

Make Room

Enlarge the site of your tent [to make room for more children]; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, do not spare them; lengthen your tent ropes and make your pegs (stakes) firm [in the ground].

Isaiah 54:2 AMP



Make Room

SESSION ONE:

Justice

SESSION TWO:

Radical Hospitality

SESSION THREE:

Family

SESSION FOUR:

Church

Every 15 minutes in the UK, a child will come into care. Many will have suffered neglect or abuse; all will have experienced trauma and loss.

We know that for children in care, it's crucial to find the right home at the right time – whether that's a short-term or long-term foster family, an adoptive home or with a supported lodgings host.

Home for Good is a UK charity with a vision to find a home for every child who needs one. We believe the Church is ideally placed to ensure that every child and young person has the loving home they need. Each one of us has a part we can play. For some, that might be opening our homes to a child or young person through fostering, adoption or supported lodgings. For others, it might be providing practical support. Church families have a huge part to play in ensuring their spaces are safe and welcoming for children who have had a tricky start in life.

Many individuals, families and churches have been inspired by the words in Isaiah 54:2, particularly from the Amplified Bible phrasing to 'make room for more children', and this has prompted a response in them to explore how they can offer welcome, care and support to vulnerable children and young people. Home for Good is passionate about every one of us playing our part. How can we, the Church, make room for vulnerable children and young people?

Make Room was created for individuals, small groups or whole churches who want to explore what their part could be. It's a study for anyone, anywhere, who would like to dig a bit deeper into what the Bible has to say about the heart of God and how that so closely connects to finding a home for every child who needs one.

How to use this resource

There are four sessions in Make Room. Each session includes four parts:

- **Welcome:** An icebreaker and introduction.
- **Study:** Bible study and discussion questions, introduced by a short film.
- **Discuss:** A chance to consider how to apply what has been read. Includes a video of a real-life story.
- **Pray:** Time to bring everything that has been learnt and shared before God in prayer.

We have also included some guidance to help you lead your group in reflective prayer, based on the words of Isaiah 54:2. You can find this at the end of the resource, but we'd love you to use it every week to allow your group to reflect and meditate on what they've heard and learnt.

You can use this guide to plan your sessions. Along with the guide, you will need to download some additional material for each session. This additional material includes short films, so you will need to have the facility to show these films through a television, computer or projection system.

We have also provided additional resources for each session for those who wish to continue exploring a topic.

We hope you have everything you need to be able to deliver this Bible study with your group, but should you have any queries or issues, please contact info@homeforgood.org.uk and one of the team will be pleased to help you.



All Make Room material can be found and downloaded from our website: homeforgood.org.uk/mr-res

Home for Good believes that we all have a part to play to ensure that every child has the home they need. We work to mobilise the Church in the UK to respond to the needs of vulnerable children through families stepping forward to foster or adopt and churches wrapping around families with support, and to influence wider society through advocacy and engagement to create systemic change.

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Hosting a Bible study

As we provide you with the content to lead your group in exploring what the Bible can teach us about caring for vulnerable children, we know that there's so much more to a small group than what we've shared in this booklet. You will likely know your group already and will therefore understand what will help them feel most welcome and comfortable. But just in case it's helpful, here are a few top tips from us at Home for Good.

Before you meet

- Make sure you know the content for each session and your plan for the group so that you're able to run the session smoothly and clearly. We hope that this resource gives you confidence to explore God's word together and won't require too much preparation, but it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the content of the session before you meet.
- Check all the tech works! This is not only for your peace of mind (although that's important), but also so that there are no distractions from the content of the session.
- PRAY as you prepare, for the group who are coming, for each individual session, into the subjects you're covering, for all that God wants to do in people and more. This isn't intended to be purely a learning session but an opportunity to grow together and to be stirred to action as followers of Jesus.

During your meeting

Environment

Think about the space that you're going to meet in and how you can make it as comfortable and welcoming as possible. It doesn't need to be fancy or expensive, but thinking about lighting, setting an atmosphere (and avoiding an awkward silence!) with music and considering where people will sit is an important part of helping everyone feel comfortable, which means that they'll be more likely to engage and share.

Food and drink

Good coffee and delicious biscuits (or whatever your equivalent is) go a long way in demonstrating value to those you are hosting and breaking the ice as people enter and settle into the session.

Welcome, welcome, welcome!

