clean-up-the-environment-2/

This link is entitled Creation Care. It speaks about how we honour the Creator by caring for what he created. odb.org/2017/10/15/creation-care/

This link talks about Stewardship of the Earth.
odb.org/2013/03/26/our-fathers-world/

Other Ideas

Do a google search and give some history on *Clean Up Australia Day*

Google *War On Waste*. There are several videos you can choose to show from the ABC series.

Invite a representative from the Council or from an Environmental Group to bring an update on local developments.

Check out Julia Schafer's blog, *Farewell My Manicure*.

Julia is part of Salvation Army fellowship at the Gold Coast. Her blog presents ideas and tips about living more sustainably.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNmS5s0IT64&feature=autoshare

Check out this link to watch a short video which introduces a free and easy program that your group could participate in. Terracycle and Colgate are partnering together to collect and recycle oral care items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes and floss containers, which are recycled into other products, thus reducing waste.

ksenvironmental.com.au/recycling-toothbrushes-and-tootpaste-tubes/

Resources:

See USB for the War Cry article entitled *Going Green for God*. Volume 136, issue 36 (16 September 2017) Used with permission.

Partnering With God - Being a Missional Salvationist by Lynnette Edge and Gregory Morgan. See Chapter 12 'Being Stewards' - the Environment pp 151-154

Check this website which has numerous resources. earthministry.org/

Check out the JustSalvos website for some helpful resources.

www.sarmy.org.au/Social/JustSalvos/

On the menu click onto the tab Issues/ Environmental Sustainability

There are numerous resources under the topic World Earth Day including:

- The Salvation Army's full positional statement about the environment
- Sermon outline by Catherine Spiller, which may have some helpful material for a devotional
- Congregational prayers on PowerPoint slides
- 3 short 1 minute videos on Creation Care
- Suggestions for caring for the environment PDF

Under the topic World Environment Day there is a reflection also by Catherine Spiller.

www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/JustSalvos/Issues/Environmental-Sustainability/World-Environment-Day-/

Why Should Christians Care for the Environment - 5 MINUTE VIDEO

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vb_Eslss1W4



The Battle

Yolande Soper

Fight—Spiritually

This devotion needs to be accompanied by a time of praise suitable for your setting.

PowerPoint of boxers in rings, or soldiers fighting

What does the word fight conjure up to you?

For some people it might mean to have a disagreement with someone, for another it might mean a boxer, to another an advocate for people, or even a wrestler in a ring.

Sometimes the most successful battles are not ones fought in the ring or on the field or in the court room but on our knees and with our hands lifted up in praise to God.

There is an amazing story of Moses in EXODUS 17:11. It is a story of how Moses helped the Israelites win the fight. Moses tells Joshua to go out and fight and as he does, Moses will hold his hands up to God. If you look at this story you will see that as Moses let his arms drop they began to lose the battle, but when he got the strength back and raised his arms again, they began to take back ground and start to win again. As Moses ceased, God's divine power ceased. As Moses grew weary and his hand got heavy they took a stone to help prop him up, and Aaron and Hur held his arms up until sunset to secure victory in the battle.

This is a great story - but it is so vital to live this in our lives today. You see every time we are facing a battle or in a fight, we begin to look within and down, and in our humanness the last thing we want to do is to lift our hands high to God and praise his name. But that is the one thing that can ensure victory in the battle, because we take our eyes off what we are fighting and look to the only one who can bring the victory. As we worship God with our hands and hearts lifted up to him, the atmosphere changes and it dismantles oppression. It shows our dependence on our heavenly Father and it shows our faith.

Any military leader will tell you that to be prepared and ready for the battle is crucial for victory. We also must prepare by daily lifting up our hands and praising God, even when things seem hard. Throughout the history of the church you will see that revival started all because two or three people made prayer and praise a priority in their lives.

Your Salvo setting - whether it be social or church or youth - needs for you to start winning the fight against the enemy, to start taking ground for God, to start being victorious. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour and ask for forgiveness from sins, He gives us a great gift ... the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to be effective in the battle, and as we lift our hands high and sing praises to God it changes our situation, and we begin to fight with divine power.

For discussion or personal reflection

- ▶ *What are the battles you're fighting now?*
- ▶ *How have you tried to fight them so far? (E.g. talked to someone about them, helped someone, made arrangements, tried to budget my money better, ignored the person giving me a hard time)*
- ▶ *Have you prayed about the situation?*
- ▶ *If so, was your prayer just a cry for help, or did you include praise to God for who He is?*

Take some time now to silently praise God and invite Him to be in charge of your situation.

Song suggestions

Sing songs of praise appropriate to your setting.

More traditional hymns:

Praise my soul the King of heaven

Hosanna

Jesus, name above all names

More recent songs of praise

Blessed be your name

Praise the name (HILLSONG)

With hands held high

I lift my hands (CHRIS TOMLIN)

‘Live, Love Fight’

Bible Study

By Social Justice Department AUE

The Social Justice Department AUE has created a four-part bible study looking at how we can *live, love, and fight* for God’s will to be done, and to see his Kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven. Based upon the social justice principles of ‘Including the Excluded’, ‘Challenging Harmful Cultural Practices’, ‘Confronting the Powerful’, and ‘Advocating for the Oppressed’, each study focuses upon an amazing Salvo Woman and the contribution she has made to the work of The Salvation Army, and to the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

We hope this study will foster meaningful discussion and will inspire women to live, love, and fight to see our communities changed and God’s Kingdom come.



