

CHURCH VS HUNGER

Hunger steals. How does the church respond and how can we play our part?

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Total resource time: ⌚ 1hr, 5mins

The World's Table

 Activity  15mins

Object of the activity:

Help young people visualise and experience the injustice of hunger in our world. Encourage them to think about their reaction to this unfairness and explore what Jesus might do or say if he was at the table.

You will need:

- Prepare three areas in your room. Area 1 should be as lavish as you can manage. Table, chairs, table cloth, all types of cutlery you can find in church, water glass, wine glass, maybe even a candle and place names! These people will get to have nice drinks and a delicious dessert - maybe grab a Gu and ice cream from your local shop, washed down with some Shloer... yum! The food here should be enough for them to share easily. Area 2 should be very basic. Table, chairs, only a fork and a small water glass each. These people will get to eat rice and beans. Feel free to get microwavable food for ease. Portions should be 30g rice and 30g beans per person. Area 3 should be a sectioned-off area on the floor. No table or chairs and definitely no cutlery! If you're feeling generous maybe get them a small bowl of water. Before the young people enter the room decide who gets to sit at which table. Ideally based on where they live. Eg. 2 people on the top table from the same house, 4 people in middle table and 3 on the floor.
- Paper and a pen for each person

Steps / rules:

1. As people arrive, show them to their seat / floor space and tell them that we're starting today's session with dessert. Put some music on and leave them to their food.
2. Listen for what people are saying and watch for reactions.
3. If people ask if they can share, your response is that there are no rules, you can do what you think is best.
4. After 5/6 minutes draw conversation to a close and give everyone a piece of paper and ask them to write one word that describes how this activity made them feel.
5. Facilitate a short discussion on people's feelings and take the opportunity to highlight that 795 million people in the world are hungry, that's 1 in 9 people.
6. Ask them with the others on their table to think about what Jesus might feel / do / say if he walked into this room and saw such unfairness. Invite the group to feedback.

Conclusions:

Hunger is a very real issue. This was a quirky activity but for many people this is their reality, they only have rice and beans to eat. We might not be able to see them, but 795 million people in our world live in

hunger. This is not ok.

Leaders' notes

This can be done with small prep from you or you can go all-out. The more extreme the difference between the three areas, the more effective the activity.

Warning

Please be careful of allergies.

Meet Christopher - Slide

 Image



Imagine...

 Activity  15mins

Object of the activity:

For a moment, imagine the life of someone a similar age but who happened to be born in a bit of the world that looks totally different to ours.

You will need:

- 4 large pieces of paper stuck to 4 different walls. 1 piece of paper has a heart drawn on, another has a foot, on another draw a hand and on the last draw a thought cloud.
- Pens
- Enough leaves for everyone to have a couple

Steps / rules:

1. Invite everyone to find a bit of floor space and lie down.
2. Give everyone their leaves and ask them to close their eyes and listen to the story you're about to read.
3. Read this story: "Christopher is a teenager living in a country called Malawi, East Africa. 30 years ago his area was thriving, there was enough food for everyone and the community did well. But over the last 30 years climate change has shifted the weather patterns. Now when his community need rain for their crops to grow - the rain doesn't come. Their crops fail and there is not enough food. Just like us, Christopher has hopes and dreams for his life. He would like to be a doctor when he's older but hunger is stealing his future. The failing crops means that Christopher and his family are forced to eat leaves to survive. Not vegetable leaves or salad leaves, leaves that would normally be eaten by animals. Hunger is stealing from Christopher."
4. Once they have heard the story ask them to think about how they would feel if they were Christopher, what they would be thinking about and wishing for. Read the story again.
5. After this, tell the story for a third time, but this time you're asking them to think about what hunger has stolen from Christopher.
6. Once you have read this three times, it's time to get up and move to the pieces of paper on the wall. With equal sized groups at each sheet invite them to spend 2 minutes chatting at each station before moving the room on.
7. At the heart paper, you're inviting them to write words that describe how they think Christopher is feeling. Please prompt them to think about more than just 'hungry'.
8. At the hands paper, you're asking them to write words that demonstrate what hunger is stealing from Christopher. Please help them think about short and long term impact, for example, his future, his hopes, his potential are being stolen by hunger.
9. At the feet paper, ask the groups to consider what can be done to help people like Christopher.

10. At the thought cloud paper, please ask them to consider what Christopher is thinking about. This is an interesting activity as when we're hungry, often all we can think about is hunger, so we don't focus at school, we get irritable with friends, this affects our relationships and learning.
11. Once everyone has visited each paper, invite the last group to feedback their paper as if they are Christopher.

Leaders' notes

This activity requires a lot of moving around the room. Please tailor the activity as required for anyone in your group for whom this may be a challenge.