It's so important that you make your group feel welcome, safe and valued. This is particularly important at the beginning of your first meeting, but also in the weeks to come. Demonstrate welcome in the obvious ways, with smiles and conversation, but also in the subtle ways, such as ensuring that all accessibility needs are met.

Prioritise connection

We'd encourage you to invite people to join you 15 minutes ahead of the 'official' start time to grab a drink and chat with one another. This time for conversation and connection is important as you journey through these four sessions together.

No pressure, but an open invitation

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 read anything out loud or answer any questions if they don't want to. However, we do want to invite and encourage people to participate as they feel comfortable.

What are we talking about when we say...

It's likely that among your group there will be a variety of knowledge and experience when it comes to fostering, adoption and supported lodgings, and while the language used throughout this Bible study will be familiar to some, others may have never encountered it.

We suggest you take some time at the beginning of your first session together to go over some of these commonly-used words and phrases, to ensure that no one in your group feels excluded because they are new to some of this language and terminology.

Fostering?

Fostering is an opportunity to give vulnerable children and young people a safe place in a stable and loving home while their own family is unable to look after them. Some may need a home for a few nights, others for a few months or years, and some will need to be in care throughout their childhood. Foster carers are trained and approved for specific types of fostering, depending on their skills and experience and what commitment they feel able to offer.

Emergency foster care provides a home for a child or children who need somewhere safe to stay for a few nights, while social workers establish what is needed in the longer term.

Short-term foster care provides a home for a child or children in care for a few weeks or months while long-term placement plans are made for the child. Short-term care is classed as being anything up to two years.

Short break and **respite foster care** provide a home for a child or children in care for a pre-planned short stay, usually for up to a fortnight, although in some circumstances it can be longer.

Remand foster care provides a home for young people who are remanded by the court into care of a specially trained foster carer.

Parent and child foster care typically provides a home and support for a new parent and their baby, to help the parent care for their baby in the long term. The parents are often teenagers themselves.

Long-term or permanent foster care provides a long-term home for a child or children who are in care. Not all children who cannot return to their birth family should go on to be adopted and some continue to have regular contact with their birth families. These children and young adults need a secure and caring long-term home until they reach adulthood.

Fostering an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) is where a non-British child has arrived alone in the UK and claimed asylum and is therefore cared for by foster carers.

Adoption?

Adoption is the opportunity to give a child or children a loving family to belong to for the rest of their lives, who will commit to them, nurture them and advocate for them, and give them a safe and stable home for good. When social workers feel that adoption is in the best interests of the child, the local authority or trust will apply to the family court for a Placement Order, which allows them to seek an adoptive family for the child. Sometimes children are placed for adoption at the request of, or in agreement with, their birth parents, but often children are placed following court processes that remove parental rights and responsibilities from their birth parents.

Early permanence (EP)?

Early permanence is an umbrella term used to describe two specific types of placements for children that may result in adoption. Concurrent Planning (CP) is where a child or children are cared for by carers who are dually approved as foster carers and adopters, and Fostering for Adoption (FfA) is where a child or children are cared for by adopters who are temporarily approved as foster carers. In both cases, the child will be placed on a temporary basis until the court makes a final decision on whether it is best for the child to be adopted or to be reunified with their birth family. Early permanence approaches reduce the number of potential moves a child will experience.

Care-experienced?

Care-experienced is an umbrella term and refers to someone who has at any stage of their life, for any length of time, been in care.

Supported lodgings?

Supported lodgings is a provision for young people aged 16+ whereby they live in a room in the house of a 'host' family, individual or couple. The young person has greater independence than in foster care, with the host holding less parental responsibility but tasked with providing emotional and practical support to the young person, including supporting them to develop practical skills for adulthood such as cooking and budgeting.

Trauma and loss?

Every child who enters the care system will have experienced trauma and loss, regardless of the age they were when separated from their birth family or the reasons why it happened. The loss and trauma that every child and young person has suffered will understandably have an effect on them. Some may struggle with trust, confidence or building appropriate relationships. Some may have health issues, developmental delays or additional needs. Some may not be able to cope with challenges and big emotions, and this will be shown in their behaviour. The impact of trauma and loss will look different for every child.

Children who wait the longest?

There is a huge need for foster carers and adoptive families for children of all ages, but there is often a particular need for families who are able to look after groups of siblings, children with disabilities or complex needs, children of black and minority ethnic heritage, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, children older than three and teenagers.

