



# A Resource for Youth Workers

Helping 11-18 year olds  
engage with social justice

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## How to use this resource

**Welcome to *Belong*.**

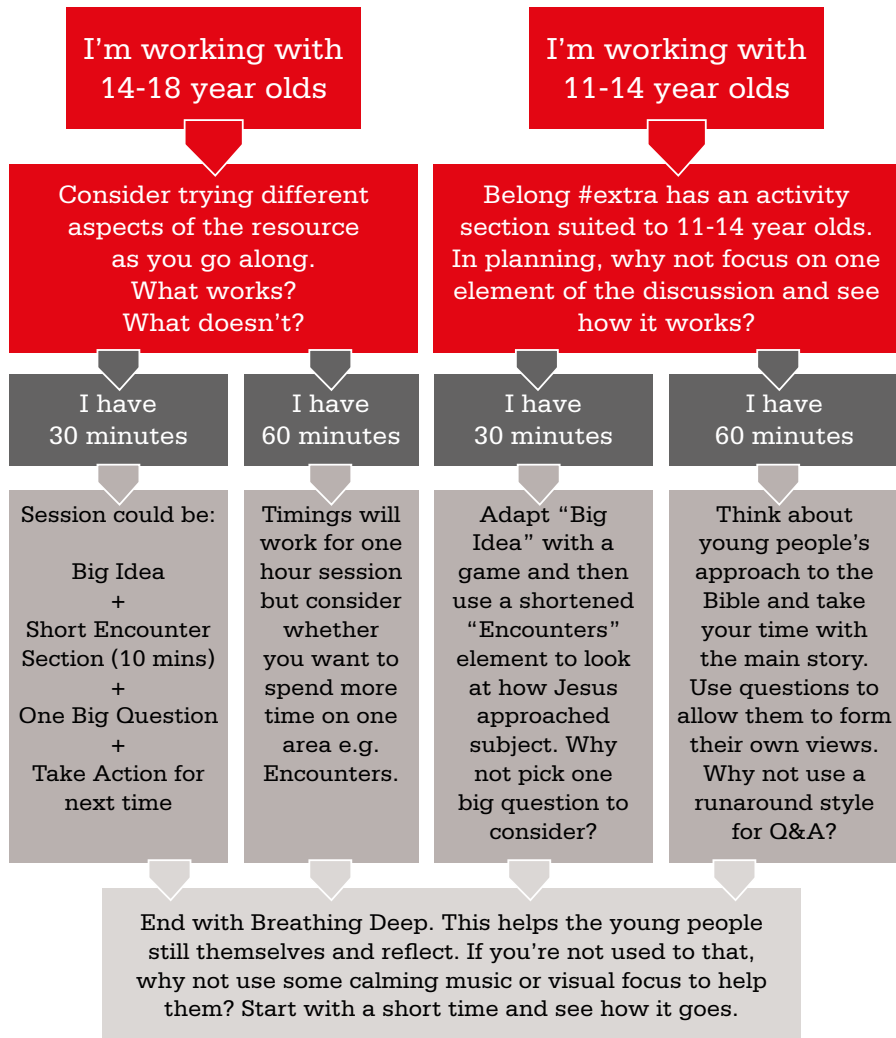
**What does it mean to belong as a Christian? To belong in today's world? To belong alongside and with each other?**

This resource seeks to help young people explore what it means to follow a God who was and is actively for the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised, to get to know a Jesus who encountered people of all walks of life, and to think about what being a disciple of Jesus means in today's world.

We know that young people today often want to get their hands dirty, to do something about the problems they see in the world around them. So we've developed a toolkit for raising Jesus-like activists, but it starts with getting to the heart of how we treat each other, ourselves and our relationship with God.

# BELONG: Adapting the Sessions

We already know that you're going to be the expert in creating sessions that suit your young people, but we wanted to give you an example of how flexible Belong can be:





In this resource you will find:



### A PLAN FOR AN INTRODUCTORY MEAL

to begin your journey that will mark a collaborative way to begin your journey with the young people you're working with.



### TEN SESSIONS

that explore the different ways that Jesus treated those he encountered



### AN ACTIVIST TOOLKIT

to help your group put their faith into practice and respond to the issues they're passionate about



### EXTRA ACTIVITIES

for each session so you can adapt them to your group's needs

Each session contains one tool – or stage – for developing a concern into an action. These tools can be considered within each session itself, or within a separate session for all of them – as suits your context.

We've designed this resource so that you can either run it over 10 consecutive sessions, or so that you can dip in and out of it. It can also be run over more than one week per session, allowing ideas

to really bed in. By the time you've finished it, you should also be equipped with the tools you need when your group want to take action and respond – whether that be to something they've seen on the news, or something that's happened in their school.

The backstory of Christian Aid's engagement with the world begins time and again with changes that take place in the hearts of everyday people, which leads to action and then to change. Head knowledge was and is important, but when hearts change our lives are set on a new course.

There is an important value in teaching young people on issues and subjects such as human rights or hunger, globalization or climate change. We will take time to do that in this resource. However, the most fundamental issue in activism is people – how we treat each other and what place the most vulnerable people in our world have in our hopes, affections and priorities. This is where the ideas for Belong began.

Belong seeks to address a fundamental human issue:  
How do we treat each other?

In Christian theology, the God who is relationship as Father, Son and Holy Spirit invites us into relationship with him and with each other as agents of relationship and reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5).

We think learning from this issue can be outworked at home, in families, in our schools and communities, in the nation, in Europe, in the world. The Bible calls us to treat people well in play, in work, in relationships, in economics, in politics, in business ... in all of life.

“”

Never be so busy not to think of others.

Mother Teresa, “No Greater Love” (New World, 2002)

This resource is designed around three vital methods that we think will enable you to get the most out of every session. We’d like to explore them briefly here.

## 1) A Way of Learning

In creating *Belong* we’ve concluded that an engagement with the heart inevitably means an engagement with theology and learning.

As someone working with young people you’ll have your opinions on learning and so these thoughts are offered humbly and to create context for the resources you’re about to explore.

*Belong* seeks to create what Pattinson calls a ‘critical conversation’<sup>1</sup>. This may sound more at home in a theology college than a youth group but we’re convinced that any learning that moves us to action needs to engage with theology at its core. We think the youth group is the perfect place to put theology in discussion with experiences and to trust the depth and timeless nature of the Bible as a guide for our discussions, realizing that we rarely end up with a single right answer.

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<sup>1</sup> Pattison, Stephen, *Some Straw for Bricks: a basic introduction to theological reflection*, The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology, in eds. Woodward, James and Pattison, Stephen, Oxford: Blackwell, 2000 p 136

In using these resources you'll notice we rely heavily on:

- ▶ **Questions and discussion**
- ▶ **Experiences**

This is a deliberate choice.

We believe these 10 sessions are best approached in a questioning environment and so we like to encourage an openness to those questions and to the discussions that result. What do the group think of what they hear and see? What does it mean to them?

The benefit of this approach is that it creates a landscape for forming ideas and opinions. It means there is a variety in responses but allows young people to feel their opinions are genuine and their doubts worth hearing. This is vital.

We all know what theology can do at its worst – but at its best it lights fires, wakes souls, catches the attention, changes everything.

“”

**Theology is an invitation to wake up:  
to be mindful and attentive.**

Clemens Sedmack, *Doing Local Theology*  
(Orbis Books 2002)

Secondly, we can't shy away from the idea of 'praxis', of learning through practical engagement. Most deep learning occurs through active doing.

So much of what we learn can be shallow and superficial. Things are heard today and gone tomorrow. But to see changes in the heart that lead to action we must reach for deep learning, learning that inhabits the core of who we are and learning that changes us.

Wenger's social theory<sup>2</sup> of learning suggests we learn in four interdependent areas and that in each one practice is vital.

- ▶ **Community:** learning as belonging. Here we learn in interaction with each other, trying out our ideas.
- ▶ **Identity:** learning as becoming. Here we learn through personal formation, discovering more about ourselves and who we are.
- ▶ **Meaning:** learning as experience. Here we learn through making sense of the things that happen to us.
- ▶ **Practice:** learning as doing. He we learn by living out the things that we learn.

Wenger's theory suggests we are doing learning in every sphere. Doing learning in relationships, doing learning in self identity, doing learning in life experience and doing learning finally in practice.

All Youth Leaders know the challenge of time means that decent space for discussion and raising questions can prove tricky. With *Belong*, we have tried to create a resource that keeps things moving but also has a little bit of flexibility so that you can stop, listen to one another, and that new learning can emerge.

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2 Theory developed in 1991 by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* and built on by Wenger in 1998.



## 2) Unashamedly deep

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In creating *Belong* we've taken the conscious decision to be deep with young people and encourage them into depth.

Importantly, we want to say this isn't about being academic or intellectual – that isn't necessarily important in changing lives. However, treating young people seriously in their understanding, treating their views with respect, expecting young people to be deep and profound. All those things are vital in bringing about change in us. How can we expect to empower young activists if we're not prepared to empower their own sense of theology making?

Part of this approach is in the open, questioning position we outlined in the previous section. But depth is more than that; it also provides space for the spirituality and attentiveness to the soul that marks out the Christian faith. We have therefore explored simple spiritual traditions, offered challenges and been prepared to air big issues, trusting young people and their ability to engage with all these areas of depth.

So as a result this resource aims to be unashamedly deep. Activists are change-makers in essence. If we want to make change we first have to start with facing up to what needs changing. This can be challenging but is ultimately healthy, productive and liberating.

### 3) Adaptable for your context

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In introducing theological dialogue and engaging with young people deeply we believe it is important to stress the need to contextualise these resources.

We know that, as Youth Workers, you'll be skilled at adapting resources to suit your work – we love that you do that. But we also want to encourage you to take the time to make sure this resource helps you discuss and inform the young people you're talking to in a way that's relevant to them. What do they understand about poverty, climate change or hunger? What are their experiences of treating people well or being treated well? These are all vital contextual questions.

On page 16 we've set out the structure for each session. This is identified early so you can get a sense of the heart of what we're trying to do and so you can take the principles and make them relevant for your group. We've deliberately then allowed each section to follow this same structure – making it easier for you and those involved – but also to enable a sense of flow to the sessions that embraces these three vital methods of learning, depth and context.

You know the young people you work with better than us so all the following is shared with humility and with a hope you'll make it whatever it needs to be for your needs.

If your group want to explore the issues even deeper then you can find additional resources, new ideas, downloadable materials and further ways to engage here:



Belong 365 days a year on the Belong webpage. Do please check it out – [www.christianaid.org.uk/belong](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/belong)



Twitter [@BelongCA](https://twitter.com/BelongCA)



Instagram [@christianaidbelong](https://www.instagram.com/christianaidbelong)



Join the Belong from Christian Aid Facebook group for Youth Leaders.

We hope you enjoy *Belong* and the 10 sessions that follow. We also hope it's a resource which starts conversations and experiences in your youth group that change lives.

Thanks so much for joining us.



## Raising Young Activists

Here are Christian Aid's Top Tips to help young people move from concern to action, honed by years of practical experience.

### ► We need to work on our relationships

At the very beginning of the Bible, God shares a vision for the world. It's a vision in which God, ourselves and the earth exist together in community and relationship, each inextricably connected. At Christian Aid, we believe the breakdown of these relationships is the cause of many of the problems around the world. We need to put right all relationships: with God, with those around us (both nearby and far away) and with the earth we live on.

## ► We need to work on our vision

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We want to raise a prophetic generation. In the Bible, prophets were those who saw how the future should look, were willing to stand up and speak truth to those in power, and were willing to spend time and energy to realign the world with God's original vision. We need to help young people pay attention to the world around them, to notice how actions affect others, to look beyond their immediate needs.

## ► We need to take time and care to see the bigger picture

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While young people can be quick to see problems and feel anger at injustices, they need to be aware of the complexity of any issue in order to become effective activists. Who is causing an issue or allowing it to happen? Who is affected by it? What change needs to happen, and how can that process start? It's also important they hear and learn from the voices of those directly affected by injustice so that we can fully understand the issue and not enforce their own opinions into a vacuum of assumptions.

## ► We can't see hope as an optional extra

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It's easy for activists to get burnt out, to put all their energy into changing the world and wind up overwhelmed and cynical. We want to raise a generation of hopeful activists; young people who know that change is possible. At Christian Aid, we constantly see such change happen: communities lifting themselves out of poverty, laws being changed to the benefit of all, people being heard and respected. We have plenty of stories of hope that you can share, and hope is a key currency in God's kingdom.



## ► We must be empowered in order to act

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Giving people the right tools to take effective action is the best way to empower people to make change. This resource includes the different steps to planning a campaign action; knowing what change is desired, finding out who holds the power to make change happen, thinking about how to communicate persuasively and to positively influence.

## ► We should trust the creativity of our young people

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Activists come in all different shapes and sizes – not all are loud and shouty! – and change happens in all sorts of ways. Activism is best when collaborative – so look for others in your community to join with. We find young people often have more creative ideas than adults, so let them shape the direction of their action and encourage them to use creativity to get their message across.

## ► We need to actively make space and time to reflect

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In this resource, we've ensured there's time after each session to breathe deeply and reflect on what we've discussed. The same is true for activism – we need to take time to reflect on what went well and what could have been better. It's vital to celebrate any success; even if you didn't see all the change you wanted, take time to notice where you've made an impact and helped others better understand the issue. Most importantly, take time to reflect on how you have been changed. Prayer can be a key resource here – giving the issue back to God and waiting to see where we are called to re-engage. We want to see faith and activism forming and shaping young people, rooting their identity in the radical hope for a better world that Jesus shows us.



## Structure



### A bit about how the sessions work

There are 10 sessions set out in *Belong*. Each outline has an aim and a key idea. These ideas are expanded by a matrix we've devised of four areas of impact for the concepts behind *Belong*.



**Example from Session One.**

Each session will explore a personal impact: What does this mean to me? It'll ask questions of our connections with other people and with the planet. Lastly it'll ask questions of God and our relationship with him. Each session will begin with some simple aims in this grid and we hope that this will enable different learning styles, different emphases and different experiences to be included and enabled through these sessions.

Each session has a simple title, drawn from core words and ideas around how we relate to each other. We've also tried to use language from around the world to help expand our horizons and give a global feel to the resource.

We want each session to make a difference to each young person, their connection to God, to the Earth and to others.

The main structure for each session will then follow the same pattern. Depending on time, you might want to use some or all of these ideas – planning is up to you. If you use each element, session timings run to one hour.

## The big idea 10 MIN

- ▶ Something creative to expand the mind and the senses

## Optional game

- ▶ You might use this to introduce the session instead of the Big Idea or combine the two.



## Encounters



15  
MIN

- ▶ Stories of the relationships of Jesus



## So what?



10  
MIN

- ▶ Why this matters



## Big questions



10  
MIN

- ▶ A photograph and quote which inspire big questions about the subject



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

- ▶ Something individual, something collective



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

- ▶ Moment of reflection, contemplation, and/or prayer



## Campaign toolkit

- ▶ Step by step guide to taking action addressed directly at your young people. One tool is included per session, deliberately linked to the theme. These are not timed but instead given over to you to action in whichever way seems best to you and your group. The aim of *Belong* is to grow activists and we know we often do that best through action.



## Christian Aid story

- ▶ In each session we're going to present a real life story from Christian Aid's work around the world and something which connects with each theme. These stories are designed to be honest and we hope connect in a very human way.