Live, Love, Fight Bible Study 1: **Including The Excluded**

Scripture | *Matthew 8:1-3, John 20:11-18 and Luke 18:15-17 (NIV)*

Reflection

When we look at Jesus' life, we see someone completely committed to bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. As Christians, followers of Jesus, we have decided to follow or imitate Jesus' example. Thus, God is calling us to join Him in working to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. Our world can be an unkind place. Social systems exclude many from enjoying everyday activities that most of us take for granted. As Christians we are called to live, love, and fight alongside those who are excluded, following the example of Jesus. Throughout the Gospels we see numerous examples of Jesus doing just that - engaging with those who were deemed 'unclean' such as lepers, engaging with those forced to the margins of society such as women, and engaging with those who were never really thought of as important in their own right, such as children. If we are truly following Jesus, then our lives must be engaged with those who are excluded.

Katharine Dale, a Sydney Salvationist, came to faith in Jesus as a young woman and soon after felt that God was calling her to use her skills as an Occupational Therapist in some way that served the Kingdom of God. Following God's calling on her life, Katharine willingly gave up a successful career here in Australia, swapping comfort for cold showers, long days, and distance from family and friends. Her obedience to this call would see her spend 13 years in Ghana at various Salvation Army health institutions, working with those who society excluded - disabled kids and their families. People with disabilities were often seen as 'cursed', which would lead to great amounts of shame and exclusion for the whole family. Katharine and her team worked hard to break down this societal barrier for these families, loving



them and engaging with them, just as Jesus did with lepers, women, and children.

Katharine recently returned to Australia and now works for the Multicultural Ministries Department, continuing to dedicate her life to including the excluded.

While Jesus was on earth He experienced significant exclusion and rejection himself. The Pharisees and teachers of the law were often plotting to catch Him out; people in His own home town didn't believe He was truly the Messiah and took offense (MATT 13:54-58 NIV); people even agreed to have Him crucified. Yet even though He was excluded, Jesus set very clear examples for us in how he treated others who were excluded. As people who love Jesus, we want to include and love people as He did, and see them in the same way He did.

Discussion

- ▶ *Who are the people excluded from your local community or from your Corps/church?*
- ▶ *God often used the excluded to teach us a Kingdom lesson - what might God be teaching you when you consider those who are excluded?*
- ▶ *Reflect upon other examples in Scripture where God provides for people who had been excluded. Which one resonates with you the most, and why?*
- ▶ *Katharine and her team were able to help change attitudes towards those who were excluded. When thinking about your own community or Corps, how can you help overcome those things which lead to people being excluded?*
- ▶ *In MATTHEW 8:1-3, Jesus is very intentional in his actions towards those who are being excluded. "Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man." In the same way Katharine was intentional in her actions. How can you be intentional this week in including those who are excluded - how will you live, love, and fight alongside them?*

Prayer

Creator God, we are all your people - created in your image. We pray today for our world, our community, ourselves and for all that divides us to be removed through the love you show us. We pray that every man, woman, and child will know that they are valuable in your sight, and that we may at all times be carriers of that message. May we be a welcoming community with you at the centre, open for all to come and find a place of healing, comfort, and refuge. We pray this in the name of the One who was excluded - who comes to bring inclusion - Jesus. Amen.



Live, Love, Fight Bible Study 2: **Challenging Harmful Cultural Practices**

Scripture | *John 4: 3-30, 39-42 (NIV)*

Reflection

When we look at Jesus' life, we see someone completely committed to bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. As Christians, followers of Jesus, we have decided to follow or imitate Jesus' example. Thus, God is calling us to join Him in working to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. There are certain things we hear again and again when talking about God's Kingdom here on earth. The phrase 'love your neighbour as yourself' is one of them. It's both impressed on us as an age old command, and bandied around as the trite cliché of 'The Golden Rule'. However, its worth is only truly known when we have experienced it. This love is both beautiful and transformative when it is demonstrated. It's interesting to consider how the disciples must have felt when they stumbled upon their leader sitting at Jacob's well with a Samaritan - let alone when he chose to stay a few days and live amongst a people group they had been taught to hate. They were surprised to find him talking with a woman - but they kept their mouths shut. They had a lot to learn from Jesus' approach, and so do we. Perhaps the greatest rebuke is not so much in what we do - but in what we fail to do. Rather than simply moving on, Jesus takes the time to cross the cultural barriers, and to sit down and engage with the woman's deepest need. In that moment, an everyday activity became an encounter with the profound. From that moment of connection - a village came to know the Messiah.

An example of someone who challenged harmful cultural practices was General Eva Burrows. General Burrows was the second Australian, the second woman, and the youngest person to be elected as General of The Salvation Army. Living in Australia, the United Kingdom, Africa and Sri Lanka, she tirelessly served in



pastoral, missionary, training and administrative roles within The Salvation Army before becoming General (world leader) in 1986. She was a strong woman, taking a firm stance against apartheid in South Africa and ensuring the return of The Salvation Army to communist countries. Amid all of these achievements, it was the way she loved that led to her being known as ‘the people’s general’. When asked about her legacy, General Burrows said, “I think I would like them to think of me not as just an important leader of The Salvation Army but someone who touched their lives.” Eva is known for her memory of names, the way she looked people straight in the eye when she engaged with them, and her ability to truly know and communicate with people from all ages and backgrounds. It is this kind of engagement with people that breathes the life of Jesus into the contexts where we *live, love and fight*.

