

HELPING HAND 2021 - FEEDING HOPE: ALL GENERATIONS SUPPORTING ALL GENERATIONS

MESSY CHURCH PLAN

Can be adapted to use as a Faith@Home session if guidelines do not allow congregations to meet.

INTRODUCTION

You can use this to create your own customised introduction for your Messy Church congregation.

This session will enable your Messy Church congregation or individual families to explore some of the challenges faced by farmers and their families in Zimbabwe. In reading the Farmers' Stories, you will discover the virtuous relationship between people and environment. The supporting resources will also reveal how The Salvation Army is helping to improve outcomes for families and communities, and what we might understand about God's character in creation from the Bible. Read through the stories in the resource so that you are familiar with the situations faced by the families in Zimbabwe.

WHAT IS FOOD SECURITY?

Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Through its food security programmes around the world, The Salvation Army provides training and confidence building so that individual families from one generation to another can thrive, whole communities can benefit, and The Salvation Army can grow through the planting of new corps. As you read the stories provided, you will see how this 'virtuous relationship' between people, environment and The Salvation Army works.

The title 'Feeding Hope' refers to two things:

1. When a farm's crop increases, the farmer and his/her family can have the confidence to know that the future they hope for is secure. The family will have enough food for themselves and enough to sell for an income. This means their children can be assured of an education and access to healthcare.
2. Families work the land together, and when the children can see their parents succeeding it gives them hope in choosing to support the family farm – all generations supporting all generations.



BIBLE REFERENCES

Mark 4:1-20 – The Parable of the Sower

Philippians 4:19

2 Corinthians 5:17

RESOURCES FOR THE ZONES

- Instructions for the zones you choose to explore (**Appendix 1**).
- Pens and pencils, together with paper to draw and write on.

Choose the resources from the following list depending on which zones you will be exploring. IMPORTANT – the Fundraising Zone and the Growing Things Zone are mandatory.

- Copies of the Bible verse 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Some junk – to create something new
- A quiet space with some blankets
- Template for Consequences Game (**see Appendix 2**)
- Material for slings or bandages to practise some first aid
- Popping corn and a popcorn maker; or
shop-bought packets of un-popped corn and a microwave oven; or
bags of popcorn
toppings – melted Fairtrade chocolate, sugar, honey, salt etc
- Copies of the Bible verse Philippians 4:19

MANDATORY FUNDRAISING ZONE

- Copies of the Farmers' Stories, the wrap-around money box labels and containers to create money boxes – plastic milk carton, clean jars with lids etc.

MANDATORY GROWING THINGS ZONE

- Some small flower pots, compost and seeds
- *Choose seeds to enable the families to harvest 'crops' – cress, tomatoes, sunflowers (seeds for salads), nasturtiums (you can eat the flowers as well as the leaves in a salad or for a decoration on a cake)*

MESSY CHURCH ZIMBABWEAN MEAL SUGGESTION

- Any meat, corn on the cob, beans, squash and peanuts make up many Zimbabwean recipes
- Making some of the staple carbohydrate called Sadza with water and corn-meal might be fun. Polenta is a good substitute for cornmeal (**see Appendix 3 for the recipe**)

OVERVIEW OF ZONES

FUNDRAISING ZONE

- You'll be encouraging people to listen to a story from a farmer in Zimbabwe and to create a money box.

JUNK MODELLING ZONE

- You will encourage people to create something from junk, sticking a Bible verse on to their creation.

QUIET ZONE - GOD'S BLANKET

- You will create a quiet zone with some cushions and blankets

MANDATORY GROWING THINGS ZONE

- You will be encouraging people to plant and take care of some seeds, looking forward to harvesting the produce – cress, sunflower seeds, flowers etc.

WORKING TOGETHER ZONE

- You'll be encouraging people to invite those who are older and younger than them to take part in creating a story, using a template (**Appendix 2**)

EDUCATION ZONE

- You'll be helping people make a sling or bandage a wound

FOOD ACTIVITY ZONE

- You be encouraging people to enrich popcorn with toppings. While the popcorn is being enjoyed, people will be learning a Bible verse.



BIBLE AND 'FEEDING HOPE' TEACHING

If your story time is:

- before the Zones, challenge the congregation to relate the activity to the Bible story and the project.
- after the Zones, ask the congregation to think about how the activities will help them remember the Bible story and the project

Say

'Jesus was a really good storyteller, always giving people clues about God's character and his Kingdom. Jesus tells a story of a farmer who plants some seeds, scattering them around, not placing them carefully in a hole or furrow. So, not all the seed lands in the good soil.'

Ask

What might happen to seeds that land on a path, or in rocky soil or with weeds and thorns?

Take some ideas, helping the congregation understand that birds, shallow soil and weeds are not helpful for seeds and young plants.

