



BIBLE STUDY SESSIONS FOR YOUTH GROUPS  
FOR USE DURING LENT 2016

11-14  
YEAR OLDS

40ACTS 2016

WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY TO SATURDAY 26 MARCH 2016

40ACTS THEME 2016: JESUS AT OUR TABLE

Follow the 40acts campaign at [40acts.org.uk](http://40acts.org.uk)



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URBAN  
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## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	Page 3
WEEK ONE: BUT I NEED IT Lent dates: Wednesday 10 February – Saturday 13 February 2016	Page 4
WEEK TWO: TO BE FAIR Lent dates: Monday 15 February – Saturday 20 February 2016	Page 8
WEEK THREE: (FOR)GIVE IT AWAY Lent dates: Monday 22 February – Saturday 27 February 2016	Page 11
WEEK FOUR: SAY MY NAME Lent dates: Monday 29 February – Saturday 5 March 2016	Page 15
WEEK FIVE: DON'T GET DISCONNECTED Lent dates: Monday 7 March – Saturday 12 March 2016	Page 18
WEEK SIX: A CHANGE WILL DO YOU GOOD Lent dates: Monday 14 March – Saturday 19 March 2016	Page 22
WEEK SEVEN: MEALTIMES WITH JESUS Lent dates: Monday 21 March – Saturday 26 March 2016	Page 25
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	Page 29

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## WELCOME TO 40ACTS

### What is 40acts?

40acts is a generosity challenge which invites people to do Lent a bit differently.

During the 40 days of Lent, 40acts participants will be invited to take part in 40 simple acts of generosity which will challenge them to 'do Lent generously' in 2016.

Lent marks a pivotal point in the history of the church, when Jesus prepared to give himself up as a sacrifice. Traditionally we mark Lent by giving something up, but what if it could be more than that? What if Lent were a preparation for a lifetime of big-heartedness?

Small acts of generosity, performed by thousands of people across the UK and beyond, have the power to make a big change to our communities, to our churches and, ultimately, to our world.

### How to use this resource

40acts is a great way for individuals to practically demonstrate and grow their generosity to the people around them. *40acts Together* is about being generous with others: multiplying that generosity and deepening relationships with other givers as well as receivers. These youth group resources were written to accompany 40acts, giving the daily challenges some context and allowing young people to unpack and explore the themes in a group setting.

These resources are split into two age groups: 11 to 14s and 15+. Each age group has seven sessions to work through. One session introduces the theme before 40acts begins and then the remaining six sessions can be done weekly during Lent.

Each session picks up on a different aspect of the 2016 theme (see below) and encourages group members to participate in the daily 40acts challenges during the rest of the week. Each session also contains more activities than any one group can expect to use. This allows the leader to choose the activities that best suit their group, depending on group size, venue and faith level.

There aren't particular recommended activities to default to, but it is suggested that at least one activity from each of the main sections is used in any session, including encouraging your young people to participate in and reflect on the daily 40acts challenges.

These sessions are also available on the Urban Saints Energize website, which contains many more ideas and resources for young people:

[www.URBANSAINTS.org/40acts](http://www.URBANSAINTS.org/40acts)

### An introduction to 40acts theme 2016: Jesus at our table

The theme of this year's 40acts small group resource is 'Jesus at our table'.

The sharing of food and being hospitable represents generosity at its most practical. Yet there is something even more fundamental at work when we eat together and welcome others into that fellowship. Sitting at a table to eat in Jesus' time was a sign not just of possible friendship but of acceptance into a totally new, forgiven, restored relationship.

Jesus ate with sinners and with church leaders; he ate with a crowd of five thousand and with children. Table fellowship meant friendship, peace, acceptance and unconditional love: community.

The book of Acts describes the generous community of the early church: *'All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer ... They shared their meals with great joy and generosity' (Acts 2:42-46 NLT).*

But why Jesus at OUR table and not at his? At first glance this might seem presumptuous; who are we to invite Jesus to our table? But that is exactly the point. During his ministry Jesus walked the earth without a physical home. Other people's homes became his. He invited himself and was invited to many tables, and indeed this still happens. That is the beauty of the gospel: expectations are reversed and new truths are born.

God, in his great generosity, seeks to sit at our, and at everyone's, table. 40acts this year asks you to invite others to share at the table. Jesus will be there. Welcome to 40acts 2016.

**WEEK ONE:  
BUT I NEED IT**

→ **Main point**

- Setting the scene for the 40acts series
- Exploring what we really need from life and how God can reveal and provide these things

→ **Bible reference**

Matthew 4:1-11

→ **Leader's notes**

There are plenty of times I've heard arguments (and may have had a few of my own) that include the phrase 'but I need it' and I've heard many responses along the lines of 'you don't need it, you just want it'. Most of us could identify concrete things needed to sustain life – food, water, oxygen – but to live the life God calls us to thrive in requires more than just the basics. As we look at Jesus being tempted by things that we might see as desirable, we're reminded that his focus was on something better – a kingdom we are called to be part of, a kingdom where other needs are met. Young people are as capable as the rest of us of craving fame, power and wealth, and yet what Jesus offers us provides them with far more of what they need and often want.

This session also provides an opportunity to begin to think about other things that we need to know as we discover all of who God is – the power of an invitation and the knowledge that we are accepted – concepts that can be hugely powerful in transforming our own and our young people's lives. And yet sometimes truly understanding the invitation and offer, and honestly accepting that Jesus invites us as we

are, can take time to sink from our heads to our hearts.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [40acts.org.uk](http://40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following question:

What are the things you need that God can provide?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Ready, Set, Bake!**

**Age groups:** 7-10, 11-14

**Duration:** 20 minutes (+proving and cooking)

**Activity type:** Cookery

**Equipment:** Ingredients, bowls, ovens

**Aim:** To make simple bread rolls

**Description:** As we think about Jesus being tempted to turn a rock into bread, help young people to make a bread roll. Various recipes could be used. You can find a simple bread roll recipe here:

[bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/basicwhiterolls\\_89612](http://bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/basicwhiterolls_89612)

If time does not allow you to make rolls you might consider making some flatbread, which doesn't require as much time:

[bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/quick\\_flatbreads\\_43123](http://bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/quick_flatbreads_43123)

**The point:** Just for fun (and to bake some bread!)

**2. Title: Bamboo obstacle course**

**Age group:** 11-14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** Obstacles, bamboo canes

**Aim:** To move the bamboo cane through a series of obstacles

**Description:** Create an obstacle course around the room (using chairs, hoola hoops, canes, etc.). Place young people in pairs and give them a bamboo cane. They must only touch the bamboo cane using their index finger. They must move through the obstacle course without dropping the cane or touching it with anything else but their index finger. This game can be run as a time trial or a competitive race (in pairs or teams), depending on the size of your venue, group and course.

**The point:** To avoid the temptation of touching the cane with anything other than your index finger.

**3. Title: Essentials quiz and build**

**Age groups:** 11-14, 15+

**Duration:** 20 mins

**Activity type:** Quiz

**Equipment:** Paper, pens, table, sticky tape, straws, Lego bricks (or similar), spaghetti, sweets, drinks, magazine (and more items as you wish), a 'special prize'

**Description:** Place all the equipment (except pens and paper) on an easily viewable table. Get the young people into teams (if you have a small group, individuals can play against each other). Introduce the item as a quiz where two prizes will be awarded from the table for a correct answer and if there is a close but not correct answer one prize will be awarded.

Once the quiz has taken place, inform the teams that they must build a structure from their winnings. Award the special prize to the group which builds the best structure.

1. What is the average age men live to in the UK?  
*Answer: 78*
2. How many bricks are in the average 3-bedroom UK house?  
*Answer: 16,320*

3. Average number of bridesmaids in a UK wedding?  
*Answer: 2*
4. Average number of friends that adults have on Facebook?  
*Answer: 338*
5. Number of Lego bricks produced each year?  
*Answer: 36 billion*
6. Standard number of days off (annual leave) Americans have each year?  
*Answer: 12*
7. Number of school days for students in England at state school in a year?  
*Answer: 190*
8. Highest number of shots recorded in a tennis rally in a competitive match?  
*Answer: 643*
9. How many cars are registered in the UK?  
*Answer: 35 million*

**The point:** To introduce the idea that what we want and what we need are sometimes different.

## Getting Started

### 1. Title: Becoming a Treble Maker

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Video clip

**Equipment:** *Pitch Perfect* DVD or equivalent, means to show it

**Description:** (N.B. The film is rated 12A and so if you have 11-year-olds in your group you may want to consider whether you use it.) *Pitch Perfect* revolves around two competitive a cappella singing groups based at an American college – the Bellas (all female) and the Treble Makers (all male).

