



CELL OUTLINES

SEEK JUSTICE AND
RECONCILIATION

These Cell Outlines are written by Youth and Children's Ministries. They are available every month from our website. For more information and other Cell resources, visit salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources

OVERVIEW

This month we are exploring the fifth mission priority for The Salvation Army in the UK.

SEEK JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

People can experience a fuller life while we are on Earth – we don't have to wait until we die. God longs for justice for all people. Therefore, The Salvation Army will speak out against injustice. We fight not simply the effects of injustice but also the systems and structures that enable injustice. Seeking reconciliation is also an essential part of Salvation Army life. Justice and reconciliation are vital activities to achieving 'Our Vision' of fullness of life for all with Jesus.

SESSION ONE: IT'S NOT FAIR!

In Session One we'll start to explore the final mission priority, 'Seek Justice and Reconciliation'. We'll dig deeper into what we mean by biblical justice and consider how this links with the mission priority. We will also begin our journey into the book of Micah as we focus on the prophet's well-known words:

**He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.**

— MICAH 6:8 (NIV)

SESSION TWO: HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF!

In Session Two we'll think about the way that injustice has continued throughout the centuries and consider how the challenges faced by the prophet Micah are relevant today. We'll spend time discussing Captain Cotterill's article 'Racing to injustice?' and consider where The Salvation Army should speak out against injustice in our society.

SESSION THREE: ABOUT 27 WEEKS TO GO!

In today's session we'll explore Micah's prophesy about the birth of Jesus and the hope that his words brought to the people of Israel. We'll think about what reconciliation looks like, how we can play an active role in bringing people together and the message of hope Jesus brings to our broken world.

SESSION FOUR: ACT JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLY

Our final session guides us through the closing chapters of the book of Micah and helps us to focus on God's priorities when seeking justice and reconciliation. We are to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly. We will draw our discussions about the final mission priority to a close and consider next steps to be part of God's reconciliation process.

Any text in italics represents notes for the leader. It gives more context around the Scripture/activity. You may choose to share verbatim, summarise or not share at all.

IT'S NOT FAIR!

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And what does the Lord require of you?
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— MICAH 6:8 (NIV)

WELCOME

IT'S NOT FAIR!

As children we can often find it difficult to control our emotions when we feel that something is unfair. Below are some examples of children struggling to deal with the unfairness of life, all taken from a BuzzFeed Article.

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/mikespohr/parents-are-sharing-the-illogical-reasons-their-toddlers>

Read through the examples below and then share any similar experiences from your childhood.

“ ‘Our daughter cried because she didn't get to go to her parents' wedding – seven years before she was born.’

— LAZIESTGIRL

“ ‘My kid screamed at his balloons for an hour because they wouldn't stop floating.’

— PRNMEDS

“ ‘My son enjoys My Little Pony. However, we cannot refer to it as 'My Little Pony'. He can say 'My Little Pony', but my wife and I must refer to it as 'Your Little Pony' or he loses his little mind.’

— LOGICCURE

“ ‘My son lost it because I wouldn't let him get into the car parked next to us.’

— MAMDOCTORJONES

“ ‘My daughter lost it because she wanted a twin sister (she has a twin sister).’

— NOTSOSTEPFORDWIFE

We smile at these parents' experiences of trying to understand their children's cries of 'It's not fair!' but how does it relate to our experience as God's children?

If our Heavenly Father was sharing his own anecdotes, what would he lovingly post about us?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

How would you finish this sentence?

'It's not fair that ...'

When we witness something that we think is unfair, we often feel a sense of injustice. Our theme for this month focuses on how God wants us to take action when we see people treated unfairly.

WORD

In the following four sessions we will complete our journey through the five mission priorities of The Salvation Army UKI. We will explore what it means to 'Seek Justice and Reconciliation' in our world and the part we play in that mission.

Before we delve into this mission priority, it is important that we grasp what the Bible means by justice.

Watch this clip from the Bible Project and then discuss the following questions.