Discussion

- ▶ *What cultural practices was Jesus challenging by speaking to this woman? Why do you think Jesus chose to have a conversation with this woman?*
- ▶ *Jesus was fully aware of the woman’s past, and the way she had been living. What was Jesus’ greatest concern in this conversation?*
- ▶ *Why was the woman’s testimony, and Jesus’ visit, so powerful to the village?*
- ▶ *Think of social barriers in your context. Do you honestly engage with people different to yourself? How can you engage in a more meaningful way?*
- ▶ *Consider General Eva Burrows, or someone you know personally, who makes you feel valued. What qualities did/do they display that are helpful in making people feel valued?*

Prayer

Dear Father, thank you for seeing us and loving us, just as we are. Where we are blind to our prejudices - help us see. Where we settle for the surface - help us delve deeply into your spring of life. Help us to truly listen to those around us, and to follow your voice. Help us to fight when others give up on loving, and give us courage to challenge the expectations of those around us. Help us to daily extend grace, as you have extended grace to us. Make known to us the people you want us to engage with today, and teach us your ways. Amen.



Live, Love, Fight Bible Study 3: **Confronting The Powerful**

Scripture | *Mark 12:13-17 and Matthew 20:20-28 (NIV)*

Reflection

When we look at Jesus' life, we see someone completely committed to bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. As Christians, followers of Jesus, we have decided to follow or imitate Jesus' example. Thus, God is calling us to join Him in working to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. Working for God's Kingdom can be difficult, particularly if you live in a country where the political situation is not friendly towards our faith, or even outright hostile towards God's people. However Scripture's call to defend the needy and oppressed is never dependent upon such political safety, and in fact Jesus himself lived amongst political dangers and turmoil. Often Jesus needed to turn the political thought on its head to challenge injustices where they occurred, pointing towards a kingdom structure where true power is found in humbly serving one's neighbour. We are people of two Kingdoms. We live on earth, but through Jesus, we have citizenship in heaven (PHIL 3:20). As citizens of God's Kingdom, how much more do we want to see it, or even glimpses of it, as a reality on earth.

Lt Col. Saratha Perieswami also lived, loved and fought for God's Kingdom amongst political danger and turmoil. She took over much of The Salvation Army's leadership in Myanmar in 1971, becoming national leader in 1985, and working right through until 1994. This was after Myanmar (then Burma) had closed its borders to all foreign employees in 1965, which had a significant impact on The Army's ability to work there.

Throughout Lt Col. Perieswami's leadership, Myanmar was governed by military rule and saw much political and social unrest. This period was a time of great



turmoil and at times violence in Myanmar, but through it all, Lt Col. Perieswami provided a steady hand in dealing with the political powers, and a God-filled heart to all she came into contact with. Today Myanmar is still beset by political unrest, but The Salvation Army is still present, still standing up for the oppressed and needy, still serving in the name of Jesus, and undoubtedly the current work of The Salvation Army in Myanmar is, in part, a result of Lt Col. Perieswami's faithful service despite the dangers she faced. The Salvation Army in Myanmar has recently celebrated 100 years of service.

Discussion

- ▶ *The Pharisees and Herodians tried to trick Jesus by creating a conflict between the State and God. How does Jesus' response help us understand our place as people of two Kingdoms - one of this world and God's?*
- ▶ *Jesus' response to James and John challenges us about how the world thinks about power and it is revolutionary! 'Greatness' - power, success, fame - is found in our serving! In what ways do you seek 'greatness'? Is it in serving?*
- ▶ *Think of some circumstances where, in your ministry, you might be called upon to confront the powerful. What resources come to mind that can help you make the right decisions (e.g. scripture)?*
- ▶ *The example of Lt Col. Perieswami is one of courage and determination. Can you think of other women who also stood up for their convictions and for those under their care in the face of danger?*
- ▶ *Think of countries where the political structures may make it hard for God's justice to be done. Write them down and pray for them - the leaders, the people, and those within these countries trying to serve in Jesus' name. (Leaders - it may be helpful to have The Salvation Army's Yearbook on hand to help you pray for The Salvation Army's work in those countries. This is available from Salvationist Supplies).*

Prayer

For Courage to do Justice

"O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others. Open my ears that I may hear their cries. Open my heart so that they need not be without succour. Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee. Amen" (ALAN PATON)



Live, Love, Fight Bible Study 4: **Advocating For The Oppressed**

Scripture | *Luke 14:12-14 and Matthew 25:31-46*

Reflection

When we look at Jesus' life, we see someone completely committed to bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. As Christians, followers of Jesus, we have decided to follow or imitate Jesus' example. Thus, it is our responsibility to join God where we are in working to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. One way to work towards bringing the Kingdom of God on earth is by speaking up for those who are not experiencing the fullness of life that God desires for them. This can be very challenging because it requires you to step out of your regular, comfortable space and live beyond self-interest. Advocacy is not just speaking up for others, but involves building relationships with people who are experiencing suffering, and finding out their needs from them rather than making assumptions. Advocacy is not about a quick fix but rather focusses on sustainable justice.

People face oppression of various forms, both in the past and still today. People can find themselves oppressed by things like slavery or human trafficking, financial burdens, sickness, mental illness, addiction, relationship problems, and many other things. Action should be a natural expression of our relationship with Jesus, and expressing practical love towards the vulnerable in every situation is one such example of this.

Lt Col. Alida Bosshardt is someone who devoted her whole life to advocating for the oppressed and living out LUKE 14:12-14 and MATTHEW 25:31-46. Lt Col. Bosshardt risked her life during World War II to protect and find homes for more than 75 Jewish children during the German invasion of Amsterdam. She travelled around 30 miles by train, bike and on foot with 70 children, collected food and was captured by



German forces, escaping two weeks later, all while keeping the children safe and hidden from the German soldiers.