Benji originally auditioned for the Treble Makers, but despite his talent he was refused a place due to the leader disliking him. A change of

leadership means a space has opened up. In this clip the group decide to invite Benji onto the team. The clip is found at 1:20:10 and finishes at 1:21:9 (it's worth noting where to stop the clip as the next scene includes an expletive in the opening scene).

After watching the clip it may be a good chance to discuss these questions:

- What difference does it make to Benji now he's been invited onto the team?
- Have you ever been invited to join something?
- What difference did being invited make?
- Does being invited make a difference to how people view something?

**The point:** To emphasise the power of being invited

### 2. Title: What are you craving?

**Age groups:** 11-14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Nothing (although you could serve bowls of 'Krave' cereal to emphasise the point)

**Description:** Depending on the size and make-up of your group, you may want to do this as one group or break it into smaller discussion groups. Ask the groups to discuss these questions (you may find it easier to concentrate on one rather than do them all):

- If you had limitless supplies of three things for life, what would they be (assuming plentiful supplies of essentials – food, air, etc.)?
- What do you crave? Are there things you just couldn't live without?
- If you could have anyone round to a meal (alive or dead), who would you have? There are only six invitations, and the group must agree on their six guests. Would

they be likely to pop round without an invitation?

**The point:** To emphasise the power of an invitation and introduce the concept of what we crave (or hunger after)

## Digging In

### 1. Title: Not on bread alone

**Age group:** 11-14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles

**Description:** Get the young people to read Matthew 4:1–11 together.

Make use of the questions below to engage with the passage. Remember you don't need to use all the questions; you may want to pick three or four in advance to use and have the others as back-up to help the group engage well.

- Why do you think the devil waited 40 days before tempting Jesus?
- Why did the devil choose bread to tempt Jesus with?
- Jesus says, 'Man shall not live on bread alone' (v. 4). What do you think Jesus thinks you need to live and thrive? Do you think he's right? Do you have those things?
- Why did Jesus not need to prove who he was to the devil by jumping off the highest point in the temple?
- The devil tempted Jesus three times; what three things do you feel most tempted by? (Depending on the openness of your group, you may want to give them some space to answer this on their own, or in pairs, rather than as a larger group.)
- If they struggle with this question, it may be good to ask them what things they are hungry for – perhaps money, love, power.
- Sometimes people worry that they are alone in being tempted; it's good to reassure them that it

happens to everyone, including Jesus.

- How did Jesus respond to being tempted?
- How do we respond? (At this point it may be good to offer some good suggestions of how to respond to temptation – from being accountable to people to simply choosing to do something positive instead.)

It's important to know that sometimes we do give in to bad temptations, but God continues to offer us forgiveness; no sin is unforgivable.

**The point:** To engage with the Bible about what Jesus was tempted by and how he responded, and to discuss how we are tempted and how we respond.

## 2. Title: What are you tempted by?

**Age group:** 11-14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Use the following questions to have a group discussion around temptation and our response:

- What am I hungry for?
- What would the devil tempt me with?
- What is a temptation?
- Are all temptations bad?
- Jesus says, 'Man shall not live on bread alone' (Matthew 4:4). What do you think Jesus thinks you need to live and thrive? What can you do without? Do you think he's right? Do you have those things?
- What three things do you feel most tempted by? (Depending on the openness of your group, you may want to give them some space to answer this on their own, or in pairs, rather than as a larger group.) If they struggle with this question, it may be good to ask

them what things they are hungry for – perhaps money, love, power.

- Sometimes people worry that they are alone in being tempted; it's good to reassure them that it happens to everyone, including Jesus.
- How do we respond? (At this point it may be good to offer some good suggestions of how to respond to temptation – from being accountable to people to simply choosing to do something positive instead.)

It's important to know that sometimes we do give in to bad temptations, but God offers us forgiveness, no sin is unforgivable.

**The point:** To engage in conversation about our own temptations and our response to them.

## 3. Title: Exploring the power of bread

**Age groups:** 11-14, 15+

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Description:** Somewhere Else Church ([www.somewhere-else.org.uk/](http://www.somewhere-else.org.uk/))

originated in Liverpool. After the Methodist Church withdrew from Liverpool city centre, a minister arrived to try something new within the city centre. After some time listening and praying she began to invite people to bake bread. As the church grew, more people began to come; their philosophy is that you make one loaf for yourself and one to give away. Many people have come together and begun to explore and come to faith from this simple invitation to bake bread. You may want to tell the story of the church; you could show a clip about the church (downloadable for £2 from the Fresh Expressions website:

[www.freshexpressions.org.uk/resources/dvd1/08](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/resources/dvd1/08)), or ask the young people

to do some internet research on it. Once they have discovered the Somewhere Else story, use some of the following questions to continue the conversation:

- Why do you think making bread is important to these people?
- Does the bread matter?

After being tempted by the devil to turn a stone into bread (after 40 days in the desert), Jesus says, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"' (Matthew 4:4).

- Do you think you can live on the word of God?
- What do you think the word of God is?
- Does God invite us to eat with him?
- What difference does it make that God invites us to join him?

**The point:** To see how an invitation can make such a difference

## Response

### 1. Title: Communal eating

**Age groups:** 7-10, 11-14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Description:** Ask the young people to commit to not eating a meal alone this week or to ensuring no one eats alone around them. Get them to think about when and where they eat and who they could share their meals with. This might mean just committing to eating with a member of their family rather than on their own or inviting someone to join them for lunch at school. Allow time for the young people to think through the implications for the week.

**The point:** We're all invited to be part of God's kingdom and Jesus was invited to eat with others; how do we follow this example?

## 2. Title: Hungry for good things

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Pebbles, marker pens, suitable background music

**Description:** Encourage the group to find a bit of their own space and reassure them that no one will see what they write. Ask them to write on one side of a pebble one of the things that tempt them to sin. On the other side ask them to write something good to crave instead. (You may want to give some examples of good things to go after: justice, peace, hope, God, space, etc.)

Encourage them to take the pebble with them and ask them, when they feel tempted to sin, to hold and turn over their pebble and think of something else to crave. It's important to encourage leaders as well as young people to take part in

this activity, to emphasise that we are all sinners and all working on sinning less as we grow closer to God. It might also be helpful to your group to offer space for young people to talk through some of their struggles with an appropriate leader if they wish to.

**The point:** To reflect on how we can all work on having the right attitude to the things we crave

### Takeaway

#### 1. Title: Get your act together – needs

**Age groups:** 11-14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a

brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- What are the things you need that God can provide?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges

→ **Main point**

- To explore the theme of fairness and how God challenges us to go a step beyond mere fairness

→ **Bible references**

John 6:1–14, Psalm 23:5

→ **Leader's notes**

Fairness is a value that we try to get across in the work that we do as youth leaders. When I take training sessions on how to manage difficult behaviour, I often talk about the importance of acting consistently fairly so that a group know the boundaries and know the consequences that will be applied if they break them. Fairness is a good value to instil, but how do we approach fairness when we have a God whose life goes way beyond fair to a life of grace and generosity?

The session begins to explore what it means to be fair and how the world is or isn't fair and follows that by looking at a God who calls us to go beyond fair. Values of great grace and generosity can really challenge people's worldviews and be met by responses on how unfair these things are. It's worth spending time before this session thinking about how you as a team respond to a God of grace and how you live out these values as a team with your group and in your own lives.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following question:

- How do we react to a God who gives us more than we ever deserved?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Fold 'em up**

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 5–10 minutes

**Activity type:** Competition

**Equipment:** Various sizes and types of paper

**Description:** Get the young people into groups (or set individual challenges). Give them a selection of paper and ask them to fold the paper in half as many times as they can. Tell them you will award a prize to any group that gets any piece of paper folded in half more than eight times. Don't tell them that it is impossible to fold a piece of paper in half more than eight times, regardless of size!