## Belong #Extra

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Each session also has some extra ideas and activities, either to use in the session itself or to use for follow up.

The *Belong* website and social media also have additional resources and ways of building on the subject matter in these sessions.



Visit [christianaid.org.uk/belong](https://christianaid.org.uk/belong)



Twitter [@BelongCA](https://twitter.com/BelongCA)



Instagram [@christianaidbelong](https://www.instagram.com/christianaidbelong)



Facebook Group: [Belong from Christian Aid](#)



# Introductory Meal

S O B R O M E S A



(Spanish: meaning 'a culture of relaxing and continuing conversation at the table after a meal.')

# Belong Introductory Meal

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Sobremesa is usually regarded as an adult activity. We believe that young people can, and should, be engaged in important conversations as equal participants.

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting Aim:

To share a simple meal as a group (potentially prepare the meal as a group also) and begin to think about the opportunities and challenges that will be shared by the group through the process of exploring the *Belong* resource.

### Foundations:

Co-create the space and mutual expectations for the coming weeks. Eating a meal together can facilitate a natural space and medium for discussion and sharing thoughts. Sharing a meal can help to remove distractions and encourage us to be more present with one another.

## Preparation

### Co-Creation/Co-Production

Co-creation is not our idea. It is, however, an important practice. As youth specialists you may know all about co-creation/co-production or the terminology may be new to you. However, it is quite likely that you have utilised elements and skills needed for co-creation in your practice before. The key to co-creation is that it

is a mutual collaboration between you and the young people you are working with.

The skill is in holding the balance of power so that it is not you manipulating young people into agreeing with you, or you as the youth leader simply actioning their demands – you have expertise, understanding, insight and a responsibility to lead young people; skills that are important to be acknowledged. However, young people have insight, perspectives, capacity and expertise also that should be given space to grow and flourish. Your challenge is to balance the demands of your role with young people (this is very real and should not be shied away from) and your wisdom, with the autonomously expressed views, feelings, wants, and needs of the young people you are working with.

In short, co-creation/co-production is the practice of working with young people, to enable young people to make important decisions about their involvement, needs, wants, and the functioning of the space/groups that they are involved in.

It is about listening to young people, but also more. It is about stepping back from our positions of power and influence and sharing power with those ‘in our care’.

## The Meal

If you can, gather around one table or in one space. Eat together.

You might want to introduce the things you want to talk about before eating, then have the meal.

## The Discussion

As part of the evening, we want to encourage you to have a discussion with your youth group about *Belong*, what you want to

do whilst following the sessions and what aims or ideas the group might have about tackling issues of social justice.

For this session you may want to use some flipchart paper and pens. Introduce the *Belong* resource, share why you think it is important and ask the young people if they think that the questions of faith and justice are important to them. (They may not think that it is important, which is an opportunity to probe and explore this further!) We suggest that coming up with a shared set of expectations for exploring the resource – how they want to work together, what kind of vibe would work best, what can they expect from each other and you the leader? What can you expect from them? The questions that follow throughout the resource are challenging, and there are no right answers – ensure that the young people know they are in a safe space to question.

For this session, and indeed the future sessions, the focus is more on asking the right questions, rather than providing the right answers. It is also OK to leave with more questions than answers, and indeed more questions that we arrived with.

As starter questions you might want to ask:

- ❓ What is justice?
- ❓ What is privilege?
- ❓ Does God care about justice?

# Belong #Extra

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## ▶ Extra Idea 1: Spreading the Word

### Chocolate

After your meal, share a big bar of chocolate for dessert and discuss the following:

- ❓ Who has been involved in your enjoyment of the chocolate bar?
- ❓ How might this relate to justice?
- ❓ Does knowing something is just/unjust affect the way we feel about eating/buying something?

## ▶ Extra Idea 2: Seeing it Through

### The Veil of Ignorance

Items needed: some food (sweets/biscuits/snacks – have an decent amount: these are your resources for distribution), envelopes (enough for one each), pieces of paper with the profiles below written on (enough so that everyone has one).

Profiles:

- ▶ You are in the 50% that lives below the breadline (half the group should receive this)
- ▶ You are in the 40% that struggle to get by (the next largest group should be this)
- ▶ You are in the 9% that live comfortably (small group – max three people)

- You are the highest earning 1%. (One person to receive this)

Put the identities in envelopes, give each young person an envelope and make sure that they do not unseal the envelope until you tell them.

Ask the young people to imagine they knew nothing about themselves. They do not know their age, gender, religion, class, (dis)ability, wealth, ethnicity, country of origin or sexual-orientation. They are, however, the people that have been appointed to make decisions for their nation.

In their nation approximately 50% of the people live below the breadline. They do not have access to enough money to have an education, a healthy life, or even eat the basics of a healthy diet. 40% of the people are struggling to get by; they have enough that they can eat and pay bills, but life is a struggle, with the constant threat of not having enough. 9% of the people are comfortable; they have access to health care, food, education and comfortable homes. 1% of the population control 50% of the wealth and resources.

As a nation you are to allocate the resources at your disposal how you best see fit. Make the decision as a team and allocate the resources (the snacks) according to the decision that the group makes.

Once the resources have been allocated, the young people can open their envelopes and find out who they are in their nation.

Reflect as a group on the decision that they made –

- ❓ What impact did it have on their person?
- ❓ Do they still feel happy with the decision that they made?

- ❓ How does the decision that they made as a group look similar/different to the world around them?

In the world today, 50% of the population live in poverty.

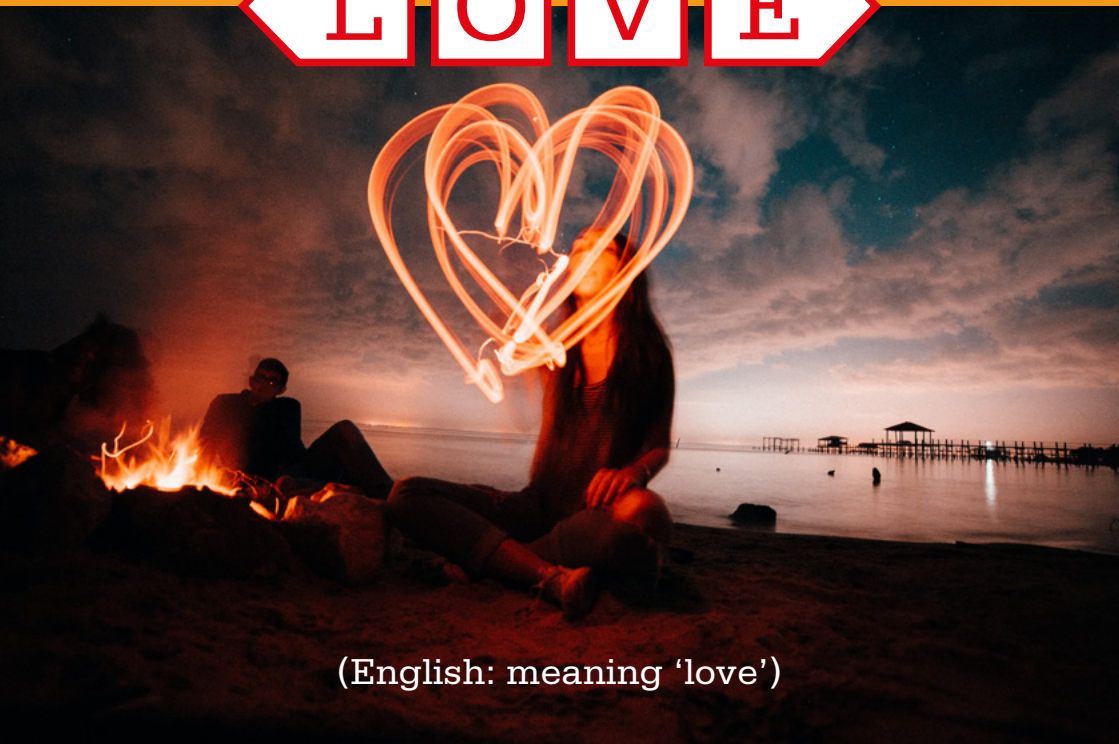
1% of the world has 50% of the wealth.

- ❓ How does that make you feel as a group?
- ❓ Why might this be the case?

Throughout the *Belong* series you will challenge ideas and be challenged by them, you will hear some of the stories of people who are struggling to make the world a better and fairer place. We invite you to think about your place in that story, that we are all a part of for better or worse, we invite you to think about God's heart and action within this story and consider how the story of Jesus can invite us to participate in making the world a better place.

# 1

LOVE



(English: meaning 'love')

christian  
**aid**



## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting Aim:

To explore love as the root of all good relationships and as the way we communicate belonging.

### Foundations:

Mark 12:30-31 (Jesus said): 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' (and): 'Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A data projector or any other way of projecting images.
- ▶ Three songs from the UK Top 40 about love.
- ▶ Speakers/Spotify.
- ▶ Paper and pens
- ▶ Fragranced candles/incense/perfume
- ▶ Cushions, open-plan seating
- ▶ A table, string and some pegs.
- ▶ Enough paper hearts for the number of people in your group.



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Love Music

Play snippets from three songs known to the group that have the word 'love' in them.

**?** What is the artist/band trying to say about love?

Write down any words or ideas people notice.

You might ask:

**?** Do any of these songs relate to their own experiences of love?



- ❓ Is love always about relationships?  
What sort of relationships?
- ❓ What does it mean to feel loved?
- ❓ What types of love do the songs tell the story of?

## Leaders' Guide

### Extra Idea

Get everyone to bring their favourite song with 'love' in the title. Take a vote on the best one.



## Optional game

### Clumps

A facilitator calls out different numbers. Players must get in groups of however many people the facilitator calls. Players who cannot successfully find a group are eliminated. It is important for the facilitator to have helpers in the crowd to help call players out.

- ❓ What brings us together?



## Encounters



**15**  
MIN

### Jesus And The Unwelcome Guest



Luke 7:36-50



Have a space set up with cushions and low tables.

Have candles, incense of something similar creating a smell of perfume in the air.

Give each young person a card with the name of a character from the story on it, ask them to listen out for this character – what they did and what they felt.

### Characters:

- ▶ Jesus
- ▶ Simon
- ▶ The other guests
- ▶ The woman

Tell the story of Luke 7:36-50 using a version of the Bible that flows as a story.

Ask people to gather with others who have the same character to think about. You might ask the group:

- ❓ What did they do?
- ❓ How did they feel?
- ❓ Why did they act the way they did?
- ❓ What do these different perspectives do to our understanding of this story?



## So what?



10  
MIN

### What is Love?



Mark 12:30-31

? Where does this sort of love fit in?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work in El Salvador's prisons.

See p38

### Questions From The Story

- ? How does love motivate the actions of those in the story?
- ? In what ways do you think the staff at the Rosa Prison are acting in a similar way to Jesus did with the woman?
- ? Are there people around you in your area or further afield where offering them love or care is risky or difficult? How are people overcoming this?

As a follow up, you might ask:

- ? Can you think of ways people would choose to love that might offend others?





## Big questions

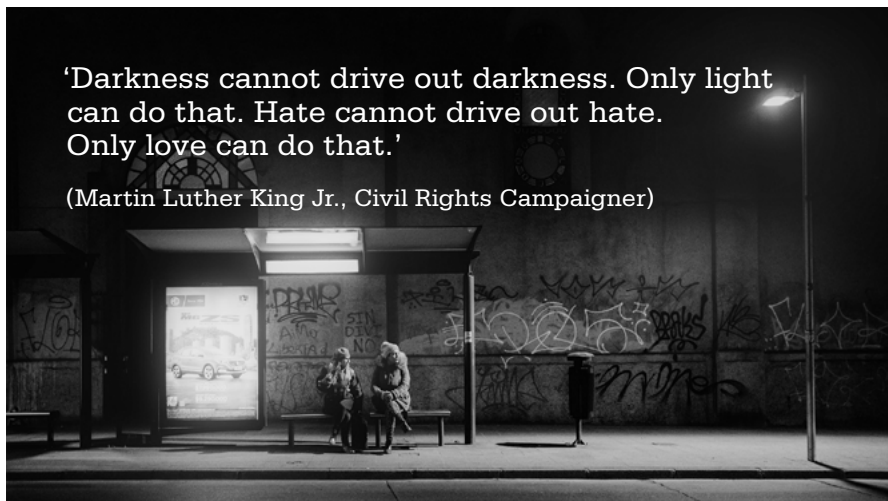


10  
MIN

### Who Do You Love?

'Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that.'

(Martin Luther King Jr., Civil Rights Campaigner)



Spend some time looking at the picture and the quote. Discuss it together using some or all of the questions below.

- ❓ Jesus said that he was 'the light of the world'. How could we follow in his footsteps and bring light into places of darkness?
- ❓ What is involved?
- ❓ Is loving only those who love and accept us the whole picture?
- ❓ How can our love cross boundaries of race, tribes or religions?



*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### How Do You Love?

#### Individual

Give out a blank piece of paper and a pen.

Ask everyone to hold the paper landscape and draw a line down the middle. On the the left-hand side give a title 'How do I love myself?' on the right-hand side 'How do I love others?'

Explain that this is a simple reflection to do at home. Fill in both sides and ask what similarities and differences exist between the two lists. If we are to 'love our neighbour as ourselves', is the challenge loving others like we love us or is it that you find it easier to love others rather than yourself?

Encourage everyone to do this in the own time and then find a trusted friend to discuss it with.

#### Group

Ask the group which boundaries between people exist in your community, your friendship groups or in our own individual lives? Think up an activity you can do as a group to celebrate the diversity of the place that you live e.g. a street party or a short phone video on social media.



## Leaders' Guide

Leading a quieter reflective time with young people can feel tricky but is often very rewarding. Before you start get everyone to find a comfortable place and position. To settle everyone, you might suggest we take a few slower deep breaths in and out. Encourage everyone to just focus on those breaths and allow some stillness to settle in the room. If silence is a problem, you could use some chilled background sounds/music e.g. Nils Frahm or Sigur Ros.



### Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

## Breathe Deeply: Who Do You Love?

Turn over a table with the legs up, then interweave string around the legs and again around the string to make a spider's web effect.

Pass out pegs and pieces of paper. Ask people to think of barriers that exist in their lives and in their community. Write each one down in turn then peg them on the string.

Then pass out paper hearts and ask the group to think about how love can overcome these boundaries? Peg the heart on top of the paper you put there previously as a prayer.

When you've finished take a moment in silent prayer.







## Campaign toolkit

### Love: What's the problem?

The first step of putting your faith into action is listening for where God is calling us to bring healing and hope to a world that is broken. When we love God's world and the people in it, we can't just stand back and watch it break, we have to do something about it. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the amount of negative things we see on the news or hear about on social media.

As a group, spend some time thinking about the different ways the world is broken – what issues are you and your group passionate about? They could be global problems, like climate change or gender inequality, or perhaps there are things closer to home: a problem that you want to fix in your local community, school or church. You might want to spend some time praying about it.

We know that there are some big problems in our world, and no one person or group can completely fix it on their own, but we can all make a difference.

It's time to choose an issue that your group want to do something about. Depending on the size of your group you might want to choose one issue to tackle as a whole group, or you might want to split into smaller groups and plan your own campaign.

Here are some things to consider as you choose your issue: Which problems can we do something about as a group? Does everyone in the group agree that it's an important issue? Sometimes there are things that annoy or irritate us, but they might just be an

inconvenience. An injustice is when something is affecting people unfairly. Is your chosen issue an injustice or an inconvenience?