From 1948 Lt Col. Bosshardt continued her work in advocating for people who were suffering and vulnerable in her community through her work in Amsterdam's red light district. After advocating to The Salvation Army for permission to begin work here, for 30 years she cheerfully and faithfully helped female sex workers, orphans, people experiencing homelessness and those struggling with drug addictions. She worked hard to brighten their lives by visiting them, showing them love, meeting their needs, treating them as her friends, and telling them about Jesus.

There is still much to be done in advocating for the oppressed, but we can choose, like Lt Col. Bosshardt, to *live, love and fight* alongside people who are vulnerable in our community to help bring the Kingdom of God on earth.

Discussion

- ▶ *Who are the vulnerable or oppressed in your community today?*
- ▶ *What are some practical ways you can advocate for the oppressed through living, loving and fighting alongside them this week?*
- ▶ *Lt Col. Bosshardt's life is one example of someone living differently to care for people who were vulnerable and oppressed. Can you think of other women who live differently to care for people who are vulnerable or oppressed?*
- ▶ *Jesus said, "and the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'" How does this change the way you see, interact with and serve others?*
- ▶ *In LUKE 14:12-14, Jesus tells us not to invite our friends or those who can repay us to dinner, but to invite the poor, vulnerable and oppressed. How do you feel about this request? What could this look like in your life?*

Prayer

Lord, thank you for giving us the opportunity to join you in working for your kingdom. Thank you for people who devote their lives to advocating and caring for those who are vulnerable. God, equip us to engage in acts of wisdom, love and compassion that result in sustainable justice. Open our eyes to see injustice and move us to act for justice within our nation and beyond, prayerfully advocating for your kingdom on earth. Amen.

Section Five





Wedding morning

Fran Everitt

Preparation

A couple of weeks before this meeting, ask the women to bring in tips or recipes to put in a folder for the bride-to-be. Have the folder at the meeting so the women can put their contributions in it, and give it to the bride-to-be, on the day.

Welcome and prayer

(Mention sharing time)

Wedding Fun

Wedding Humour

Jokes, hints, etc. Google 'Hints for making a marriage work' - there are many sites on this subject.

Jokes

One man's definition of the term 'mixed emotions':

Watching your mother-in-law drive off a cliff in your new Cadillac.

Q: *How would you make a marriage work?*

A: *Tell your wife she looks pretty even if she looks like a truck.*

- Ricky, age ten.

Game 1

Get into groups of 4 or 5 and make a wedding dress: newspaper, sticky tape, pens -

prize for the best one!

Sharing

Their first kiss - the bride-to-be shares first! Or funny wedding stories.

Game 2

Memory game - pin household utensils and kitchen items onto an apron - remember as many as you can after looking at the apron for a few seconds. The bride-to-be receives the apron with all the items, and the winner gets a prize!

Wedding traditions

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wedding_customs_by_country has a great list of these traditions sorted by country. Australia isn't on there, but our traditions are mostly the same as the English ones.

The tradition of the bridal shower began when a seventeenth century Dutch maiden fell in love with a miller. Due to his generous tendencies of giving away flour to the poor, the miller lacked the sufficient financial means to marry. Local popularity for the couple prompted the community to 'shower' them with the household goods needed to start a life together so the maiden's father would consent to the marriage.

An ancient Polish custom was to sprinkle sugar on the bride's bouquet to keep her disposition sweet!

The tradition of throwing rice at weddings was born from the belief that rice was the symbol of fruitfulness and prosperity, and tossing it on the bride and groom would bestow fertility on them!

The wedding band's shape represents an unbroken promise of love and commitment. The circle has no beginning and no end; therefore the marriage has no end. In ancient times, the Egyptians and the Romans shared the belief that a vein from the fourth finger led directly to the heart. As such, it seemed a logical place for the placement of the wedding band. Science has since disproved that theory, but it is still romantic to think that our wedding rings are placed on a direct path to our hearts!

Message

The importance of the Five Love Languages (for all of us)

This message is based on Gary Chapman's book, *The 5 Love Languages: How to express heartfelt commitment to your mate*

Chapman suggests that we express love and receive love in different ways, and we each have a primary love language and a secondary love language. If my love language is different to yours, then what I see as loving, you might not, and vice versa.

We can often tell a person's love language by seeing how they express love, and also what they complain about. So if I complain that my husband hasn't put out



the garbage bin, it might be that my love language is acts of service - and if I don't receive those acts of service, I don't feel loved. If my husband complains that I'm always busy, his love language might be quality time spent with him.

The five love languages are:

Words of Affirmation

Verbal compliments, or words of appreciation, are powerful communicators of love

Quality Time

Giving people your undivided attention

Receiving Gifts

Gifts are visual symbols of love

Acts of Service

Seek to please people by doing special things for them

Physical Touch

People who are held and hugged develop a healthier emotional life

- ▶ *Which of these do you think are your main love languages?*

Movie clip

Excerpt from *Vicar of Dibley* - the wedding scene!

Announcements

Recipes and tips for the bride-to-be's folder, and paper for those who forgot!
Remind about this a couple of weeks before.

Devotions

About love or marriage

Song

Power of your love

Final Prayer



God's Love: Valentine's Day

Joycelyn McIver

Welcome and introduction

Now that Valentine's Day is coming up, we're thinking about love. Here are some thoughts from kids about love.

Love lesson: life's big lessons unscripted

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1czDASTpH9M

Activity: Toilet paper

Pass around a roll of toilet paper and ask each lady to take some.

For each sheet taken, share something about your experiences with love (remember to be sensitive with one another).

