

Let's talk about being 'dad'

Father's Day is a day to celebrate and acknowledge the massively important role that men can have in the lives of children and young people in all sorts of different ways. Being a great Dad is more than shared DNA – but we've found that sometimes it can be difficult to find a space to talk about being a 'dad' and everything this beautiful role entails.

It's our pleasure to share this free and flexible resource that we hope will help to create a space for your church family to talk about what it means to be a father figure, and to think about the part that each of us can play to welcome, care for and encourage care-experienced children and young people in our communities.

Ideas for your service

For Father's Day 2023 we have compiled a flexible resource package for your church, which you can choose from to shape your service this year. The package includes a film and congregational prayer, as well as some additional ideas for your service. We hope these resources are helpful, but we encourage you to tailor these suggestions to best fit and serve your own church family.

We know that days like Father's Day can be difficult for churches to navigate, given there will be a huge breadth of experiences and emotions across your congregation. Home for Good wants to equip churches to be welcoming and sensitive places for all individuals and families. We want to acknowledge the huge array of parenting and caring roles that impact the lives of children and young people and affirm all those who are making a difference. We want to raise awareness of the need for more people to play their part to ensure that every child has the home, family and supportive community they need.

Gathering together

Here are some ways you can make your service a space of welcome...

- Write 'Welcome' in different languages on your screen.
- Good coffee and delicious biscuits (or whatever your equivalent is) go a long way in showing value and breaking the ice as people enter and settle into the session.
- Have a diverse range of different voices, ages and faces contributing to your service, through readings, worship, prayers etc.
- Consider how your church can ensure that all accessibility needs are met.
- Explicitly telling people that you are glad they have joined you can be a powerful thing. Acknowledge that for many, Father's Day can be complicated or painful – let those joining you know that whatever their experience, they are welcome.

Sung worship

We've listed a few of our favourite hymns and worship songs that **reflect and celebrate how God walks with us, talks with us and loves us as our Father**. You may want to sing some of these songs as part of your worship service, or have them playing as people enter, leave or mingle!

- What a friend we have in Jesus, Public Domain
- Little things with great love, The Porter's Gate ft. Madison Cunningham
- To the table, Zach Williams
- Promises, Maverick City ft. Joe L Barnes and Naomi Raine
- May the Grace, Resound Worship
- You know my name, Tasha Cobbs Leonard
- No outsiders, Rend Collective

Films

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Trailer

We've created a short trailer to whet your appetite for what's to come on Father's Day. You can use this on your social media platforms or share it digitally before your Sunday service as a taster.

Service version

A video that captures parts of a conversation around a table between men who have different experiences as sons and fathers but a shared heart to make a difference in the lives of care-experienced children. This video is designed for your Sunday service with an encouragement to men in particular (although not exclusively) to keep talking about fatherhood in its many forms, and to encourage your congregation to consider the part they could play.

Extended version

An extended version of the conversation for anyone, anywhere, to watch at anytime! You could use this in small groups, at men's gatherings or simply to hear even more experience and wisdom from those around this special Father's Day table.

Making a difference

(also available with subtitles)

Blueprints

Congregational prayer

Father, You are a God of conversation.

You are a God Who listens;
Who is always available, Who always has time.
What Your children have to share is important to You.

Today, on Father's Day, we praise You.

Will You help us to be a Church who notice and hear the stories that are all-too-often hushed, drowned out or ignored?
Help us to be a Church who actively listen, demonstrating to those around us that who they are and what they have to share is of value and importance.

Father, You are a God of conversation.

You are a God Who speaks.
You communicate with Your children in so many different ways;
Through Your word, through creation,
With pictures, or in dreams,
In a still, small voice, or through the voices of other people.

Today, on Father's Day, we praise You.

Will You help us to be a Church who are creative and inclusive in how we communicate with others?
Help us to communicate with truth, grace and integrity.
Help us to communicate messages that bring encouragement.

Father, You are a God of conversation.

Sometimes You are quiet.
You are not absent, but gentle in Your presence.
You are deliberate in Your timing, in Your volume and in Your mystery,
And even though we may have questions or doubts, we can trust that You are constant and faithful.

Today, on Father's Day, we praise You.

Will You help us to be a Church who are able to be quiet;
Who can find some peace in the unknown and who can admit when we, unlike You, just don't have words or answers?
Help us to be faithful and committed in our presence with one another.
Allow our being near and walking beside to be a source of comfort and peace.

Father, You are a God of conversation.

From You, nothing is hidden.
Nothing is taboo,
Nothing is too great or too insignificant to share with You.

Congregational prayer continued

Today on Father's Day, we praise You.

Will you help us to be a Church who are open and generous in what we share and in how we receive?

Protect us from judgement and protect us from shame.