**The point:** Just for fun

**2. Title: Popcorn hands**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** A bag of un-popped popcorn kernels

**Description:** Give all the young people seven popcorn kernels each. They must put a number of kernels in a closed fist and another young person must guess whether they are concealing an odd or even number of kernels. If the guesser guesses correctly they win the kernels to add to their collection. If they guess incorrectly the holder keeps their kernels and another guessing game can begin. The winner is the holder of the most kernels at the end of the allotted time.

**The point:** To introduce the idea that what people have or have not is not necessarily fair

**3. Title: Count to 20**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get the group to sit in a circle but facing outwards. If your group is large (over 25) you may want to split it into two groups. The aim of the exercise is to get the group to count to 20, but the people either side of the person who has just shouted a number cannot shout the next number and no two people can shout at the same time. If either of these things happens, the group must return to zero. Do not let the group discuss tactics but just encourage them to get started; it's much more difficult than it first seems!

**The point:** Just for fun

**Getting Started**

**1. Title: Teeny tiny pizza**

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Pizza

**Description:** Tell your group you are delighted to be able to provide them with some pizza for the session. Ask them to take a seat – you could go to town on the place settings – and then bring out a pizza, considerably too small for the group to share (an individual or child-size pizza). If you don't have cooking facilities you might want to consider using a local takeaway (and ask them to place one slice in a large box). There is likely to be much grumbling at this point, but emphasise that it's up to them to



work out how to best share the pizza out amongst themselves.

Once they have decided how to distribute the pizza, ask how they made their decision (and ask them why they didn't make it another way): did they share it equally, did one table claim it all, did they decide who was the hungriest and feed them first? Is their decision fair?

If you are feeling generous you may want to then provide enough pizza for the rest of your group.

**The point:** To introduce the idea of sharing what we have

## 2. Title: Rich and poor meal

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Cooked rice for the whole group, two amazing meals, envelopes (enough for the whole group)

**Description:** Inform your group in advance that you are having a rich/poor meal. Once the whole group has arrived, allow everyone to take an envelope.

Two envelopes contain 'rich': those who get these envelopes are given the best meals (if you lack cooking facilities or skills, you may want to order them the takeaway of their choice and provide the others with plain bread).

All the other envelopes contain 'poor' and the recipients are offered plain rice (or bread). Ask them how they felt to be treated so differently.

**The point:** To remind the group of the differences between people.

## 3. Title: Who would be the best person to have ...?

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Create a group of judges (they could be leaders or young people). Put the rest of the young people into teams. Teams must send up to the front the team members who, they decide, fit the following statements. They can then choose to make a statement about why they are best suited to the task.

- Best person to reach something off a high shelf
- Best person in a crisis
- Best person to fix a leaky tap
- Best person to answer a maths problem
- Person most likely to become famous
- Person most likely to become infamous
- Person who can sing the best
- Person most likely to make the judges laugh
- Person most likely to sleep in
- Person most likely to change their mind
- Best person to feed 5000 people

Team members cannot come up more than twice. Judges award points to the person who best fits the statement. If you have a small or shy group you could give your team a list of celebrities to select from.

**The point:** To introduce the idea of why some people do certain things, whilst others don't

## Digging In

### 1. Title: Feeding the crowd

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles

**Description:** Get the group to read John 6:1–14. Make use of some of the questions below to engage with the passage.

- Why were the disciples concerned about feeding the crowd?

- Why had no one (except the boy) brought food with them?
- If you were the boy, would you have willingly given up your food?
- Why do you think he handed over the food?
- How easy is it to hand over what we have to God? Are some things easier than others? Does God use the stuff you give? Could you give an example of where God has used something you have given him? If you have never asked God to use something you have, could you give it a go?
- What do you think the boy thought would happen to the food?
- Why does Jesus do a miracle that produces leftovers?

Jesus blesses the food and then it blesses the crowd, so much so that there is an overflow. Are we willing to give what we have to God and see him transform it?

**The point:** To show that God can bless others through what we do.

### 2. Title: Bless you

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Host a discussion using some of the following questions. The aim of the discussion is to explore what it means to bless and why we do it.

- What does it mean to bless people?
- Are there people you know who are blessings to you? What makes them different from others?
- Do you bless other people? Who do you choose to bless?
- How do you decide who to bless and what to do?
- Are there people we choose not to bless? Should we try and bless everyone?
- Is there something in it for us when we bless others?

Some versions of the Bible translate Psalm 23:5 as *'My cup overflows with your blessings'*. Do we feel blessed by God? Do we live as if we have a lot of blessings to share?

**The point:** To explore what it means to bless and why we do it

### 3. Title: Not-so-sweet charity

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Video clip

**Equipment:** *About a Boy* DVD (or equivalent), the means to show it

**Description:** In the clip (32 mins 13 secs to 34 mins 10 secs), Will discusses the negative side of doing charity. After the clip it would be good to ask:

- Is Will right?
- Do you have to mean it?
- When we seek to bless others, do we mean it?
- What happens when we don't?
- Have we ever done something good for someone else with the wrong motives? What happens when we do?

**The point:** To explore whether our motives matter when we choose to bless others

## Response

### 1. Title: Blessing together

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Paper and pens

**Description:** Get the group to decide on a group activity that everyone could do together to bless their community. Perhaps the group could agree to clean up a local area or

help together at a food bank; the possibilities are endless!

**The point:** To emphasise that we need to live out the fact God calls us to bless

### 2. Title: Thank yous

**Age group:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Craft

**Equipment:** Thank you cards, pens

**Description:** Encourage the group to think of someone who blesses them and to bless them back by writing and sending them a thank you card. You might want to encourage your group to thank someone who may go unnoticed in many situations.

**The point:** To pass the blessings on!

### 3. Title: Confetti blessings

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Confetti cannon(s) (available from most card shops)

**Description:** Give everyone an opportunity to reflect on what they have that can bless others and how they might seek to bless others this week. Explain to the group that after a countdown you will let off the cannon and ask everyone to shout thanks as a prayer to God to thank him for all the blessings he gives us. When the cannon goes off they must try to collect some confetti as a reminder that God's blessings are given to us to overflow to others. Ask them to keep some of the confetti in their pocket or bag and when they see it, it will act as a reminder to bless others. You may want to encourage them to bless the

cleaning team by helping to clear all the confetti up!

**The point:** To emphasise that God's blessings overflow to us and others.

## Takeaway

### 1. Title: Get your act together – beyond fairness

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- How do we react to a God who gives us more than we ever deserved?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges

**WEEK THREE:  
(FOR)GIVE IT AWAY**

→ **Main point**

- Forgiveness is not just for us – we have to pass it on to others

→ **Bible references**

Luke 7:36–50, Psalm 103

→ **Leader's notes**

When I think about doing a session on 'passing it on', my mind instantly goes to a session on mission, or perhaps kindness, but rarely does my mind take me to the topic of forgiveness.

Whenever we cover the topic of forgiveness we need to be aware that we only forgive when something has gone wrong – where someone (often us or those we love) has been hurt. Being aware that these issues can bring up pain is important and being sensitive to those who have been and will continue to be hurt is a vital part of teaching on forgiveness. It's all too easy to think about a God who forgives us and then tell others we need to forgive without taking stock of the fact that it cost God to forgive and it often requires a cost on our part to forgive others.

The session looks at the need to pass on God's forgiveness – not just in the sense that others need to know God forgives them but also in that God's forgiveness should overflow into our ability to forgive others. Ensure that you have time as a leader to know God's forgiveness and his desire and help to forgive others, and ensure there is space enough in the session for others not only to know these facts but also to experience what they can mean in their life.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following question:

- Who do you need to forgive?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Food colour painting**

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Milk (whole milk works best), food colouring, plates (disposable ones make for easy clean-up), washing-up liquid, cotton buds

**Description:** Give each young person a plate covered in milk. Ask them to drop a few drops of food colouring onto the milk (you might find having droppers to use, rather than having them drop from the usual food colouring bottles, avoids over-use of the colouring!). Different colours could be used, but ensure there is still plenty of milk visible on the plate. Get them to place the tip of a cotton bud into some washing-up liquid and then gently place the end of the cotton bud onto the plate of milk. The colouring should quickly move across the milk, creating intricate patterns.