Session one:

Justice

Welcome

Activity: Two truths and a lie

Have each member of your group (or just a few of them, if your group is large or includes individuals who would rather not share out loud right away) share three statements about themselves – two of them must be true, but one must be a lie. Everyone else must guess which statement is false by asking questions to find out as many details about the statement as possible.

This icebreaker will help your group get to know each other and begin to feel comfortable around one another, but it will also gently introduce the theme as you decipher what is right from what is wrong!

Session one is about justice. We will spend some time in the book of Isaiah and will then consider how this theme relates to fostering, adoption and supported lodgings, before finishing with some time in prayer.

ASK:

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'justice'?



Study

WATCH: Session one Bible study



In this first session together, we're going to dig a bit deeper into the first chapter of Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet sent by God to speak on God's behalf. It's a chapter that packs some punches, so get ready!

READ: Isaiah 1:1-15



ASK:



1. What words or phrases stood out to you in this passage?
2. What do we learn about God's attitude towards His people and their acts of worship?
3. Take a look at the particular actions God mentions in verses 11-15. Do any of these actions form part of your experience of worship?
4. How do these verses challenge your understanding or experience of God?

READ: Isaiah 1:16-17



Tip: As you explore this with your group, encourage one another to be honest and real. It can be easy to 'know' the 'right' answer, but in this discussion in particular, encourage your group to pursue greater depth through honesty.

ASK:



1. What does God ask His people to do in these verses?
2. Why do you think God asks this of His people?
3. What could this mean for us today? How might we follow the commands we read in verses 16 and 17?
4. What difference would it make to worship in this way, to live this kind of radical life?

Teaching point: Whatever our worship has looked like up to this point, we have a powerful opportunity ahead of us, as individuals, as family and as the Church, to continue to grow: we can be part of bringing God's justice to our communities, worshipping Him with our love and care for the vulnerable.



READ: You could divide your group up for this part of the evening give each small group or individual one of these passages to explore and then feed back to the rest of the group.

- **Deuteronomy 10:17-18**
- **Psalm 146:6-9**
- **Micah 6:8**
- **Luke 14:12-13**
- **James 2:15-17**

**ASK:**

1. What does this verse teach us about God's heart for justice?
2. How is this verse relevant today? What is it speaking into in our time?
3. How should we respond?



READ: Mark 12:28-32

Teaching point: In Deuteronomy 6:4-5, God tells His people that they are to LOVE Him with all their heart, mind and strength. When Jesus is questioned by a teacher of the law and asked which is the greatest commandment, His answer echoes Deuteronomy 6. The teacher who asks the question emphasises again here that how we treat our neighbour is more important than any other sacrifices we may bring.

When Jesus says that we're to love our neighbour as ourselves, this isn't just our family by birth or our own community, but anyone anywhere. In the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus teaches that we're called to love anyone in need. He even teaches that we should love our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

As we've learned in this session, we know that God has a particular heart for the most vulnerable in society, including the 'orphan'. While it is not appropriate to use this word to describe children in care today, we recognise God's heart for those who are in need of care, protection, nurture and stability.

The word used for 'love' in Mark is 'agape'. Agape love is a choice. It's not dependant on how loveable (or not) the other person may be. It's choosing to delight in someone, to see the best in them and choosing to advocate for them, no matter what.

Discuss

WATCH: Session one stories



ASK:



1. Why is the topic of fostering, adoption and supported lodgings a justice issue?
2. Do you have any experience of fostering, adoption or supported lodgings?
3. Have you ever considered if you might have a part to play in caring for children or teenagers in this way?

Pray

We know that how people pray when they come together will look different in each context, so below are two different ideas for how to end this session together in prayer for you to use if it serves your group, or to adapt as you see fit. The important thing is not the 'how', but the coming to God in prayer for justice.

Read, or invite a member of your group to read, the following prayer:

1. Father God,

Grow in us a heart for justice and righteousness that reflects Your own.

Fan into flame an urgent desire within each of us to listen to the voices our societies silence or ignore, to encounter and build relationships with those who are different to us, to fight for freedom and fullness for those our world has let down.

Break our hearts for what breaks Yours, God, but don't let it stop there; fill us with hope for what could be and inspire us to play our part.

