



FORGIVENESS

SPECIAL DAYS

PREPARATION

- Prepare some handprint cut-outs - one for each member - and provide pens and colouring pens/pencils
- Have some chocolate hearts to hand out to everyone - or mini eggs if using for Easter
- Provide clay for everyone to make a small heart (play dough will also work)

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Each of us will know what it is like to feel let down, hurt, or wronged by someone in some way. Those feelings of disappointment and injustice can have a big impact on our lives.

In this session we will look at the events of Easter and how Jesus' unjust death on the cross made way for acts of forgiveness, and how we can show compassion being led by his example.

ACTIVITIES

QUIZ

1. Which Canadian singer sang the words: 'Please forgive me, I know not what I do.'
Bryan Adams
2. In the Bible, Jesus says we should forgive someone how many times?
77 times - Matthew 18:22 NIV or 70x7 Authorised
3. Which word beginning with the letter 'A' can be given and received in order to forgive or be forgiven?
Apology
4. Who said these words: 'The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.'
Mahatma Gandhi
5. What words come next in this Adele song: 'Hello from the other side, I must have called a thousand times to tell you ...'
'I'm sorry for everything I've done'

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POEM

Easter joy

Jesus came to earth,
To show us how to live,
How to put others first,
How to love and how to give.

Then he set about his work
That God sent him to do;
He took our punishment on himself;
He made us clean and new.

He could have saved himself,
Calling angels from above,
But he chose to pay our price for sin;
He paid it out of love.

Our Lord died on Good Friday,
But the cross did not destroy
His resurrection on Easter morn
That fills our hearts with joy.

Now we know our earthly death,
Like his, is just a rest.
We'll be forever with him
In Heaven, where life is best.

So we live our lives for Jesus,
Think of him in all we do.
Thank you, Saviour, thank you, Lord.
Help us love like you!

Joanna Fuchs
poemsource.com

GAME

Play a game of charades. Act out different types of jobs or activities that we use our hands for and see if others can guess what we are doing.

Spend some time afterwards sharing together the ways we use our hands around the home and in our everyday lives, eg washing up, holding things, pushing/pulling doors, hugging ...

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PRAYER

Give each member a cut-out hand and a pen. Explain to the group that we are going to write some 'forgiving hands' prayers. Say the following:

- * Jesus' hands were nailed to a cross to pay for the sins of everyone. Look at the handprint in front of you and write on the fingers something you could do to show love and compassion to others.
- * On the thumb, write, 'I forgive.'
- * On the palm, write, 'We love because he first loved us.'
- * Colour the handprint and keep as a reminder to forgive others, just as Jesus forgives us.
- * Pray for those whom we need to forgive, and for ourselves as we need to be forgiven.

BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

'You can't forgive without loving. And I don't mean sentimentality. I don't mean mush. I mean having enough courage to stand up and say, "I forgive. I'm finished with it."'

Maya Angelou

How easy is it to forgive someone when they have hurt us, or let us down with their dishonesty? Do we automatically think, 'I forgive. I'm finished with it?' Do we have that sort of courage that Maya Angelou spoke of? It can be quite difficult to be like that in all situations.

Have you ever been forgiven by a friend or loved one when you have done something wrong?

It isn't always easy to forgive someone, nor is it always easy to ask for forgiveness and admit we were wrong. In life we face many challenges, and we can choose how we respond to each of them. When we build relationships with each other and share in whole life together, we can start to understand one other better and have mutual accountability for each other.

There are several references in the Bible that speak of loving one another and being slow to anger and quick to forgive. Philippians 2:5 reminds us to have the same mindset as that of Christ Jesus in all our relationships. 1 Peter 4:8 says: *'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.'*

Jesus paid the ultimate price when he died on the cross so that we could be forgiven; he did this out of his great love for us. It is our choice whether we follow

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his example and do likewise, or whether we allow things to eat away at us. Let us show love and compassion, let us foster relationships that are built on trust and forgiveness, and let us allow our hearts to be softened and moulded to be like that of Christ Jesus.

Take some clay and mould it into a heart shape. As you hold it in your hand and shape it, thank God that he moulds and shapes us into the people he wants us to be.

PRAYER

Thank you, God, for loving us, for taking away our sins and enduring the punishment for us when you died on the cross, and for offering us eternal forgiveness. Help us to be loving and kind towards others, showing that same compassion that you bless each of us with.
Amen

SONGS

- ♪ SASB 32 'How deep the Father's love for us'
Watch the [lyric video](#) by Celtic Worship or the [instrumental lyric video](#) from Stotfold Salvation Army
- ♪ SASB 925 'Let us go out into the world with love in our hearts'
Watch the [short instrumental version - no lyrics](#) - by Coventry City Salvation Army band or the [instrumental brass band version](#) performed at the Salvation Army Congress, Together 2023 (starts at 01:49:11)
- ♪ SASB 459 'God forgave my sin in Jesus' name (Freely, freely)'
Watch the [instrumental lyric video](#) by Salvation Army Yorkminster Citadel or the [lyric video](#) by Frodsham Methodist Church
- ♪ 'Living Hope'
Watch the [lyric video](#) by Bethel Music
- ♪ SASB 379 'Lord, I lift your name on high'
Watch the [lyric video](#) by kidzworld777 or the [lyric video](#) by The Salvation Army (Hallelujah Choruses) uploaded by RJ Music Playlist

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WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect
- Family Ministries website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families
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- Twitter: @ukifamily
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Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for

Children | Adults | Everyone