 **Justice – Bible Project (6 min 18 sec)**


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A14THPoc4-4>

 **Read Genesis 1:24-27.**

How does God make a distinction between animals and humans?


- * The clip says that our identity as God's representatives is 'the bedrock of the Bible's view of justice. All humans are equal before God and have the right to be treated with dignity and fairness no matter who you are.'

Discuss how this statement reflects, or does not reflect, the world that we live in.




-  Do you agree that 'we are constantly redefining good and evil to our own advantage at the expense of others'? Share any examples that you can think of.

 **Read Genesis 18:18-19.**


What did God call Abraham to do?

-  How did the clip describe the difference between 'being good' and 'being righteous'?

'The biblical Hebrew word for righteousness is tsedeqah ... It's an ethical standard that refers to right relationships between people; it's about treating others as the image of God.'

-  What is the difference between retributive justice and restorative justice?
-  The clip says, 'Justice and righteousness are about a radical way of life.' Do you agree? If not, why not?
-  What do the following Scripture verses teach us about justice and righteousness?

- ▶ Proverbs 31:8-9
- ▶ Jeremiah 22:3
- ▶ Psalm 146:7-9

 **Read through the following extract from the clip and discuss examples that you see in society today.**

'Some people actively perpetrate injustice. Others receive benefits or privileges from unjust social structures they take for granted, and, sadly, history has shown that when the oppressed gain power, they often become oppressors themselves.'

- * God sent Jesus to die on the cross for us and rise from the dead so that we could be declared righteous through his sacrifice.

How should this reality spur us on to seek righteousness and justice for others?

Reflect on everything that has been discussed.

How would you describe justice to someone who had never heard the word before?


ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Discuss the following quote about justice.

“Doing justice” meant not only “not doing wrong”, but also actively doing right and restoring what is broken.’
 — JESSICA NICHOLAS

As you think about your everyday life, what opportunities are there to restore what is broken, rather than just doing the right thing?

For this activity you'll need a wall with nothing in front of it and a post-it note for each person in the group. One by one, each person must try to stick their post-it as high as possible on the wall. While run-up and jumping is allowed, no props can be used and the post-it must be placed by hand. The winner is the person that gets the post-it highest on the wall. Making sure you have a prize for the winner will help make the point clearer.

 Discuss – how does it feel to play a game when un-fairness, inequality and injustice built right into the rules?

Ask the group to redesign the game to make it fair. This shouldn't be too difficult. Then, using the above quote have a conversation about what it would take to make the game not just fair but “just.”

WORSHIP

In each session the Worship section will focus on the words of Micah 6:8.

Give each member of the group the Micah 6:8 handout. Ask them to look through all the translations and choose one to memorise before the next session. They could create a wallpaper or screensaver on their phone for the verse, or set a reminder to read the verse each day. The aim is to have a daily reminder to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. The group leader or member of the group could also send a translation of the verse each day by text or on the group's social media page.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time reflecting on the words of Micah 6:8 as you listen to the following song.

 **Micah 6:8 Sing the Bible Vol 4 (3 min 39 sec)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VH9VbRY_1n4

WITNESS

With each mission priority we've spent time looking at the wording and discussing what it means for us both individually and as a church. This month we are going to use the same process to think about the 'Seek Justice and Reconciliation' mission priority.

This activity can be done in a number of ways depending on whether you are meeting in person or online. Either way, each member of the group will need a copy of the mission priority.

Read through the statement a couple of times.

SEEK JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

People can experience a fuller life while we are on Earth – we don't have to wait until we die. God longs for justice for all people. Therefore, The Salvation Army will speak out against injustice. We fight not simply the effects of injustice but also the systems and structures that enable injustice. Seeking reconciliation is also an essential part of Salvation Army life. Justice and reconciliation are vital activities to achieving 'Our Vision' of fullness of life for all with Jesus.

Generate questions around this statement and highlight words that require clarification. At the end of the four sessions these questions will be revisited for further discussion.