In the next session, we'll be looking at our chosen issues more deeply and thinking about who is affected by them.

# El-Salvador: Prison Poems

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## A Christian Aid Story



The Rosa Centre is not the sort of place you find in a typical prison. The first sound you hear isn't the clasp of a lock, or a cell door closing; it is the sound of laughter. It is 10 am and music class had just begun. A group of girls are playing instruments in an outside space and in classrooms next door one group write poetry while another prepare lunch. This is a centre for second chances and all these girls are seizing it.

These girls have seen, and experienced, far more than most adults do in a lifetime. Many have come from a background of poverty and domestic violence, from a world where opportunities

are few and far between. Some get involved in a gang just for fun, while others are tricked into joining by gang members who pretend to fall in love with them: once they're in a relationship the girl becomes the property of the boy, and can be at risk from rival gangs. They have been caught up in a cycle where the odds were already stacked against them before birth.

Meet Guadalupe – a smart and surprisingly gentle girl – who knows this all too well. Guadalupe became a member of the 'Calle 18' gang when she started dating a gang member. Her association with the gang, and with the boy she loved, meant she had to distance herself from her family and live on the streets. Her boyfriend was killed by a rival gang – Guadalupe was in prison at the time. She never got to say goodbye.

'Through poetry I have learned how to get everything I feel out. When I was in the gang I just needed a hug from my mum. I didn't have that. It was just me and God. All I thought about was how to get out – I'd ask people to help but, but they usually just shut the door on me. There was too much discrimination against us. It made me feel alone, like I wasn't worth anything and that my life had no meaning. Here, inside, I have learned to see things differently. Just like all human beings, I have dreams. I need help to be a different person, we all do. If we can change our lives, then hopefully we can live in a society that is full of joy.'

At the Rosa Centre, Christian's Aid's partner organisation FESPAD works with the girls to provide education and hope: cookery classes, craft workshops, music and poetry workshops are all a way to help the girls develop new skills and find space in society once they're released so they don't have to go back into a gang. Although they are in prison, this is not a 'life behind bars' as we know it; it's a second chance in life.

Graciela, who is the Prison Director says:

'I tell everyone this: we don't look at them and see them just for their crimes – as extortionists, thieves or murderers. We see them as little girls who need us. We play with them. We serve as models in the type of workshops they do – for example, they do our hair and paint our nails. They make bread and we eat with them. We're always interested in their needs. We're not afraid of them because we treat them like human beings.'

# Belong #Extra

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## Leaders' Guide

Belong #extra provides three extra ideas to try out.

- ▶ First is a **story** that can be used as a discussion starter, as a part of a talk or something to reflect on
- ▶ Second is '**spreading the word**', which is about sharing what you're learning. How can the themes in a session be shared more widely in your church or local community?
- ▶ Last is '**seeing it through**', which is about allowing the learning from a session to really take root in people's lives

## ► Extra Idea One – Story

### The Truth and Reconciliation Commission



For several decades South Africa was ruled by a system called 'Apartheid' where people of black skin were segregated from people who were white. After decades of global opposition, freedom campaigner Nelson Mandela was released from prison, apartheid ended and within months Mandela was made President of South Africa.

In the midst of all this incredible change, South Africa needed a way to heal wounds and so in 1996 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established to hear stories from those abused by apartheid and from those who were responsible. Painful stories were heard and many admitted to terrible crimes. But, through it all, South Africa began to heal.

Convenor of the TRC, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, said of the process:

'Forgiving is not forgetting; it's actually remembering – remembering and not using your right to hit back. It's a second chance for a new beginning. And the remembering part is particularly important. Especially if you don't want to repeat what happened.'

Sometimes loving others takes a different and challenging path yet healing and bringing people together is something very hard to achieve. Love can be tough.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the word

### Offering Friendship

The issue of care for displaced people (or refugees) has been a complicated one in the news media and many people are troubled by the way people coming to the UK are made to feel. Why not research the ways your local community is caring for refugees and where you can do something that offers friendship to these new residents to your area?

Maybe write to your MP and ask that they are are more welcoming, or share about the needs of refugees across the world with your church.

Let us know what happens.





Twitter [@belongCA](#) (use #belong)



Email [belong@christianaid.org.uk](mailto:belong@christianaid.org.uk)



Instagram [@christianaidbelong](#)

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it through

Start a daily practice of thankfulness.

Commit to thinking about things that you're thankful for every day for at least a fortnight. This simple practice opens up an appreciation of yourself, of your circumstances and of others.

If you go for this, post a photo on Instagram each day of something you're thankful for. Use the hashtag #belong.



Instagram [@christianaidbelong](#)



# 2

## I M A G O

(Latin:  
meaning  
'image')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting Aim

To explore what significance being made in the image of God should have on the way we treat people.

### Foundations

Genesis 1:26: 'Then God said: "Let us make man in our Image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images.
- ▶ People with several generations of family photos.
- ▶ Small pictures of an image of Jesus either to give out to the young people or send round the group on WhatsApp or social media. Sample images are downloadable from the Belong pages on Christian Aid's website.



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Family Photos

Have a selection of baby photos available to have a look at together. These could be of youth leaders/team when they were babies (you could also get photos of the vicar or members of the congregation if they're well known). You could ask the youth group members themselves to bring in photos of when they were little.

In discussion, you could ask:

- ❓ What does family likeness show? How are families alike in ways other than appearance?
- ❓ Why is this the case?
- ❓ Ask the group to share what they know about their extended families.
- ❓ What does being in a family make you feel like?



Family can come in all shapes and sizes and look different everywhere you find it. But for some people being included in this way is a central part of their self-esteem and how they feel about their place in the world. If family is a hard place then the desire to be included can be very powerful. We are going to explore God's family image and the dignity it gives to each person because we are all made that way.



## Optional game

### Copycats

Split the young people into pairs and number them one and two.

Ones get to act however they like – making faces, dancing, etc. Twos have to copy them. Then swap over.

❓ Are we ever the same really?



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### Zaccheus



Luke 19:1-10

Zaccheus was an unpopular person. As a Tax Collector he would have most likely been:

- ▶ In league with the Roman occupiers and seen as a traitor.
- ▶ Taking bribes to supplement his income and make a living.

- ▶ Forced to be harsh with people to get results.
- ▶ Forced to apply unfair rules to raise cash for leaders and for occupiers.

Read the story in Luke 19:1-10.

You could then ask:

- ❓ What is outrageous about this?
- ❓ What parts of this story show you what God's love is like? How does that make you feel? What purpose was there to Jesus acting this way? How would this have made the watching crowd feel? Why?

As a follow up, suggest the group think about celebrity culture today:

- ❓ Is there anyone that if Jesus went for coffee with them you'd be outraged?
- ❓ Has including someone or standing up for someone ever meant you've been misunderstood?
- ❓ Have you seen something like this happen to other people?



So what?



10  
MIN

## The Image Of God

Play Image of God bingo:

The youth leader could write down (and keep to themselves) a few words they predict the group will say if asked the question:

## ❓ What does God look like?

Male/man, old, beard, white, cloud, etc.

If the young people guess the same words shout 'Bingo'.



Read Genesis 1:26

Briefly introduce the idea of the image of God. We are unique in our place as human beings; nothing else has this honour. Scholars have debated whether this is about the soul, our ability to connect with God, something relational or something about likeness to God.

You could ask:

- ❓ What do your group think this idea means?
- ❓ What Is God's Image? God's overarching character/idea or likeness?
- ❓ As individuals we are made in God's image, but what if our families and our communities were also made in God's image? What would it look like to be a youth group made in God's image?
- ❓ The Bible passage we just looked at says God wanted humans to 'rule over' the earth. What would it look like to rule the earth in the likeness of God?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work with teenage mums in Kenya.

**See p57**



## Questions:

- ❓ Why Is It Important to tell your own story?  
What impact did that have in this project?
- ❓ What kind of photos would Zaccheus have taken of his life? How would Jesus have connected with them?
- ❓ If you told a photo story of your life  
what would be included in it?



## Big questions



10  
MIN

## Who Is Special?



### Leaders' Guide

Using images and text. These downloadable images are intended to provoke and prompt. The words hopefully inspire and the images amplify the idea in the quote. Here poet Maya Angelou's desire for acceptance of everyone is set against the staring eyes of a man we don't know. How can we accept everyone as we'd want to be accepted regardless of who they are?





'I long, as does every other human being,  
to be at home wherever I find myself.'

(Maya Angelou, Poet)

- ❓ Is everyone special or unique? If so, in what way?
- ❓ Does everyone deserve to be treated with value or respect?
- ❓ What would happen to the world if we did this?
- ❓ How can we start to do this?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action

 **10-20**  
MIN

## Dignity

### Individual

Put all the names of the group in a basket and ask each person to take a name. Spend one week praying for that person by name,

asking God that he would bless them and that particularly he would reveal the love he has for them. If it feels appropriate, ask the group to share how it's gone and what it's been like to pray like this for someone by name.

## Group

If your church has a noticeboard, ask your vicar/leader to display a sign for one week saying: 'You are made In the image of God.' Create this yourselves and find some way to get people to feedback e.g. creating a feedback email or using social media. See what happens.



## Icon



The Icon of Christ and his Friend Is a 6th Century monastic icon probably created In the Egyptian desert. It features a character called Abba (Father) Menas and Jesus. Menas led a desert monastery. The icon is revolutionary for its time because in the 6th Century the concept of painting Jesus in such a friendly pose, with his arm gently round a man, would have been unheard of. Other icons painted then that have survived are full of halos,

saints and reverence. Here Jesus is standing next to Menas and hugging him.

Encourage the group to spend five minutes reflecting on the image prayerfully. You can either do this in silence or with ambient music in the background. Icons were designed for meditation and the details are important. For example, you could ask your group to focus on the following points and consider why the artist might have drawn them that way:

- ▶ The arm around Menas
  - ▶ The direction of Jesus eyes – one up (to God) one to Menas
  - ▶ That you can see Menas' feet. He is sent.
  - ▶ That Jesus is holding a Bible. He is the Word of God.
- ❓ What else can they see?

Reflect on the Idea that Jesus also feels this way about you.



## Campaign toolkit

### Imago: Who is affected?

Before launching into action it's important that we take time to understand more about a problem and how it affects people. We know that God created all people equally, so when injustice affects anyone, whether they're our next-door neighbour or on the other side of the world, it's a threat to all of us. When we're angry about an issue it's easy to rush in and try and fix it in the ways we think are best, but treating people with the respect and dignity that they were created with means listening to their experiences and voices and taking time to understand what their needs are.

Spend some time researching your chosen issue from the last session. Try and think about all the different people involved and what their views and perspectives on it might be.

Questions to ask:

- ❓ Where did the problem start?
- ❓ What's keeping it going?
- ❓ Who is the most affected by this issue?
- ❓ What people or groups are already doing something to help?
- ❓ What people or groups are a part of the problem, either creating or perpetuating it?

If your chosen issue is a local one, think about whether you can talk to the people affected by it and work with them to help solve it. If it's a global one, try and find some stories online from charities or the news about the people affected.

# Kenya: Picture Power

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## A Christian Aid story



**Ivine Chepkorir, one of the participants of the Picture Power training, practises her skills**

In a village called Narok in Kenya, Christian Aid has been working with teenage mums to give them back a voice and help them tell their own story by giving them cameras and training them in how to take photographs.

A group of teenage girls – all either pregnant or already mums – chose to take photos to tell the stories of the challenges they face in life. The subjects of their photos were entirely their own – what they wanted people to know about their life instead of others choosing what we think you should know about their lives.

But it doesn't end there ... once the girls had taken their photos, Christian Aid helped them put on an exhibition to show the wider community. Over 600 people came to see the exhibition, including respected and influential people in the community; teachers, church leaders and community chiefs.

After they saw the stories the girls were telling, the community leaders were moved into doing something to help the girls improve their lives.

Here are some of the things that happened as a direct result of the exhibition:

- ▶ Working with young boys to help them play their part in preventing pregnancies.
- ▶ Helping parents have better communication with their children.
- ▶ Educating the wider community about the law that makes it illegal to have sex with under-age girls.
- ▶ Providing practical employment training for girls to give them skills for their future.

If you were going to put on an exhibition of photos about the challenges that teenagers in your community face, who would you invite? Who has the power to improve the lives of teenagers?

Interested in seeing the work these girls have done? Check out:



[www.christianaid.org.uk/news/life-teenage-girl](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/life-teenage-girl)



# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One - Story

### **Goodison Park Liverpool, 2016**

On a cold Saturday afternoon at Goodison Park, home of Everton Football Club, Jermaine Defoe was getting ready to play for his team Sunderland. As they prepared to walk out, Jermaine met his mascot – a young boy called Bradley Lowery. It was a moment that impacted his life profoundly. Bradley was suffering from a cancer that would eventually take his life. However, over those last few months Bradley and Jermaine developed such a bond that he called the young boy ‘his best friend’. Bradley would become a regular feature at Sunderland’s Stadium of Light and even scored a goal in warm-up, which Match of the Day affectionately awarded Goal of the Month.

At Bradley Lowery’s funeral, Jermaine Defoe spoke lovingly of this little boy who’d shared such love and friendship with the ex-England striker. In turn Defoe urged the congregation to show love and dignity to everyone they cared about – ‘Life’s too short,’ he concluded.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the word

### **Picture Power**

Take five photos each that capture what your life is about/what’s difficult about being a young person today.

You might want to create this to help the wider church understand the struggles young people face.



## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it through

### Create an Art Exhibition

Ask your group to get creative – words, art, music, whatever works for your group – on the theme of dignity. You could work with members of your church community too. Create an exhibition on the subject and invite your church members and the community to it in the same way the teenage mums in Kenya in the Christian Aid story shared their work.

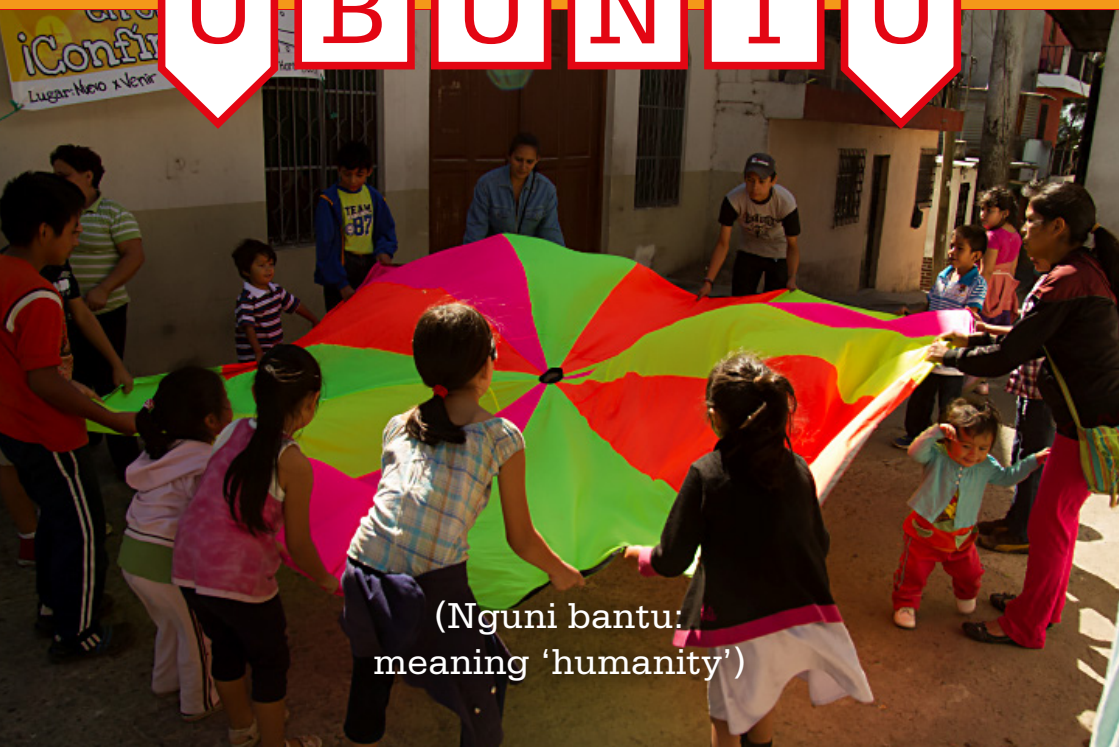
Post some pictures of your exhibition on Instagram:



Instagram @christianaidthelongs

# 3

## UBUNTU



(Nguni bantu:  
meaning 'humanity')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

To think about the communities we are part of – locally and globally – and to explore how we are all dependent on each other. What does it mean to be part of God's community?

