



## INTERNATIONAL FAMILIES DAY

SPECIAL DAYS

### PREPARATION

- Ask members to bring a family photograph of a parent, sibling, child or grandchild
- Ask members to bring a gift they have received that is precious to them
- Organise a special celebration tea for members to share - perhaps try some food from other parts of the world
- Plan a fundraising tea for the Helping-Hand Appeal (optional)

Be sensitive in case family is a difficult subject for some of your members.

### INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

There are lots of days throughout the year that we celebrate: Mother's Day; Father's Day; Valentine's Day; Grandparents Day; Burns Night; St David's Day; St George's Day and many more. These days, which appear in our calendars every year, can sometimes be very painful and leave us with a feeling of exclusion.

Every year 15 May is the United Nations' [International Day of Families](#).

'This day provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families.'

[International Day of Families](#)

International Day of Families can also help remind us that we are all part of a family. There are no exclusions because we all belong to the family of God, each of us a child of God, brought together through Jesus. We are the family of God, fearfully and wonderfully made, unique and equipped by God in so many different ways. That's something we can celebrate!

### ACTIVITIES

#### QUIZ

Pass the family photos around and see if people can guess whose family it is. Encourage members to share stories of when the photo was taken or an anecdote of the person.

# Connect



## SHARE

Talk about family traditions. Ask members to share something they learned from a family member that they have now passed on to another family member.

## SHOW

Ask each member to show a gift they have received that is precious to them. Encourage them to share why the gift is so special.

## QUOTES

‘I sustain myself with the love of family.’

Maya Angelou

‘Family is not an important thing. It’s everything.’

Michael J Fox

‘I believe the world is one big family, and we need to help each other.’

Jet Li

‘This is my family. I found it, all on my own. It’s little, and broken, but still good.’

Stitch from *Lilo and Stitch*

‘Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.’

George Burns

## CELEBRATE

Organise a special celebration tea to share together. Perhaps try different foods from around the world as part of this.

## FUNDRAISE

Why not plan a tea as a fundraiser for the Helping-Hand Appeal, remembering that God’s family is worldwide.



## BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

Family life is regarded as the bedrock of society all around the world. Today we are celebrating the United Nations' International Day of Families. It is a day that recognises the importance of families all around the world and seeks to include everyone.

Family life is not always easy and sometimes relationships get strained. We only have to remember the story of Joseph in the Old Testament to find a family who struggled to get along all of the time. Joseph's brothers were so jealous of him (and his new coat) that they sold him into slavery. But thankfully we know it all worked out in the end!

The Scriptures make it very clear that we are all God's children, and even though we may have different coloured skin, speak different languages and eat different food, we are all created in God's image and are loved by him.

Family celebrations very often involve the giving of gifts, and lots of us will have special mementos that are precious because they were given to us by our family. God gives many gifts to us too - the blessing of a new day, the beauty of the world around us, the joy of friendship - but his greatest gift is his love.

📖 'See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!'

(1 John 3:1)

So today let us celebrate together how great it is to be part of our family and also to be part of the family of God.

## SONGS

♪ SASB 53 'Praise and thanksgiving, Father, we offer'  
[Piano instrumental lyric video](#) by raszmies (2:10)  
[Lyric video](#) by Distant Voices (2:22)

♪ SASB 1013 'When I needed a neighbour'  
[Piano instrumental lyric video](#) by Salvation Army Video Songbook - Kelston Stanford (2:14)  
[Lyric video](#) by Diving Hymns (2:25)  
[Lyric video](#) by YoungPraise (1:49)

# Connect



- ♪ SASB 14 'For the beauty of the earth'  
**Congregational lyric video** (tune: Dix) by Chet Valley Hymns and Songs (2:21)  
**International Songsters video** (no lyrics) (tune: by John Rutter) by Music and More (3:53)  
**Lyric video** (tune: by John Rutter) by Chet Valley Hymns and Songs

## 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