



## SHARING HIS LOVE

SPECIAL DAYS

### PREPARATION

- ➔ Invite members to bring something - or a picture of something - they love
- ➔ Prepare a large tree template and cut-out leaves - large enough to write on and enough for each person with some spares
  - ➔ [Optional tree template](#)
  - ➔ [Optional leaf templates](#)
- ➔ Print out a Bible verse for each member to keep - you may wish to print on card
- ➔ Provide pens for members to write on the leaves with
- ➔ Prepare to show / listen to the song '[Everywhere](#)' by Salvation Army International Songsters uploaded by lovegodandloveothers

#### Additional resources

- ❖ John 13:34-35 Bible verse cards

### INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

February is known in many part of the world for being the month of love!

Love can mean many things for different people; it may conjure up images of happy times or bring back memories of sad or frightening experiences. Love is a basic emotion that we all crave.

God tells us to '*Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another*' (John 13:34-35).

I wonder how we can help our friends and families to know they are loved through our words, communications and experiences?

### ACTIVITIES

#### THIS OR THAT

Give a 'this or that' option and invite members to put their left hand up for the first option and their right hand for the second option.

# Connect



There are 10 examples below for you to use - you will be able to think of more - and maybe ask group members to come up with their own:

- \* Cat or dog?
- \* Sweet or savoury?
- \* Winter or summer?
- \* *Coronation Street* or *Emmerdale*?
- \* Jumper or cardigan?
- \* Coffee or tea?
- \* Morning or night?
- \* City or country?
- \* Camping or hotel?
- \* Fiction or non-fiction?

We all have preferences for things we love - and it's OK for not all of us to be cat lovers! God made us in his own image and loves us.

## SHARE

Let everyone who would like to share what they have brought with them - something/someone they love - and to give a reason why they do so.

## BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

📖 'Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognise that you are my disciples - when they see the love you have for each other.'

(John 13: 34-35 *THE MESSAGE*)

At the beginning of the film *Love Actually* these words are spoken:

'Whenever I get gloomy with the state of the world, I think about the arrivals gate at Heathrow Airport. General opinion is starting to make out that we live in a world of hatred and greed, but I don't see that. It seems to me that love is everywhere.'

'Often, it's not particularly dignified or newsworthy, but it's always there - fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, old friends.'

# Connect



‘When the planes hit the Twin Towers, as far as I know, none of the phone calls from the people on board were messages of hate or revenge - they were all messages of love. If you look for it, I’ve got a sneaky feeling you’ll find that love actually is all around.’

We are all unique and we have different loves - from loving winter more than summer or coffee rather than tea. But the one thing we can rely on is that God loves us all, no matter what our preferences or loves are, and he wants us to love him and others in the same way.

Love is something we can all give - young babies who smile at you and wait for your response, the teenager messaging their friends to check on them, the retired gentleman sharing a cup of tea and a chat with their friend. These are simple ways of showing love, and no matter what our age, we are all able to do it.

But what about those people whom we may find it harder to love - those who have hurt us, or we those read about in the news who have done dreadful things? Jesus tells us plainly - love one another as I have loved you. He loved and still loves everyone, and we must do the same.

The words of a well-known hymn says this:

‘Oh dearly, dearly, has he loved  
And we must love him too,  
And trust in his redeeming [love]  
And try his works to do.’

SASB 203

So how do we show love completely and wholeheartedly if we don’t find it easy?

One phrase that parents might use to their child is, ‘I love you, but I don’t love this particular behaviour.’

We can love people with a love that God gives, even if we don’t necessarily love something about them or something they have done. Even when it is the most difficult thing to do, we need to look beyond the situation with God’s eyes. By showing God’s love and reaching out to them, maybe they will feel and see God’s love for themselves and want to know more of his love for themselves.

# Connect



## REFLECTION

Is there a particular situation that you find difficult to show love in?

Are there people who need your love particularly at the moment?

Why not write that name or situation on the leaf you have and add it to the tree - a tree that is growing leaves of love. Watch the love grow as more leaves are added, and share a prayer as you do so.

Whilst engaging in this activity you could listen to the song **'Everywhere'** which talks about God's love being the same for us all each and every day.

## PRAYER

May we look at others  
as if through your eyes,  
less judging, more loving,  
and seeing them, like us,  
as not perfect or finished,  
but as a work in progress  
that will be completed  
in due time by your hands.  
Amen.

Anon

## BIBLE VERSE

Give each member a Bible verse card based on John 13:34 to keep.

## SONGS

- ♪ SASB 1007 'Let there be love shared among us'  
Watch the [lyric duet video](#) by Droitwich Spa Salvation Army or the [lyric video](#) by Emmaus Music
- ♪ 'I could sing of your love for ever'  
Watch the [lyric video](#), sung by Vineyard Music and uploaded by parkhallfc
- ♪ SASB 925 'Let us go out into the world with love in our hearts'  
Watch the [instrumental brass band version](#) performed at the Salvation Army Congress, Together 2023 (starts at 01:49:11)
- ♪ 'The golden rule'  
Watch the [lyric video](#) by Worship for Everyone

# Connect



## WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect)
- Family Ministries website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families)
- Emails: [familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk)
- Facebook: @sarmyfm
- Twitter: @ukifamily
- Instagram: safamily\_ministries



### Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for

Children | Adults | Everyone

