

RISING UP: A YOUTH GROUP SESSION THAT REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

Christian Aid Week is on the horizon and it's a time to remember the love that God has for every person, wherever they are in the world. This session provides an opportunity for your youth group to unpack just how valuable they are too! We'll hear the story of Feroza in Bangladesh and have a think about how we can be part of God's great plan for justice, so that every one of us can live life to the full.

I AM WONDERFULLY MADE

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to get your youth celebrating their own brilliance

You'll need: a ball

What to do: stand in a circle and throw the ball to someone and as you do, say something you value about yourself (try to think of things others might not already know), before the person that catches the ball does the same.

CHAT IT OVER

Read together Psalm 139:1-18

(You could find a video on Psalm 139 on YouTube too.)

- Look at how the psalm describes God knowing us – does it make you feel comfortable or uncomfortable that he knows you that well?
- What does this passage say about God's opinion of us?
- Pull out one or two verses (maybe v14 and v16) and spend some time thinking about what difference these truths could make to your everyday lives.

Ask your group: what do you think it means for every person to be valuable?

The writer of this psalm gets that God made us brilliantly (v14) and it is clear that he values us more than we could ever understand (v6). Christian Aid believes that every person is valuable too. That's why we work hard in challenging environments all around the world to make sure that people can live their lives to the full.

YOU ARE WONDERFULLY MADE

Activity time: 10 minutes

Aim: to get your youth celebrating each others' brilliance

You'll need: paper and pens

What to do: sitting in a circle, give everyone a piece of paper and have them write their name at the top of it. Then each pass your piece of paper to the person on your left and time 30 seconds. Write down the wonderful things you see in the person whose name is on the paper you are holding. This could be what you love about them, or what you think they are good at, then pass the papers to the left again for another 30 seconds. Repeat until everyone has written on everyone else's piece of paper, then make sure that everyone has their own returned to them to read.

Imagine if we used all of these talents so that people all around the world knew they were valuable too.

'I FEEL LIKE CRYING WHEN I THINK OF ALL THAT I'VE LOST... IF YOU LOSE YOUR HOUSE IN A FIRE, YOU STILL HAVE THE LAND AFTERWARDS. BUT FOR YOUR WHOLE HOUSE, YOUR LAND, EVERYTHING, TO BE LOST IS TOO MUCH.'

Feroza, Bangladesh

MEET FEROZA



Read Feroza's story:

Feroza's story is a hard one.

She lives on an island that sits in the middle of a mighty river whose waters rise up, lapping and sometimes crashing against her community's homes. In fact, it's been getting worse because of the increasingly erratic weather Bangladesh has been experiencing as a result of climate change.

Seven times, river floods had swept away her home! Every day Feroza was afraid that her three children wouldn't have enough to eat or that the next flood would be her last – the one they would never recover from. Each time the floods came Feroza and her family picked up the pieces and started again. But in 2011, the raging river

left the family with nothing but a goat and the bamboo walls of their tiny house.

'I feel like crying when I think of all that I've lost... If you lose your house in a fire, you still have the land afterwards. But for your whole house, your land, everything to be lost is too much.'

Christian Aid's partner helped transform Feroza's life. Today, Feroza and her sons Faruk and Farhad, her daughter Julekha, and husband Joynal are no longer afraid of what tomorrow may bring. Instead, they have big plans for the future.

'I couldn't imagine that this kind of change could happen. I am hard working, but a little bit of money can really change things.'

What changed? Feroza's home was raised about six feet higher. The Home Safety Package they received from Christian Aid employed Feroza's husband and a small team of her neighbours to rebuild her home on a new raised base, safely out of reach of future floods.

It gets better! Feroza's grant from Christian Aid also meant she could buy a cow, a goat, ducks, chickens, vegetable seeds and a composting wormery. Day by day the money she was able to make grew and so did her confidence.

'There is no sign now of the time I struggled a lot.'

Today, Feroza's family are healthy and thriving and she no longer needs charity support. She's even saving money to move to the mainland, where a brighter future awaits.

That sounds like a life lived to the full alright!

Watch 'The Mighty River' film, available on christianaidcollective.org/caw

Because everybody is valuable and made wonderfully, we want to join together, using all of our talents, to be part of a community that builds other people up, helping them to rise above their challenges just like Feroza.

Join us!

Check out the £5 into £50 guide enclosed – you'll find challenges your youth group could do to start using their talents for good.