Help us to be a Church whose capacity to care and to love has no limit.

Father, You are a God of conversation.

You are a God Who laughs.

You delight in and rejoice in Your children.

You are a God Who weeps.

You are compassionate, and You enter into grief and pain.

Today on Father's Day, we praise You.

Will You help us to be like the early Church, who we read in the Bible had everything in common?

Help us to live in true fellowship with one another;

Journeying together, sharing together,

Celebrating together, crying together.

Father, You are a God of conversation.

You don't shy away from communicating what matters.

You call us to show love and hospitality;

To care for and welcome those in need of family and community.

You call us to pursue justice for the vulnerable, the marginalised and the disadvantaged.

Today, on Father's Day, we hear You.

Will You help us to keep at the centre of our conversations the needs of children and young people who right now are waiting for the right place to call home?

Help us to figure out together what we can do to make this community and this space one of belonging for care-experienced children and young people and their families.

Help us to consider what we, Your Church, have to offer.

Amen.

Conversation

Father's Day provides a great opportunity to give space for those in your congregation to have a conversation about what 'fatherhood' means to them.

Warmly invite everyone to contribute, but don't put anyone under pressure to do so. Let's put people at ease by letting them know we won't be asking them to answer any questions if they don't want to. However, we do want to invite and encourage people to participate as they feel comfortable.

There are lots of ways to incorporate conversation into your Father's Day service – here are a few ideas!

Ice-breaker questions

You could start your service or sermon with some ice breaker questions that both introduce the theme of Father's Day and help your church family connect and get to know one another a little. You could ask the following questions of your congregation, perhaps displaying them on the screen if you have one in your church, and encourage them to discuss their answer with the person next to them.

- Who do you think is the best fictional dad – perhaps from a book, movie or TV show – and what makes them the best?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word 'father'?

Discussion groups

You could dedicate some time in your service to conversation in smaller groups. Display the following questions on a screen or distribute them among your church congregation and facilitate some discussion in groups of 4-8 people.

- Who do you think is the best fictional dad – perhaps from a book, movie or TV show – and what makes them the best?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word 'father'?
- How has your understanding of what it means to be a 'dad' changed over the span of your life?
- Think about what it might be like to be a father figure, if you aren't one already – what do you think are some of the biggest joys?
- What do you imagine are some of the most difficult things?
- What part could men have to play in the lives of children and young people who have had a difficult start in life? What difference could that make?

Over coffee, before or after the service

We all love a chat before or after church – especially if it's over a cup of tea or coffee! Help make that conversation time a little more intentional this Father's Day by offering some conversation starters for people to use. Print some out and leave them on tables, by the mugs, or on chairs.

- What are your memories about the houses you lived in as a kid?
- What did you think you wanted to be when you grew up?
- Who were some of the important males in your life when you were growing up?
- Can you see any resemblance between you and the adults who cared for you growing up?
- Who were your heroes when you were a child?
- What are you most proud of in your life?
- What lessons in life have you learnt from father figures who have cared for you in some capacity?
- What is the best advice a father figure has given you?
- What's the most embarrassing thing a father figure in your life has done?
- If you could ask a father figure in your life one thing, what would it be?
- Who are your mentors or role models?
- How has your understanding of what it means to be a 'dad' changed over the span of your life?
- What is one thing a father figure shared with you that you would like to pass down to children you may care for?
- To those of you who are fathers in some capacity: what is your favourite thing about this role?
- To those of you who are fathers in some capacity: what are some of the difficult things?
- To those of you who are fathers in some capacity: what is the most helpful thing a friend has done to support and encourage you in your role?

Stories

We think Father's Day provides a particularly special chance for you to raise awareness and shine a light on the experiences of foster carers, kinship carers, supported lodgings hosts, special guardians and dads through adoption, whose stories are often missing from traditional Father's Day celebrations and conversations. Could you invite some father figures in your congregation to share a story with your church family?

We at Home for Good have an online library full of beautiful real-life stories, which you may want to use in your service or share with your church family before, after or on your social media platforms.

[We love because](#)