Once the principle has been established, you can let them see who can create the best patterns.

**The point:** To introduce the concept of things spreading out

**2. Title: You, Me, Left, Right**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get the group to sit in a circle and place one person in the centre (this could be a leader to start with). The person in the centre points to someone in the outer circle and says 'You', 'Me', 'Left' or 'Right'. If they say 'You' the person pointed at says their own name. If they say 'Me' they must say the pointer's name.

If they say 'Left' or 'Right' they must say the name of the person on their left or right. All answers must be given in under three seconds. If they get the name correct the pointer must point again.

If they get it wrong they become the pointer, and the pointer gains the seat. This game can go on endlessly, or you can set a timer and say you mustn't be the pointer when the timer goes off. You can increase the difficulty of the game by added three left, three right (so names must be given of people two spaces to the left or three to the right, etc.).

**The point:** Just for fun

**Getting Started**

**1. Title: Whisper**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get the groups into teams and give the team captains a series of messages (getting increasingly complicated) that must be whispered down the line. When the messages have been received by the final team member they must be written down and given to the team leader. Points can be awarded for speed, but more points should be awarded to the team with the most accurate messages.

**The point:** To introduce the concept of passing things on

## 2. Title: Would you? Could you?

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** The means to create a line through your venue (could be masking tape on the floor, a row of chairs, a historical line on the floor), a sign at either end with one saying 'Easy' and the other 'Impossible'.

**Description:** Introduce to the group that today you are looking at forgiveness. Explain that standing at one end of the line means that you would find it easy to forgive, the other end impossible, and everything else is in-between. Firstly ask the group how easy they find forgiving people. Then follow up with a selection of situations where forgiveness may be needed.

You can add more story to the situations if needed. Try to be aware of any live issues within the group that might mean that some of the situations below might be useful to discuss or too close to the bone for the group environment at this time.

- Someone hacks your Facebook account
- Someone steals your phone
- Someone tells people you have done something that you haven't
- Someone has killed someone you don't know
- Someone has killed someone you know really well
- Someone has cheated in an exam
- Someone has cheated in an exam, meaning they get the last place at an activity that you wanted.

Add situations as is helpful to your group. Discuss with the group that there are some things we find easier to forgive than others, but God offers forgiveness for all things and asks us to forgive all things too.

**The point:** To introduce the concept of forgiveness

## 3. Title: Picture This – photo challenge

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Camera phones (or cameras)

**Description:** Depending on the size of your group you may wish to split your group into teams for this exercise. Ensure there is at least one person with a camera phone in the each group who is willing to take pictures. Give each team a list of words and ask them to take a photo that sums up each word. With the correct consent, risk assessment etc. this activity could be done as an out-and-about activity in the local area. The list of words can be expanded depending on the time you have available.

Include the words forgiveness + forgiving others + grace to encourage them to explore the theme of the session. Other words you might want to include: the group's name, wild, sin, community, peace, red, cost.

When the photos have been taken you can display them through a computer/projector, if you wish, and ask the group to explain how the pictures sum up the words.

**The point:** To begin to explore forgiveness

### Digging In

#### 1. Title: Coloured forgiveness

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Milk (whole milk works best), food colouring, plates disposable makes for easy clean-up), washing-up liquid, cotton buds (if you wished to do this on a bigger scale, following on from the warm-up activity, you could use a small

paddling pool instead of plates and small sponges rather than cotton buds)

**Description:** Talk to the group about how as Christians we believe that God forgives us for all the things we do wrong. Explain that we ask for forgiveness and God offers it on the cross. As you do so, drop some food colouring onto the milk (you may want to use red to emphasise the cross).

God will forgive us no matter what we have done, how much we have done. God's forgiveness is generous beyond measure (continue to drop the food colouring into the milk). God's forgiveness is so generous that it changes us and calls us to forgive those around us. His forgiveness is so powerful that it overflows from us into how we treat others. At this point dip the cotton bud/sponge (which has been previously soaked in washing-up liquid) into the milk. As the colour spreads and changes shape across the milk, emphasise the point that God calls us to forgive others; it's our natural reaction to knowing we are forgiven.

You may want to challenge the young people to think about how they respond to God's forgiveness: we may stop to say thank you to God, but have we let forgiveness overflow to others we need to forgive?

**The point:** To emphasise that God's forgiveness to us should overflow to others.

#### 2. Title: Overwhelmed by grace

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles or copies of Luke 7:36–50

**Description:** Get the group to read through the story from Luke 7:36–50. Use some of the following

questions to get the group to explore the passage together; remember to allow the group some space to ask and explore their own questions.

- Why do you think the woman responded to Jesus in the way she did?
- Could she not have just spoken to him?
- Out of all the characters in the story which one do you identify with most? The woman, the Pharisee – surprised by Jesus' actions, the man owing money, the money-lender...
- How do you think being forgiven has changed/would change the life of the woman?
- Do you think this incident changed Simon's view? Why/why not?
- Does it matter whether you've been forgiven a lot or a little?
- How do you respond to the idea that Jesus forgives you?
- How do others respond to being forgiven?

**The point:** To explore our response to forgiveness

### 3. Title: Real forgiveness

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Copies of the story of forgiveness found at

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-33847293](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-33847293) (or another more recent story of someone offering forgiveness in the news)

**Description:** Provide an opportunity for the group to explore the story of Vincent Uzomah, a teacher who was stabbed by a student. Questions may arise naturally from reviewing the story; if not, you may want to use some of the following questions to stimulate discussion.

- Was Vincent right to forgive the boy?
- If Vincent had been even more seriously injured, or died in the

attack, would forgiving the boy have been appropriate?

- What difference does forgiving the boy make, to Vincent and to the boy?
- Vincent says his faith was a key factor in choosing to forgive; why do you think his faith mattered?
- If the boy does not change, was the forgiveness worth it?
- What would you have done if you were in Vincent's shoes?

**The point:** To see real people in difficult circumstances forgiving those who have hurt them

### Response

#### 1. Title: Handwashing

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Large bowls of warm water, soap, towels, suitable background music, copies of Psalm 103

**Description:** As we think of how God forgives us and how God encourages us to forgive others, we may have realised that we continue to do some things wrong. As a sign that God continues to forgive us, encourage the young people to come to the water and wash their hands. Encourage the group to think of this as a new start. It may be appropriate to offer an opportunity to talk to leaders in case talking about forgiveness has brought up any specific issues.

**The point:** To remember that God forgives us all regardless of what we have done.

#### 2. Title: Fizzing forgiveness

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Large transparent container(s) (old fish tanks work well,

or large clear vases), fizzing vitamin tablets, marker pens, optional lights (torches work fine!)

**Description:** Fill the tank with water and (if using) place the lights behind it. Encourage the young people to write on the tablets something they have done wrong (or something that represents it) or a person they need to forgive. When they are ready, encourage them to place the tablet in the water and watch it disappear.

Be aware that the writing on the tablets will be visible for a few moments as the tablet dissolves, so you may want to have a few water stations to allow people to do this one by one. To conclude the activity you may want to read Psalm 103.

**The point:** To experience God's forgiveness and to remember our call to forgive others.

#### 3. Title: Palm confession

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Means to display the video found at

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbGT8aDiN3I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbGT8aDiN3I), palm crosses, pens, suitable bucket to burn palm crosses, matches, something to put out the fire at the end

**Description:** Give everyone a palm cross and a pen and encourage them to find a space to watch the clip. The clip requires a reasonable standard of reading so might not work for groups who struggle with reading.

The clip gives various statistics about the sins of the world, and then encourages people to write a confession on their palm and bring it forward to be burned, as a symbol of sins being put away.

Invite the young people to write a sin (on a world level or personal one) on their palm and place it in the bucket

to be burned while God's forgiveness is declared.

