

AT HOME WITH...



INCOME GENERATION

INTRODUCTION

In the urban slums of Nairobi, Kenya, every day is a struggle for survival.

It is harsh. It is squalid. It is unfair. It is neglected.

But it is not hopeless.

Not content with life as it is, people are coming together and taking their future into their own hands. Together they are pursuing life as it could be, as it was intended to be.

As part of a community self-help group, members regularly contribute small amounts of money to build up a communal fund. They can then each take loans from this shared pot to start or expand their business, or pay for unexpected costs.

The Salvation Army is already working and walking alongside these communities. Training individuals in business management, accounting, marketing, healthcare and anti-human trafficking helps to improve opportunities, grow confidence, generate income and strengthen resilience within the whole community.

It is the epitome of empowerment, equality and accountability.

In each person there is a flicker of hope. In each group there is a spark of potential. In these seemingly desperate surroundings, community has flourished and potential is being fulfilled.

In community, life can be about more than mere survival.

When a community shares, it can thrive.

BIBLE READING / THOUGHT

In Psalm 133:1 we read, 'How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!' (NIV)



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BIBLE READING / THOUGHT (CONTINUED)

Have you ever heard the phrase 'It takes a village to raise a child'? This is an African proverb which recognises that it is not just a parental responsibility to raise a child, but a communal responsibility - the extended family, the village, the community.

Throughout the Bible we are reminded of the importance of community: the feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21), the lowering of the man through the roof (Luke 5:17-26), the Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26), the stories of the Early Church (Acts 2:42-47) are all good examples of God's people coming together.

Community is at the heart of all we do, whether it is in our neighbourhoods, school, church, work, hobbies or family – in all walks of our life, coming together with others helps us to grow, learn, live and thrive.

Could the community in which you live be mobilised to come together to share, pray, love, raise awareness and raise money to make a difference to others?

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Below are some ideas to help you, as an individual and/or as a family, to think about your local community as well as the wider global community, and how you can support it through our work.

Prayer Walk

Take a walk around your neighbourhood and pray for the people in the homes, the shops and parks. Some people you will know by name, some you won't; but bring them and the area in which you live to God in prayer. If you are unable to walk, why not find a map of your area and pray over your neighbourhood this way. You can find a map at www.maps.google.co.uk.

Over the year write down your praises in a notebook or on some scraps of paper to pop in a jar and review at the end of the year and celebrate where you have seen God at work in your community. See the Reflect Activity for more information. You could put up the map at home and indicate the places you are celebrating with sticky dots!



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Body of Christ

Read 1 Corinthians 12. As the body of Christ we are all one, but each plays a different part. Spend time reflecting on yourself and the gifts, talents and heart that God has given you. How can you use them to make a difference in the communities that you are part of? If you are working through this resource with your family, explore how your different roles and characteristics join together to reveal your family strengths.

Open up your home (or make it virtual!)

Hold a coffee morning with your neighbours, family and friends. Tell them about the Income Generation theme and why you are raising money. This would be especially good in the winter months or school holidays when you may not see your friends or neighbours as regularly. Not only could this raise money but it will also bring people together.

Clean up

In the summer months could you bring your neighbours and friends together to litter-pick your local area? As a community you could make a difference to the surroundings in which you live.

Prayer Page

Buy a newspaper and look at the things that are affecting in your town, country and around the world. Cut out the stories that speak to your heart as an individual or a family and create a prayer page. This could be for personal use, or you could stick it up on a wall or fridge for others to see. Add cuttings to the prayer page over time.

Volunteer

Is there somewhere that you can volunteer this year to make a difference to others?

Places to consider could be The Salvation Army, Animal Rescue Homes or residential homes.

How can I help?

Is there someone in your neighbourhood who is lonely? Is there something that you could offer to help them with? Perhaps offering a listening ear, a shopping trip, a cup of tea or to read to them would brighten their day.



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How can I help? (continued)

If you have children who love drawing, maybe they could create some pictures that you could put in envelopes with a little message and post them through their letter box now and then.

'God of Justice'

Spend some time listening and reflecting on the words of this song by Tim Hughes. Write down names of people and issues that come to mind and bring them to God in prayer. You could write them on sticky notes and add them to your Prayer Page. Have some spare sticky notes available so friends and neighbours could add things too.

What is God calling you to do to show love to other people (from your next-door neighbours, to those on the other side of the world)?

REFLECT

At the end of the year, spend some time in prayer and reflection. How has this year made a difference to others? How has focusing on community made a difference to you? How has helping others made them feel? How has helping others made you feel? Is there something that you can make part of your everyday life?

SHARE

Share your favourite way of being community with others, both as family or an individual.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO LISTEN TO:

FMSB 38 'He's got the whole world'

SASB 364 'Give thanks'

SASB 1001 'Help us build a loving world'

SoF 1794 'God of justice'



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