### Foundations

John 15:5-8: 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.'



## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A ball of string
- ▶ Grapes and/or grape juice
- ▶ Five bread rolls and two tins of tuna



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Ubuntu

Take the ball of string and ask them to throw it from one person to another, holding the string as they pass it on. As they catch it and pass it on, ask people to say who they are, how they would describe themselves, and then how they are connected to the person they (then) throw the string to?

This is a picture of Ubuntu. Explain the concept using the quote below.

Ubuntu is about our interdependence. Literally translated, Ubuntu means ‘A person is only a person through other people.’ Former South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu explains it this way:

‘It speaks of the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, “Yu, u nobuntu”; “Hey, so-and-so has Ubuntu”. Then you are generous, you are hospitable, and you are friendly and caring and compassionate. You share what you have. It is to say, my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours. We belong in a bundle of life. We say a person is a person through other persons. It is not I think therefore I am. It says rather: I am human because I belong, I participate, and I share. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or

she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.'



Check out more at

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wZtfqZ271w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wZtfqZ271w)



## Optional game

### Human Knot

In the group, join hands in a way that you become a human knot, with arms all mixed. Then try and untangle yourselves so (whilst still holding hands) you become a circle.



How are we connected?



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### Feeding Of The 5000 John 6:1-26

Place out the fives bread rolls and two tins of tuna.

Google a picture of Mourneview Park, Lurgan in Northern Ireland. This is the home of Glenavon FC and has a capacity of 5000. Have a picture of it available for the group to see so that they can understand just how many people 5000 is.

This story is about something incredible and impossible to imagine. Yet Jesus enabled it to happen.

Then read the story from John in a contemporary English version they might not have heard before, such as The Street Bible.

- ❓ Why was Jesus concerned about the people?
- ❓ Why do you think he needed the boy's food? (Couldn't he simply have produced it out of nothing?)
- ❓ Why was there extra left over?

Some problems seem impossible to fix. Here Jesus was presented with an impossible situation, yet the solution came from a little boy's lunch.

- ❓ Have you ever been asked to help with an impossible problem? What happened? How did it affect you?

Challenge one of the group to make tuna sandwiches out of the five loaves and two tins of tuna for as many people as you have present in the group that night. As this task is done get the rest of the group to pay them compliments in an attempt to get the first sandwich.

Imagine how chaotic the scene in the story would have been.



So what?



10  
MIN

## Community



Read John 15:5-8

Have some grapes and grape juice to share as you talk.

Think about the connectivity of this idea. Vine, branches, grapes, crop, produce, growth. All connected. Think about how we are connected to the earth – do we know how our food is grown, where it comes from, etc? This story was told by Jesus to people who were connected to the land, for whom growing food and crops was vital. But Jesus then used it ask how we are connected ...

- ❓ To God?
- ❓ To each other?
- ❓ How is God connected to us?
- ❓ What other ideas of connection does the Bible talk about?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work with Vilia in Haiti.

**See p71**

- ❓ What do you think motivated Vilia to share her limited resources with others?
- ❓ What do you have that you could share with others?





## Big questions



10  
MIN

### Why Do We Need Each Other?

Take some time to consider the image and the quote.



- ❓ Can you think of a time you did a small action that had a big impact?
- ❓ Can we make an impact on our own?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

Writer JRR Tolkien said, 'All have their worth and each contributes to the worth of others.' When we understand our interdependence we begin to make each other feel of greater worth.

When you spend any money this week think of the true worth of others. Think about how the way you spend your money might be impacting someone else. For example, try and think as far back as you can ... if you bought a chocolate bar, how many different people might that money have impacted? Does this make you feel differently in any way?

### Group

Arrange a collection of food for a local foodbank. If you can, take the food there yourselves and meet some of the people working there and visiting. Foodbanks are one way we can show our connection to each other in local communities.



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

Catholic Saint Ignatius created a simple end-of-the-day reflection called the Examen. It asks five simple questions about your day and is a prayerful look back at the last 24 hours.

Begin by instructing everyone to get into a comfortable position and create a quiet atmosphere. Then ask each question (below) and leave space in between for people to reflect in silence.

Take some quiet and think on your day. How has it felt? Particularly think of those people you've interacted with – both positive and negative. Think of all the small actions you took today, have they caused any ripples? Positive or negative? What small actions might you do differently tomorrow? What might you bring tomorrow to improve things or to show your thankfulness for things?



## Campaign toolkit

Ubuntu: What change do we want to see?

Just like the story of the feeding of the 5000, sometimes the problems we see in the world seem impossible to solve. When we're acting on our own they often are, but when we work together and share the resources we have we can see huge changes happen.

Before you start planning your group's action, it's important to have a vision for the changes you want to see - even if they seem impossible at first.

Write a list of all the things you want to see changed. Try and break it down into realistic points. For example, if the issue your group is passionate about is climate change, you might want to see an end to global warming, but that's quite a big change. Think: what is realistic for your group to achieve? Perhaps you'd like to see your church or school using less plastic, or maybe at this point the change you want to see is your friends and family becoming more aware of the problem.

# Haiti: Vilia

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A Christian Aid story:  
Community and relationships in Haiti



Vilia lives with her husband and seven children in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. During Haiti's biggest earthquake for more than a hundred years, their house was destroyed and they were left homeless. Imagine that. No house. No possessions. Just the clothes on their backs. Christian Aid's partner KORAL reached out to help. They built Vilia and her family a new home – safe, stable and strong

enough to stand up to natural disasters like earthquakes. In fact, it was so strong that when Hurricane Matthew struck in 2016, her house was the only thing left standing in the area.

When Hurricane Matthew hit, the winds outside reached speeds of 150mph. It blew people away, tore roofs off houses, ripped trees out of the ground. Did Vilia batten down the hatches, sit in the very middle of her safe, sturdy living room and hug her family closer?

Of course she didn't. Seeing the urgency of the situation, Vilia managed to cram 54 friends and neighbours inside her two-room house, struggling to hold the door open for them to get in. A woman arrived holding her baby, screaming that it had died. Vilia wrapped the baby in a blanket and warmed it until it revived. When her neighbours arrived in wet clothes, she gave them dry ones. She and her family slept on chairs so more people could fit in. In the morning, she cooked for all her guests like it was the last Bed & Breakfast at the end of the world.

A simple act of hospitality that saved 54 lives.



You can find out more about what happened by checking out Vilia's storm:

[youtube.com/watch?v=3KuCEPMnxkM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=3KuCEPMnxkM)

and with English vocal overdub:

[youtube.com/watch?v=WH1AjYwJwHA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=WH1AjYwJwHA)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story



### **1964: France**

Jean Vanier launches L'Arche – a network of communities that now exists in 37 countries. L'Arche helps people with disabilities, taking them into a community and caring for them.

Through his friendship with a priest called Thomas Philippe, Vanier found out about the everyday struggle of thousands of people institutionalised with developmental disabilities. Vanier invited two

men, Raphael Simi and Philippe Seux, to leave these institutions and live with him in a house in a place called Trosly-Breuil, France. Their time together led to the establishment of L'Arche at Trosly-Breuil, a community where people with disabilities live with those who care for them.

Jean faced a terrible problem but knew he had a connection to it and knew of the value of those people he met. It moved him to action.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

### Build a Labyrinth

Ancient Celtic Cathedrals had labyrinths within them – metaphorical maze-like designs that were walking meditations of the journey towards the divine. Allow your steps to be a metaphor today. What journey are you on? Be thankful for those who travel with you.

You could create a labyrinth around your town or city. Draw up a route to wander, maybe use Google Maps to help you. Use this prayerful journey as a way to reflect on your community, letting each step be a prayer.

Ideas and resources at [proost.co.uk](http://proost.co.uk) and also at [labyrinth.org.uk](http://labyrinth.org.uk)

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

### Friends' prayer

Find a small piece of string and tie knots in it. Let each knot be a friend, neighbour, family member or someone important to you. Use the knots as reminders to pray. Tie these to your shoes, your bag or somewhere you'll see it regularly. Use each knot as a prayer and use this for as long as you'd like to.



# 4

## G U C



(Azerbaijani: meaning  
'power, force, strength')



## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

To reflect on power in relationships. How can it be helpful?  
How can it hurt? What power do we have to effect change?

### Foundations

Philippians 2:5-11: '(He) made himself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant.'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A whiteboard or something similar
- ▶ Bowl of water, soap, hand-towel and flannel (to wash hands)
- ▶ Some pictures of computers as they're developed (from the internet)



## The big idea



10  
MIN

Ask everyone in the group to show everyone else anything they have on them that uses power. What are the best things about this easy availability of power? What are the frustrations? What does it feel like when your phone runs out of battery or you have connectivity problems?

These are very new problems.

Show some pictures of computers as they've developed through the generations.

When the first men landed on the moon in July 1969, their onboard computer had the same power as two XBoxes today. The seminal Cray 2 SuperComputer launched in 1985 was the largest computer of its day and needed a small room to house it. The Cray 2 has the same processing power as an Apple iPhone 4.

Things have changed a lot in recent years.

- ❓ We've thought about electrical power but what other sorts of power do people have? Can you think of a time when you were given power, or when it's been taken away? How does that feel?

Take time to think about your own community. You might ask:

- ❓ What power exists there? Who holds it?



## Optional game

### Amoeba

Players stand in a circle and hold hands. A rubbish bin is in the middle of the circle. The leader says 3-2-1-go at which point players, while holding tightly to the hands of the players next to them, try to pull the circle back so that other players are pulled towards the bin. If a player touches the bin, they are out. If two players let go of each other's hands, both of those players are out. The last one remaining wins.

- ❓ How does it feel when power isn't always in your hands?



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### Washing: John 13:1-17

Sit in a circle and explain we're going to mirror something Jesus did with his disciples, but washing hands rather than feet.

Imagine it's the night before Jesus's arrest and death. Jesus knows this is coming, the disciples have an inclining something is

up, but they don't know what. As a result, the room is tense. You get the sense Jesus is keen to communicate something to them; he gets up with a towel around his waist ready to wash their feet. Explain the culture of the time: sand, dirty feet, washing as a sign of welcome. This task would have usually been done by a servant.

Have a bowl, water, towel and some soap. Invite each person to have their hands washed, then wash the hands of the next person. Read the Bible story aloud as you do it.

- ❓ How did it feel to be washed like this?
- ❓ Why did the disciples react?
- ❓ What did Peter get wrong?
- ❓ How is God's power and the way God use's power different from human views and approaches to power?



## So what?



10  
MIN

## Power



Philippians 2:5-11

This passage was probably based on an early church hymn so why not read this all together.

Remember our conversations about power and connectivity in terms of phones, connectivity, battery, etc? It's frustrating to lose power, so ...

- ❓ Why would a God with power give the power away?

- ❓ How do people grasp power? Why didn't Jesus do the same?
- ❓ Jesus spend time with people who on the whole didn't have power – why was that?

(Your group might not feel powerful but ask them to think about living in the UK, being educated, some of them might have jobs. What relational power do they have?)

Share the story of Christian Aid's work with Usha and the Dalit community.

See p84

## Questions

- ❓ Usha's example is incredible. What do you admire about her?
- ❓ Have you ever experienced someone treating you with inequality? How did it make you feel? How did you respond?
- ❓ Jesus led but also served. How is his example and that of Usha similar?



## Big questions



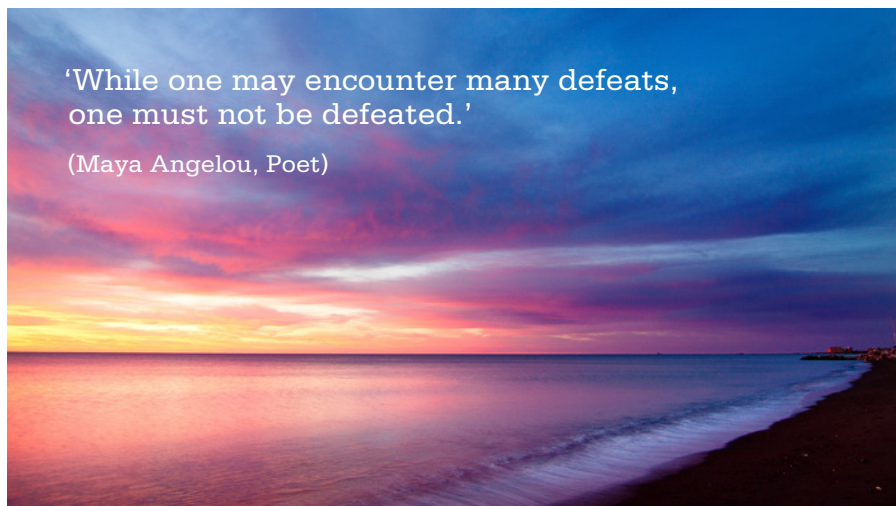
10  
MIN

## The Problem Of Power? (10 mins)

Take some time to look at the image and the quote.

'While one may encounter many defeats,  
one must not be defeated.'

(Maya Angelou, Poet)



So many people we admire have lacked power, yet have stuck in there, taken blows and stood up for what's right.

- ❓ How do you think they manage this sort of perseverance?
- ❓ Do you think people take advantage of people who serve others?
- ❓ Do the people with power use power well?
- ❓ How can we be more aware of how we use power for good?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

Once a day service.

Being a servant of others sounds like a hard task. Start with one deliberate act each day for one week. For example you could:

- ▶ Help someone to cross the road who struggles with this themselves
- ▶ Put out your neighbour's bins
- ▶ Help out your parents
- ▶ Be kind to someone who doesn't deserve it

Each day find one way to serve someone else. Write down how it all feels and feedback.

## Group

Next time you have a youth group away day/weekend together why not go gadget free for one day. Put aside your phone, laptop, games machine, etc. You'll have to plan this as it might be harder than you think.

As you do this one-day gadget fast, pray for those people around the world who are powerless.

❓ What might you do to help?

 Breathing deeply

 5 MIN

Spend five minutes quietly with your hands in front of you, palms up. This symbolises what you have in your hands, the power you have or maybe don't have. Reflect quietly on what you've heard and on what you can do with the power that's been given to you.