Examples of questions:

- 🗨️ What is meant by experiencing a 'fuller life'?
- 🗨️ In what ways is seeking reconciliation 'an essential part of Salvation Army life'?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Share together 'A Prayer for Social Justice' written for the World Day of Social Justice by Compassion UK.

Heavenly Father, you to teach us to seek justice, to defend the oppressed and take up the cause of the fatherless and the plea of the widow.

We ask that when the scale of injustice seeks to overwhelm us, your Spirit will be the encouragement we need to keep speaking out against it.

Today, we ask for breakthrough for those facing situations of injustice. May they know a sense of hope that only you can bring.

Amen.

MICAH 6:8 HANDOUT

**He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.**

— MICAH 6:8 (NIV)

**No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:
to do what is right, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.**

— MICAH 6:8 (NLT)

**But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do,
what God is looking for in men and women.
It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour,
be compassionate and loyal in your love,
And don't take yourself too seriously –
take God seriously.**

— MICAH 6:8 (THE MESSAGE PARAPHRASE)

**No. He has told you, mortals, what is good in His sight.
What else does the Eternal ask of you
But to live justly and to love kindness
and to walk with your True God in all humility?**

— MICAH 6:8 (THE VOICE PARAPHRASE)

What impact do you think you could have on the lives of others if every day you made the conscious choice to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God?

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

We'll think about the way that injustice has continued throughout the centuries and consider how the challenges faced by the prophet Micah are relevant today. We'll spend time discussing Captain Cotterill's article 'Racing to injustice?' and consider where The Salvation Army should speak out against injustice in our society.

WELCOME

Read the following quotes about history.

What point do you think they are trying to make?

“ **‘More and more, I tend to read history. I often find it more up to date than the daily newspapers.’**

— JOE MURRAY

“ **‘History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unloved, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.’**

— MAYA ANGELOU

“ **‘History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme.’**

— MARK TWAIN

Sometimes we may question the relevance of Old Testament Scripture for our lives today, but people are people. Unfortunately human nature often leads us to make the same mistakes throughout history, and sadly the same injustices are present in society today. To explore the theme of injustice we are going to turn to the book of Micah in the Old Testament.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Imagine you are going out for a meal and you can invite four guests. These guests can be from any point in history.

Who would you choose for your guest list? Explain why.

WORD

Apart from a few select verses, like the one we've started memorising, Micah isn't a particularly well-known book in the Bible.

Watch the clip to get an overview of this minor prophet.

 **The Prophet Micah in 3 Minutes**




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rqBQ-yBo5s>

From watching this short clip, how would you summarise Micah's message?

SCRIPTURE SEARCH



Ask the group to skim through the first three chapters of the book of Micah, using The Message paraphrase if possible, and list all the examples of injustice that they find. You could divide the group into pairs to take a chapter each or complete the activity together.

Make a list of all the issues Micah raises with the Israelites.

-  What similarities and differences are there between the world Micah was living in and society today?
-  How does God feel about injustice?
-  What word of hope does Micah bring to the people of Israel in Micah 2:12-13?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Micah was around at the same time as the prophet Isaiah, but they came from very different backgrounds. As cousin to the King, Isaiah grew up in luxury and had the ear of royalty and government officials. In contrast, Micah lived in Shepelah in an area of conflict and poverty, a stark contrast to the wealth found in Jerusalem.

-  How do you think Micah's upbringing and background influenced his perspective on injustice?
-  How does God use our background and experience to speak into situations filled with injustice?

What does it feel like to experience life in someone else's shoes?

You'll need a pile of newspapers (or similar), two (or more – one per team) rolls of sellotape and two (or more – one per team) pairs of scissors.

Divide your group in to two (or more) teams to compete in the classic challenge – build the highest freestanding tower in 5 minutes. However, there is a twist. Each member will be asked to take on a characteristic that is not typical of them. You can choose which roles to use and who to assign them to with your knowledge of the group. You don't have to use all of them or if your group is pro at this kind of challenge, you could even double up.

