

SESSION TWO:

HUNGER

SURELY WE WERE MADE FOR MORE THAN MERE SURVIVAL?



WE ALL LOVE AN ADVENTURE STORY. SOMETHING ABOUT THE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL CAPTIVATES AND INSPIRES US. BUT WHETHER YOU ARE A THRILL SEEKER IN REAL LIFE OR JUST ENJOY WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE ADVENTURE ON TV, IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT OUR EVERYDAY SURVIVAL IS COMPARATIVELY SIMPLE.

During this session we'll meet Selena. Selena farms to provide for her seven children but a struggle with hunger means she is fighting to survive. We will explore how hunger threatens survival and consider how we can respond to help families going hungry across the world. Learn how you can use the unique strengths you possess as a group to start taking action together.

You can use this session with a large group or in a smaller, more informal, social setting. There are sections that are relevant to both, and any activities or discussions include two options depending on your context – pick and choose what works for you. Look out for these symbols:



BEST SUITED TO SMALLER GATHERINGS, INCLUDING FRIENDS ENJOYING A MEAL TOGETHER OR A SMALLER GROUP OF STUDENTS.



BEST SUITED TO A LARGER GROUP SUCH AS A YOUTH GROUP, CHRISTIAN UNION, OR SCHOOLS WORK.

VIDEO: MEET SELENA

Need to make notes?
We've left some space on the
side of each page

Meet Selena. Selena is a mum of seven. She is a farmer. And she is fighting to survive. Selena is one of the 1 in 9 people in our world who are hungry. This is her story.



 <https://vimeo.com/181782279>



ACTIVITY: THE WORLD'S DINNER TABLE

The reality is that Selena's story of survival is not unusual. The world's dinner table is set unequally, where some people have plenty and some people have nothing.



IF YOU'RE IN A SMALL GROUP AT HOME, YOU CAN TRY THE GROUP ACTIVITY AS DESCRIBED, BUT IF YOU'RE OUT FOR A MEAL, WHY NOT TRY IT WITH A JUG OF TAP WATER AND GLASSES AS YOU WAIT TO BE SERVED.



TAKE SMALL PORTIONS OF UNCOOKED RICE IN CUPS AND SHARE THEM AROUND YOUR GROUP. KEEP ASKING THE GROUP TO REDISTRIBUTE THE RICE UNTIL SOME MEMBERS OF THE GROUP HAVE NONE, OTHERS HAVE VERY LITTLE AND ONE OR TWO PEOPLE HAVE THE MAJORITY OF THE RICE.

Imagine the group represents the whole world and that the contents of their cup is their food for today.

In redistributing the rice, we start to see a more realistic representation of the world's dinner table. Some members of the group will have no rice at all, representing 50% of the world's population who live in low-income countries, many of whom live in poverty. Many people live in poverty in middle-income countries, represented by those with a small amount of rice remaining. Only 10% of the world lives in high-income countries. This is what we generally experience and see in those one or two with the majority of the rice at the end.

Even though there are people around the world's dinner table with no food, others around the table have so much food that they end up throwing a lot of it away.



IF USING GLASSES OF WATER, POUR HALF OF THE FULL GLASS INTO A SPARE.



ASK THOSE WITH LOTS OF RICE TO PUT MOST OF IT INTO A BOWL, LEAVING THEM WITH JUST HALF A CUP OF RICE. PLACE THE BOWL TO ONE SIDE. (SAVE THE RICE FROM BECOMING FOOD WASTE, JUST RINSE NORMALLY BEFORE COOKING AS STANDARD).

In the UK, we throw away 7 million tonnes of food and drink from our homes every year, and more than half of this food and drink is suitable for consumption. Wasting this food costs the average household £470 a year, rising to £700 for a family with children, the equivalent of around £60 a month. Not only does this affect our bank balances, but also the environment. If we all stopped wasting food that could have been eaten, the benefit to the planet would be the equivalent of taking 1 in 4 cars off the road.

DISCUSS: THE HUNGER TREE

What does it really mean to be hungry? Delve a bit deeper into the issue of hunger. Draw out a tree trunk, add branches and large leaves at the top, and roots at the bottom, write the word 'hunger' on the trunk. Consider the causes and effects of hunger, write the causes on the roots and the effects on the leaves.