### Who holds the power?

Part of making change happen is about looking at who has power and who doesn't. Look back at your list of things you want to change about your issue, and for each one think of all the different groups of people involved. What power does each of those groups of people have over the thing you want to change? Different people have different types of power.

Perhaps you want your church to stop using plastic cups. Your youth group might have the power to talk to church leaders about why it's important, but who has the power to make a decision about which cups the church buys? Who is the all-important person you need to influence who can actually make your change happen?



# Breaking the Caste

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A Christian Aid story exploring work with the Dalit people in India and Bangladesh.



Usha is an incredible woman and a provocative leader. Usha was born into a family of Dalit farm labourers in Uttar Pradesh, India. The Dalits, formerly known as 'untouchables' sit at the bottom of what's known as the caste system. The caste system is a class-like view of the world where people are judged and treated as to their position in the caste system. Because of their place at the bottom of caste, the Dalit people are often expected to do the worst jobs, often in conditions of slavery. It's a tough life for many and the Dalit people often must deal with being written off, but not Usha.

Over the years Usha has gradually emerged as a leader within her community, but it was quite a fight. As well as being looked down

on for being Dalit, Usha also had to deal with a society that often thinks women's voices shouldn't be heard. It was tough to stand up but she felt she had to.

She was successful in organising Dalit farm workers to fight against the oppression of the more dominant castes and negotiate for better wages. This sounds incredible, but when you understand that in South Asia approximately 210 million people (source: United Nations) are prejudiced against for issues of race or caste, it's more incredible. These issues of prejudice hamper people's chances of employment, education and healthcare and affect their everyday lives.

For Usha, standing up as a leader wasn't easy. She experienced adverse reactions in her community and family, which resulted in family violence and forced her to leave her marital home. This has not deterred her from her commitment to fight for oppressed communities and Dalit women, and she now leads the women's collective supported by Dynamic Action Group and backed with Christian Aid's support.

The plight of Dalit women is complicated and painful. Christian Aid's work has taught that the struggles of marginalised groups are not only with groups who seek to dominate them but also with the ways society has incorporated these prejudices into everyday life.

One example is that violence against women and girls is very common in Dalit households and communities. This problem can be increased by the Dalit's community not being listened to when a problem occurs. In India for example, the conviction rate for rape against Dalit women is under 2% compared to a conviction rate of 25% in rape cases against all women in India.

‘I am in this movement for a reason; I cannot give up. If you are educated, no one can stop you. That is what I want for my grandchildren. I want to educate them so that they do not face the same challenges that I have faced.’

(Moni Rani Das, Vice-President of the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement.)

Christian Aid works with Nagorik Uddyog (NU) who support some of the most vulnerable Dalit communities, supporting Dalit organisations and platforms for claiming their rights and entitlements.

Working together they’ve:

- ▶ Supported women to become change agents in their communities. For example, Dalit women leaders can help individuals, especially other women, to access social safety net programmes.
- ▶ Provided skills development and support to enable Dalit women to find new and creative ways to earn an income.
- ▶ Advocated for young girls and women to gain scholarships for schools and campaigned for affirmative action and non-discrimination in education.



To find out more about Christian Aid's work with Dalit communities check out:

[christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/india](http://christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/india)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

### 1230: Assisi, Italy

Stories are told of an early Franciscan monk called Juniper. Juniper was spontaneously generous but it often got him in trouble. Regularly, the other friars would send Juniper out for supplies or to do a task. Instead of completing it, he'd return naked with no money saying he'd met more needy people along the road who needed clothes or money so he had given it to them. Once, Juniper was tasked with looking after a church building. An extremely poor man came to the door asking for help. Juniper looked for money to give him but couldn't find any so instead let him take the church bell, which had some value.

The leader of Juniper's friary had had enough and so told him he was forbidden from giving his clothes away anymore. That same afternoon Juniper was out walking and met a man who was naked and in great need. He asked Juniper for his cloak.

'I have been forbidden from giving away my clothes,' he said, 'but if you were to take it from me, I would not resist you.'

Juniper returned naked once more.

When Francis, the founder of the Franciscans heard about his exploits, he is said to have prayed for 'a forest of Junipers'.

- ❓ What power do we have?
- ❓ How might we take the power we have and use it to help those without power?



**Painting by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo- Brother 'Juniper and the Beggar'**

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

### Dalit support

As a group, why not investigate the cause and needs of the Dalit community in South Asia. Check out what the issues are and share them with your church. Take an action to support them such as:

- ▶ Writing to your Member of Parliament to ask them to take up the Dalit cause.
- ▶ Supporting a campaign that speaks up for Dalits around the world.

## ▶ Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

### Power prayer map

Take time to think about your local community. If you can, bring out a map of the area. Write down where power is held and who holds it. Pray for these people/institutions and the way they use power.

#### ❓ What does it teach you about using power?

Why not use this simple prayer task to help you reflect.

Each time you switch on a plug or power button pray:

‘Thank you God for the power you give me, help me to use it wisely.’

Each time you switch something off, pray:

‘Help me Lord to remember those who are powerless and to speak up for them.’

# 5

# S H A L O M

(Hebrew:  
meaning 'peace')



christian  
**aid**



## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

To understand the nature of peace between people and how to foster peace. In doing so we'll explore the proactive nature of peace – that something needs to be done in order to achieve it.

### Foundations

John 14:27: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A homemade graffiti wall. You can use lining paper on a wall, or a blackboard, or an old piece of MDF. Anything that people can gather round and write on with marker pens.
- ▶ Film footage of England's penalty shootout against Columbia in the 2018 World Cup ([bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk) or Youtube).



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Peace

The Church of England uses this unusual blessing in its services. It's called 'The Peace'. The congregation use the words below and then greet each other (handshakes, hugs, smiles, waves) as a sign of peace. Do it together In your group.

Encourage people to stand and read the following liturgy from the Church of England's Common Worship (c/r Ephesians 2:15,16).

Christ is our peace.

He has reconciled us to God  
in one body by the cross.

We meet in his name and share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.





You can read the full liturgy at [bit.ly/2E1H3XR](https://bit.ly/2E1H3XR)

Ask:

- ❓ How did that feel?
- ❓ Would you want to share the peace with everyone, even those you'd fallen out with?
- ❓ Is there a difference sharing a greeting normally in everyday life and greeting each other in the name of Jesus? Why?

Explain that many cultures have set ways to share peace, eg the Masai spitting on their hands or the Maori tradition of the Hongi: sharing breath. These are intentional practices that recognise peace isn't simply about style or emotions but about intention and determination.

- ❓ Are we willing to actively share peace with other people?



## Optional game

### Balancing

Get hold of a pair of scales with two sides so that you can compare the weights of things. If you don't have any scales, make a simple set with plastic cups, hung with string from a coathanger (see Belong website for details).

Gather together a variety of household objects and get the group to choose items that will balance each other. Each team starts

with 10 points. Each wrong guess leads to a point being lost and the winning team is the one with points still left at the end.

- ❓ What helps us to feel balanced?



## Being Sent Out: Matthew 10:5-16, 40-42

Show the film clip of England's penalty shootout against Columbia in the 2018 World Cup.

- ❓ What does it feel like to be picked?
- ❓ What changes when you discover the task is easier or harder than you thought?

Watch the players walk up to take the penalty.

- ❓ What might they be thinking?

Jesus picked his 12 disciples and then sends them out. He gives them a mission to go all around the surrounding area sharing about Jesus and the good news of his message. Their first instruction though is to offer peace in every place where they set foot.

Read the passage in a contemporary version of the Bible.

- ❓ Why is peace the first thing the disciples offer?
- ❓ Why is the rejection of peace such a big problem?
- ❓ In the section at the end of the chapter, Jesus talks about if people give a cup of water to one

of his disciples he considers them a follower,  
why is this? Does it remind you of anything?

The Hebrew word Shalom is offered as a greeting of peace, either when meeting someone or when saying goodbye. You can find it in the Bible, where it focuses on the well-being of others (Genesis 43:27, Exodus 4:18), seals peace treaties (1 Kings 5:12), and is used as a blessing of peace to cities and nations (Psalm 122:6, Jeremiah 29:7).

Shalom expresses a complete, God-given peace that is granted in a greeting but centres on the love of God. The disciples brought shalom into each home they visited and it was the first thing Jesus wanted the people to be given.

❓ Have you ever felt like you've brought the greeting of God to a situation?



So what?



10  
MIN

## Peace



Read John 14:2-27

It's towards the end of his life and Jesus is seeking to reassure his disciples. He's going but they won't be alone. Jesus will be with them through his Spirit and peace will be the outcome. It won't be like any other peace they've known.

The peace of God, his shalom is whole and total, encompassing relationships, the future and all of our needs as human beings. Christ leaves them with his peace as a way of being in community.



Make a graffiti wall and write on it all the words they can think of that express the emotion of a goodbye.

- ❓ How does it feel if you might never see someone again, or might not see them for a long time?

Give people who might have gone through this the opportunity to share.

- ❓ Why is peace an important gift for Jesus to bring?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work with Bishop Paride in South Sudan.

**See p102**

## Questions

- ❓ Why are peacemakers important? What role do they play?
- ❓ What do you think of Bishop Paride's daily exercise? Does it make any difference at all?
- ❓ What difference does the peace Jesus brings make to Bishop Paride's work? Is this a different sort of peace?



## Big questions



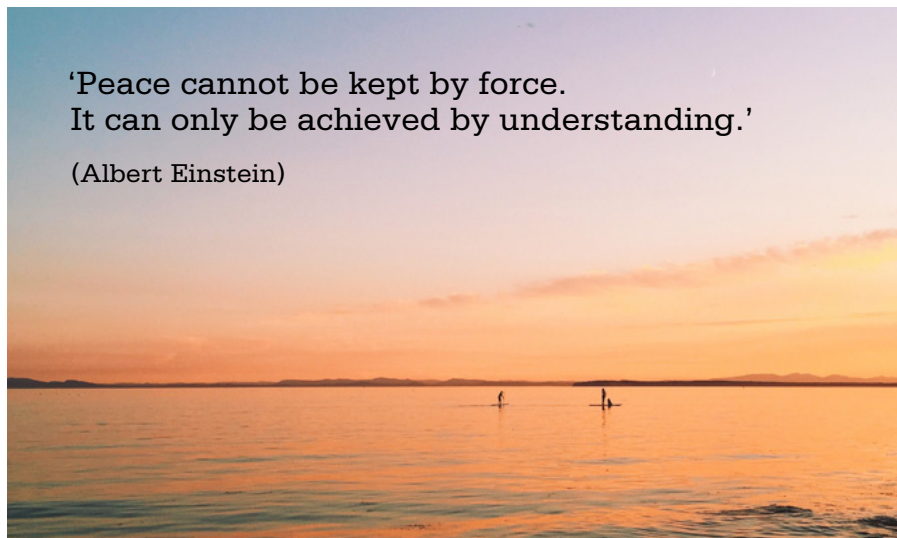
10  
MIN

### Why Be At Peace?

Take some time to look at the image and the quote:

'Peace cannot be kept by force.  
It can only be achieved by understanding.'

(Albert Einstein)



#### ? Can we be bringers of peace?

At Christian Aid, we believe that in places of conflict or violence the way to peace requires the absence of violence. It's not just enough to be 'peaceful'. This absence of violence usually requires action so what might it look like to be bringers of peace?

#### ? How might we start?

Remember God's peace isn't simply a feeling but a way of being in community with the whole of creation.

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*





## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

13th century Saint Francis of Assisi was so impacted by the story of Jesus sending out his disciples that he committed to offering peace to everyone he met, even animals and wildlife as well as people.

- ❓ Why not spend this week using a simple greeting that offers peace? Have a think about what you might say?
- ❓ Why not report back next week and see what happens?

### Group

In this week's story, Bishop Paride in South Sudan uses a physical routine each morning to reflect on peacemaking and his role in it. Why not devise a simple routine as a group that explores something you feel God's speaking to you about peace and peacemaking. Agree to try that routine out yourselves and to share it with your church.



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

Throughout the history of the Church, people have used repetitive prayers or liturgies as a way of reflecting on Jesus, his love or his promises.

Write a list of people, places and times when there is a lack of peace – think about your home, friends, school, church and wider



community first, and then about things beyond that, in the country, in the world.

Read out each one in turn and after a moment of silence ask the group to say together:

‘Peace be with you.’

Repeat this until you’ve finished your list.

 Could you use this prayer during this week?



## Campaign toolkit

### Peace: How do we get people on board?

Relationships are important – how we make each other feel, how well we understand each other, and choosing to approach each other with peace rather than aggression or violence is vital when we’re trying to make change happen. Listening is always a key skill in peacemaking.

Jesus often used what is called the ‘third way’ when it came to challenging people. The third way is a middle ground between getting angry and violent, and giving in or ignoring something we know is wrong. The third way is about finding a creative way to challenge people in a way that turns the issue on its head and helps people think about what the problem is.

Often we might be angry about an issue, but if we want to convince those with the power to change something then we need to make

sure we approach them in a way that doesn't just bring about more anger and difference.

Look at the people that hold the power to make your change happen.

- ❓ How are you going to communicate to them in a way that convinces them to get on board?
- ❓ Think about what their motivations might be; how do they feel about the issue?
- ❓ What are the similarities between you and the things you have in common that you can use to talk to them?

Come up with a powerful tag line, slogan or sentence that will convince people to get on board with your campaign. Your message might be slightly different depending on who you're talking to.

# Bringing Peace

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A Christian Aid story about  
peacemaking in South Sudan.



Bishop Paride has one of those warm faces where his eyes smile when his mouth does, softened even further by his white beard. His energy, enthusiasm and smile make him an unusual 80-year-old man.

But to the people of South Sudan, Bishop Paride is different for a more striking reason – he can remember peace.

South Sudan, our world's youngest nation, has truly suffered. With decades of brutal civil war to its name, many of its people have never known what peace is. The latest period of conflict erupted in 2013 and has claimed the lives of thousands of people as well as seeing millions displaced.

There was a brief period where violence ceased under an agreement initiated in 2005, in which Bishop Paride played a key role. It was the same agreement that began a process which led to South Sudan's independence from Sudan in 2011. Nevertheless, in December of 2013 violent conflict erupted again.

Christian Aid is working in South Sudan with local communities to tackle violence. Where violence exists, there can be no peace. One of the ways this is done is through working with church leaders to help them be advocates for peace and reconciliation. Bishop Paride is central to this work, but at the centre of his commitment to peacemaking is a rather odd ritual.

It starts early in the morning, every morning. If you catch him at the right moment you'll find Paride jumping like a frog a hundred times, doing twenty push-ups, swimming with his arms in the air a hundred times, twisting his waist a hundred times and standing on each leg a hundred times. If he's in a car travelling early (as he often is as an internationally acclaimed peacemaker) he waits for the car to stop and runs around it 100 times before continuing with his usual set.

But this isn't merely an exercise routine. As Paride jumps or runs he whispers quietly to himself:

‘Love, joy, peace, patience, compassion, sympathy, kindness, truth, gentleness, self-control, humility, poverty, forgiveness, mercy, friendship, trust, unity, purity, faith, hope.’

And then,

‘I love you, I miss you, thank you, I forgive, we forget together, I am wrong, I am sorry.’