- * Is the only person allowed to touch the Sellotape
- * Is the only person allowed to touch the scissors
- * Can only talk to (and be heard by) the person holding the Sellotape
- * Can only talk to (and be heard by) the person holding the scissors
- * Can not touch the newspaper
- * Can only use their non-dominant hand
- * Can not talk at all
- * Has to approve every action before it is taken

Once the game is over and winners declared, chat through how it felt to play each particular role in the group. Did anyone get a glimpse into how those around them navigate situations with the challenges they face? Was anyone's contribution helped or hindered by their role? What could have happened if everyone had been free and encouraged to bring the fullness of their gifts and experience? How does our perspective and experience shape how other see us and how we see others?

WORSHIP

How are you getting on memorising Micah 6:8?

Ask the group to share the version of Micah 6:8 they have memorised.


Have the daily reminders of this verse changed your perspective on the people you have met or the situations you have been involved in? If so, how?

If the daily verse reminders have had no real impact, then why do you think that is, when the issue of justice is so important to God?

Read the *Amplified Version* of Micah 6:8.

**He has told you, O man, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you
Except to be just, and to love [and to diligently practise] kindness (compassion),
And to walk humbly with your God [setting aside any overblown sense of importance or self-righteousness]?**

— MICAH 6:8 (AMP)

-  How does this translation add to your understanding of Micah 6:8?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY



Spend time reflecting on the words of Micah 6:8 as you listen to the following song:

 **Micah 6:8 – Kathleen Carnali Music**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paHfnVzy4ak>

WITNESS

In the Old Testament the prophets spoke into situations where God's followers had turned away from his will and purpose for their lives. God uses prophets from different backgrounds to speak to different audiences about what often boil down to the same issues.

 **Read Micah 6:8.**

-  What is Micah's motivation for speaking truth into this situation?
-  Why is our motivation important when we are pointing out injustice, particularly within the Church?

God uses Christians today to speak truth into situations of injustice. Today we're going to spend time considering an article written by Captain Ben Cotterill in October 2020.

 **Article of the week: Racing to justice? 3 October 2020**
<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/article-week-racing-justice>

A PDF download is also available on the Cell page.

Read through the article together and discuss the following questions:

-  What was the context for Captain Cotterill's article? What events were taking place at the time?
-  We have already mentioned that Micah's background gave him a different perspective on the injustice around him. What role does proximity play in understanding the perspectives of others?
-  What current issues would suit Captain Cotterill's suggested positional statement?

'We don't actually know what is right and wrong on this complicated issue, even though we thought we did. Time is needed, to prayerfully and respectfully discern a way forward.'
-  One of the points made in the article is that 'decision-making needs to be anchored in how it affects the marginalised'. What do you think that means?

In his final point Captain Cotterill says:

'The reality is that we are simply unpractised at centring other people. All too often, deliberately or inadvertently, we practise racism and sexism, we ignore the calls of the poor, we practise justifying harm and we have somehow become skilled at these things.'

In what ways do you agree/disagree?

In what ways are you personally challenged by the 'Racing to justice' article?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

What key injustice issues do you feel The Salvation Army should be more vocal about?




Do you know if or what work The Salvation Army is already doing in this area? If not, spend some time finding out and share it with the group in the next session.

ABOUT 27 WEEKS TO GO!

In today's session we'll explore Micah's prophesy about the birth of Jesus and the hope that his words brought to the people of Israel. We'll think about what reconciliation looks like, how we can play an active role in bringing people together and the message of hope Jesus brings to our broken world.

WELCOME

If possible start the session playing Christmas music and then discussion the following questions.

-  Have you bought any Christmas presents yet?
-  What would you like for Christmas this year?
-  Does it seem strange to be thinking about Christmas in the middle of June?

Around 700 years before it happened, Micah prophesied about the birth of Jesus. Today's session explores how that prophesy, and its fulfilment, connects with the theme of justice.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Micah and the other prophets used their words to paint a picture of the future. Using, just colouring pens and paper, ask each young person to create something they think will exist in 700 years. It may be a teleportation device we use instead of a car or a human colony on Mars! Share your imaginings and creations.