You can then either:

1. Show a video of the story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8WZTQv2rhE>
2. Or a song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oOW4FRuM6g>
3. or read it from the Bible asking for some volunteers as you read. They will need to represent:
 - Four 'seeds'
 - A 'bird'
 - A 'sun' (give them a torch to hold)
 - A 'weed'

While telling the story, make the action to throw the 'seeds' to the front and ask them to mime 'growing'. Then send the 'bird' to peck one seed, the 'sun' to burn the next and the 'weed' to choke the third. Let the fourth seed keep growing.

ENDING

Whichever way you choose to tell the story, make sure you remind the congregation that Jesus says, 'Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.'

Ask the congregation: 'What do you think Jesus meant by that?'

Allow some conversation; and if the point has not been made, make sure the people know that the story Jesus is telling is about God's word, good news for them to know and live by, that they can be like the good soil and tell other people about him too.

We also have a project to learn about and raise some money to support.

Show the video in the resources pack letting people know that other resources are available.

PRAYER TIME

Invite people who responded in the Quiet Zone to share. Say a prayer which incorporates some of their thoughts and ideas.

Pray for the Feeding Hope campaign.

HOPE ZONE

- Use the junk and rubbish to create something new: a machine, a signpost, a message – anything, really.
- Then stick the Bible verse on to your creation to help you remember that hope is found in Jesus.

Being able to create something out of nothing, or very little, is a reality for some of the farming families that The Salvation Army's projects support. Knowing that they will receive help and support in creating a better environment, one in which their crops can thrive, gives them hope for a better future.

We can see all of God in Jesus – his character **is** hope.

GOD'S BLANKET ZONE

Zimbabweans call the Earth 'God's blanket', and when it gets eroded away, it is very hard for anything to grow.

So...

Wrap yourself in one of the blankets.

How do you feel – Safe? Comfortable? Held? Wrapped up? Covered?

How do the Bible verses on this card make you feel?

- By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (Hebrews 11:3 ESV)
- In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1 ESV)
- But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? (Job 12:7-9 ESV)
- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16,17 ESV)

Do these verses make you want to do something about the environment?

How could you give more thought to our world, God's wonderful creation, the environment in which you live?

Could you do something to support The Salvation Army's projects that help improve food security and the environment?

Write or draw your thoughts and ideas on a piece of paper to take home as a reminder, and remember to tell someone else your ideas. Working with other people is more fun than doing things on your own – all generations supporting all generations!

You could copy down one of the Bible verses too.

GROWING THINGS ZONE

From the seeds available, decide which kind of crop you might like to harvest in a few days, weeks or months. If there are seeds left at the end you might be able to plant a second crop; but just now, leave enough for everyone to plant something.

The crops that the farmers plant in Zimbabwe are not just to provide food for their family, but to grow enough to be able to sell it, using the money to pay for education and healthcare.

Take care of your seeds and baby plants as if your life depended on them!

WORKING TOGETHER ZONE

A family farm in Zimbabwe relies on everyone to ensure the crops are planted, cared for and harvested. Everyone from the youngest to the oldest gets involved.

Using the template, invite people who are older and younger than you to take part in creating a story with a beginning and a middle and a happy ending. If you are not meeting as Messy Church, you can still try this activity, but it might take a bit longer if you are waiting until you visit family or friends to get them to take part.

EDUCATION ZONE

It costs a lot of money to visit the doctor or go to a hospital in Zimbabwe, and if the crops fail and a family do not earn enough money, then it can take a long time for them to recover from illnesses or injuries.

Knowing how to deliver some basic first aid is helpful.

Can you help a member of your 'farming family' with a 'sprained arm' by making a sling using the material on the table? (Appendix 4)

FOODY ZONE

After you have popped some corn or taken some from the bag, choose some toppings to make the snacks even more delicious.

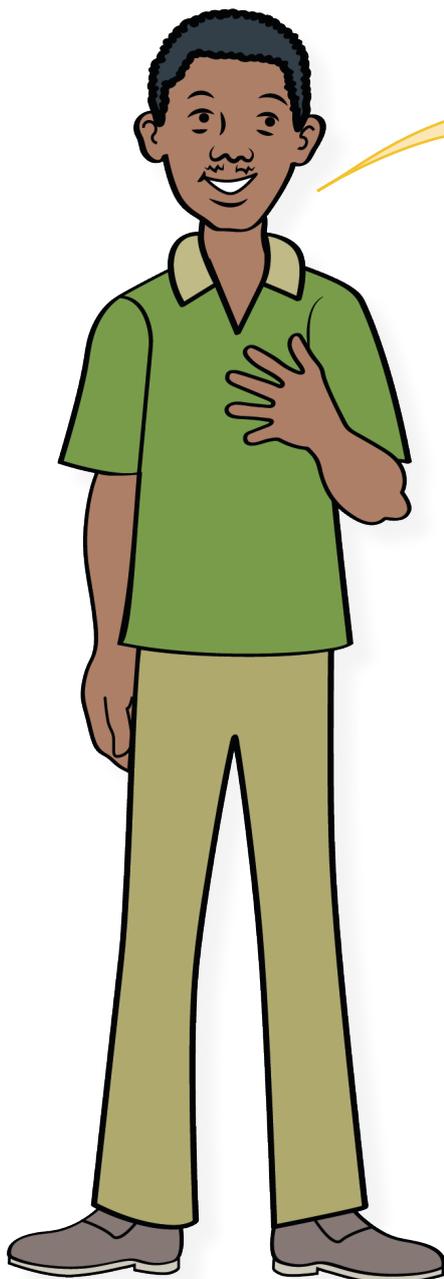
While you are enjoying your enriched popcorn, try and learn this Bible verse by heart:
'And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:19 *NIV*).