He repeats this collection of words to himself over and over as he goes through his well-practised exercises. The crucial part is that as these words are spoken Paride examines himself asking whether he is keeping to this words and where he needs to improve.

Every day he starts his day this way. Every day. He’s done this for over twenty years.

He explains, ‘If these words are repeated by everybody, then there will be no conflict between people.’



You can watch Bishop Paride sharing his words here:  
[youtube.com/watch?v=G3-dwZFpm4E](https://youtube.com/watch?v=G3-dwZFpm4E)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

**August 1982: Beirut, Lebanon**



The August of 1982 in the Lebanese capital is marked with bombs. A war was in full swing. People were trapped and suffering.

In Calcutta, the suffering of children in Beirut and particularly the story of some disabled children who had become isolated and trapped in a local hospital struck a little Albanian nun called Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa took immediate action, travelling to Beirut, negotiating with leaders and diplomats and praying for a ceasefire. On 14 August as silence came over Beirut and the bombs stopped for a short time, she went into the city in a bus and collected between 30 and 60 children, no one is quite sure. She set up a makeshift care centre in a safer part of the city and cared like no one else could.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

Focus on an area or nation where there is conflict and a lack of peace right now.



You might want to use the website  
[warsintheworld.com](http://warsintheworld.com) to help you.

You might want to use the website [warsintheworld.com](http://warsintheworld.com) to help you. Agree to explore the issues in that place and to understand them better, then join in a campaign to encourage people to take action to bring about change. For example, this could be about South Sudan and the problems featured in our story.



To find out more about what Christian Aid are doing in that country visit [www.christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/south-sudan](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/south-sudan)

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

### Count to 10

Often we can struggle ourselves with being at peace, with controlling our emotions or understanding people different from us. Make a conscious effort to use the simple technique of counting to 10 when you're stressed before speaking or acting. Maybe you feel like sending someone an angry PM or putting a response to something that's been said on Instagram. Instead try and count to 10 before continuing.

- ❓ Can waiting for a little while and finding some peace help you respond in a more helpful way?



# 6

## M A R U T A I



(Tamil: meaning  
'change')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting Aim

To learn how to be people who are committed to change, to explore what change God wants to see and to know how to begin to bring change about.

### Foundations

Isaiah 43:19: '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.'



### What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A whiteboard or something similar
- ▶ A drinking glass, a glass bowl, water and blue and yellow food colouring.
- ▶ A tray with household objects (for optional game.)



### The big idea



**10**  
MIN

## Change

This is a simple colour-change experiment that looks cool.

You need a glass and then a glass bowl and some water and food colouring.

**Step 1** – Take the glass, fill it with water and add two drops of blue food colouring. The water should change colour.

**Step 2** – Take the bowl, fill it with water and add two drops of yellow food colouring. Again the water should change.

Now place the glass in the yellow water in the bowl.

When you look through the glass of the bowl the water in the glass should now appear green.

Some changes are big, some are small but the world is always changing.

- ❓ Ask the group what changes have they gone through in their lives?
- ❓ What changes do they see around them?
- ❓ Is change good or bad?
- ❓ What changes would they like to see?



## Optional game

### Kim's Game

Have a tray with a selection of household objects. Remove the tray and take something off the tray without anyone seeing. Ask the group to identify what has gone.

- ❓ Is change always easy to see?



### Nicodemus John 3:1-21

Ask your vicar or one of trained team members at your church whether you can interview them (perhaps on film) about all the training they received. Get them to explain all the subjects they learned about and what qualification they left training with. Have some fun with the longest theological word they learned.

Nicodemus was a trained and educated religious leader. He'd been told that Jesus was bad news, yet he wondered if he was wrong.

Jesus realised Nicodemus had to go through a process to accept following him. Nicodemus would find it hard to accept Jesus if he didn't first let go of all the intellectual reasons why he should reject him. It would almost be like a re-birth.



Read John 3:1-21.

Think about the metaphor of being born again.

- ❓ If a very trained and educated adult man had to go back to the maturity and reasoning of a child, what would happen?
- ❓ Why was this important to seeing change?



## So what?



10  
MIN

### Is Change Possible?



Read Isaiah 43:19

Write down a list of positive changes you've seen happen in your lifetimes.

Pick out two and ask:

- ❓ How did they begin?
- ❓ Who started them?
- ❓ Why did change take place?
- ❓ Was God involved?

We see many difficult situations in the world and can often feel powerless but the reality is that change can happen and usually it's started by ordinary people like you and me. The prophet Isaiah was speaking to Israel in a terrible time in their history. He wanted to communicate God's message of change, that the impossible could be made possible.

Have a discussion about issues they see in the world where change is needed, such as in an area of conflict, hunger or natural disaster.

- ❓ What changes might they think God wants to see in our world?



Pick one issue they're aware of in the world they'd like to see change and write it down somewhere prominent for later.

Share the story of Christian Aid's work in Ethiopia protecting children.

**See p117**

## Questions

- ❓ What were the events that brought about change in Bokiya's situation?

The local people realized the issue of child marriage was wrong after working with Christian Aid's partner. They had to be presented with new ideas and realities.

- ❓ Does this feel similar to the journey Nicodemus went on? How?

Bokiya became a campaigner on the issue.

- ❓ Who else do you know who has been affected by an injustice and then gone on to campaign about it?



## Big questions



**10**  
MIN

## The Problem Of Power?

Take some time to look at the image and the quote:



- ❓ Can we really change the world?
- ❓ Is the impossible really possible with God's help?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*

## Taking action 10-20 MIN

### Individual

Jesus encouraged Nicodemus to start the process of change with himself – to be born again or start again. Think about your own life and concentrate on an area where it might be good to make a fresh start. Share this with a friend and ask for help.

## Group

Go back to the big issue you raised at the start of the session. Discuss how realistically you might make a difference and as a group try to get involved.



### Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

The biggest change we make in our own lives is to make a fresh start of faith with Jesus. Take a few moments to reflect on your own life in silence, then lead the group in a simple prayer to ask forgiveness, to make a fresh start and to be born again.



### Campaign toolkit

## What's the plan?

We've thought about what we want to change, who has the power to make the change happen, and how we're going to get them on board. Now's the time to make a plan of what we're going to do!

**? What are the different things that need to be done?**

Try and put them into an order of things you need to do and when each thing will happen. There are some different types of tasks you should think about:

**? Does your campaign involve talking to people, sending letters, putting something on social media or designing posters to put up?**



- ❓ Are you planning on putting on an event to tell people about your issue?
- ❓ Or maybe you want to arrange a time to go and meet with the people who hold the power.

# Campaigning For Rights

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A Christian Aid story about  
protecting children in Ethiopia



For many people, their wedding day is a day to dream about or remember forever. But for many girls and women, marriage is far from that dream. Did you know that one third of girls in the developing world are married before 18 and one in five married before 15. For many there is no choice in this and often the marriages then prove traumatic or violent.

Bokiya is 14 years old and lives in a rural community in Ethiopia. In her community, child marriage is common and many girls don't go to secondary school because they're married when they're

young. Girls are treated as less important than boys here, and are often exchanged for cattle when they get married.

One of Christian Aid's partners, HUNDEE, works in the community and runs workshops to teach people about the problems that child marriage causes. As a result, the community recognised how unfair and harmful it was and decided to set up a law that says no one can marry a girl under the age of 18.

But not everyone knew about the law...

When Bokiya's sister died, her parents wanted her to marry her sister's husband. But he was 60 years old. Bokiya had heard in school about the new law that she had the right not to be forced into marriage, so she refused. Her parents were very angry and took away her clothes and soap.

Bokiya ran away from home and was looked after by another woman in the community who had helped to set up the new law against child marriage. Eventually her parents were persuaded to let her continue going to school and agreed that she didn't have to marry.

Now Bokiya is a campaigner for girls in her community. She gives advice to other girls at her school so they know what their rights are too.



For more check out:

[christianaidcollective.org/id-like-you-to-meet-bokiya](https://christianaidcollective.org/id-like-you-to-meet-bokiya)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

### **November 2008: Chicago**

During a massive gathering in Central Chicago in 2008 stood Barack Obama. He'd just been elected President of the United States after a long and gruelling election. He stood there as the first black President in a country where 14% of all people are African-American.

Central to Obama's campaign was the phrase 'Yes, We Can' – a belief that change was possible.



- ❓ Is change possible?
- ❓ How might our actions bring about changes that make the world better?

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

### Spring clean

If you have a youth venue or room you use to meet why not organize a clean up and redesign of it. If you can, get permission repaint the place, make it more you and more up to date. If that's not possible, how about a church clean up or community litter pick. Afterwards reflect on how changing a place can change the way it feels.

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

An ancient tradition in praying for change is something called The Jesus Prayer. This prayer has various versions but has been around for much of the life of the church. It may go something like this:

'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have Mercy on Me.'

The prayer is designed to be repeated many times each day as a way of reflecting on our need for Jesus and his mercy.

❓ Why not teach your group the prayer or make up your own?

# 7

## MANA

## TAURITE



(Maori: meaning  
'having equal status or equality')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

This session will explore what it means to have equal opportunities, from local to global. What did God intend when we were all created equal?

### Foundations

Galatians 3:26-28: 'You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Greek nor Jew, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A Maths Book
- ▶ A Membership badge of some sort
- ▶ Some chains
- ▶ Some money
- ▶ A selection of plugs or phone chargers
- ▶ A set of scales and weights (if you can find them)
- ▶ A whiteboard or flipchart



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Equality

Ask the group to stand in height order from the shortest to the tallest. Then give three of the shorter members of the group something to stand on to make them taller. Move up the line accordingly. How does this make them feel?

❓ How do we make judgements of things and people in our world?

- ▶ Prettier
- ▶ More important
- ▶ Richer
- ▶ What else?



Sometimes the way we judge things can be valid, eg someone is taller than me or something is too heavy to carry or too large to fit.



However, some of our judgements are based on a way of looking at the world that doesn't champion equality – where things like pretty or wealthy become reasons for some people to be treated differently to others.

Sometimes people also have an advantage (where they've been born or what opportunities are given or taken away).

## Leaders' Guide

In the following discussion be aware of the difference between equality and equity. We don't all have the same resources, but God's economy suggests we provide for each other in community so that all have the same opportunity.

Discuss:

-  Are some people more important than others?
-  Should we all be equal?



## Optional game

### Water Game

Create three teams and put them in front of a container of water. Somewhere at the other end of the room have an empty container. Give the teams containers to transport the water from the full container to the empty one and two minutes to do it. Then hand

out each teams containers – these should be different sizes (one big, one small, one medium). The groups will no doubt complain but ignore their responses and start the game.

❓ Is everything fair?



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### The Woman At The Well John 4:1-26 and 39-42



Read the story together from John 4

As you do so be aware that there is more to the passage than meets the eye and notice all the emotions at play in their encounter.

Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman in John 4 is an extraordinary one. His disciples have gone off to get food and left Jesus alone at the well in the middle of the day. A woman appears coming to draw water. Midday is when the sun is at its hottest so it's an unusual time to come to the well unless, that is, you don't want to meet anyone else.

Draw a line down a flipchart or a whiteboard. On the left write 'say hello' and on the right say 'don't say hello'.

Ask the group why Jesus chose to talk to the woman and write their ideas on the left side. This could be to do with the way Jesus valued people and his values of equality. He saw her as an equal and acted that way. He also wanted to empower the woman. She

becomes one of the first evangelists, telling her whole village about Jesus and bringing them to him.

On the right hand side, write all the group's ideas on why it wasn't a good idea to talk to her.

**? Was she simply from the wrong side of town, the sort of person you only get into trouble with by talking to?**

Many people from his time and culture would have dissuade Jesus from talking to the woman because:

- ▶ She was a Samaritan and the Jews didn't like them that much.
- ▶ She was a woman alone and, at the time, a man might have considered it a scandal to open a conversation.
- ▶ Her reputation – she was isolated and went to the well when no one else would be there. It'd be unwise for Jesus to hang out with her.
- ▶ His reputation – what might people think of him breaking all these social rules?
- ▶ Culture – this wasn't the way things were done at that time.

Consider whether you would have spoken to her?

- ? Why?**
- ? How had she changed as a result of meeting Jesus?**
- ? What boundaries exist in our culture/nation today?**
- ? Have you ever been given equality with someone by their actions or attitudes? How did this make you feel?**



## So what?



10  
MIN

### Power



Read Galatians 3:26-28

Spend some time explaining the ideas of the passage using the props listed above:

- ▶ Wise/Included
- ▶ A maths book: to be Greek was to be wise, learned, the centre of civilisation. The Greeks prided themselves on knowledge.

OR

- ▶ A Membership Card: to be a Jew was to be included, officially a member of Yahweh's selected. You were in.
- ▶ Neither Greek nor Jew = Neither wise nor included. These were also national boundaries. It didn't matter where you came from.
- ▶ Have/have nots
- ▶ Chains: to be a slave was common at that time but you would be without rights and privileges. You had no voice.
- ▶ Money: to be free meant the opposite; you have influence, choice and freedom.
- ▶ Neither Slave Nor Free = Neither Haves nor Have nots.
- ▶ Privileged/voiceless



- ▶ A selection of plus or phone chargers:

To be male in that culture was to be prominent, listened to and in power.

Sadly at that time to be female was not considered as important as men, with fewer rights.

Neither male nor female = Neither privileged nor voiceless. Also gender distinctions are not there in God's kingdom.

Consider...

- ❓ Why do we create these categories?
- ❓ Do you think they still exist today?
- ❓ How can all be equal? Is that possible?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work with Adi from Ethiopia.

**See p133**

## Questions

- ❓ We don't all start on an equal footing ... what inequalities can't you see? Are there people in your community that didn't start with the same things you did?
- ❓ Why is this?
- ❓ Like Adi in the story, is there a way we can give people gifts to help draw out their equality with us?



## Big questions



10  
MIN

### Everyone Equal

Take some time to look at the image and the quote:

'I would like to be known as a person who is concerned about freedom and equality and justice and prosperity for all people.'

(Rosa Parks, campaigner for racial equality)



We often talk of equality as something to achieve or to provide for someone else, but at its heart, equality is mutual and something done with others and for each other's benefit. We all bring different concerns, resources and power to the question of equality.

Reflect on the image and ask:

- ❓ The glasses need different amounts of water added to become full. Does equality mean everyone gets the same treatment?

- ❓ How can I take part in living out equality in my own community?
- ❓ What equalities am I seeking? For myself? For others?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

Write this quote from Paul on a piece of paper and put it up next to your bathroom mirror or in your room. Read it each morning and see if it has an effect on the way you feel and the way you treat others:

'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' (Galatians 3:28)

### Group

Read the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount together.



(Matthew 5:1-12)

- ❓ Do any of the issues that Jesus mentions exist in your local community?

Consider who's working to address it and how your group and/or your church might be able to help? Report back your findings to the Church Council or Church Leadership.



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

Bring in a set of scales and put equal weights on each side. If you can't find a set use an image or use another object which shows balance.

Ask everyone to reflect on equality in their lives and the lives of those they know.

❓ Do you experience equality?

❓ Do your friends?

Ask everyone to write a short prayer for equality in our world and, if you have time, read them out.



## Campaign toolkit

❓ Everyone has a role to play – what will we all do?

Equality doesn't always mean (everyone being or having) the same. We all bring different skills and strengths to a team, but it's important to make sure everyone is involved if they want to be.

Make a list of what skills and strengths you bring – they might be practical or creative, or maybe you are really good at listening to people or talking to people.