WORD

At the time of writing, the invasion of Ukraine is still in progress. News of atrocities witnessed across the country are surfacing and harrowing stories of war crimes are being revealed. Micah lived in a time of conflict and poverty and was surrounded by injustice. Much like today, there were those who looked out for themselves at the expense of others and benefited from unfair social systems.

Despite the challenges Micah faced, what message of hope did the prophet bring in Micah 4:1-4 (*The Message* paraphrase)?

It can be very easy to be pulled into the world's way of thinking and look away when we see injustice.

Read Micah 4:5

**'Meanwhile, all the other people live however they wish,
picking and choosing their gods.
But we live honouring God,
and we're loyal to our God forever and ever.'**

— MICAH 4:5 (*THE MESSAGE* PARAPHRASE)

What is Micah's approach to resisting the pressures in society to accept injustice as an inevitable part of life?

In the middle of all the injustice Micah points to a future hope.

Read Micah 5:2-4 (*The Message* paraphrase)

**But you, Bethlehem, David's country,
the runt of the litter –
From you will come the leader
who will shepherd-rule Israel.
He'll be no upstart, no pretender.
His family tree is ancient and distinguished.**

**Meanwhile, Israel will be in foster homes
until the birth pangs are over and the child is born,
And the scattered brothers come back
home to the family of Israel.
He will stand tall in his shepherd-rule by God's strength,
centred in the majesty of God-Revealed.
And the people will have a good and safe home,
for the whole world will hold him in respect –
Peacemaker of the world!**

Micah points toward the day when the Messiah will come as the 'peacemaker of the world'. But the Messiah has already come, so why do we still live in a world of injustice?

Watch the Bible Project clip to discover more.

 **Messiah – Bible Project (5 min 16 sec)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>



How is Jesus the answer to the injustice that we face in the world today?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

You'll need pens and paper again – large paper – as big as possible – would be best.

Understanding the prophets can be tricky. Maybe even impossible. But what we do get when we dig in is a picture of what has happened, like the birth of Jesus and the coming of the Messiah, but also what is not yet – the world Jesus has asked us to partner with him in the creation of. Earlier we allowed our individual imaginations run wild with futuristic creations. Now, we'll do the same activity, but together. Together, create a picture of what your church, community or world would look like when the prophecies of Micah are fully realised.

When this is done, discuss what are some of the tangible steps that can be taken towards making this world a reality.



-  In an ideal world, what injustice would you like to be completely solved by Christmas?
-  Do you think that your answer could represent an area where God is calling you to serve? If so, what's your next move?

WITNESS

Give the group a copy of Archbishop Justin Welby's message of reconciliation.

A Message on reconciliation from Archbishop Justin Welby



Discuss the following questions:

-  'Jesus calls every one of us to love God, our neighbours, ourselves and our enemies – a challenging command, with nobody left out.' Why is this command of Jesus so challenging to follow?
-  Justin Welby describes what reconciliation is and what it is not. What are your thoughts about his take on the meaning of reconciliation?

Part of the 'Seek Justice and Reconciliation' mission priority says:

“Seeking reconciliation is also an essential part of Salvation Army life.”

If something is essential, then it is defined to be absolutely necessary and extremely important.

-  What steps do we need to take to make reconciliation an 'extremely important' part of The Salvation Army?
-  How should our relationship with Jesus impact the way we relate with others?

‘Christ calls us to be peacemakers who cross the borders and barriers that divide us – radical in our generosity and welcome. It’s a call to see others in their full humanity, to persist in seeking their good. Communities of followers of Jesus across the world are present at the most local levels where relationships are made or broken. In these relationships, the Church has the opportunity to offer honest, deeply-rooted hope.’

- How can each one of us play a role in being a source of ‘deeply-rooted hope’ for the world around us?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

On his visit to South Africa in 1982, the theologian David Pawson was accused of being a communist and had many of his meetings cancelled for saying these words:

‘A God of righteousness is as concerned about injustice as he is about immorality.’