USE A SMALLER PIECE OF PAPER AND NOMINATE ONE PERSON TO BE THE SCRIBE. THEY CAN USE DIFFERENT COLOURED PENS TO ADD THE CAUSES TO THE ROOTS AND THE EFFECTS TO THE LEAVES.



DRAW OUT THE TREE ON A LARGE PIECE OF PAPER AND CUT OUT A MIX OF LEAVES AND ROOTS FROM COLOURED PAPER. SHARE THE LEAVES AND ROOTS OUT ACROSS THE GROUP, ASK PEOPLE TO WRITE CAUSES AND EFFECTS ONTO THEM. THEY CAN GO TO THE FRONT AND STICK THEIR LEAF OR ROOT UP ONTO THE TREE.

Go deeper by considering some of the causes of the causes or the effects of the effects. Prepare a few ideas in advance to get the discussion going.

VIDEO: FACE TO FACE

When Kiera Phyo travelled to Malawi in 2016 she encountered hunger in a way she never had before. She responded by taking the Mean Bean Challenge to experience just a little of what hunger truly feels like.



 <https://vimeo.com/209582580>



Would Jesus use someone like me to help end hunger? Yes. The Bible is full of stories where Jesus chooses to work through normal people to do amazing things. In this story, a young boy made a choice to offer the small thing he had to Jesus, trusting Jesus to take care of the rest.

- John 6:1-15

Discussion:

Discuss how you think the boy may have felt and take a moment to consider what you might have done in his shoes. Share your answers.

Conclusion:

It is easy for us to think what we have in our hands is too small to solve a problem; especially problems as big as climate change, disasters and hunger. But that's not how Jesus sees us. The Bible is full of examples of people just like you and me who offered what they had to serve God. Esther was a young woman who bravely risked her own safety to save her nation. Ruth was a widow whose faithfulness to her mother-in-law meant she became a direct ancestor of Jesus. Samuel was a child who God entrusted with a message to relay to his mentor. David was a shepherd boy who defeated Goliath. Jesus chooses to use us, ordinary and broken, for his mission. God doesn't wave a magic wand to see his kingdom come on earth, instead he partners with us in this mission. Even when self-doubt creeps in and we don't feel that we are good enough, clever enough or Christian enough for God to work through us, he still does: because God believes in us more than we believe in ourselves.



There is work going on to help people like Selena, who are experiencing the effects of the drought in Malawi. One of Tearfund's partners in Malawi is called Eagles, and they are helping to improve food security, making sure families are confident they will have enough food to eat.

They do this by encouraging local churches to take action, helping them to work with their communities to identify local needs and find the best ways to meet them. They help communities to develop creative ways to grow food. Eagles are training local farmers to grow drought-resistant crops and to develop small-scale irrigation farming. They have been able to supply Selena, and others in her community, with maize flour, beans and cooking oil, to help them survive while they are waiting for the next harvest to grow.

But there's so much we can be doing to help here in the UK too. Whether it's reducing our contribution to climate change, advocating on behalf of those who are hungry or giving some of what we have away, there are loads of things we could offer in our everyday lives. We'll come back to this a little later.

VIDEO: LETTUCE PRAY

Do you say grace before you eat? Saying grace can sound like an old-fashioned activity for formal family dinners, but really it is just saying thank you to God for our food. It also provides us with a regular opportunity to remember and pray for those in the world who are hungry. Use this time to write your own grace. It could be just a couple of lines long. It could be something that you can memorise. Or it could be a longer prayer that you keep near the dinner table to read out before meals. Write something that will help you remember to be thankful for what we have, and to pray with our hungry global neighbours who are struggling to survive.



 <https://vimeo.com/181784513>

TAKE ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

Remember when you discovered your persona using the quiz in the previous session? Knowing your unique skills can help you respond effectively to issues impacting people living in poverty. Let's join together, make a stand against hunger and help our global neighbours.

On the next few pages you'll find suggested activities for your persona. If you were a combination of two or more personas, choose which one appeals to you most.



ACTIVITY: TAKE ACTION – THE MOBILISER

Invite your friends round for a hunger banquet: a meal with a twist. Get your best plates out from the cupboard, check no one is allergic to any food types, shop for your ingredients and preheat that oven. Host a dinner that reflects what our world looks like, and use the opportunity to raise awareness about the issue of hunger.