Now's the time to work out who's going to do what! Depending on how ambitious your campaign is, you might have lots of things for people to do or you might just have a few things that everyone can take part in. Look at your plan and decide who is going to be responsible for which bits.

# All It Takes Is A Cow

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## A Christian Aid story about our work in Ethiopia

Many of us worry about ourselves and how we look and who we are. These are honest, everyday concerns. But imagine living in a place where nearly everyone wishes they were a boy. In Oromiya, a rural state in Ethiopia, 90% of women in the community wish they had been born as boys. This is because life is hard for Oromiya's women with many discriminated against simply for their gender.



Adi lives this difficult life. When Christian Aid met her, it became clear that she was one of the poorest women in the community. We knew that her poverty shouldn't be the thing that defines her, so we asked our partner organisation to invite her to be part of a cunning plan.

The idea was simple – to give Adi a cow. Adi was overjoyed but soon discovered this gift was more than simply a cow.

In Adi's community, owning a cow leads to having more status and equal opportunities in the community. She says: 'The day I received my cow I felt like a conquering hero returning from war.' As well as making butter and milk from her cow and selling it at the market, owning a cow means Adi can participate in community

decision-making meetings. 'The people who saw I was the poorest are the same people who now come to borrow money from me.'

Adi is part of a wider women's self-help group in local community. It shares business knowledge with women and empowers them to create work, earn a living and gain a voice. They meet once a week to discuss issues around health, hygiene and their rights. They are also able to borrow and lend each other money to help their businesses grow.

It's early days for the group but Adi is just one of many success stories. Slowly the women are growing in confidence and life in Oromiya is changing.



[youtube.com/watch?v=mAeYlniCSH4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=mAeYlniCSH4)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

**1st December 1955: Alabama**



On a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused bus driver James Balek's order to give up her seat in the 'coloured section' of his bus after a white man had boarded to find the 'whites' area full.

In 1955 racial segregation was enshrined in law in Alabama and black people were made to feel like second-class citizens.

This wasn't the first time this had happened but Parks stood her ground and then worked with the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) to take the case to court and to see the law changed. She told the press she was 'tired of giving in'. Parks so inspired the local community that black people boycotted Montgomery buses for over a year and her challenge became the first major action of the civil rights movement later made famous by Martin Luther King.

Her lawsuit succeeded in November 1956.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

### Equal Church

Think about equality in your church.

- ❓ Do you feel that you've got a voice in your church?
- ❓ What could you do as a group to share the message from this session in next week's church service?
- ❓ If your church has a notice sheet, what about asking for a paragraph each week to share what's going on in the group?
- ❓ If you feel more ambitious, how about a video with a few highlights of what the group is doing.

Take an opportunity to play an equal part in the life of your church.

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

### Inequality Diary

Ask everyone to keep a piece of paper with them this week and to note down the day, time and place where they observe inequality.

Then bring them all back together and share them.

- ❓ What similarities do you notice?
- ❓ Are there people, groups or situations that come up time and again?

# 8

## T E T S U D A U



(Japanese: meaning  
'to help someone by doing something together')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

To recognise we all need help, whatever stage of life we are at. To explore the ideas of help and kindness with all their strengths and weaknesses and to realise help is a mutual and communal activity.

### Foundations

Micah 6:8: 'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'







## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ Flour, water, pottery lacquer
- ▶ Tree/bush in a pot
- ▶ Luggage labels and pens



## The big idea



15  
MIN

### Kindness



#### Leaders' Guide

We are all broken. None of us will navigate through life injury-free: no one is perfect. But this doesn't need to be the whole story. The experience and metaphor of Kintsuigi below explores this a little. This session about help and kindness enables us to realise we both need help and that our ability to help others is enriched by an awareness and ownership of our own brokenness.

Explain the Japanese art of Kintsuigi. This is where broken pottery is fixed with gold. The simple metaphor is that our brokenness can become beautiful.

If you can, bring in some broken pottery and demonstrate. Show some pictures of beautiful Kintsuigi.

If you have the time and if your group are interested you could make some yourself here are some steps to complete your own Kintsuigi repair.

- ▶ Mix flour with water till it is spongy but not too wet.
- ▶ Add pottery lacquer to the flour/water and mix it until it is evenly blended in.
- ▶ Apply the mixture to both sides of the broken piece and then fit the pieces together.
- ▶ Set the piece aside to dry. If you are using real lacquer you need to put it in a damp and warm place for about seven days. For synthetic or cashew lacquer, you need to let it dry for about two days. (We suggest you bring one you've made earlier at this point.)
- ▶ After the piece is dry clean up the material that has been squeezed out from between the edges.
- ▶ Apply further lacquer to the join.
- ▶ Sprinkle gold leaf or gold dust on the join whilst the lacquer is still drying.
- ▶ Allow it to dry for one to two days.
- ▶ Again, bring a finished pot to show how it all ends up.

Think about times when you've been hurt or broken but that later down the line something good has come from it.

- ❓ Are there things in the world that are broken where no good can come of it?
- ❓ Where does God use our imperfections?

Sometimes things in the world need fixing, but often the mending of this brokenness can become beautiful in its own right.

- ❓ Why do you think Kintsugi is an important metaphor for Japanese culture?



## Optional game

### Human Etch-a-Sketch

A number of teams are first formed (ideally at least five members per team). One neutral judge then calls out some object (eg, a boat, a fish) that all the teams need to form with their bodies. Team members must lay down and together with the help of their team, form the object together which the judge has called out. The judge decides which team is first in the formation of the object. The judge declares that team to be the winner for that round.

- ❓ What's it like to help others?



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### The Healing - Luke 8:40-56



Read Luke 8:40-56 from a contemporary version of the Bible

Ask the group to improvise and act out the story.

The woman in the story is desperate and in need of help but too ashamed to declare her needs. She is someone who's been

broken and wants to be brought back together both in her physical struggles but also the emotional wounds that accompany them.

So she approaches Jesus and knows that if only she can get near to him, that'd be enough. But Jesus is aware of her and asks, 'Who touched me?'

Remember Jesus is super-busy. He has a child to save but nonetheless he stops to talk to the woman as well as heal her. This feels like a different sort of kindness. This act of generosity and kindness offers healing for her as a person and for all of the suffering she's been through.

- ❓ Why do you think the woman take so long to make herself known?
- ❓ How was Jesus' response kind?
- ❓ How do you think Jesus was so sensitive to the needs of others?



So what?



10  
MIN

## The Currency Of Kindness

Micah 6:8: 'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'

Put the word 'Kindness' and then the word 'Justice' on a flipchart or a whiteboard and ask the group to come up with all the other words/ways to describe them.

When we've struggled or when we meet other people who are struggling with life then being kind, helping them or campaigning for justice on their behalf seems the right thing to do. But ...

- ❓ Does kindness always make things ok?
- ❓ Aren't kind people sometimes weak? Is being just or seeking justice a bolder word?
- ❓ Can kindness and justice really change the world?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work in Bolivia with Young Entrepreneurs.

**See p149**

## Questions

- ❓ Why do you think the help from Young Entrepreneurs and Christian Aid was so important to Ronald?
- ❓ To stand up for your rights and the rights of others requires bravery and confidence. Who do you admire that stands up for other people's rights?
- ❓ Jesus stood up for the woman's right to be well and healed in our Encounter story. What other similarities can you see between Jesus and Ronald?



## Big questions



5  
MIN



### Leaders' Guide

When thinking about helping or being kind to people there can be a concern that we do good things but in an unhelpful way. What often benefits people the most is a mutual sharing of life and freedom together so that we both help each other. This quote from Lilla Watson is often attributed to liberationist Paulo Freire and attempts to say we help each other not because of power or duty but because we are all on a path of finding our way in life, all struggle and all seek our freedom and liberation together. We find this freedom in the path of love and by providing loving help and kindness to each other.

Take some time to look at the image and the quote:

'If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is tied up with mine then let us work together.'

(Lilla Watson, indigenous Australian activist and academic)

- ❓ Who has helped you?
- ❓ What difference did that make to your life?
- ❓ How can both giving to and receiving from others be an answer to problems?
- ❓ Can you think of a time where you and someone else helped each other? What was the result?

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

The Moravians who formed in the 18th century were committed to three simple vows. These three vows were to:

- ▶ Be true to Christ
- ▶ Be kind to others
- ▶ Take the gospel to the nations.

Reflecting on the second vow, why not spend one week deliberately acting kindly whenever you can. See what happens.

## Group

Plan an activity as a group where you can be kind to your local community in some way. Organise a visit to a Residential Care Home. Clean up a local river. Do it simply to be kind. Take time to recognise the benefit you receive as a group as well as the benefit to the local community. Kindness is and can be a mutual blessing.



Gather round a tree. This could be a tree near where your group meets or be a small small tree or bush that you bring in. Have some luggage tags with you.

Use the tree as a prayer tree and write on the labels all the ways God has been kind to you or that others have been kind to you. Tie them to the tree.

Think about the opportunities you may be kind to others in the future.





## Campaign toolkit

### Who can we ask to help?

As well as helping other people, we need to ask others to help us. We've already learnt that we can't do things on our own!

### Who else in the community could you approach for support with your campaign?

It might be that there are people in your church who could help, maybe a local charity that works on a similar issue that you could work with, or maybe there are local businesses who would be able to donate resources to you!

# Young Entrepreneurs

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## A Christian Aid story about working in Bolivia



Sometimes we could be forgiven for thinking being an entrepreneur was a Western thing, reserved for The Apprentice candidates of America and Europe. But if economics and business are so important for the building up of a country and its finances, why shouldn't these opportunities be available for all?

In Bolivia, Christian Aid partners with the Young Entrepreneurs' Association and works with people like Ronald Yarari Palomeque (above). Ronald is 31, runs his own baking business, organizes local basketball teams for young people in his city of San Buenaventura and campaigns for LGBTQ rights in Bolivia.

Ronald is an amazing businessman. His bakery Hornito Casero (literally 'Home of the Little Oven') produces and sells 3,500 loaves of bread every day. The business was given help by the Young Entrepreneurs Association – with some finance and support – but now it's growing and Ronald is able to give back time to others setting up businesses. He's the Vice President of the Young Entrepreneurs' Association now – quite a journey for a baker from just outside La Paz!

But this isn't all of Ronald's story. Ronald is gay and he's been on the receiving end of a considerable amount of prejudice and abuse for this. Now he campaigns for others and for LGBTQ rights in Bolivia. He's had to be brave and to be committed to help others as much as he was first helped by the Young Entrepreneurs' Association.

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

**21 October 1854 Balaklava, Crimea**

On this date, an extraordinary woman made an extraordinary change in British medical care. Florence Nightingale and 38 volunteer nurses that she'd trained were sent to Balaklava in Crimea to care for wounded British soldiers during the Crimean war.



This incredible act of help and kindness was unprecedented and changed the way nurses and field hospitals were viewed in British culture.

They arrived to find overstretched medical staff with hardly any medicine and with army officers indifferent to the importance of care. Nightingale decided she had to act and wrote to the British Government. Her campaigning resulted in the first-ever prefabricated hospitals being built in England and shipped to the battle front. When she returned she campaigned for better care of wounded servicemen, arguing that most of the deaths were due to poor conditions.

Nightingale herself became an icon at the time, known as ‘the lady with the lamp’ as she went round all the beds at night to tend for soldiers using lamplight to guide her. The Nightingale Pledge was introduced in 1893 as a pledge said by all new nurses.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the Word

### Accompanying

Talk to your church community or a community group about ways you can connect people in need with those willing to help. Maybe there’s someone you can organize meals for or you can gather together volunteers to help clear a garden or fix something? Maybe there’s an existing project you can help out with that’s doing the things you want to help with.

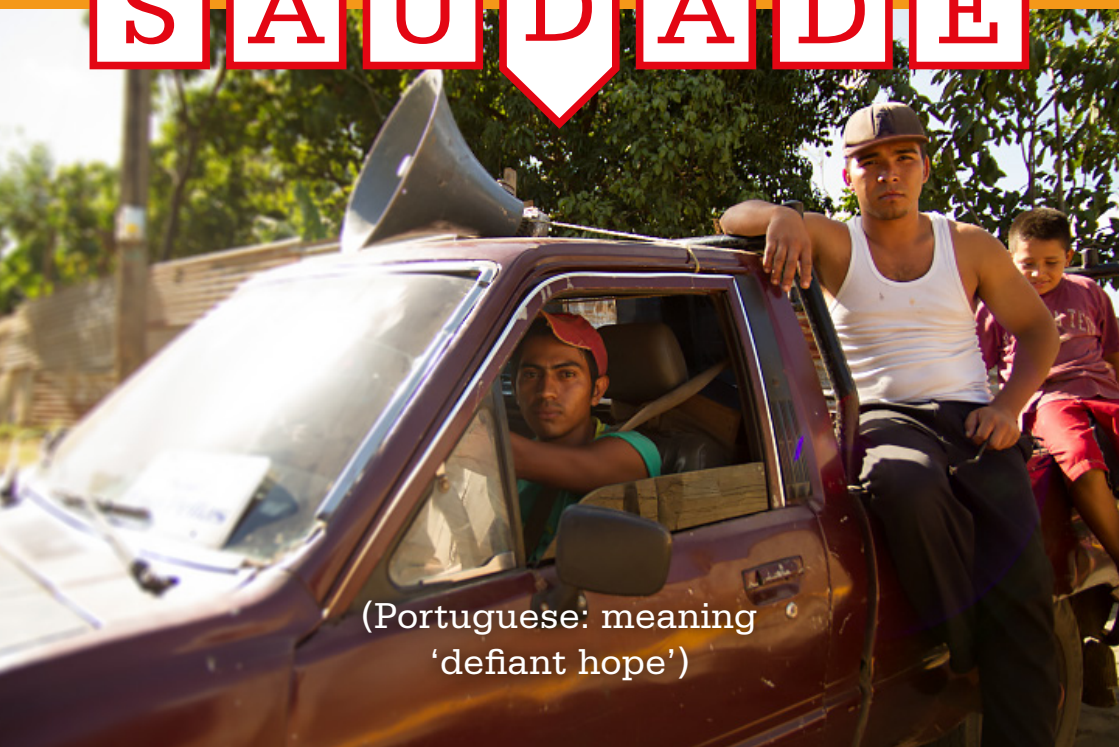
## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it Through

### Helping

Many of us use technology to count how many steps we’ve taken or how many miles we’ve run. Why not create a simple way of encouraging yourself to help such as an alarm that goes off at noon each day which reminds you to help others in need.

# 9

## S A U D A D E



(Portuguese: meaning  
'defiant hope')

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting Aim

Hope is an active word and the Bible teaches us we can hope in a better world. Hope can change us and change others?

### Foundations

Psalm 42:11: 'Put your hope in God for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.'





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A whiteboard or something similar
- ▶ Seeds of your choice, soil and something to plant in.
- ▶ Props for the 'Encounter' story, especially a white sheet.



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Hope

Hand out some seeds. Sunflower seeds work well for this if you're doing this in Spring or Summer but otherwise use a seed which can be planted at this time of year.

Small seeds grow big things. Plant them in some soil and agree to tend them as a group. You can plant the seeds at home but if you have anywhere at your venue why not plant them there and then you can see plants develop as you meet together each week.

Hope can be like a small seed. It starts as a small and insignificant thing but can grow tall. Hope is full of potential.