**The point:** To remind us that we all need God's forgiveness and can all experience it.

## Takeaway

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### 1. Title: **Get your act together – forgive me**

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't

already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with

someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- Who do you need to forgive?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges

**WEEK FOUR:  
SAY MY NAME**

→ **Main point**

- To encourage young people to try something different – to ‘taste and see’ something different of God’s character

→ **Bible references**

Psalm 34, Luke 11:1–4

→ **Leader’s notes**

We all like our comfort zone; the name gives it away really. We like the knowledge and feeling of the familiar; we like to know the likely outcomes of our actions, the people we work well with and who we don’t. Most of us find change difficult, some of us more than others, but change is inevitable and how we manage change matters, and it matters partly because our young people are learning from us every day.

I’m always impressed by young people who are willing to try new foods and who have that desire to give new things a go. In this session there is an opportunity to explore Psalm 34 (*‘Taste and see that the Lord is good’, v. 8*). Many young people don’t want to see how good God is, or they have decided that God is a bit like Marmite – you either like it or you don’t – and yet we want to encourage them to try, to be willing to taste God with open minds and hearts and see what they discover. We know that God is good, but to them it may be a challenge to get beyond what they have already decided.

For others there is a chance to look at how we explore prayer. Perhaps you consider yourself a seasoned ‘pray-er’ or a novice or someone who

really struggles. Be encouraged, regardless of where you would place yourself in the prayer Olympics, to try something new in prayer; do it together with your group so they are reassured that you undergo this experiment with them. We so often describe God as indescribable and then try to place him back in our comfort zones; take this session to together discover more of who God is and how you can speak to him and he to you.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following question:

- What name will you call God this week?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: What is this?**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** A selection of well-known and unusual foods (be aware of any allergies in the group), blindfolds, pens and paper

**Description:** Have each team choose a participant to be blindfolded. The willing participant is blindfolded and brought to the front. They are fed (by a team mate of their choice) a spoonful of one of the foods. After tasting the food, their blindfold can be removed and they must write down what they think the food is. Repeat until all the foods have been tasted. A prize can be awarded to the team which has the most correct answers.

**The point:** To introduce the idea of taste as part of the theme

**2. Title: Feeding stations**

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** Chairs, jars of baby food, spoons, bamboo canes, tape, bibs (tea towels work fine!)

**Description:** This game can be played in pairs or as a team game, with people taking turns after each spoonful. Tape the spoons to the ends of the canes and open the jars of baby food. One team member sits on a chair at the far end of the room. Other team members must race and collect the spoon/cane combo and try to scoop food out of the jar and into the mouth of their team mate. The team/pair which finishes the jar wins (a judgment may have to be made on how much has been eaten, against the amount on the floor/face).

**The point:** To introduce the idea of taste as part of the theme

**3. Title: I got up in the morning and I...**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get the group to sit in a circle. This game is a variation of ‘I went to the market and I bought...’. Someone starts the game by saying ‘I got up in the morning and I...’ and adding something they would do. The next person must repeat the phrase, including the activity, and then add one of their own. The game continues as each successive person adds an activity and must recall all the previous ones.

**The point:** To begin to think about how we spend a day

## Getting Started

### 1. Title: 180 days around the world

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Access to the internet for each group, list of countries in the world

**Description:** Get each group to pick a country (or a couple) from around the world. They have to find out what a normal young person's day is like. What is their staple diet? Does everyone go to school? For how many hours? Is there something you have in common with them? Is there something that strikes you as different? If your church has good links with people around the world, you may be able to arrange a Skype session to ask these questions directly to someone the church knows.

**The point:** To see how we can share things with people across the world as well as have differences

### 2. Title: Breads around the world

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Quiz

**Equipment:** Quiz sheets (or bring in a selection of breads), pens

**Description:** Give each team a copy of the quiz sheet and see how many they can guess correctly. Alternatively you could collect breads from around the world and the group could taste them and guess where in the world they are from.

**The point:** To introduce the concept of daily bread

## Digging In

### 1. Title: Taste and see

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Two packets of different flavour crisps which have been emptied by the bottom of the packet, the contents swapped and the packets resealed with tape, blindfold

**Description:** Start by asking if anyone in the group would be able to tell which bag of crisps there were eating whilst blindfolded. When you have a willing volunteer, blindfold them and present them with a bag of crisps to try. Ask them which flavour they are eating. Assuming their taste buds are OK, they will guess the correct flavour but the rest of the group will be convinced they are wrong. Ask them if they are sure, and then tell them they are correct (much to the horror of the group). Before you explain the deception, remind them of the words from Psalm 34, *'Taste and see that the Lord is good'*, and remind them that sometimes we need to try things before we can make informed decisions about them.

God asks us to follow him, and some of the group may need to try that before they decide it's not for them. For others it will be an opportunity to emphasise the need to engage with God day by day before deciding that God is to be contained in youth group or Sunday services. You then may want to explain your deception, or not if you want to keep an air of mystery...

**The point:** To 'taste and see that the Lord is good'

### 2. Title: Teach us how to pray

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles or copies of Luke 11:1–4

**Description:** Before the group read the passage, ask them how they would answer someone who asked

them to teach them how to pray. Encourage the group to read 11:1–4 together. Use some of the questions below to help engage with the text.

- How different was your answer from the way Jesus answered the question? (You may need to reassure them that if asked the question they don't necessarily have to answer the same way; context matters!)
- Jesus encouraged the disciples to call God 'Father' (Abba, closer to 'Daddy'). Is this different from how they would have prayed before? How different would it have felt to suddenly start calling God 'Daddy'?
- If you pray, what is the most common way you address God (Father, Lord, Jesus)? Do you tend to use one name over another?
- Why do you think Jesus used the phrase 'daily bread'? Is the bread bit important?
- What do we need God to give us each day?
- Do we find it easy or difficult to come back to God each day and engage with him?
- Does anyone use the Lord's Prayer to pray regularly? Why or why not?

**The point:** To engage with the Biblical text for the Lord's Prayer

### 3. Title: Daily bread

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Paper, pens, optional paper plates

**Description:** Ask the group to think about the different food groups that make up a healthy, balanced diet. What percentage of your diet should be fruit and veg? How much protein? Etc. You may want to write this up on paper or on a paper plate.

When they have spent some time working that out, ask them:



- What makes a good spiritual diet?
- Are there things that they need to consume regularly for a healthy spiritual diet?
- Are there great occasional treats which, if you start to live off them, can do more harm than good?
- Is there such a thing as spiritual 'comfort food'?

They might want to complete a plate which says what they include in their spiritual diet and what new things they might want to try.

It may be useful to do this exercise as a team beforehand to see what you come up with and to ensure that you have a range of suggestions to share if required.

**The point:** To consider what a good spiritual diet looks like.

## Response

### 1. Title: The Lord's Prayer

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Copies of the Lord's Prayer, suitable background music (or silence if it works better with your group)

**Description:** Distribute copies of the Lord's Prayer to the group and give them a moment or two to find some space and read through it quickly. Explain that you are going to pray it together (if they wish), line by line with a pause in between to think about what each line means to them today. At the end of the prayer, give

a moment longer to think and pray for the group and then pray the whole prayer again at normal speed.

**The point:** To engage with the Lord's Prayer.

### 2. Title: Beginnings and endings

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Young people will need their mobile phones

**Description:** Ask the young people to set two alarms on their phone, one for 15 minutes after they normally wake up and one for 15 minutes before they go to bed.

Most phones will allow you to attach a note to each alarm. Suggest that the morning alarm is a chance to pray The Lord's Prayer (they may want to type the words into their phone somewhere), and the evening one a chance to thank God for all he has given them that day.

Don't worry too much if technology causes you stress; the young people will be able to do this on their own phones without too much difficulty and will often help each other if they are unsure.

**The point:** To start and end the day with God.

## Takeaway

### 1. Title: Get your act together - prayer

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- What name will you call God this week?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges

→ **Main point**

- To explore the issue of poverty and how we respond to it

→ **Bible references**

1 Corinthians 16:1–4, Matthew 19:16–30, Mark 12:41–44

→ **Leader's notes**

In a world of 24-hour news, it can be difficult to know how to respond to so much need. Our screens are filled with images of poverty from the other side of the world and the other side of our streets. Poverty is not just about the effects of lack of financial resources but can affect many other parts of life. In Pamela Couture's book *Seeing Children, Seeing God*, she writes about how a 'poverty of tenuous connections' is the most dangerous type of poverty.