Isaiah - true worship

 Bible study  10mins

Introduction:

The Israelites had become so consumed with the detail about what happened INSIDE the temple, that they gave little thought to what happened OUTSIDE the temple. They believed that if they followed all of the rules and did what they were supposed to do, God would be pleased with them and answer their prayer. But they had got it wrong - God didn't see their 'good behaviour' as worship at all; all God could see was the brokenness and injustice in their community. Isaiah had to remind the Israelites that what truly brought God glory was what they did in their daily lives: brave acts of freedom, mercy, generosity, and kindness.

Passages:

- Isaiah 58 v 1 - 12 [↗ Bible Gateway](#)

Questions:

1. What did this passage mean for the people first reading it? How would they have felt?
2. If the prophet Isaiah walked into our church community, what do you think he would say about our worship?
3. What does this passage mean for you and me, living in 2017?
4. How well do you think we're doing at following this commandment?
5. If you had to rewrite this verse for 2017, what might it say? (NB - you could rewrite it in the opposite way, of how a consumeristic society encourages us to live: "Buy the cheapest clothes on the high street so you can stay on trend, and don't let needy family members ruin your fun.")



Conclusion:

It seems clear from this passage that God desires his followers to spend their lives on behalf of other people, instead of only being concerned with themselves. It is fascinating to see that after encountering Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the early believers did exactly that...

Leaders' notes

If it's appropriate, do share your re-writes of the passage with us on Instagram @WeAreTearfund

Acts 2

 Bible study  5mins

Introduction:

Parts of this passage sound pretty crazy - can you imagine your parents coming home from church and telling you that they're selling all of your stuff, giving away all their money, and whatever is left you have to share with your whole church?! But the rest of the passage kind of sounds slightly dull - the believers met in each others homes, shared their food, gathered at the temple.

If we were coming up with ideas to change the world today, would these acts be at the top of our list? The point is, after Israel had struggled for so many years to live in a right relationship with God, this passage feels like they finally started to understand God's greatest commandment of loving their neighbours in the most basic of ways, beginning with sharing a meal.

Passages:

- Act 2 v 42 - 47  [Bible Gateway](#)

Questions:

1. Can you think of a time someone has shared something with you that you needed? How did it make you feel?
2. Is there someone in your school or church that could really do with a community to belong to?
3. How do you feel when you learn that 2000 years after the Church first started meeting, that there are still millions of people who don't have enough?

Conclusion:

We are called to extravagant generosity that prefers the needs of others. Could it be that when we give money towards the East Africa crisis, its really just like sharing a meal with someone?

Leaders' notes

If you're pressed for time, why not split the room into groups, give half of them the Isaiah passage, and the other half can read Acts.

We have an article on our website about a young person in a community who quite literally gave everything away! <https://lifestyle.tearfund.org/article/five-ways-living-community-environmentally-friendly/>

Hunger steals but the Church Gives!

 Input  1min

Input / Talk:

Hunger is a thief. It robs people of their freedom, ruins their self-esteem and wrecks their dreams.

But there's one thing that hunger didn't count on: the church. Together, we can act against poverty and hunger.

All around the world, local churches are leading their communities out of lives devastated by hunger and into lives filled with dignity, opportunity and strength. In Malawi the church is running an initiative called Foundations for Farming, teaching people new ways to farm their land so that it produces more food, even in difficult times, as well as helping them to start businesses and save money. The church is showing God's love in practical ways to their community. They are spending themselves on behalf of the hungry.

Meet Christopher, his mum, siblings and community

Video 3mins

Introduction:

Meet Sylvia (Christopher's mum) and watch her work the field with Christopher. Also meet Polly is an inspiring 24 year old who at the age of 21 joined her local church initiative Foundations for Farming. Watch and see how the church can bring change, even in the most desperate situations.



(<https://vimeo.com/212917502/5e5edb2f78>)

Spend yourself on behalf of the hungry?

 Activity  7mins

Object of the activity:

Give an opportunity for young people to look at the areas of their lives that are important to them, how much time they give to these areas. Where does caring for those going hungry fit in? How do we live generously on their behalf, sharing and loving? It's a helpful activity to observe any gaps between our intentions and actions.

You will need:

- Paper and Pens
- Powerpoint Slide
- Background Music
- Some sort of 'token'. Enough for everyone to have 10 each. You could use pennies, grains of rice or leaves if you wanted it to connect with the stories and activities earlier.