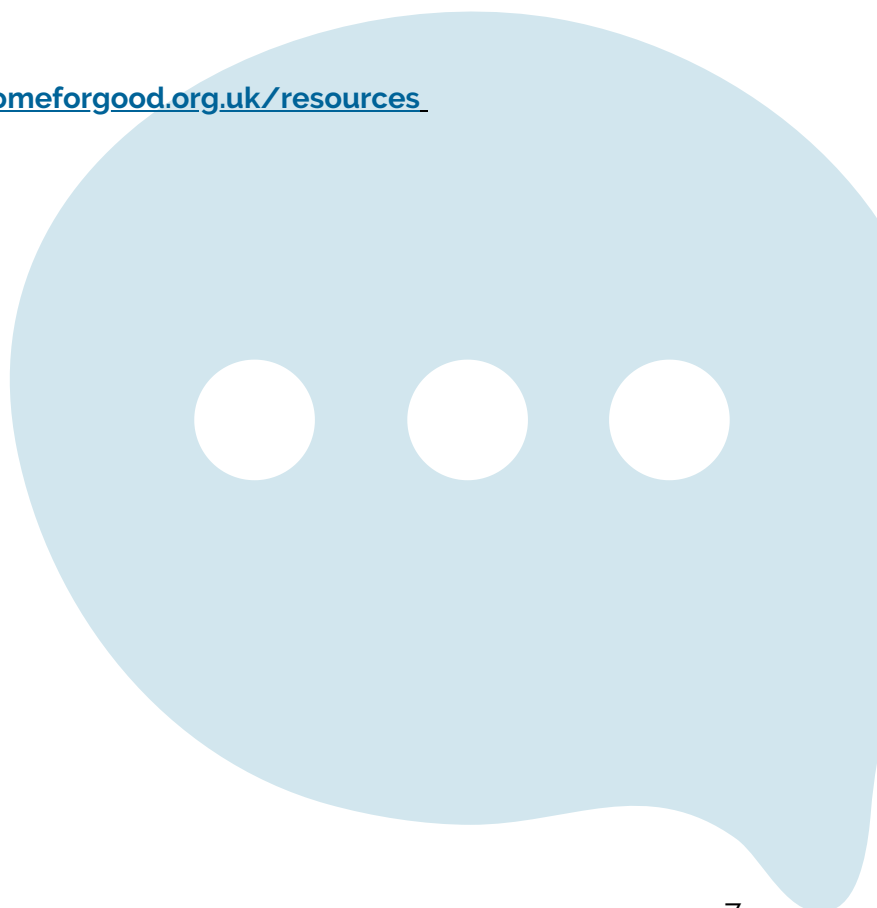
[Pushing the door](#)

[Short break foster care: Rob and Lisa's story](#)

[Glimmers of hope](#)

[Fostering teenagers: Dave's story](#)

Find more articles, stories and films at homeforgood.org.uk/resources



Bible readings

Father's Day is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all those in 'father' roles who make a difference, not just biological dads! Below are some examples of men in the Bible who cared for others in different ways. You might want to use their stories as readings, to guide moments of reflection, as points for a sermon or for children's and youth ministry.

Mordecai and Esther

Book of Esther

Mordecai cared for his cousin Esther as if she were his own daughter, and he helped her see her place in God's purposes.

David and Mephibosheth

2 Samuel 9:1 – 13

David made space at his table for Mephibosheth, son of Jonathon, and made sure he was cared for throughout his life.

Prophets

Isaiah 1: 10-18

There are a number of cases in the Old Testament when the Prophets reminded the church that to seek justice and care for the vulnerable is an act of worship.

Joseph and Jesus

Matthew 1: 1 – Matthew 2: 23

Luke 1: 1 – Luke 2: 52

Joseph stood by Mary and raised and loved Jesus as his own son, trusting God.

Jairus and his daughter

Mark 5: 21 - 43

Luke 8: 40 – 56

Jairus went to great lengths to seek Jesus' help when his daughter was sick, refusing to give up even when others said it was too late.

Paul and Timothy

Acts 16:15

1 Timothy

2 Timothy

Paul was a spiritual father and mentor to Timothy, pointing him to Jesus and helping him lead others.



It's our privilege to provide resources like this Father's Day package free of charge to churches across the UK. Perhaps your church could consider making a donation to support the vision and work of Home for Good in finding a home for every child who needs one?

Churches across the country support Home for Good either through hosting a special collection during their services or making a monthly or annual donation. This Father's Day, please consider:

- 1. Hosting a special collection for Home for Good**
- 2. Committing your church to a monthly or annual donation**

There are three ways that you can donate:

By bank transfer

You can make a donation into Home for Good's bank account using these details:

Name on account: Home for Good

Bank: CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4JQ

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account No.: 00029458

To help our finance team identify your donation, please also send an email to fundraising@homeforgood.org.uk to let us know the name and address of your church, and the date and amount of your donation.

By cheque

You can send a cheque made out to 'Home for Good' to 8 Angel Court, Copthall Avenue, London EC2R 7HP. Please also include the name and address of your church along with the cheque.

Online

You can donate with a debit or credit card online at homeforgood.org.uk/donate. Please ensure that, unless it is your own personal money, you do not tick the Gift Aid declaration.

If you have any questions about how we use donations to facilitate our work, or would like to know more about giving as a church, please contact our team via fundraising@homeforgood.org.uk.

Thank you. Together we can find a home for every child who needs one.