She acknowledges that those lacking finances can suffer this type of poverty too, but when any person is lacking stable connections to a world beyond themselves – whether that be people controlling infrastructure, family, friends, those who can provide employment, or many others – they suffer regardless of whether or not the cause of this lack of connections was originally financial.

How do you understand poverty? How do your young people? How does God see and respond to poverty? And how do we respond to these needs? This session seeks to explore these questions, and although under no illusion that all problems can be solved in a 1½ hour session, we hope this session can provide an opportunity for your group

to take action to respond to poverty in places both near and far.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following question:

- What will you do to help change the lives of those in poverty?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Simply extravagant**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Various dishes of food varying from very simple and bland (plain porridge, boiled rice) to very extravagant. If you would prefer a simple option, start with plain crisps and end with a posh box of chocolates.

**Description:** As the group arrives, sit small groups at different tables, set up for a meal. Serve each table a different food (from extravagant to simple). See if anyone shares the food given to them and how they react to being treated differently.

**The point:** To introduce the idea of fairness and sharing

**2. Title: Banana surgery**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Competition

**Equipment:** Bananas (other fruit can be used but bananas work best), sticky tape, needle and thread

**Description:** Give each group a banana and tell them to peel it and share it with the group (but don't eat it). At this point do not give out the equipment or any clues about what is

about to happen. When the banana is broken into pieces, explain the objective of the game is to put the banana back together as best you can, and hand out the equipment to help. Points will be awarded for the banana that looks most like the original.

**The point:** Just for fun

**3. Title: The Price is Right**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Quiz

**Equipment:** Either pictures of various objects or the objects themselves; the objects should range from the everyday (bread, milk) to the more extravagant (car, house)

**Description:** Place the objects in view of the group (or distribute the pictures). Ask the young people, in teams, to guess the price of each object. Guesses are excluded if the guess is higher than the actual price. Points are awarded for the closest guess – extra points are awarded if they get the exact price correct.

**The point:** Just for fun

**Getting Started**

**1. Title: Million pound spending spree**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Paper and pens

**Description:** Explain to the group that you have received a surprise inheritance of one million pounds. You may consider giving them some of your inheritance if they can wisely advise you how to use the money. Place the young people in groups and ask them to come up with a presentation on how to spend this inheritance; your only guidance is

that the spending must be generous. After allowing the groups some time to come up with their plan, have them present their plan to you and the rest of the group.

**The point:** To begin to explore the themes of generosity and selfishness

## 2. Title: £100 silent auction

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Selection of boxes, each with a valuable asset on it (examples below), envelopes, pens, paper

**Description:** Explain to the group that you are about to give them £100 (someone needs to keep a tally), and they can spend all of that money on any of the items around the room. If they wish to purchase an item they must place a bid in that box.

The highest bid will win the item, but warn them to be aware of paying more than necessary for the item. They can bid on as many items as they wish (or just one), but they must not spend more than their £100. Bids are made by placing their name and the amount they want to bid in an envelope and placing it in the box. Once they have had an opportunity to place their bids, open the boxes and declare the successful bids. You can have as many items to bid on as you like; you may want to include:

- 2 tickets to the FA cup final
- 2 tickets to the Olympics 100m final
- 10 A\* GCSEs
- A year's supply of chocolate
- A new car
- A 14-day holiday to the destination of your choice (hotel and flights included)
- 3 new friends
- Your own bedroom
- A meeting with your favourite celebrity

- A new house for the whole family
- A 3-course meal at a top restaurant

After the bids have been revealed you may want to ask them how they made their decisions, and how it felt if they couldn't have anything. Did anyone make a decision to club together to buy an item?

**The point:** To introduce the idea of using money wisely

## Digging In

### 1. Title: What does it mean to be poor?

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Pens and paper

**Description:** Ask the group what they think it means to be poor. If they come up with monetary suggestions, ask them to be specific about the difference not having money makes.

Once they have discussed monetary aspects of being poor, discuss whether people can be poor in other ways. Can people be poor in relationships, in time, in self-confidence? How many different ways to be poor can the group come up with?

Remind the group that God calls Christians to respond to those in need around us and that includes all types of poverty. How good are we at doing that? Could we be more generous in our support?

How can we respond to these different types of being poor? Ask the group to come up with at least one suggestion for each type they have listed.

**The point:** To explore different ways of being poor and how we respond to them

### 2. Title: Give to those in need

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles, or copies of 1 Corinthians 16:1–4

**Description:** Ask the group to think about their money. How often do they receive money (pocket money, birthdays, Christmas, jobs, etc.)? Ask them how they decide to spend it. Do they ever consider that their money belongs to God? If their money belongs to God, what difference would that make to how they spend it?

Get the group to read 1 Corinthians 16:1–4 together and then use the following questions to engage with the passage.

- Why do you think a collection for God's people was needed? Is that still the case?
- Why did Paul (the writer of the letter) think setting aside money weekly mattered?
- How would Paul decide who received the money? Why would the church in Jerusalem be in need?
- Why would the church need to be reminded to give money away?
- How are we reminded to give to others?
- Does the advice about giving money away apply to young people?
- How can we be generous with the money we have?

If your group are familiar with the Bible it might be worth asking them if there are other passages which give advice about the use of money. What do we learn from them?

**The point:** To engage with the Bible about how we deal with money

### 3. Title: How far down the line?

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** The means to make a line down the centre of your venue

(chairs, tape, an existing line on the floor, etc.)

**Description:** Explain to the group that the line down the centre of your venue is a line of selfishness. One end of the line is completely selfish, the other end completely selfless (you may need to give an explanation of the two concepts). You will ask a series of questions about how selfish/selfless people are, and they should stand on the line at the point they think they are on the spectrum. It may be important to reassure people that there is not a right answer and reports will not be sent to the relevant individuals or groups.

- How selfish is the world?
- How selfish is Europe?
- How selfish is the UK?
- How selfish is Scotland/Wales/England/Northern Ireland, etc.?
- How selfish is your town?
- How selfish is your street?
- How selfish is your family?
- How selfish is the youth group?
- How selfish is the church?
- How selfish are you?
- How selfish was Jesus?

As you ask the questions you could ask what makes someone selfish/selfless. How easy is to be selfish / selfless? If Jesus was pretty selfless, how should that affect us?

**The point:** To explore selfishness and selflessness

## Response

### 1. Title: See a penny

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Pennies (enough for one per person in the group), business card size pieces of card, sticky tape, pens

**Description:** Give each person a penny and a piece of card and ask

them to tape the penny to it. Ask them to write 'How can I use my money wisely?' or 'How does God want me to use my money?' on the card. Encourage the group to place the card in their purse/wallet/pocket all week and when they see it to continue to ask themselves the question. You could review whether they have made any different decisions with their money next week.

**The point:** To commit to reviewing how God wants us to use our money wisely.

### 2. Title: Skill swap shop

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Paper, pens

**Description:** Ask the group to come up with what they think the needs are in the local community (try to encourage honest and practical suggestions), and write each one on a separate piece of paper. Are there any things that they need help with (e.g. maths, learning guitar)? Again write these on bits of paper. When you have collected a selection of areas, ask if they have any skills which could help these situations. If they do, get them to write their name on the relevant sheet of paper. If there are situations you still don't have a response on, encourage the group to go away and think whether there is someone they know who could help, or whether they could contact a relevant agency to help.

**The point:** To encourage personal and community responses to situations requiring help.

### 3. Title: Simple living

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Worship

**Equipment:** A copy of the song 'Simple Living' by Townend and

Getty, means to play it, a copy of the lyrics of the last verse for everyone.

**Description:** Encourage everyone to listen to (or sing if your group likes to) the song 'Simple Living'. The song tells the stories of the rich young man and the widow at the temple and concludes with a verse about our need to live simply. After listening to the song, it may be good to encourage the group to use the last verse as a prayer together and perhaps to pray it over the next few weeks.