Sharing

- ▶ *How do you know someone loves you?*
- ▶ *How do you show love to others?*
- ▶ *What are some loving qualities that you have seen in others?*

**Activity: A heart collage**

Provide sheets of white paper, crepe paper hearts of different colours and glue. Ask each lady to make a collage from the hearts.

Devotion: Valentine's Day

(The following information can be found on many websites, but its origin is unknown.)

The history of Valentine's Day - and the story of its patron saint - is shrouded in mystery. We do know that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. But who was Saint Valentine, and how did he become associated with this ancient rite?

The Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl - possibly his jailor's daughter - who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine," an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic and - most importantly - romantic figure. By the Middle Ages, perhaps thanks to this reputation, Valentine would become one of the most popular saints in England and France.

Origins of Valentine's Day: a pagan festival in February

While some believe that Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial - which probably occurred around A. D. 270 - others claim that the Christian church may have decided to place St. Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in an effort to "Christianize" the pagan celebration of Lupercalia. Celebrated at the ides of February, or February 15, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman God of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

To begin the festival, members of the Luperci, an order of Roman priests, would gather at a sacred cave where the infants Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, were believed to have been cared for by a she-wolf or lupa. The priests would sacrifice a goat, for fertility, and a dog, for purification. They would then tear the goat's hide into strips, dip them into the sacrificial blood and take to the streets,



gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide. Far from being fearful, Roman women welcomed the touch of the hides because it was believed to make them more fertile in the coming year. Later in the day, according to legend, all the young women in the city would place their names in a big urn. The city's bachelors would each choose a name and become paired for the year with his chosen woman. These matches often ended in marriage.

Valentine's Day: a day of romance

Lupercalia survived the initial rise of Christianity but was outlawed - as it was deemed "un-Christian" - at the end of the 5th century, when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that the day became definitively associated with love. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, though written Valentines didn't begin to appear until after 1400. The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt. (The greeting is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London, England.) Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

Typical Valentine's Day greetings

In addition to the United States, Valentine's Day is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France and Australia. In Great Britain, Valentine's Day began to be popularly celebrated around the 17th century. By the middle of the 18th, it was common for friends and lovers of all social classes to exchange small tokens of affection or handwritten notes, and by 1900 printed cards began to replace written letters due to improvements in printing technology. Ready-made cards were an easy way for people to express their emotions in a time when direct expression of one's feelings was discouraged. Cheaper postage rates also contributed to an increase in the popularity of sending Valentine's Day greetings.

The best love: God's

When we think about love, we know that there is no love greater than the love of God. The Bible is full of His love, mercy, grace and faithfulness. Human love is seen as an imperfect reflection of the love that God has for us.

The story of Hosea in the Old Testament is a display of God's love for his people. It is an enactment (through the prophet) of the way in which God seeks us out and brings us back to himself.

Hosea is instructed by God to take as his wife a woman who is a harlot - a prostitute or a promiscuous woman. So he marries a woman called Gomer.

During this marriage, Gomer has three children. We don't know whether these children were Gomer's or whether they were the children of Gomer's other lovers.



Eventually Gomer leaves Hosea for another man. Then after some time - we don't know how long - God tells Hosea to buy Gomer back again.

He pays quite a large price for her - 15 pieces of silver and a heap of barley. Then before they come together intimately again, Gomer insists on a period of purification and testing. He says, in effect, we will wait for each other, for many days - and during that time you are not to go to any other man.

Of course this story isn't just about Gomer. It is about God's love for His people, who often act like an unfaithful wife. And God has paid the price to buy them back again by sending his son Jesus to die for us.

The apostle John speaks of love many times in his writings. He tells us that the source of true love is God, because he, in his very nature, is love. Again and again John rejoices in God's love and it is this love that has made us his children (1 JOHN 3:1)

God's love for us does not depend on us, on who we are or how we look, on our behaviour or our relationships. In an act of ultimate love for us God sent his only son to lay down his life for us (1 JOHN 3:16), and it is this sort of sacrificial love, which does not depend upon the loveliness of the person being loved, that God wants us to show to each other.

This kind of love isn't just an attitude; rather it is a way of living. It can be seen. Love towards others doesn't stop at words or script on a card, but it feeds the hungry, clothes the needy, provides hospitality and friendship.

- ▶ *What ways can you show love to others?*
- ▶ *What are your hopes for having love shown to you?*

Activity: Love in a balloon

Write a hope or prayer about love and put it in a balloon, blow it up and toss the balloons around. Ask each woman to pop one and read the hope or prayer they get.

Hand out scriptures about love. (see USB)



Meditation On Easter

Suzanne Winterburn

Décor

Wooden cross, dice, purple cloth, crown of thorns

Suggested songs

- *O Lamb of God* (SASB 448)
- *O Spotless Lamb* (SASB 450)
- *On a Hill Far Away* (SASB 124)
- *When I Survey* (SASB 136)

Poem

*There was a Friday when the sky turned dark
and the earth shook and trembled at a love so great
that it was crucified upon a hill.*

*The curtain hiding God from man was rent in two,
because he died for me and died for you.*



*We find it hard to comprehend a love as big as this –
to die in such a shameful way;
so painfully that all his bones were out of joint,
and stretched over them, the skin, drawn out and paper thin.
and on his nail-pierced hands and feet and in his side
the red, raw wounds of love.
My Lord, my Lord, all this for me
who longs to love you in return,
and fails abysmally.*

Elma Beezley

Symbols of Easter

The Cross

Represents the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and to the Christian is a symbol of His victory over death. People in many parts of the world eat hot cross buns, each bun having a cross of icing on its crust. The Greeks and Portuguese eat a specially baked round flat Easter loaf marked with a cross and decorated with Easter eggs.