FUNDRAISING ZONE

Choose a container; and while you are listening to a story about farming as a family in Zimbabwe, decorate your container to create a money box to help you fundraise as a family for the Feeding Hope campaign.

You could place the money box on your meal table at home when you eat together sometimes and make a collection as a family.

Here's an idea of a grace you might say in the Shona dialect:



Tinokutendai Mwari Baba
nekudya kwamatipa.

We thank you, Lord God, for the food you have
provided.

Tinokumbira kuti muite kuti chikafu ichi chisimbise mweya
nemuviri wedu.

We ask that you make this food strengthen our spirits and our
bodies.

Tikurangarirei mune zvose, nekusingaperi.
So we remember you, in all things, for eternity. Amen.

(Thanks to Chiedza Dokwani, THQ,
for the prayer and translation)

MESSY CHURCH STORY TEMPLATE: APPENDIX 2

Use this template to encourage lots of other people to help you create a story.

Make sure you ask people of different ages and fold the paper over as you go. The only rule is that there must be a happy ending!

There was once a (could be a person, an animal, a family)

FOLD

They lived (create an amazing environment for your character)

FOLD

Life for them was (decide if their life is easy or hard)

FOLD

One day (create a problem for the character to solve)

FOLD

But then (resolve the problem)

FOLD

So, after that (maybe a celebration?)

FOLD

And finally (what is the happy ending?)

Share the story with all the people who helped you create it.

SADZA RECIPE

(SERVES 4 TO 6)

Ingredients

- 4 cups water
- 2½ cups white cornmeal (regular cornmeal may be used)

Procedure

1. Bring 3 cups of the water to a boil in a large pot.
2. Combine 1½ cups of the cornmeal with the remaining 1 cup water.
3. Reduce heat to medium to low and add the cornmeal mixture to the boiling water, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon. Cook for about 5 minutes.
4. Slowly add the remaining 1 cup of cornmeal. When the mixture is very thick and starts to pull away from the sides of the pan, transfer to a serving bowl or plate.
5. Use a wooden spoon to shape the mixture into a round shape.
6. You may use wet hands to help shape the sadza.

Read more: <http://www.foodbycountry.com/Spain-to-Zimbabwe-Cumulative-Index/Zimbabwe.html#ixzz6TbRIWQXX>



EDUCATION ZONE

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Knowing how to deliver some basic first aid is helpful.

Can you help a member of your 'farming family' with a 'sprained arm' by making a sling using the material on the table?

1.



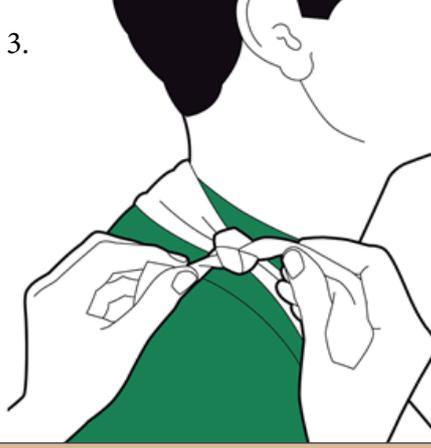
Ask the casualty to support their arm with their other hand. Gently slide the triangular bandage underneath the arm. The point of the triangle should be underneath the elbow of the injured arm. Bring the top end of the bandage around the back of the neck.

2.



Fold the lower end of the bandage up over the forearm to meet the top of the bandage at the shoulder of the injured side.

3.



Tie the two ends of the bandage together in a reef knot above their collar bone and tuck in the free ends.

4.



Adjust the sling so that it supports their arm all the way to the end of their little finger.

5.



Make sure that the edge of the bandage by the elbow is secured by twisting the fabric and tucking it in, or using a safety pin to fasten.

6.



Check the circulation in their fingertips every 10 minutes. Press their nail for 5 seconds until it turns pale, then release to see if the colour returns within 2 seconds.

Instructions taken from St. John's Ambulance: <https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/how-to/how-to-make-an-arm-sling/>