*O teach me Lord to walk this road,  
The road of simple living;  
To be content with what I own  
And generous in giving.  
And when I cling to what I have  
Please wrest it quickly from my grasp;  
I'd rather lose all the things of earth  
To gain the things of heaven.*

Stuart Townend, Keith & Kristyn Getty Copyright © 2011 Thankyou Music & Getty Music

**The point:** To respond to the call to live simply.

## Takeaway

### 1. Title: Get your act together – poverty

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people

to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to

reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- What will you do to help change the lives of those in poverty?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on

what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges

**WEEK SIX:  
A CHANGE WILL DO YOU  
GOOD**

→ **Main point**

- To understand how God can change us – if we are willing to give him access and let him do so

→ **Bible references**

2 Corinthians 5:17, Luke 19:1–10

→ **Leader's notes**

'A leopard cannot change its spots' or so the saying goes. Can it? Is it possible to change? Can we really change everything, or are some things off limits? As youth leaders we celebrate growth. We long to see young people change their life around, take a new and courageous step in their faith – to finally make the change we want to see – but do we believe it's possible? Do our young people think changing something is out of the question? Makeover shows of people and places often start with an introduction of 'Change anything except...'. What are the things we would add to that phrase? Except my finances? My home? My job? Young people are no different. There are areas of our life we choose to put 'off limits', but God may want that to change too.

I'm always glad that when I came to faith God did not give me a list of all the things that needed to change. Instead he has gradually revealed more and more of what needs to be changed to become all he created me to be. One of my friends has a mug that says 'Be patient, God isn't finished with me yet', which is so true, and yet are we willing to continue to be changed or have we

settled for where we've got to? This session begins to explore change, often through the eyes of change in others (Zacchaeus) but it is as much about how we can change.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following questions:

- Can you change? Do you see others changing?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Look like a leader**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** A selection of dressing-up clothes (which may include some group leaders' clothes), sheets, toilet roll, newspaper, etc.

**Description:** Get the group into teams and ask them to choose a person to be dressed up. Once the person has been chosen, tell the group they must dress their volunteer to look as much like a leader in the group (or an appropriate celebrity if your leaders are particularly shy) as they can. Give them a tight time limit and allow the relevant leader to judge their efforts.

**The point:** Just for fun

**2. Title: Magic dishcloth**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** A (dry) dishcloth

**Description:** Put the group into two or more teams. Explain to the group that they have to come up with as

many uses for a dishcloth as possible. After a few moments to think about it, throw the dishcloth to one team, who must explain one use. They then throw it to the next team, who explain one use and then throw the dishcloth to the other team. The game continues until all teams but one run out of ideas. The game can be lengthened by adding new objects (a mop head works well).

**The point:** Just for fun

**3. Title: King of the Jungle**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get your group to sit in a circle (if your group is large you could have more than one circle). Decide where the circle begins and ends. The person at the beginning of the circle is assigned to be the Amoeba (a simple 1-celled organism); they have an action of shrugging their shoulders and a 'mmm' noise. The person at the end of circle is the Lion (the King of the Jungle), with accompanying roar and hand gesture. The rest of the group must now decide which animal they want to be; each animal needs to have an action and a noise.

The Lion makes their noise and action, followed by the noise and action of someone else in the group. That person must now do their action followed by someone else's. If they get it wrong or take too long to do theirs or the other person's noise/action, they lose their seat and must move to the Amoeba's seat. This means many of the group must move around the circle and therefore become the new seat's animal. The aim of the game is to be the King of the Jungle when the whistle blows.

**The point:** Just for fun

## Getting Started

### 1. Title: The kittens of change

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Video clip

**Equipment:** *Despicable Me* DVD or equivalent, means to show it

**Description:** *Despicable Me* tells the story of Gru, a supervillain determined to be the top supervillain. But in an attempt to use three orphan girls to help steal a shrink ray, his life takes some unexpected turns. The clip begins at 1 hour 19 mins 27 secs and ends at 1 hour 21 mins 39 secs. At this point Gru sits down to tell the three girls a story about three kittens and how they influence someone else to change (a bad cover for his own encounter with them). After watching the clip you may want to ask the group whether they think people change.

**The point:** To begin to think about transformation

### 2. Title: Super face painting

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** Face paints, baby wipes

**Description:** Assign a willing leader to each team and give the group a time limit to face-paint their leader to look like a well-known superhero (Iron Man/Batman/Spider Man, etc.). Judge their efforts for accuracy and creativity!

**The point:** To introduce the concept of being transformed.

## Digging In

### 1. Title: Transformed into a new person

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Images/objects that have been transformed (see below)

**Description:** The aim of this activity is to get the group to think about whether it truly possible to be transformed and how that happens. It may be worth showing a selection of images of objects that have been transformed from one thing into something remarkably different, e.g. the 'Tree of Life' sculpture at the British Museum (guns made into poignant art) or pencil cases made from car tyres. You may have another object that is something quite different from what it started life as which you could bring in to share with the group – if the original use is difficult to see, they might enjoy guessing what it was! Whilst looking at the images or objects you may want to use a few of these questions:

- What have you seen transformed?
- Is it possible for things to really change?
- Do you think people can be transformed?

Share with the group the idea that knowing God transforms us.

You may want to share 2 Corinthians 5:17: *'Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new' (CEV).*

If your group has some young Christians in it, you might want to ask how they feel about being transformed. If your group is made up of more non-Christians, you might want to ask whether they think God could/would transform them. What difference do they think he would make?

**The point:** To introduce the concept that God is still working at transforming people's lives.

### 2. Title: Soul bought for God

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Video clip

**Equipment:** *Les Miserables* DVD or equivalent, means to show it

**Description:** Explain that the main character, Valjean, was imprisoned for stealing a loaf of bread. On his release he seeks shelter in a church and meets a Bishop who provides him with some much needed food and care.

During the night, Valjean runs away, stealing some silver to be able to pay his way. He is caught by the guard and returned to the Bishop to await his fate, but the Bishop tells the guard that he hasn't stolen the silver at all. In fact he says that he gave the silver as a gift and Valjean has taken as much as he should. The clip is Valjean's response to the Bishop's kindness: it begins at 7 mins 8 secs and finishes at 13 mins 52 secs. After the clip you may want to explore some of the following questions:

- What do you think of Valjean's response?
- Should the Bishop have lied to save Valjean?
- Is it the Bishop's actions that transform Valjean?
- Is his response to being given a second chance a normal one?
- How would you respond if you were given such a big second chance?
- Do you think God offers us such a new slate?

**The point:** To emphasise that God's transformation of us is ongoing

### 3. Title: Zacchaeus transformed

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Drama

**Equipment:** Bibles or copies of Luke 19:1–10

**Description:** Get the group to act out the story of Zacchaeus as found in Luke 19:1–10. Then use some of the following questions to engage with the text:

- Why do you think Zacchaeus climbed a tree rather than getting to the front to be able to see?
- How do you think Zacchaeus felt when Jesus began to talk to him?
- What do you think the others in the crowd would have thought as Jesus approached Zacchaeus?
- What do you think the others in the crowd thought of Jesus' words to Zacchaeus?
- Do you think Zacchaeus was expecting to see his life changed that day?
- How was Zacchaeus' life transformed?

Does God still transform people's lives? At this point you may want to have a young person or leader share some testimony of how God has transformed them.

**The point:** To explore the story of Zacchaeus and reflect on how God continues to transform

## Response

### 1. Title: Origami butterflies

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Craft

**Equipment:** Square origami paper (it's worth finding proper paper rather than cutting down A4, we speak from experience!)

**Description:** Spend some time making origami butterflies. The easiest way to do this is to follow a tutorial on YouTube (if you've had nightmares trying to following instructions in a book, video makes it

much easier) –

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWjEYlMZnhE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWjEYlMZnhE)

You may feel confident in teaching this skill after a few attempts yourself but it may be worth having the clip available to view. Encourage people to make two butterflies, one to keep as a reminder that God is transforming them, and another to give away to someone they are praying for as a sign God can transform any situation.

**The point:** To encourage thanksgiving for transformation already undergone and prayer for those in need of transformation.

### 2. Title: Ice melt

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Ice cubes, suitable background music, paper towels (or similar)

**Description:** Create a quiet atmosphere and encourage people to find some space in the room to sit. Distribute an ice cube to each person. Encourage the group to think about how God has been and is transforming them, as they hold the ice and watch it transform into water. As the time goes on, ask them to pray about certain situations they know of that need God to transform them; it might be a world situation or something very personal. Ask them to pray about how God might be asking them to help the transformation happen. You may want to close the time with a prayer and reading 2 Corinthians 5:17.