May we, Your Church, learn to do right, seek justice, defend the oppressed, take up the cause of the fatherless and plead the case of the widow. May we know You in even greater depth as we follow and worship You.

Amen.

2. If your group are confident in praying together, here are some ideas for what and how to pray during this time:
- Praise God for who He is: our God who loves justice, who cares for the vulnerable and who places the lonely in families. Thank Him that we are made in His image and carry that same love in us.
 - Pray for those children who even now are waiting for the right home, either through foster care, adoption or supported lodgings. Pray for the children and young people who statistically wait the longest: Black and other ethnic minority children; children over the age of four and teenagers; sibling groups; and children with disabilities or medical needs. Let's pray for them as unique individuals, thanking God for the stories, gifts and interests that make them who they are, and the potential and purpose in each one of them.
 - Pray for those in our society who face injustice daily and for individuals who are vulnerable, on the margins, who have been let down by people, systems and structures. Pray for individuals experiencing homelessness, those who are victims of exploitation, those struggling with addiction, those in contact with the criminal justice system.
 - Ask God to guide, inspire and lead you as you explore what your response to this need could be.

Find out more:

For stories, articles and extra resources on the theme of JUSTICE, use the QR code (right) or visit homeforgood.org.uk/mr-res



Session two:

Radical Hospitality

Welcome

ASK:

1. What's the greatest meal you've ever eaten? What made it so wonderful?
2. What's the best example of generosity you've seen or experienced? What made it so special?
3. What does the word 'hospitality' mean to you?



Session two is about radical hospitality. We will spend some time in the book of Matthew, and then consider how we can partake in demonstrating love and hospitality, before finishing with some time in prayer.

Study

WATCH: Session two Bible study



READ: Matthew 25:31-46



**ASK:**

1. What words or phrases stood out to you in this passage?
2. How is Jesus described in verse 31? How does this compare with what we read in verses 35-36 and 42-43?
3. How does Jesus' teaching in this passage make you feel?
4. What can we learn from this passage about hospitality?

Teaching point: We are called to welcome the 'stranger' and to practice hospitality; it's core to who we are and what we are called to as those who follow God.

As we heard in the teaching video, the word most often used in the Bible for hospitality is 'philoxenia'; 'philo' meaning brotherly/sisterly love, the kind of love displayed in friendship, and 'xenia' meaning stranger or foreigner. Here are three more examples of when this word is used in the New Testament to look at to grow in our understanding of what biblical hospitality is.

READ:

- **Titus 1:8**
- **1 Peter 4:8-9**
- **Hebrews 13:2**

**ASK:**

1. What does this verse/passage say about radical hospitality?
2. Have you had an experience of this kind of hospitality?
3. What excites or challenges you about this kind of hospitality?



Discuss

Teaching point: Every 15 minutes in the UK, a child will come into care. Many will have suffered neglect or abuse; all will have experienced trauma and loss. Each one deserves a home where they will be loved, nurtured and enabled to thrive, whether that's through short-term or long-term foster care, with a new adoptive family, or through supported lodgings. Currently, too many children are waiting too long for the stability, care and love they need.

We, the Church, have the opportunity to provide radical hospitality to these children and young people.

WATCH: Session two stories



ASK:



1. What are the different ways in which we could show hospitality to vulnerable children and young people?
2. Is there a particular role you can see yourself playing?
3. What impact could it have? On you? On them? On society?

Pray

Read, or invite a member of your group to read, the following prayer:

1. Father God,

Grow in us a passion for radical hospitality.

Inspire us with new ways to show welcome and value to others. Embolden us to open our doors and share what we have, no matter the cost.

As we discover 'philoxenia' and show brotherly and sisterly love to the stranger, may we see in them glimpses of You, whose image they bear. May we experience the fullness of community as we recognise what others have to bring to our lives.

May we, Your Church, worship You through our invitation to others, our sharing of food and drink and clothes, our care for the sick and our time spent with the lonely.

Amen.

2. If your group are confident in praying together, here are some ideas for what and how to pray during this time:
- Praise God for who He is: a God of radical hospitality, whose heart is for welcome, love and care. Thank Jesus for showing us on earth what this hospitality can look like, and for the opportunity we have as the Church to make a transformational difference.
 - Let's pray again for children and young people who are waiting for the right place to call home, either through foster care, adoption or supported lodgings. Pray that more adults with the right skills and in the right places will step forward to meet this need and provide hospitality, love and care to those who need it.
 - Pray for care leavers who enter adulthood without the same support network as their peers. Pray for peace and protection and pray that they will find themselves within communities who will wrap around them with love and encouragement.
 - Ask God to guide, inspire and lead you as you explore what your response to this need could be.