As he shared this story he went on to say:

‘You see, our political problem is that right-wing politicians are concerned about immorality and left-wing politicians are concerned about injustice. And God is concerned about both.’

— DAVID PAWSON

- 🗨️ How are David Pawson’s words relevant to our society today?
- 🗨️ What issues come to mind when you read his words?
- 🗨️ What role can Christians play in reconciling these two perspectives?

WORSHIP

Spend time as a group recapping the memory verse Micah 6:8.

This verse comes from the book of Micah in the Old Testament. Although times may change, human nature unfortunately stays the same and we see examples of injustice all around us.

Watch the clip and discuss the questions below.

📺 **Is Micah 6:8 relevant for Christians today? (3 min 36 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWojcPnrC50>

- 🗨️ How are the words of Micah 6:8 lived out in the life of Jesus?
- 🗨️ How are the words of Micah 6:8 relevant to Christians today?
- 🗨️ What does Micah 6:8 inspire you to do for God?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time reflecting on the words of Micah 6:8 as you listen to the following song.

🎵 **Pat Barrett – ‘Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly’ (Official Lyric Video) (2 min 47 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dk7llf2LkKc>

A MESSAGE ON RECONCILIATION FROM ARCHBISHOP JUSTIN WELBY

Reconciliation is one of our greatest needs and toughest challenges as human beings. In a world plagued by conflict, division and indifference, the Church has a crucial role to play as a community of reconcilers. Jesus calls every one of us to love God, our neighbours, ourselves and our enemies – a challenging command, with nobody left out.

The word 'reconcile' literally means to bring together – or heal – that which was broken. This healing is much more than the absence of conflict. It's certainly not about suppressing difference. Reconciliation is about seeking to transform relationships that have become damaged or destructive into relationships of trust that bring new life.

The journey towards this is not easy. It requires humility, time and patience. Most of all, it demands a decision to let go of the destructive power of memory and past hurt. It's precisely because reconciliation is so difficult that it is so powerful.

Reconciliation is at the heart of Christ's good news. It's at the centre of the call he makes to those who follow him. That's why I've made it a personal priority for my ministry.

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus are the story of God's reconciliation with humanity. Through them, Jesus opens the way for a restored relationship between God and us. If we embrace that joyful new relationship, it should overflow into the way we relate to one another. This will look different in each of our lives – from making cups of tea to acting as professional mediators.

Christ calls us to be peacemakers who cross the borders and barriers that divide us – radical in our generosity and welcome. It's a call to see others in their full humanity, to persist in seeking their good. Communities of followers of Jesus across the world are present at the most local levels where relationships are made or broken. In these relationships, the Church has the opportunity to offer honest, deeply-rooted hope.

ACT JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLLY

Our final session guides us through the closing chapters of the book of Micah and helps us to focus on God's priorities when seeking justice and reconciliation. We are to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly. We will draw our discussions about the final mission priority to a close and consider next steps to be part of God's reconciliation process.

WELCOME

We have managed to get to Session Four without any mention of the Justice League, but the moment has arrived. This team of superheroes fight injustice – but can you name the members of the Justice League?

- * Batman
- * Wonder Woman
- * Green Lantern
- * Martian Manhunter
- * Superman
- * Aquaman
- * Flash

If you could spend the day as one of these superheroes, fighting for justice, who would you choose?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

-  **Which Justice League superhero are you?**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuYI3EEfU1I>

WORD

Throughout these sessions we have explored the words of the prophet Micah and today we are looking at the final two chapters.

-  **Read Micah 6: 1-5, preferably in *The Message* paraphrase.**

^{1,2} **Listen now, listen to God:**

‘Take your stand in court.

**If you have a complaint, tell the mountains;
make your case to the hills.**

**And now, Mountains, hear God’s case;
listen, Jury Earth –**

**For I am bringing charges against my people.
I am building a case against Israel.**

^{3,5} **‘Dear people, how have I done you wrong?
Have I burdened you, worn you out? Answer!**

**I delivered you from a bad life in Egypt;
I paid a good price to get you out of slavery.**

**I sent Moses to lead you –
and Aaron and Miriam to boot!**

**Remember what Balak king of Moab tried to pull,
and how Balaam son of Beor turned the tables on him.**

**Remember all those stories about Shittim and Gilgal.
Keep all God’s salvation stories fresh and present.’**

What frustration is God sharing in this passage?