Steps / rules:

1. Ensure everyone has paper and pen
2. Invite them to replicate the table on the slide on their piece of paper
3. Ask them to get into pairs and work out what a normal week looks like, what they spend time doing, what their priorities are. Add these into the boxes on the left.
4. Remind them that as followers of Jesus we might want to include caring about those in poverty, doing what we can those the hungry might be a priority for us
5. Ask them to take a minute on their own to think about how much time they give each activity. You have 10 tokens which represent how much time you have in a week. Where do you spend your time?
6. Ask them to think about whether any boxes are priorities but don't get any of your time? Or visa versa, any boxes that aren't really very important but you give loads of time to?
7. Input from Youth Leader. "So often there is a gap between our best intentions and where we focus our time or effort. This is human nature, don't feel bad about it, but lets inspire one another to keep the things that are important to Jesus as high priority for us too. This might mean moving a token away from 'playing on my phone' and into the box that remembers those who are hungry. We might use that time to pray for our world, to fundraise so that communities can learn to feed themselves... so many options!"

Conclusions:

Once any gaps have been identified, take a moment to reflect and make a commitment to reduce the gap. We are looking to focus on any gap between intentions and action on behalf of the hungry and

those who need the church to respond with kindness and generosity. We are the church. Together we can turn the story of hunger around for communities around the world and people like Christopher.

Introduce Mean Bean

 Input  3mins

Input / Talk:

One of the best ways we can play our part in the Church Vs Hunger is to fund raise for communities living in hunger. So we're not going to just talk about doing something, we're going to actually do it! On [insert date] our group is going to do the Mean Bean challenge to raise money. We will get to collect sponsorship from friends, family and church for spending 24 hours eating what people in our world have to eat every day - rice and beans. Through Tearfunds work, every £10 we raise could help a family learn how to grow food and sustain themselves for a year. Incredible!

You will need:

- Check out the Mean Bean Challenge and the pdf for every step you need to complete your challenge!
- Print a heap of sponsorship forms
- Pick a day for your group's Mean Bean challenge. You might want to choose a Sunday when your group could eat their Rice and Bean dinner together perhaps before the service and share in the service about how they're feeling and why they're doing it.
- Follow the Mean Bean Meal resource for debrief questions and celebrations!

Leaders' notes

Thank you in advance for fundraising. Tearfund cannot do the life-changing work our partners do without support from people and groups like yours.

Warning

We know that this might be a difficult challenge for those who struggle in their relationship with food. Please take every opportunity to tailor this activity to suit the needs of the group.

Mean Bean PDF

 Link

Everything you need to run your 24 hour Mean Bean Challenge. Please note: this is written as a 5 day challenge, which you're very welcome to do, but we're suggesting 24 hours might be more manageable for youth groups.

<https://lifestyle.tearfund.org/article/meanbean/>

Mean Bean Meal

 Link

Come together on the day of your 24 hour Mean Bean Challenge to eat and reflect on your experience.

<http://joincanopy.org/library/24-hour-mean-bean-challenge/>

You're invited - slides



**WE WANT TO
CELEBRATE
YOUR IMPACT**

Input: You're invited

 Input  1min

Input / Talk:

What you will have done in the Mean Bean Challenge will have helped fight injustice. We know that Jesus' heart breaks when he sees people going hungry, but what an honour it is to play our part and do something to respond. Your actions today, your fundraising and your prayers are so precious to Him. Let's be people who continue to think about those who have less, to pray and take opportunities to be generous with what we have.

As a way to thank you and recognise the impact that young people can have in the fight against poverty, we are hosting celebration events all over the UK. To find one near you please check out tearfund.org/celebrate.

You will need:


- If your group would like to join a celebration, please email youth@tearfund.org and we would love to send you an invitation.
- Young people can find out more by following us on Instagram [@WeAreTearfund](https://www.instagram.com/WeAreTearfund)
- For flyers promoting Celebrations to give to your young people, please email youth@tearfund.org with your address and number required

Celebrations 2017 - visit tearfund.org/celebrate for more info



**CELEBRATIONS
COMING SOON**

Prayer Response

 Prayer activity  5mins

Introduction:

We are compelled to act on behalf of those going hungry because the church can bring change to this situation. We are believing that hope can come out of hopeless places, energy can be renewed, brokenness can be healed and the hungry can be fed. We will raise money and we will also pray - believing in the power of our God who answers prayer.

You will need:

- Felt tip pens or pens that will write on hands easily (please be careful of any allergies)

Steps:

1. Give everyone a felt tip and invite them to draw an outline of a leaf on the back of their hand
2. Inside that leaf ask them to write one word that describes what they want to pray for on behalf of those going hungry
3. Invite everyone to share their word and then pray together at the end in whatever style is most customary for your group
4. As a marker in the sand, ask people to put their hands in the middle of a circle, take a photo and post it to Instagram. Tag @WeAreTearfund and we will re-post it to encourage other youth groups around the UK to be praying too

Conclusion or closing prayer:

Lord, we are so grateful for what you have given us but we are not happy to ignore the rest of our world. We pray for those going hungry tonight that the church all around the world would step up and bring change. Thank you that you ask us to play our part. Please help us to pray for people as often as we are able and help us to do what we can to respond to a world in need. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.



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