Find out more:

For stories, articles and extra resources on the theme of RADICAL HOSPITALITY, use the QR code (right) or visit homeforgood.org.uk/mr-res



Session three:

Family

Welcome

Activity: Name that fictional family

Introduce the idea of family with a quick general knowledge quiz round. Search online for some images of your favourite fictional families or describe them to your group and invite them to guess the answer. Here are a few ideas, but please add your own!

1. The Weasleys
2. The Simpsons
3. The Incredibles
4. The Gilmore Girls
5. The Wormwoods (Matilda)

ASK:

1. Who were the most important people to you growing up? They could be in your biological family or not.
2. What made them significant?



Session three is about family. We will spend some time in the books of Romans and Ephesians, and will then consider what family truly means, before finishing with some time in prayer.

Study

WATCH: Session three Bible study



READ: Romans 8:1-17



ASK:



1. What words or phrases stood out to you in this passage?
2. What do you identify as the core message of this passage?
3. Re-read verses 14-17. How do these words make you feel?

Teaching point: Adoption is at the heart of the gospel. We were chosen in love. Romans 8 gives a brilliant and deep explanation of what our adoption as God's children means for us as individuals. Ephesians then shows us how this should be worked out in the church, the community of believers and in family.

Paul writes to the church in Ephesus not to address a specific problem, but to explain some of the great doctrine (teaching) of the Christian faith. This first chapter captures the core of the gospel, the good news of Jesus, and at the heart of that is a reminder that we have been adopted into God's family.

READ: Ephesians 1:1-10



ASK:



1. What words or phrases stood out to you in the passage?
2. List all the things that these verses tell us that we have because of Jesus and look at the words used to describe how they were given to us (e.g. lavished, freely given).
3. What do we learn about God as we read this passage?
4. How does this make you feel?
5. How should we respond?

READ: Psalm 68:4-10



ASK:

1. How would the contemporaries of the psalmist (and us today) expect kings and rulers of the day to behave? Who would they normally surround themselves with?
2. How does that compare to the way God is described here?



Discuss

Teaching point: God's family is never full. There's always room for more. As Christians, we want our lives to reflect who He is. We pray 'Your kingdom come, on earth as it is in Heaven'. What if God's kingdom on earth looked like our families reflecting His; a place where anyone is welcome, where there's always space at the table?

WATCH: Session three stories



ASK:

1. Have you ever encountered family (biological or otherwise) who have demonstrated the heart of God to you?
2. What difference could this kind of family make to a child or teenager who has had a difficult start in life?



Pray

Read, or invite a member of your group to read, the following prayer:

1. *Father God,*

Thank You for family – whatever that word might mean to each of us, whoever it might include.

Will You broaden and expand our understanding of this word today, Lord. May our idea of 'family' reach far beyond those who are related to us, those in our communities, those who we are comfortable around. (continued overleaf)

Will You open our eyes to see those in need of what Your design for family can offer. Will You show us how to offer what we can as You do; freely, with pleasure, lavishly.

May Your kingdom come, Lord, on earth as it is in Heaven. And as we seek and usher in Your kingdom, may our families reflect Yours. May we, Your Church, create spaces where anyone is welcome, and where there is always space at the table.

Amen

2. If your group are confident in praying together, here are some ideas for what and how to pray during this time:
- Praise God for who He is: our Father who sets the lonely in families. Give thanks for those who have shown you love and care in your life, whether they are biologically related to you or not.
 - Let's pray again for children and young people who are waiting for the right place to call home, either through foster care, adoption or supported lodgings. Pray for those for whom the idea of 'family' is a complex and difficult one. Pray for comfort in their loss, peace in their confusion, love that meets their shame and hope that lifts their eyes.
 - Pray for foster carers, adoptive parents and supported lodgings hosts who have welcomed a child or young person into their family. Pray that God will be near to them as they navigate both the joys and the challenges that this kind of love brings. Pray that they will find access to the support, encouragement and community they need to enable their family to thrive. Pray too for the 'corporate parents' who care for children and young people, such as social workers whose hard work makes a huge difference.
 - Ask God to guide, inspire and lead you as you explore what your response to this need could be.