Eggs

Represent the new life that begins in nature in spring, which in the Northern Hemisphere is around Easter time. The custom began in ancient times, but early Christians of Mesopotamia were the first to use coloured eggs for Easter. In some European countries people coloured eggs to represent the joy of the Resurrection.

Rabbits

Many children believe that an Easter bunny brings their Easter eggs. This belief probably comes from Germany. One legend says that a poor woman dyed some eggs during a famine, and hid them in a nest as an Easter gift for her children. Just as the children discovered the nest, a big rabbit leaped away. The story spread that the rabbit had brought the Easter eggs.

Activity

Easter bonnet parade; Easter egg painting; chocolate making

Vocal or CD

We are the reason (DAVID MEECE OR AVALON)

For object lesson preparation

An extremely effective crown of thorns can be made by cutting long pieces from the crown of thorns bush (sometimes known as the Saviour's Bush). Clip together or bind with fine wire. Make the shape of a circle. Cut some days before the meeting so that the pieces dry out and look more realistic.

Message

Place the crown of thorns in a prominent place. READ MATTHEW 27:27-31.

27 Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. 28 They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. 30 They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. 31 After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (NIV)

As you can see the thorns are very deep. They would certainly be painful if they pierced your skin. Yet Jesus wore something like this when his enemies mocked him and made him such a crown and dressed him up as a King. Little did they realise that He was king and still more in that He is the King of Kings! There is a song which tells us that 'The cross He bore and the crown that He wore were His own ...'

Jesus was sin God's perfect plan from the beginning of time, from His birth, to His death, thorough t His resurrection and will be until His coming the second time.

Good Friday was a dark, bleak, dismal day in the life of Jesus' followers. How could it bring them hope? Jesus was leaving His people. How sad the disciples were! A person they had grown to love, a friend with whom they had fellowship, the greatest of all physicians, the healer of all sickness. During His last hours of life Jesus was paying the penalty for our sins when He knew no sin. Even in His last moments He was thinking of others (LUKE 23:34, 43 AND JOHN 19:26-27). He truly is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords@! Jesus did not die in vain. He was a sacrificial Lamb and offering for our sins. We are God's children and because we live Jesus will live on forever through the triumphant message of the cross.

Conclusion

Emphasise the triumph of Easter – Jesus did wear the crown of thorns for us; He did die, but now He lives!

Thorns

Matthew 27:29 | 2 Cor. 1:27

A Crown of Thorns ... and I have to wear

His grace enables me these thorns to bear.

Lord help me love the thorn Thou gavest me,

My own small replica of Calvary.

The thorns pressed deeply on my Saviour's head;

My earthly thorn reveals His love instead.

For Christ, the thorns meant suffering and shame

And mine but makes me quick to plead His name

For needed strength and patience, daily grace

Till some day, thorn-free, I shall see His face

In untold beauty, clearer than the morn,

And know that life was richer for my thorn.

MYRA BURGESS



What Christmas Means To Me

Fay Foster

Preparation

- Ask all ladies to bring in something that really speaks of Christmas to them.
- Decorate the room with nativity scene(s).
- Have a selection of Christmas cards for the ladies to choose from.

Song

Joy to the World

Introduction

I think that for most if not all of us, Christmas is a really special occasion. For some people it can bring sad memories, usually because the season is so special that we miss the people we can no longer celebrate it with.

Today we will look at the people who were involved in the very first Christmas, when Jesus was born. We'll also talk about why Christmas is special to us today.

Song

Once in royal David's city

Discussion

Each lady to show what she has brought in, and say why it speaks of Christmas to her.

Message

Mary and Joseph

LUKE 2:1-7

We are told that Mary and Joseph had come from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to be registered – which is like being counted in the census. And that’s where they were when Mary went into labour and delivered her firstborn child, a son.

Jesus’ parents knew that their baby was a special one. In Luke Chapter 1 we read that Mary was told by an angel that her son was to be called Jesus, he would be great, he would be known as the Son of the Most High, God would give him the throne of his father David, and he would reign forever in a kingdom that would never end. (LUKE 1: 31-33)

Song

The first Noel

The shepherds and angels

LUKE 2:8-20

Unlike Mary and Joseph, the shepherds were not expecting the birth of a special baby that night. They were at their usual place of work, out in the fields with their sheep, when suddenly an angel of God is standing in front of them and the glory of God is shining all around them. We can only imagine what that must have been like –no wonder they were terrified!

Other than the parents of Jesus, the shepherds are the first to know that a Saviour and Messiah has been born! What’s more, they are told how to recognise him – he would be wrapped up and lying in a feeding trough.

Even after a whole chorus of angels had joined the first one to praise God, then gone back into heaven, the shepherds remembered this. They went immediately to Bethlehem – we don’t know how far they had to walk – and they knew they’d found the right baby when they saw him wrapped up and lying in the feeding-trough.

Imagine how Mary and Joseph must have felt when the shepherds told them that their son was the Messiah they had all been waiting for! We are told that ‘Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart’. (Luke 2:19: NIV) And the shepherds were so excited! They went back to their fields, praising and worshipping God.

Song

Silent Night

Simeon and Anna

LUKE 2: 21-40

Mary and Joseph are careful to observe the Jewish requirements to circumcise their son on the eighth day, and later to present him to God at the temple. It is at this place and time that Simeon and Anna – both in their last years of life and both worshipping God day and night, and praying for the salvation of their people – get to meet the baby Jesus. God blesses them with the appearance of this newborn Son of his, and they recognised him as the light for all nations – not just for Israel - and told everyone present about him.