Ask the group what they feel hopeful about ... in their lives, in the world.

- ❓ Why do you feel this hope?
- ❓ What things do you feel less hopeful about? Why?
- ❓ How can you plant hope?



- ❓ How can you tend it and look after it?
- ❓ What might hope grow?



## Optional game

### Newspaper Game

Each team has a newspaper.

The leader asks questions and they must answer by cutting out the appropriate words from a paper.

Sample questions:

- ❓ What colour is my hair?
- ❓ What day is it?
- ❓ What was the weather today?
- ❓ What is your favourite food?

Sometimes finding answers isn't straightforward.



## Encounters



15  
MIN

### The Widow And Her Son Luke 7:11-17

This story is fun to act so hand out some parts. Encourage people to be dramatic. Anyone without a defined role can be the crowd as they have a lot to do, being stunned and amazed as the person once dead comes back to life. Look through the story and bring as many props as you can such as a white sheet for the body.

- ❓ Why does the writer mention the man was an only son, and the woman a widow?
- ❓ Who had hope in the story, and why?

For fun, film it and if you're feeling brave share in online (with permission from those involved and parents).

OR

Why not get the group to write a poem or short story from either the widow's point of view or that of her son. Get them to imagine a post-resurrection experience.

- ❓ How do you think the man and his mum would have lived their lives after this encounter with Jesus? Why?




## So what?


**10**  
MIN

## Hope

- ❓ What is hope and how would you define it to someone?

 Psalm 42:11: 'Put your hope in God for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.'

- ❓ Why would we put hope in God, what does this mean?
- ❓ Is hoping in God different from other types of hope? Why?

Share the story of Christian Aid's work in the Philippines.

**See p161**

## Questions

- ❓ Some situations around the world feel hopeless. How can we find hope in them? What does this story tell us about hope?
- ❓ ICode found Susset was well placed to help because of her determination and strength. Why is this important?
- ❓ Is God determined for us? Think about your answer and why you think it.



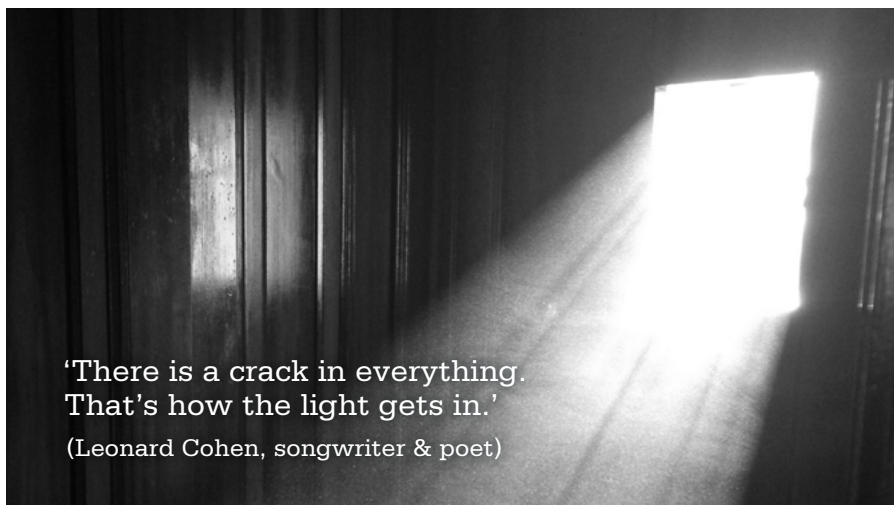
### Big questions



10  
MIN

## The Brightness Of Hope?

Take some time to look at the image and the quote:



'There is a crack in everything.  
That's how the light gets in.'

(Leonard Cohen, songwriter & poet)

Think about hope and the light that it can bring into dark situations. Allow yourself to hope.

*(Image is available for download on the Belong pages of Christian Aid's website).*



## Taking action



10-20  
MIN

### Individual

Make a hope journal. Each day write down everything you have hope for and a prayer or thought to go with it. Tend these hopes and trust them to God.

### Group

Create an exhibition, a mural, a piece of art, a garden or something visible that communicates hope to your commitment. Call it a Hope Garden or Hope Art. Share news of it and encourage others to join in with a sense of hope for where you live.



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

Take a large piece of card and write the words 'I hope for ...' on it in black pen.

Place it at the front of the room.

Then give everyone paper and ask them to complete this sentence as many times as they want to. Challenge people to think of things local, national and global.

Lastly gather all the paper together (folded up so its private) and place it in a bowl. Offer it to God like a priest offers the money offering and say a prayer.

Trust these hopes to God.



## Campaign toolkit

What is our vision for the outcome?

God has a vision for a better world, a world where everyone is equal and treated with dignity; a world where justice runs like a never-ending stream.

What's your vision for a better world? What would your ideal result be for the issue you're campaigning on? You can think about the big picture outcome, but try and also think about a realistic outcome for your campaign. You aren't going to change the whole world with one campaign, but there are small changes you can make.

When planning a campaign it's important to have an end point, so that you know when you've achieved what you're working towards and so that you can be really clear to people about what it is you're asking for.

# Island Of Hope

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A Christian Aid story about working in the Philippines



Sometimes change is just a few steps away and sometimes saying yes when you're asked to help is the way change begins.

Susset lives on Bat-Os island in the Philippines. This island wouldn't look out of place on a holiday website with turquoise seas and lush beaches. But what you wouldn't know is that a few years ago Bat-Os was hit by the most powerful tropical storm to ever make landfall with winds over 250mph and a sea level surge of 13 foot. It left over 4 million people homeless and killed over 6000.

Hope on the island and across the entire Philippines was low. Although not one of the major contributors to climate change, the Philippines is one of the countries that is being hit the hardest by its effects. It feels hopeless because it's only going to get worse as

the climate continues to change. The Philippines is suffering from an increasing number of storms and rising sea levels that are the result of climate change.

So how does hope start? Well in this story it starts with Susset. She was asked by Christian Aid partner ICode to help them get the community back on their feet. They chose her to be involved because they saw in her determination and strength, despite all she had been through.

Susset's house was destroyed during the typhoon, leaving her to take shelter in their church with her three young children. Everything they owned was washed away and they were left with nowhere to live. Despite all she'd been through, Susset was determined to help rebuild her community and help them to be more resistant to future storms.

Together they rebuilt the community, which had been destroyed, with new storm-resistant, solar-powered houses.

Although they will inevitably face more storms in the future, the islanders of Bat-Os are in a much stronger position and they're leading the way in using sustainable technology, which means when the storms knock the electricity lines down they'll still have power.

What's more is that the community is now much closer; they work together to make sure they're more resilient to the disasters that come their way.



For more about Christian Aid's work in the Philippines  
visit [christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/  
philippines](http://christianaid.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/philippines)

# Belong #Extra

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## ► Extra Idea One – Story

**1666, London**



In 1666, a massive fire swept through London. Within days Sir Christopher Wren, a leading architect, had submitted plans to King Charles II for new buildings in the area including St Paul's Cathedral. Some plans were rejected but eventually building began.

As Wren began building, he used the central stones from the old St Paul's destroyed in the fire and found one inscribed with the line 'resurgam' which is Latin for 'I shall rise again'. So struck by this sense of hope, he placed the wording across the south door of the church.



What resulted from his work was one of the most iconic Cathedrals in the UK but also a symbol of hope. This hope increased during the Blitz in the Second World War when St Paul's stood tall and undamaged amidst all the bombing. It became a symbol of hope once more to the people of London.

## ► Extra Idea Two – Spreading the word

### St Pauls

Research more of the story of St Pauls Cathedral and, if it's possible, go for a visit. Is there a building or place near you that represents hope? Go and check it out.

Share your feedback on social media with us.

## ► Extra Idea Three – Seeing it through

### Be Hopeful

One of the most popular things people do in cathedrals or other religious buildings is to light a candle as a prayer for hope in a situation. Usually this is done quietly and personally. Why not have a candle-lit vigil to pray for situations and people where hope is needed. Just fill your church with tealights and allow people to come in and light them.

# 10

# KIRCHE



(German:  
meaning 'church')

christian  
**aid**

## Leaders' Guide

### Meeting aim

Looking at how the Church is God's great plan for relationships. For this last session we're going to work a little differently from our normal plan. We have given more time to discussing how we can live out the concepts in these ten sessions by 'being' church and also to give more space to the Breathe Deeply element. We hope you appreciate the change.

### Foundations

John 21: The miraculous catch of fish and the calling of Peter.





## What you'll need

- ▶ A way of projecting images
- ▶ A whiteboard or something similar
- ▶ Your church



## The big idea



10  
MIN

### Church

Hold a discussion about church with your group.

- ❓ What do they like and don't like about church?

Move the discussion quickly onto where they feel they fit in church and what impact church can have.

- ❓ Do your young people feel central to the life of the church?
- ❓ Does church feel central to the life of the community?

If the answer to either or both of those is 'no' then think about what might need to change.

Take some notes and agree to take these ideas to the church leadership, the Church Council and the wider congregation.

Begin a discussion about how things might change.

Christian Aid works with and partners with churches in the UK and around the world. We're convinced that the church plays a central role in God's plan for the world and how we care for it.

❓ Do you agree with this?

❓ Do you think your church is important to the world?



## Optional game

### Human Church

Split teams in two.

With their bodies only they must make a 3D church building including:

- ▶ a door
- ▶ a steeple/spire
- ▶ a clock

❓ How do we make up the Church?



## Encounters



20-30  
MIN

### Fish - John 21

Set up a barbeque or outside cooking space and cook some fish. As the fish is cooking, share the story of John 21 and the miraculous catch. If this is not possible, perhaps order some fish and chips and tell the story as it is being unwrapped and shared out.

Think about the story in three parts:

❓ Why was the catch of fish important?

❓ Why did Jesus cook them breakfast?

## ? Why did Jesus need to restore Peter three times?

If the discussion heads in this direction suggest some ideas:

- ▶ These were simple ordinary people just like you and me.
- ▶ Jesus built church around ideas they were familiar with, eg fishing. The analogy can be messy as its not just about catching people – but the point is it made sense to them.
- ▶ Jesus liked to hang out.
- ▶ Jesus served them – this isn't the first time this had happened. We can get the point of church wrong quite often. It's about Jesus primarily.
- ▶ Jesus wanted Peter to know what he did and to feel like he'd been forgiven.
- ▶ Jesus chose Peter with all the knowledge of what he'd done. We are ready if we're called.

Have a fish supper and discuss the sessions from this course you've done.

? What have you all learnt?

? How will it change us, what might we do next?

? How can church be a part of the future?

Check out the Christian Aid Story about our work with churches around the world.

**See p172**

Do you think the church is really that important in helping and changing society?



## Breathing deeply



5  
MIN

The early church shared everything they had – they ate together, prayed together, worshipped together. As they shared life, others joined them and they genuinely changed the world from those first moments in Jerusalem.

Finish your time with some prayers and then agree to come up with a plan of what you might do next.

We'd like to suggest you create a place where you can talk to your church about what you've been thinking through and working on and how to be people who bring about change in our world.

Why not organise a meal and invite members of your church to it to discuss this?



## Campaign toolkit

How to get your church on board and putting our plan into action

You've finished all your planning and you're ready to go! Don't be quiet about your campaign – make sure you get your church involved.

You could ask your church leaders if you can stand up before or after a service and tell people about what you're doing and why it's an important issue. Have a think about whether there are ways other people in your church can get involved.

Maybe part of your campaign is about putting on an art exhibition or film evening – invite your church to come along. Maybe you’ve already achieved your outcome – make sure you tell your church about your success!



# The Church for the World

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## A Christian Aid Story about our work with churches



Christian Aid has been around for a long time – set up over 70 years ago by people in churches who recognised problems around them, and who were willing to be part of the solution. Back then, Christian Aid wanted to support the millions of refugees and displaced people across Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Since then Christian Aid has been busy. There are more success stories and breakthroughs than we have space for in this story but here are a few to give you an idea of what's been achieved over the years.

- ▶ We've worked with refugees and displaced people across the globe, helping them have the resources they need to live lives of dignity and hope. Churches have raised their own awareness of this by taking part in 'solidarity sleepouts'.
- ▶ Worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and others to combat racism and poverty in the United States of America and elsewhere and with the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa to help bring about change there.
- ▶ Challenged the stigma of those living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere.
- ▶ Been a founding member of the Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History movements, calling for richer countries to reduce or clear debts owed by the poorest.
- ▶ Raised awareness of climate change and how it disproportionately affects the poor - including helping local churches think about how they can be 'greener'.

Everything we do starts with a small group of people who see something that needs changing, and begin the journey of being part of the solution. An avalanche starts with a single snowflake, landing in just the right place, and making just the right impact.

The work that we support is innovative, it's not about putting a plaster on the wound, it's about changing the way structures work. We're working with communities who are using technology to track the weather, who are training their young people to lobby their governments, and others who are setting up solar powered communities and campaigning to shut down coal plants.

We know you have more ideas and dreams than we do! We believe that together we can put our faith into action and bring about the vision for a better world that God lays out in the Bible.

**?** What story will we be telling about you in the future?



To see more about Christian Aid's history visit  
[christianaid.org.uk/about-us/our-history](http://christianaid.org.uk/about-us/our-history)

# Conclusion

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At the beginning of this resource we suggested that central to the journey of becoming an activist for change in the world was to begin by thinking about how we treat each other.

Whether you've used one, many or all of these sessions we hope that journey has begun and that the young people who've engaged in these sessions have felt valued, empowered and prepared to be change makers.

We'd like to encourage you to keep in touch with us through our web pages and social media so we can continue the discussion and we can continue to support you. We'd also love to hear how things have gone and what you've done and learnt.

Why not keep in touch in the ways set out below but in the meantime thanks so much for using Belong and joining in with this journey.



Visit [christianaid.org.uk/belong](https://christianaid.org.uk/belong)



Twitter [@BelongCA](https://twitter.com/BelongCA)



Instagram [@christianaidbelong](https://www.instagram.com/christianaidbelong)



Facebook Group: [Belong from Christian Aid](#)

# Glossary

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<b>Activism</b>	Using action to campaign for or act on behalf of others, particularly linked to social justice.
<b>Campaign</b>	A plan of action involving others and with a goal, change or achievement as its aim.
<b>Contextualise</b>	To make something relevant for a particular setting or culture. To make an idea understandable in a local setting.
<b>Culture</b>	The way things are done round here. Culture defines social beliefs or practices. Can be global or local cultures e.g. African culture or skateboard culture.
<b>Dalit</b>	From traditional Indian caste system. The Dalit peoples are considered lowest in the caste system and therefore treated lower than those from other castes.
<b>Economics</b>	The study of commercial activities in society. Deals with wealth, money, consumption and trade.
<b>Friar</b>	A travelling or wandering monk, whose work predominantly takes him or her outside of the monastery into everyday life.

<b>Icon</b>	A religious image which can be meditated on or that reflects something of god or other religious figures.
<b>Kintsuigi</b>	The japanese art of repairing broken pottery.
<b>Monastery</b>	The centre or house of an order of monks.
<b>Moravians</b>	The moravians are a group formed in the 18th century in east germany who were committed to prayer and mission and who formed churches around the world.
<b>Theology</b>	The study of god and of religious belief.
<b>Transformative</b>	A change that affects an area or society and makes life better
<b>Vows</b>	Commitments taken before god that are made often in religious orders or in civil ceremonies

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