

MIDWEEK MEETING SESSION



PREPARATION

- Find Helping-Hand 2020 videos at www.salvationarmy.org.uk/unseenpromise
- Paper and scissors for snowflakes activity
- String or wool
- Find the song 'Who You Say I Am' (Hillsong) to be played during the session

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

The promise of a better life is a tempting offer.

For those living in poverty, in even the most beautiful parts of the world, the dream of providing for your family becomes a constant and agonising ache.

In the Philippines – a sun-kissed paradise of more than 7,000 tropical islands – one in five people lives in poverty, and the luscious setting shrouds an ugliness which lies beneath the surface.

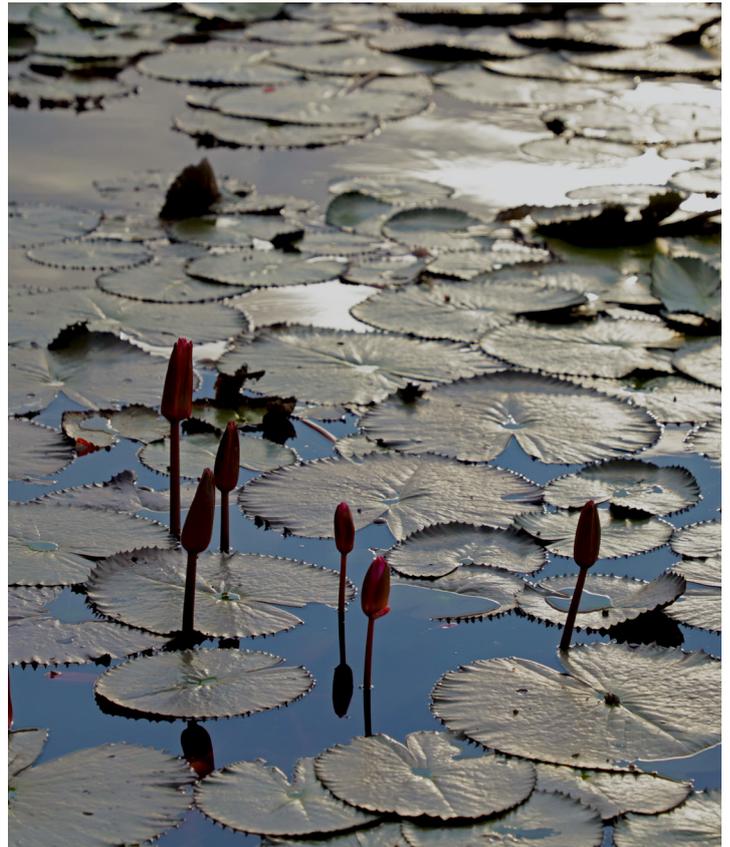
Preying on the vulnerable, traffickers deceive and exploit, enticing people with the promise of dreams fulfilled. Desperate to support those they love, people believe the lies and accept opportunities to journey away from home unaware of the reality which awaits them.

The promises remain unseen and the dreams remain unrealised.

Traffickers see people merely as commodities, ignoring the truth of who they are – children of God, full of promise and dearly loved by the One who created them.

The Salvation Army is raising awareness of the reality of trafficking, mobilising communities to protect themselves, supporting survivors and helping to improve opportunities at home so the drive to leave is lessened.

Through prevention, protection and partnership, we are supporting people to reclaim the promise that exists within them and rebuild their lives.



BACKGROUND

As a global organisation, The Salvation Army is in a unique position to respond to the injustice of human trafficking. Through the 2020 Helping-Hand Appeal, Family Ministries groups across the UKI Territory are invited to support The Salvation Army's international anti-trafficking projects.

ACTIVITIES



Watch the SAID UK Helping-Hand videos

- Visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/unseenpromise to watch one or more of the story videos.
- Discuss in pairs, or as a whole group, how the videos make you feel.
- *Note: if you are not able to show videos, read one or more of the Unseen Promise case stories to the group (available on the Unseen Promise website).*

Snowflakes

- Invite the group to cut the paper into snowflake patterns – each one different from the other – to visually represent how each person, like each snowflake, is unique and special.

Compliment Connection

- Invite the group to stand or sit in a circle. Whilst keeping hold of the loose end of a ball of wool/string, the first person will throw the ball to another person in the group and give that person a compliment. This then continues until everyone in the group has received a compliment from another group member.
- Everyone should now be holding on to part of the wool which may look tangled and messy in the middle. You could go round twice if you have enough string.
- The purpose of this activity is that each person hears how they are loved and valued, and to show that though it can sometimes look messy, we are a community and all connected to one another as children of God.

Reflection time – Who am I

- Play the Hillsong song ‘Who You Say I Am’, and invite the group to spend time in personal, quiet reflection considering what the words mean to them.
- If appropriate, invite people to voice prayers at the end of the song.
- *Note: It may be helpful to print out the song lyrics for people to read as they listen.*



BIBLE READING/THOUGHT



'See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!'
(1 John 3:1a)

A teenager may dream of the day that they are free to make their own decisions, outside of the confines of their parents' rules, to choose where they live, how late they stay out and how they spend their money. There may be times when they feel as though they want to break free of their parents' authority but, in reality, a child of a loving parent already knows that they are free. They are not forced to love their parents, but they do, and want to, because it is with their parents that they feel safe, comforted and supported.

As children of God, we are free to choose our own path in life. We are free to love God, or to turn away from him. Whilst God's heart breaks for those who reject him, they are never forced to love or accept him.

It is one of life's greatest blessings to be loved by God, to be his creations, to be his children.

Do you know yourself to be a child of God?

We are loved, valued, and cherished by the God who created us – the God who created all things.

Just as a parent delights in their children – as they learn to walk and talk, as they laugh and play, as they reach out their arms for a hug – God delights in us. And he longs for us to see ourselves the way he sees us, recognising our worth as lovingly created children of God, made in his image (Genesis 1:27).

Yet around the world, people are being trafficked, exploited and abused. People are being seen and treated as commodities to be bought and sold rather than as human beings to be loved and cherished.

This is not what God wants for us. As children of God we have a responsibility to care for our brothers and sisters both locally and globally. We have a duty to make informed choices so we are not unknowingly supporting trafficking. This includes choosing traffick-free products such as those marked with the Fairtrade logo, boycotting clothes shops which use slave labour in their supply chains, and avoiding/discouraging the use of pornography which is exploitative to those involved and corrosive to relationships.

We can also make choices to support projects which are

working to bring an end to human trafficking. The Salvation Army is engaged in projects around the world which raise awareness about trafficking, enable communities to become resilient to traffickers' methods and support survivors to overcome their experiences and rebuild their lives.



NEXT STEPS

- Challenge the group to 'think outside the box' about how you can support this year's Helping-Hand Appeal.
- Spend some time (in this session, or in coming weeks) thinking of ideas together to raise money for and spread the word about The Salvation Army's international anti-trafficking work.

SUGGESTED SONGS

- SASB 262 'Love divine'
- 'Who you say I am' (Ben Fielding, Reuben Morgan, Hillsong)
- 'Child of God' (Kathryn Scott, Vineyard Music)

This session was created by Hayley Still.