By now there must have been no doubt at all left in Mary and Joseph's minds. Their baby was the Messiah; his coming was going to change the world.

For all of these participants in this story – for Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the angels and Simeon and Anna, that first Christmas was incredibly meaningful. When we think about the significance of the Christmas story, it is incredibly meaningful for us as well.

Discussion

- ▶ *When you think about the people Luke talks about in this Christmas story, who do you most identify with? Why?*
- ▶ *What do you think of first when you remember the birth of Jesus?*
- ▶ *How do you see Christmas as being a significant time for you?*

Clip

We're going to watch a clip showing what one songwriter says is their wish list for Christmas.

My Grown Up Christmas List

LEA SALONGA

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGgEWpM7tgg

Discussion

- ▶ *If you could have anything at all for Christmas – not just material things – what would you wish for?
Firstly for yourself and your family, and then for your whole city or the whole world?*
- ▶ *Are there ways that you can start to make some of these wishes come true? How will you get started on that?*

Activity

Write a Christmas card for someone, letting them know why Christmas is special to you, and wishing them a happy and meaningful Christmas.

Prayer

Section Six

A vibrant collage of tropical elements including pineapples, monstera leaves, and palm fronds, arranged in a circular pattern around the central text. The pineapples are rendered in shades of pink and purple with a textured, diamond-patterned skin. The leaves are in various shades of green and blue. The entire composition is set against a light green background with a subtle pattern of small, darker green circles.

GROW

Discipleship In A Café

Petra Dorman

Working out how best to disciple our people can be difficult.

At one corps we recently started discipleship groups, that meet once a week for an hour in a cafe (the same one each time). We share our SOAP devotions, then pray for each other.

This has many great Kingdom advantages...

- We do the journey together and share deeply and grow in Christ.
- The staff in the cafe get to know what we are there for and love seeing us each week.
- Other customers can hear some of the conversations and have sometimes made a positive comment to us.

This is definitely living, loving and fighting for the Kingdom ... sharing tears and laughter and learning how to live lives of integrity and full of grace. I see the beautiful Kingdom growth in these women, and in turn they give out to others.

The more groups that meet the better ... all at different times and in different cafés. There are discipleship groups for women and separate ones for men. Mixed groups could work too.

The groups are a great space for people who are not able to come to church for different reasons to be connected and learn and develop in their spiritual walk.

I have now left this appointment ... but the groups are still going and they love to meet, even over the Christmas period, because those who attend really help to empower each other.

We have had a beautiful lady come back to church through coming to discipleship group for about a year and Steve started a men's group and invited her husband along.

Just before we left they both started attending church again and are still faithfully going and growing stronger in Christ. We are so grateful for what God is doing through these groups.

Revitalising Our Women's Group

The changes and why

When I was asked to be Salvos Women Coordinator at my current corps, the Corps Officer asked me to change the name of the women's group, which had always been known as Home League.

The name Home League is out of date and does not really capture what we are about. So we chose LIFT - **Ladies in Fellowship Together**.

The new name explains our purpose and the women here also add, "We come to get a lift."

I did not tell the group the new name until the Christmas luncheon. That's when I announced that we would be doing things differently - but I did not use the word CHANGE. I've found in the past that using that word can get people off side.

I printed an attractive flyer (see below) which I handed out at the luncheon and the women loved the bright colours - so that was a winner.

When we commenced in 2017, with the new name, I made a big announcement: "If anyone hears me use the name Home League then I am to be fined \$2 for the missionary basket."

So it was a race to see who could catch me out. I purposely used the name Home League to see what they would do and they yelled out '\$2', and on the first day I was fined \$6. It became a fun thing really and I think helped them accept the name



LIFT

*Ladies
In
Fellowship
Together*

change. I also said that if they heard anyone using the name Home League, they also had to pay up.

Another improvement was how the hall was set up for meetings. In previous years the women sat around long tables in a U formation and it was not very friendly. So for the first day in 2017 I made sure that the set up was inviting.

Well, the women came to the door and looked in and the comments were so positive. They loved it. The corps bought small tables and arm chairs and it gives a much more homely/fellowship feel. We change the setting a little at times just so we don't get stuck in a rut.

We place a different centrepiece on the small tables each week to match the theme. It's a talking point for the ladies and they love it.

For a birthday morning, the small tables were set out in a huge horseshoe shape and the food table was down the middle of the tables.

The table at the front also needs to be fresh each week and decorated for the theme of the day.

I try to vary the leadership and have guests as well as local people, plus outings, birthday party, etc.

The meetings need to be welcoming and interesting.

I also have printed an **attractive syllabus** in a size that fits in a handbag.

Another key is **Pastoral Care** - I try to speak with every lady prior to the meeting and find out how they are going. Pastoral care is so important. If the women know you love them and are interested in them, they will do anything for you.

If they are absent, a phone call or visit works wonders. Also I have visited 70% of members in their homes or had coffee with them.

We now have **four groups** because of the increased attendance and I have four great team leaders who love their role. They provide the morning tea each week, except for the birthday mornings when a special morning tea is provided.

I meet with the group leaders for feedback and discussion.

We also commenced a Bring and Buy stall once a month, and that was keenly welcomed by the ladies.

A Bible study group existed with an average attendance of 9 or 10 and the study now is based on the theme of LIFT for that day. That works really well.



Here are
our table
settings for
Possibili-TEAs.

How did LIFT grow?