Find out more:

For stories, articles and extra resources on the theme of RADICAL HOSPITALITY, use the QR code (right) or visit homeforgood.org.uk/mr-res



Session four:

Church

Welcome

Activity: Would you rather?

A game of 'Would you rather?' is a great way to spark some conversations about church. Use some of the questions we've suggested below, but feel free to add your own too!

1. Would you rather attend a morning service or an evening service?
2. Would you rather never sing in church again or have to perform a solo every week?
3. We all love a cuppa after church – but would you rather have tea or coffee?

ASK:

1. What is your favourite thing about being part of a church family?



Our final session will focus on the Church – both the global body of Christ and our own individual church communities. We will spend some time in Acts, Ephesians and 1 Corinthians together before discussing the part the whole Church has to play in caring for vulnerable children. We'll finish the session in prayer. If you'd like to learn more about the work of Home for Good or continue the conversation around fostering, adoption and supported lodgings, there will be some information at the end of the session to help you take your next step.

Study

WATCH: Session four Bible study



READ: Acts 2:42-47



ASK:



1. What most impacts you as you read these verses?
2. Which elements of this 'fellowship' are part of your own experience of church? What would you like to experience more of?
3. What difference would it make to the world if the Church lived and shared their lives like this? How could it transform our families, churches, communities and beyond?

READ:



- Ephesians 1:18-23 (NIV)
- Ephesians 2:19-22
- Ephesians 1:20-23 (MSG)

ASK:



1. What words or phrases stand out to you in these verses?
2. What does this teach us about the Church?


READ: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



ASK:



1. What words or phrases stand out to you in these verses?
2. What does this passage teach us about the Church?
3. What could be the impact of us being united, as the church described here, in our families, homes, communities and beyond? (continued on next page)

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4. Verse 26 says that 'if one part suffers, every part suffers.' How do we see this in our society today?
 5. How does this understanding of the Church as one body affect how you think about caring for children who have had a difficult start in life?

Discuss


Koinonia: Fellowship. Common. Share.

'Koinonia' has the power to make an enormous difference in the lives of those who are fostering, have adopted or are caring for children or teenagers in some capacity; to have mutually supportive relationships, full of encouragement and love, with others who count it a privilege to share in their lives – and that's life in all its beauty and mess, joy and pain – without resentment, rooted in a desire to follow Jesus together.

WATCH: Session four stories



ASK:

- 
1. What stood out to you the most in the video?
 2. What is your church already doing to engage in caring for the vulnerable?
 3. What more could you as a church do to provide welcome and stability for care-experienced children?
 4. What part could you play as an individual?

Pray

Read, or invite a member of your group to read, the following prayer:

1. Father God,

Thank You for Your Church across the world. Thank You for our church communities here in our town/city. Thank You for this group here today. Thank You, Lord, that You are moving powerfully and beautifully through Your Church, and for the privilege and joy it is to be part of it.
(continued overleaf)

As we remember that Your Church is one body made up of so many different parts, will You help us see the beauty, the power and the potential in others. May we be the first to call out and encourage the gold we see in those around us – especially in those who are often overlooked.

As we remember that Your Church is one body made up of so many different parts, will you help us see the beauty, the power and the potential in ourselves. Show us what we have to offer, Lord. Give us joy in the unique gifts we have to bring and help us not to compare ourselves to others.

May we, Your Church, be more aware than ever before of those who do not feel like they belong in our spaces and communities. Show us, urgently, where and what we need to do differently. May we be a people of welcome, who bend so that others can fit in.

Amen.

2. If your group are confident in praying together, here are some ideas for what and how to pray during this time:

- Praise God for who He is. Give thanks for the Church around the world, for all the parts that make up one body. Give thanks for your own church community, and for some specific things or people you are thankful for within it.
- Pray for foster and adoptive families and supported lodgings hosts who are part of a church family, or who are perhaps part of your church family. Pray that they will find encouragement, prayer, practical support and love there. Pray that the children and young people they care for will feel welcomed, valued and understood.
- Pray for those who might find church a difficult space to be in sometimes. Pray that God would draw your attention to those on the margins of your groups or congregations. Ask that He would show you the areas where you can make small changes that could make an enormous difference in the lives of others.
- Ask God to guide, inspire and lead you as you explore what your response to this need could be.

