

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

SESSION ONE:
Justice

SESSION TWO:
Radical Hospitality

SESSION THREE:
Family

SESSION FOUR:
Church

Introduction

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.

Session One: Justice

- **Isaiah 1:1-15**

"The multitude of your sacrifices — what are they to me?" says the Lord.

- **Isaiah 1:16-17**

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

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

What do these verses teach us about God's heart for justice? How should we respond?

- **Mark 12:28-32**

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"

Why is the topic of fostering, adoption and supported lodgings a justice issue?

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.

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



- **Matthew 25:31-46**

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

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 Jesus.

Philoxenia:

‘Philo’ – meaning brotherly/sisterly love, the kind of love displayed in friendship.

‘Xenia’ – meaning stranger or foreigner.

- **Titus 1:8**

- **1 Peter 4:8-9**

- **Hebrews 13:2**

What do these verses say about radical hospitality?

All children who are waiting for a home for good – whether that’s the right fostering family for as long as they need, an adoptive family or a home through supported lodgings – have experienced trauma. Every story is different, each one unique and precious, but the impact of this trauma is profound, life altering and lifelong.

What are the different ways in which we could show hospitality to vulnerable children and young people?

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.

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



- **Romans 8:1-17**

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory

- **Ephesians 1:1-10**

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will — to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

- **Psalm 68:4-10**

God sets the lonely in families.

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?

Have you ever encountered family (biological or otherwise) who have demonstrated the heart of God to you?

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.

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

Find out more:

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



Session Four: Church

- **Acts 2:42-47**

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.

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

What does this teach us about the Church?

- **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?

- What does this passage teach us about the Church?
- What could be the impact of us being united, as the church described here, in our families, homes, communities and beyond?

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.

What part could you play?

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.

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.

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



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 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.