- Friends inviting friends
- People from the community meal were invited
- Members inviting friends
- I always have a Syllabus in my handbag on Sundays and hand it to new attenders who come to church who might be interested in LIFT

When the women enjoy it they talk about it.

If it's dull and boring then your group won't grow.

Honouring the women is also high on my agenda. I like to make them feel special. Praying for them in the meeting is also appreciated, and taking an interest in them.

Some women who came to LIFT have now commenced attending church on Sunday and two have become Adherents.

Some women who came to church first, now attend LIFT.

I know if you ask the LIFT ladies they will tell you they love LIFT because of the friendships and fellowship and the spiritual input. I keep hearing, "I love the focus on spiritual things at LIFT" - the best compliment I could receive.

One 90 year old told me in November 2016 when we celebrated her birthday that she would not be back in 2017 as she was too old. Well try and keep her away. She loves it, and raised the \$500 for the divisional project.

I think another aspect is that if you have a group leader who is not also the Corps Officer, they have more time to give to the group and to prepare for it.

If the leader is enthusiastic, it rubs off.

We try to have every meeting format a little different. I use the computer a lot and 90% of my meetings include PowerPoint and clips to show. We use YouTube a lot and sometimes just listen or sing along with the songs.

Things I don't do!

We have stopped doing some of the things associated with Home League, such as:

- Roll call
- Hint, humour, etc.
- Using the Home League song book.

Morning tea is not just a biscuit - our teams are excellent and prepare a variety of food.

We don't use the same décor on the front table each week. It's different every week. Family stores are a great resource for décor - borrow and return!

Culture is so important. If you hear negativity, squash it. I just say, 'We don't do that here'.

I am blessed to have a very friendly group of women and attendance has almost doubled.

Suggestions For Guest Speakers For 2019

Live

- Representative from your local council to discuss their services
- Aquaerobics instructor from your local pool
- Gym worker or physiotherapist who could talk about exercise for seniors
- A solicitor who could talk about making a will
- Salvos Funerals representative
- Speaker on safety in the home
- Representative from Aged Care Plus
- U3A representative to talk about available courses
- TAFE representative
- Local library worker

Love

- Doorways worker
- Worker from a refuge, drop-in centre or Community of Hope
- Representative of Ronald McDonald House, Canteen or other charity
- A retired teacher who could talk about the needs of children
- Speaker from Samaritan's Purse, re Christmas boxes for children overseas
- Ambulance or CareFlight officer
- Social worker
- Worker from a rehabilitation centre
- Someone who has been involved with 'Kids in the Kitchen'
- A chaplain (Hospital, court, prison, Fire Brigade, Rural Fire Service, Military, Red Shield Defence Services [RSDS], Salvation Army Emergency Services, Employment Plus, Aged Care Plus)

Fight

- Representative from Australia's Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force)
- Firefighter
- Police officer
- Social Justice Team representative
- Council representative to discuss environmental issues
- 'Clean Up Australia' representative
- Local member of the Legislative Assembly - how can we best fight for the good of our community?

Need A Theme?

National And International Special Days And Weeks 2019

January

- 1 New Year's Day
- 26 Australia Day
- 27 International Day of
Commemoration in Memory of
the Victims of the Holocaust

February

- 1 Wear Red Day
(for heart disease research)
- 2 World Wetlands Day
- 4 World Cancer Day
- 4 National Pet Adoption Day
- 5 Chinese New Year
(continues for 15 days)
- 6 Safer Internet Day
- 4-10 World Interfaith Harmony Week
- 11 International Day of Women and
Girls in Science
- 13 Apology Anniversary –
remembering the apology to the
Stolen Generations
- 13 World Radio Day
- 20 World Day of Social Justice
- 21 International Mother
Language Day
- 22 World Water Day
- 25 Hearing Awareness Week
(25 Feb to 3 March)
- 27 Teal Ribbon Day (for ovarian
cancer awareness)

March

- 1 Zero Discrimination Day
- 8 International Women's Day
- 20 International Day of Happiness
- 21 International Day of Forests
- 22 World Water Day
- 23 World Meteorological Day
- 21 Week of Solidarity with the
Peoples Struggling against
Racism and Racial Discrimination

April

- 2 World Autism Awareness Day
- 12 International Day of
Human Space Flight
- 19 Good Friday
- 21 Easter Sunday
- 24-30 World Immunization Week
- 25 Anzac Day

May

- 5 International Midwives Day
- 15 International Day of Families
- 25 Africa Day
- 31 World No-Tobacco Day

June

- 1 Global Day of Parents
- 5 World Environment Day
- 8 World Oceans Day
- 12 World Day Against Child Labour
- 14 World Blood Donor Day
- 25 Day of the Seafarer

July

- 11 World Population Day
- 18 Nelson Mandela International Day
- 30 International Day of Friendship
- 30 World Day against Trafficking in Persons

August

- 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous People
- 12 International Youth Day
- 23 International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

September

- 7 International Literacy Day
- 10 World Suicide Prevention Day
- 21 International Day of Peace
- 27 World Tourism Day

October

- 1 International Day of Older Persons
- 5 World Teachers Day
- 10 World Mental Health Day
- 10 World Sight Day
- 11 International Day of the Girl Child
- 15 International Day of Rural Women
- 16 World Food Day
- 17 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- 31 World Cities Day

November

- 5 World Tsunami Awareness Day
- 14 World Diabetes Day
- 19 World Toilet Day
- 20 Universal Children's Day

December

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 2 International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
- 3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 10 Human Rights Day
- 11 International Mountain Day
- 18 International Migrants Day
- 25 Christmas Day