Find out more:

For stories, articles and extra resources on the theme of CHURCH, use the QR code (right) or visit homeforgood.org.uk/mr-res



Make Room Prayer Space

Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep. You're going to need lots of elbow room for your growing family. Isaiah 54:2 MSG

Enlarge the site of your tent [to make room for more children]; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, do not spare them; lengthen your tent ropes and make your pegs (stakes) firm [in the ground]. Isaiah 54:2 AMP

Many individuals, families and churches have been inspired by the words in Isaiah 54:2, particularly from the Amplified Bible phrasing to 'make room for more children', and this has prompted a response in them to explore how they can offer welcome, care and support to vulnerable children and young people. Home for Good is passionate about every one of us playing our part. How can we, the Church, make room for vulnerable children and young people?

We want to give people time and space to reflect individually at the end of this Bible study in an atmosphere of prayer, drawing on what we've heard, learnt and been challenged by. You may want to offer this prayer space at the end of your final session as you bring the series to a close and as each individual considers their next step.

You'll need:

- Tent pegs (enough for each person in your group to have four)
- Luggage tags (enough for each person to have at least four)
- Pens

Instructions:

- Put some worship music on quietly in the background.
- In four corners or spaces in your meeting room, create a station for each command in Isaiah 54:2 (*Enlarge the place of your tent/stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back / lengthen your cords/strengthen your stakes*). You might want to make it comfortable for people with cushions or chairs. Use the questions provided below to guide your group in some time of reflection and prayer.
- Give each person a tent peg, a luggage tag and a pen and read Isaiah 54:2 (AMP) together, inviting them to write on their luggage tag the things they're praying for and things that God is speaking to them about.

Enlarge the place of your tent...

- Who is in your 'tent' right now?
- What would it look like to enlarge this?
- What is God saying to you?

...stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back...

- What is holding you back?
- What do you need to overcome before you can 'stretch your curtains wide'?
- What is God saying to you?

...stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back...

- What does commitment mean to you? How do you currently show this to those around you?
- What is God saying to you?

...stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back...

- What do you hope for?
- What do you put your hope in?
- How can you grow strength now for what is to come?
- What are the promises of God that you're holding on to?
- What are your dreams for your church and her part to play in bringing strength and 54:2 hope to children and teenagers waiting for a home for good?
- What is God saying to you?

What next?

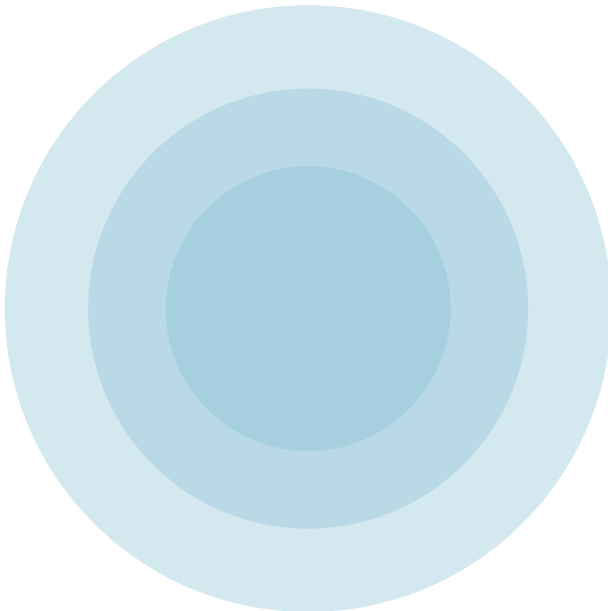
There is so much you can do to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children. To find out more about how you can stand with Home for Good, visit <https://homeforgood.org.uk/stand-with-us>.

If you are interested in learning more about fostering, adoption or supported lodgings, our team would love to hear from you. We can answer your questions, help you to explore your options and point you in the right direction for any next steps you'd like to take.

We would also love to hear from you if you are already a foster carer or adoptive parent, or if you want to find out more about the vision of Home for Good. We'd love to stand with you in your journey or help to resource your church to be a safe and welcoming place for vulnerable children and their families. And we're always here to listen and pray for you, at every point of your journey.

To start your journey with Home for Good, visit homeforgood.org.uk/get-in-touch.

Thank you for taking this time to explore God's heart for vulnerable children. **Together we can find a home for every child who needs one.**





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