Get started:

1. Once you have welcomed all your guests and they are sitting at the table you can begin to serve them, but here's where the plot twist lies...
2. Share food among your friends unevenly, you want your portion sizes to represent the imbalance of income we see in our world. For example, one or two people might get a normal meal; a couple more could get a half portion; the rest of your guests would only get a mouthful. You could go even further to represent the 1 in 9 people who go to bed hungry, and give one dinner guest an empty plate.
3. You may hear comments like 'What's going on?', 'Can I have some more?' and 'This doesn't seem like a fair portion!'. Use the opportunity to explain that this is the reality for people all over the world.
4. You could prepare a short talk in advance, or think of some questions to generate a discussion.
5. Make sure you have enough food prepared so you can all enjoy a reasonable amount of dinner together after you have had a chance to chat.
6. Say grace together before you eat, and remember to pray for those in the world who are hungry.



ACTIVITY: TAKE ACTION – THE MAKER

Did you know, through Tearfund's work, it costs just £5 to feed a hungry child for a whole month? Isn't that incredible! The question is, how could you make £5? Or better still, how could you make £5 over and over again? Take on the £5 challenge and see how you can raise money to feed hungry children around the world. It could be an event with £5 tickets; you could create a product or experience which donates £5 with every sale; it could be a personal challenge for friends and family to consider giving. Get thinking, be creative and make £5, £50 or more.

Get started:

1. Grab a pen to jot down your great ideas.
2. Make a plan. You'll need a calendar to work out a schedule. When will you host your event, launch your product or take on your challenge? What preparation and promotion will you need to do before that to ensure it's a success?
3. Choose your location for a venue or space depending on your needs.
4. Find your people. Gather a team, bring others on board to help, contact anyone who might need to give permission.
5. Do your thing. Get making, hosting, fundraising, creating, inspiring.

For some inspiration, you could check out Tearfund's Big Bake at:

 tearfund.org/bigbake



ACTIVITY: TAKE ACTION – THE ACTIVIST

We believe in the power of prayer. We bring everything before God, even the really big issues like hunger. Petition your church to pray about hunger.

Get started:

1. Read up on the issue of hunger. Check out the Tearfund website for some helpful facts and stories.
2. Work out how often your church could realistically pray about hunger. It could be once a month or you could time it with an all-age service for example.
3. Write a letter to your church leader telling them three things: why you care about hunger, why it's important for the church to pray about hunger and how you would like to help your church to pray.
4. Tell your friends, your youth group, your house group or whoever you hang out with in church about your idea. Ask them to join you by signing the letter to your church leader.
5. Organise a meeting with your church leader to talk about your idea. Take your letter with you and, if you like, as many friends and supporters as possible to show how much you all care about hunger. Explain further the three things you wrote about in your letter.
6. Agree an action plan with your church leader to ensure you and your church are able to start praying together for people who experience hunger.



ACTIVITY: TAKE ACTION – THE ADVOCATE

Ever experienced what it's like to be hungry? And we don't mean a little bit peckish before dinner. We're talking serious stomach-gurgling hunger. For 1 in 9 people in the world, hunger is a daily reality. Take on the Mean Bean Challenge to discover what hunger really feels like and get sponsored to do it to help people who are living in poverty.

Why not ask a few friends to do it with you? It's a tough challenge which lasts for five days and so it's great to have some moral support.

Get started:

1. Download your trusty Mean Bean handbook from tearfund.org/meanbean
2. Print out a couple of sponsorship sheets from the handbook, or more than a couple if you're feeling confident!
3. Get some friends involved by encouraging them to sign up too. Trust us, a bit of solidarity is going to help.
4. Start fundraising. Once you've settled on a date to do the challenge, tell as many people about it as possible, so you can raise lots of support! You could talk about it in church, message your friends, or post about it online.
5. Hit the shops. Make sure to tick everything off your list: rice, beans and oats... that's it! Shopping done, now you just have to cook it...
6. Time to take on the challenge. Share your experience with others as you go. You could write a blog, tell your friends or even try vlogging the experience. The more you share, the more awareness about the issue of hunger you will raise.

If 5 days just isn't possible for you, there's a 48-hour option too.

Note: If you are under 18 or are the leader of a group who are under 18 then please seek parental permission.

KEEP IN TOUCH



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weare.tearfund.org