

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

TODDLER CHURCH GUIDE

PREPARATION

- Read through this guide
- Look at some pictures of Zimbabwe (use your phone or computer, or look in books at the library)
- Read the Farmers' Stories found on our website
- See Appendix 1 for list of materials you will need to complete the activities

Side note: You do not need to do all the activities in this session, or you can do one every now and then. So choose those that suit your group, or adapt them, but retain the messaging. If your group has very young children, remember that you are communicating with their parents and carers too.

If your group is not meeting up yet, you can create packs to deliver to your families and will have to adapt the session accordingly.

INTRODUCTION

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

This session will enable your Toddler 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 REFERNECES

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

Philippians 4:19

2 Corinthians 5:17

FOR THE CAMPAIGN

Have a laptop available open at the webpage so that the parents and carers can be encouraged to look at the stories and the resources which support the campaign – they might come up with some fundraising ideas. Make sure you have a poster on display.

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

(see Appendix 1 for resources)

Seed planting: Help the children to plant seeds in small pots to take home.

Discussion points: What do plants need to grow? What would happen if we didn't give them these things? What things that we eat grow on plants? The Salvation Army's Helping-Hand project helps farmers in other countries by teaching them how to look after their crops and produce as much as they can.

Flower craft:

- Before the children start, a small slit should be made in each paper plate for the flowers to come through; this should be about a third of the way up.
- Children should stick flowers to the top of the lolly stick. They may wish to decorate their flowers.
- They should then be helped to colour the bottom part of the plate brown. Older children can be encouraged to draw the roots.
- They should draw/stick a sun on to the plate and can also draw/stick on raindrops.
- Finally, they can poke their flowers through the gap and then these can 'grow' appearing out of the soil.

Leaf threading: Older children could hole-punch leaves and thread on to string. For younger children, adults can punch the holes into the leaves and then help them thread them on.

Discussion points: How do we learn to do things? The Salvation Army works in places like Zimbabwe to teach farmers the skills they need. Why is it important for people to be able to show us how to do things?

Leaf pictures: Children could glue leaves to make pictures.

Money game (this game is more suited to older children in the group): Set up four areas – these could be four corners of the room. In one area place some cut-out plant shapes / leaf shapes; in the second have some coins (if you are doing this with younger children you may want to use paper printouts of coins to ensure there isn't a choking risk); in the third corner have some plasters; and in the final area have some dolls / pictures of babies. Children should collect a plant/leaf, then run to the next corner, swap it for a coin, then run to the next corner and swap it for a plaster, and finally they should stick the plaster on the doll / picture of the baby. Discussion points: In Zimbabwe farmers need to grow as many crops as they can so that they can buy things their children need, such as helping them go to school and get medicine.

BIBLE STORY

Use the props to tell this story. Encourage the children and their parents/carers to get involved with actions. Depending on how many children you have, you could ask some of them to take it in turns to sprinkle the seeds for each part of the story. You can leave the props out afterwards for children to play with and continue to engage with the story with their parents/carers.

Jesus told a story:

A farmer went out to sow his seeds. Use a little play figure, put a packet of seeds in his hand or next to him.

As he was scattering the seed, some fell on the path. Have the piece of grey fabric and sprinkle some seeds on.

But birds came along and ate them. Use a toy bird or a printout of a bird to come along and peck at the seeds. You could encourage the children to make bird noises.

Some fell on rocky places. Have some stones, sprinkle some seeds on the rocks.

They grew quickly. Encourage the children to stretch up as high as they can.

But they couldn't build good roots without any soil and so the plant dried up. Encourage the children to wiggle back down until they are sat back on the floor.

Other seed fell amongst the thorns. Use some wool or string all mixed up so that it would be hard for plants to grown in between. You could encourage the children to stretch their fingers out like sharp, pointy thorns.

But the thorns stopped the plants from being able to grow fruit. Encourage everyone to make a sad face.

Some fell on good soil. Sprinkle seed on a tray of soil / brown fabric / paper

And it grew and grew and grew, producing lots of fruit. Each child could have a picture of a plant/flower/crop and they could bring it and put it on the soil.

Message: Good soil helps good things grow, such as fruit, vegetables, other food and flowers. But this story is not just about soil, it has a message about our hearts. Just like the plants need good soil we need to have a good heart. Jesus was saying we should listen to and do what is right, the things that God teaches us, this makes our heart good just like the soil is good. When our hearts are good then good things can happen as a result.

THEME SONG

**To the tune of 'The Farmer's in the Den'.
Actions for each verse are in brackets.**

The farmer sowed some seed, *(Sprinkle seeds)*
The farmer sowed some seed,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh
The farmer sowed some seed.

Some fell on the path, *(walk around in a circle)*
Some fell on the path,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh,
Some fell on the path.

They all blew away, *(waving arms side to side)*
They all blew away,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh,
They all blew away.

Some fell on the rocks, *(curl up in a ball like a rock)*
Some fell on the rocks,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh,
Some fell on the rocks.

They didn't have good roots, *(Stamp feet)*
They didn't have good roots,
E-Ah- A-De-Oh,
They didn't have good roots.

Some fell on good soil, *(thumbs up in front of you)*
Some fell on good soil,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh,
Some fell on good soil.

They grew and grew and grew, *(start crouched down and then grow upwards until arms are stretched and you are on tiptoes)*
They grew and grew and grew,
E-Ah-A-De-Oh,
They grew and grew and grew.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for our feet so we can walk. *(Walk on spot/ stamp feet).*

Thank you for our mouths so we can speak. *(Point to mouths)*

Thank you for our hands so we can help others. *(Wave hands)*

Amen.

RESOURCES FOR ACTIVITIES

For the Bible Story

- Packet of seeds (real or pretend packet)
- A farmer – eg, a puppet or a Duplo figure
- Grey fabric/paper/felt (eg, A grey T-shirt folded or something similar)
- Toy bird / picture of a bird
- Stones
- Wool or string
- Tray of soil or brown paper/fabric
- Optional: Pictures of plants/flowers for each child or one plant (real/pretend/picture)

Seed planting

- Pots
- Seeds
- Soil

Flower craft

- Paper plates
- Brown crayons/pens/pencils
- Yellow paper circles for the sun. Alternatively draw a picture of the sun
- Blue raindrops cut out of paper. Alternatively draw raindrops
- Lolly sticks
- Paper flowers – see Appendix 2 for template

Leaf threading

- Leaves
- String/wool
- Hole punch

Leaf pictures

- Leaves
- PVA glue
- Paper

Money game

- Pictures of plants
- Coins (real or cut out of paper – ensure that real coins are used only with older children who won't put them in their mouths)
- Plasters
- Toy dolls / pictures of babies

FUNDRAISING SUGGESTIONS

- Families could be given pots and the wrap-around label from the resource pack to create a money box to collect change. The campaign runs from January to December 2021 so it is something they can continue raising money for.
- Coffee morning: this can include a cake/secondhand books/toy stall.
- Sponsored activity: for example, an obstacle course to include some 'planting' activities.

ADDITIONAL SONGS

You can use any songs that the group of children you are working with might know. Some suggestions that fit with the theme are below.

- **'Our God is a great big God'**
- **'Nothing's too big for his power'**
- **'He's got the whole world in his hands'**
- **'Thank you for the food we eat'**



TODDLER CHURCH: APPENDIX 2

PAPER FLOWER TEMPLATE

