

## WE SEEK YOUR KINGDOM

### MISSION PRIORITIES

#### PREPARATION

- ➔ In advance ask members to look at the news this week, and maybe consider challenging themselves by reading it from a different perspective from their own
- ➔ Collect a range of printed resources on social justice and reconciliation to read and discuss, eg different newspapers both local and national, and information from The Salvation Army: anti-trafficking, modern slavery, International Development, Family Tracing, Family Ministries - the list could go on and on as it is such a part of our DNA!
- ➔ Gather resources for a group collage, eg roll of paper, spare paper, pens, scissors and glue
- ➔ Provide refreshments, eg tea/coffee
- ➔ Set up a large sheet of paper and pens or project on a screen
- ➔ Prepare to use the song '[We seek your Kingdom](#)' by Noel Robinson, Andy Flannagan and Graham Hunter
- ➔ Print the [song lyrics](#) for each member to take home

#### INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

This session helps us explore one of The Salvation Army's five Mission Priorities: 'Seek Justice and Reconciliation'. God longs for justice and reconciliation for all people, and we are a part of his mission to see his Kingdom values on earth today. Injustice and oppression can be overwhelming and heartbreaking. We are thankful that we have a God who is with us and who offers hope for the future and on earth today.

#### ACTIVITIES

##### COLLAGE

Over a cup of tea or coffee, invite members to look at the printed resources on social justice and reconciliation. Allow space and time for reading and discussion.

Provide a roll of paper, scissors and glue for members who would like to make a collage of articles that really stand out for them as they discuss.

##### DISCUSS

Discuss together how the newspapers are collated. They are a picture in time of what is going on in the world, carefully chosen and collated by writers and editors



who decide what we might want to read or what will sell papers, or maybe even for other political reasons. But they are a glimpse and perspective that can inform us about what is going on outside our own situation, into the world and in the lives of people around us.

Ask the group:

- ✳ What could seeking justice and reconciliation look like for the situations you have read about?

## Thought

Take a moment to pause and consider that every single person written about in the news articles, every statistic given or group of people mentioned, is each wonderfully created by God. They are made in his image, and not only viewed by God as 'good' but '**very** good'!

## POEM

Write a group poem to help introduce the concept of Kingdom values.

Title the poem 'What if ...' Ask members to think what an ideal world would look like. Ask them to suggest ways to finish the sentence 'What if ...' - eg there were no arguments, everyone had enough to eat, everyone loved God, we found joy in other people's success ... Record the poem on a large sheet of paper or project on a screen. You may wish to finish the poem with 'What if ...'

## Thought

Consider what kind of poem God might write. What would he consider to be an ideal world? Would there be any similarities? Highlight any examples of different Kingdom values that feature in the group poem, eg love, humility, honesty, forgiveness, generosity, kindness, peacemaking, joy, faith and purity.

## BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

📖 'So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

'God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number;  
fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the  
sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."'"  
(Genesis 1:27-28)



📖 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.'  
(Genesis 1:31)

In God's family we are all connected, we are brothers, sisters, aunties, uncles, parents - all created in the image of God. Does our inter-connectedness change how we read, understand and are impacted by these articles?

'We must preach with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other.'

This quote is often assigned to the theologian Karl Barth. It is a challenge to see how faith in God can inform our understanding of how Kingdom values can be put into practice in real life. The Bible is not meant to be some separate, irrelevant and sanitised book, but rather a guide to a way of life that is relevant and often messy and calls us to authentic living in the realities of what is going on in the world.

It can be overwhelming even to consider seeking justice and reconciliation in the world. If you are brave enough to read or listen to the news, that is brilliant!

For all of us, there are times in life when we may need to focus on what is in front of us, striving to cope with whatever we are dealing with in life ourselves or with those who are close to us.

There are other times when we have the space and emotional capacity to open up ourselves to other people's situations. This is when we can position ourselves to hear, see and feel what others may be struggling with in life. But we must remain aware of our own circumstances and capacity to care for others, especially when we hear of such painful stories of oppression.

Reflect on your own situation. Are you in a time of needing to prioritise self-care, or are you in a season of being able to support others? Sometimes we pray for ourselves, and at other times we can be part of God's answer to someone else's prayer.

When we look at the messiness of the world, read or watch the news or ask people how they genuinely are, it can inform our response. One thing every one of us can do is pray. Prayer does make a difference, and being informed can help us pray into specific situations.

Seeking justice and reconciliation is a Kingdom value, but it can be overwhelming and lead to us feeling that we don't know even where to begin praying. Sometimes



we are left lost for words as we think about situations. Let's take a moment to be reminded of how Jesus taught us to pray:

📖 'Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.'  
(Matthew 6:9-10)

In Revelation 21 we see God's promise for the future. When we are inclined to be overwhelmed at the world, we have a hope that is both for the future and a vision for the world now as we seek justice and reconciliation in God's world.

📖 'Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

'He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"  
Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."  
(Revelation 21:1-5)

Be encouraged that God's hope is trustworthy and true. Now we see glimpses of a world where we see moments of justice and times of reconciliation, but one day a new Heaven and earth will mean we no longer seek it but live in it for eternity.

As we watch this video from The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) with the song 'We seek your Kingdom', we pray for our world, that we would see justice and reconciliation in our world. Our prayer is that God would help us discern how we might keep praying and put into action, Heaven on earth today.

## VIDEO

'[We seek your Kingdom](#)' (official video) by Noel Robinson, Andy Flannagan and Graham Hunter (4:01)



Give members the lyrics to reflect on and to take home. Perhaps they could use the song as part of their prayers this week.

## PRAYER

Members may want to pray over certain situations they have discussed, as a group, in pairs or as individuals. Provide paper and pens for any members who wish to write a prayer, to add to the collage.

## SONGS

- ♪ 'We are blessed' by Andy Flannagan  
[Video](#) feat Tearfund friends and partners (press CC for lyrics) by Andy Flannagan (4:30)  
[Lyric video](#) uploaded by Daniel Easton (4:21)
- ♪ SASB 998 'Beauty for brokenness' by Graham Kendrick  
[Lyric video](#) by Graham Kendrick Music (5:21)  
[Lyric video](#) feat Ann Stewart by Regent Hall (5:09)
- ♪ 'Hosanna' by Brooke Ligertwood  
[Official lyric video](#) by Hillsong Worship (7:06)  
[Lyric video](#) uploaded by Maria Crossette (5:58)

## 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