God reminds the people of all the ways he has been there for them. Their lives do not reflect the grace and mercy he has shown to them.

Read Micah 6:6-7 (*The Message*)

In verse 6 the question is asked, 'How can I stand up before God and show proper respect to the high God?' We then read a list of rituals that the people followed.

We may not 'bring an armload of offerings topped with yearling calves' these days, but what other rituals do we follow?

We can put a lot of emphasis on following the traditions and rituals of the church. Although these play an important part in our church traditions, Micah's words show us that they should never be seen as more important than seeking justice and reconciliation.

After listing all the possible ways that believers could show their proper respect to the high God, Micah reminds the people what God has already told them to do.

Ask each member of the group to share the Micah 6:8 memory verse they have memorised.

If we want to seek justice and reconciliation, then Micah 6:8 is a good place to start. We may feel overwhelmed by the amount of injustice we see in the world, but let's continue to pray, trust God and follow the example of the prophet Micah.

**'But me, I'm not giving up.
I'm sticking around to see what God will do.
I'm waiting for God to make things right.
I'm counting on God to listen to me.'**

— MICAH 7:7 (THE MESSAGE PARAPHRASE)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

You'll need colouring pens and paper – if available, human sized paper, card, scissors and elastic.

While DC's Justice League may not be real, we see in Micah, and throughout the Bible, that God's people are called to the very real fight for justice for all people. Using the large paper, together design your ideal member of the Justice League. What characteristics would this hero need to bring about real peace, equality and justice on earth?

If you have the resources, using the mask template at the end of this session, get each member of the group to create their own superhero mask to remind them of the characteristics they have/would like/can use to be a justice-bringing-hero in their everyday lives. You'll know your group best and some may consider this activity too young for them but the masks allow an opportunity to create a takeaway with a personal focused reminder – they of course don't have to be worn!

WITNESS

Over the last four sessions we have explored the fifth Mission Priority for the United Kingdom and Ireland Territory. We have looked at what is meant by this mission priority and what it means for us as followers of Jesus.

Read again The Salvation Army's statement to 'seek justice and reconciliation'.

SEEK JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

People can experience a fuller life while we are on Earth - we don't have to wait until we die. God longs for justice for all people. Therefore, The Salvation Army will speak out against injustice. we fight not simply the effects of injustice but also the systems and structures that enable injustice. Seeking reconciliation is also an essential part of Salvation Army life. Justice and reconciliation are vital activities to achieving 'Our Vision' of fulness of life for all with Jesus'.

Revisit the original questions you generated in Session One. Work through each one and discuss it in light of all you have discovered in the past four sessions.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Recap the five mission priorities.

- * To share the good news
- * To serve others without discrimination
- * To nurture disciples of Jesus
- * To care for creation
- * To seek justice and reconciliation
- * How is your youth group living out these mission priorities?
- * Where are the strengths and the weaknesses?
- * Over the past five months you have spent time as a group exploring the mission priorities in depth. Which one calls you to actions and what are your next steps?

WORSHIP

What is the key message you have taken away from your time reflecting on the book of Micah?

You have already shared the memory verse once today, but how has it changed your perspective on seeking justice and reconciliation in your everyday life?



If the group feels comfortable, then film them saying their translation of the memory verse and sharing the key message of this verse. The clips could be edited together and shared with the rest of the church.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time reflecting on the words of Micah 6:8 as you listen to the following song.

 **Micah 6:8 Manna Worship**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhJDSTNkJFw>

Throughout these sessions you have listened to four songs based on the words of Micah 6:8.

-  Which one has resonated with you the most?
-  Which one would you introduce to the rest of your church to share the message of Micah 6:8?