**The point:** To encourage thanksgiving for transformation already undergone and prayer for

those in need of transformation and a commitment to be involved in God's work of transformation.

## Takeaway

### 1. Title: Get your act together – change

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Description:** Introduce the group to the 40acts concept (if you haven't already), explaining that every day during Lent there will be a challenge around a different aspect of generosity. Each challenge includes a brief reflection to get people thinking what it means to them. You may wish, if you have internet access, to show the group the 40acts website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)).

Encourage your group to sign up to 40acts (on the website), so that they can be sent daily email prompts for the challenges. Ask the young people to complete the challenges in the coming week and think through them – ideally discussing them with someone else (a friend, parent, leader or discipler). Ask them to reflect on the following question when doing the challenges this week:

- Can you change? Do you see others changing?

You may wish to make space in your next session to get some feedback on what your group have experienced when doing the challenges.

**The point:** To get group members to participate in 40acts and engage with and reflect on the challenges



**WEEK SEVEN:  
MEALTIMES WITH JESUS**

→ **Main point**

- To explore the link between sharing food and building relationships

→ **Bible references**

John 21, Luke 22:1–30

→ **Leader's notes**

As the Easter story draws to a close, we continue to see Jesus eating with those around him: before the cross – the Last Supper – and after the resurrection – feeding the disciples on the beach. We live in a world where eating often goes to one of two extremes – a need that must be fulfilled quickly or a luxury that is to be savoured (often at a high financial cost).

How do we reclaim a space for sharing meals that allows trust to be built between those we know and those we are just beginning to meet?

Before astronauts go into space they spend time in quarantine to ensure they have no viruses building in their system, which means they are unable to say goodbye to their families just before they leave earth. NASA used to allow families to prepare some beans to be served to the astronauts in preparation for take-off because they knew the importance of people eating together and did their best to provide something that summed up the symbolism of a family meal.

In a changing world how do we help young people see the importance of food, not just for nutrition but for good relationships? How do we help them to see that Jesus wants to be present in their mealtimes as much as he is in a worship service? How do we help them be generous with their

invitations to share food together? This session begins to explore the importance of these issues and the need to find ways to discover them that fit and challenge the lives our group members lead.

As a follow-up to this session, we recommend you encourage the group to sign up to the 40acts campaign – [www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk) – and engage with the daily challenges throughout Lent, reflecting on the following questions:

- What difference has taking part in 40acts made to you?
- What changes will you keep up now that the challenges have ended or are drawing to a close?

**Warming Up**

**1. Title: Clap, clap, snap, snap**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Description:** Get everyone in a circle and give them all a number.

Introduce a gentle rhythm of clap, clap, snap, snap (with claps and clicks) with everyone joining in.

Once the rhythm is established (and beware of it getting quicker), say your number on the claps (e.g. one, one) and then on the snaps say someone else's number (e.g. one, one, five, five). In time with the rhythm, they must respond with their number on the claps and someone else's on the snaps (e.g. five, five, two, two).

The aim of the game is to keep the rhythm going; if someone gets it wrong you can move them to the highest number and everyone moves down (so the aim is to become number 1), or you can just see how long you can keep it going and

speed up the rhythm as and when necessary.

**The point:** Just for fun

**2. Title: Springtime BBQ**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Activity type:** Cookery

**Equipment:** BBQ, food, etc.

**Description:** As this series draws to a close, celebrate with a BBQ. It might be an opportunity to invite friends along, or just lapsed members. Make the atmosphere relaxed and celebratory.

**The point:** To be together and begin to introduce Jesus and the BBQ on the beach

**3. Title: Volleyball balloon sheets**

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** A net (or something else to form a divide across a room; a line of chairs would do the job), balloons, single sheets or picnic blankets

**Description:** Divide your group into two teams (if your group is particularly large you may want to have a quick league going on). Give each team a sheet. The whole team must keep both hands touching the sheet at all times. They must attempt to play a tennis-type game using the sheet to get a balloon across the net. Hands must not leave the sheet and only one shot is allowed per team (i.e. you can't make several attempts to get it across the net). The balloon must not hit the floor. If you are blessed with a large (perhaps outdoor) space, this game can be played at a faster pace with a sponge ball rather than a balloon.

**The point:** To encourage greater teamwork

## Getting Started

### 1. Title: Who can stay on the boat?

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Paper, pens

**Description:** This activity can be done in one group or in several smaller groups of about five members each. Tell them that they are going to plan an around-the-world trip and can invite five additional people onto their adventure.

Once they have made their decisions, they share who their invited guests are with the other groups. Now tell them that their boat has set sail but has come into difficulty. To survive, eight people must be put on the lifeboat and tossed out into the open sea. Who will be chosen to stay on board and who will be set adrift? You may wish to alter the numbers in this activity to suit the size of your group.

**The point:** To introduce ideas about who we trust to do what and what matters to trusting people.

### 2. Title: Blindfold obstacle course

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Game

**Equipment:** Blindfolds, items to make an obstacle course (if you lack space as a group, you can run this activity outdoors along a quiet street, with the appropriate risk assessment and consent forms)

**Description:** Explain to the group that they must pass through an obstacle course blindfolded – you can run this activity in teams if you have a large group. One person will not be blindfolded and can verbally guide the team through it; they are the only person allowed to speak.

The rest of the group will be blindfolded and must pass through the course unharmed.

**The point:** To introduce the idea of trust.

## Digging In

### 1. Title: The Last Supper

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Activity type:** Bible study

**Equipment:** Bibles or copies of Luke 22:1–30

**Description:** Start by asking the group how much (on a scale of 1–10) they trust their 12 closest friends. How much do they think Jesus trusted the disciples, his friends?

Ask the group to read Luke 22:1–30; you may like to watch a version of the events of the Last Supper from a film of Jesus' life. The passage is quite long, so you might want to break it into sections. After going through the passage use some of the following questions to engage with the text:

- What do you think Jesus' attitude to the disciples was at the beginning, middle and end of this passage?
- What do you think the disciples were thinking when Jesus said one of them would betray him?
- Why did Jesus choose to share this important meal with all his disciples (including Judas)?
- If you knew what Judas was about to do, would you have invited him to dinner? Why / why not?
- Do you think the disciples still trusted Judas?
- Why do you think we hear so much about Jesus eating with other people in the Bible?

**The point:** To explore the story of the Last Supper, especially the role of trust within it.

### 2. Title: BBQ on the beach

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Equipment:** Various (see below)

**Description:** If you have hosted a BBQ to launch the evening, it's now time to introduce the story of Jesus making breakfast on the beach for the disciples in John 21:1–14. If you haven't had a BBQ, you may want to bring out some grilled fish to share. Get the group to read through the passage or tell the story yourself.

- How did the disciples react when Jesus appeared on the beach?
- How would you have reacted?
- Why did Jesus eat after he had risen again?
- If you could eat a meal with Jesus, what would you eat?
- If you could pick people to celebrate a great life event with, who would you invite?
- Do you think it matters that Jesus keeps eating with his disciples?
- Do you think it matters who we eat with?
- Does Jesus share meals with us now?

**The point:** To explore that Jesus continues to eat with others and the importance of eating in building community

### 3. Title: Passover

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Illustration

**Equipment:** Matzah (or wholewheat unleavened bread), grape juice, fresh green parsley, horseradish, chopped apples and raisins (haroset), shank of lamb, boiled (roasted) eggs, salted water

**Description:** Allow the young people to explore the different foods (tasting is OK!). Explain that all these foods are part of the Passover celebration and each is symbolic of a different

part of the Jewish story and would have been eaten for centuries to help communities remember the story.

Ask whether they have any suggestions on what each item represents. Different traditions have slightly different meanings for each item but use the list below as a guide.

1. Matzah (or wholewheat unleavened bread) – a symbol of the bread made quickly (and therefore unable to rise) in the flight from Egypt.
  2. Grape juice – there are four small cups drunk through the meal, each representing a different promise God made to his people.
  3. Fresh green parsley – a symbol of life.
  4. Horseradish – bitter herbs bring tears to the eyes and recall the bitterness of slavery. The Seder refers to the slavery in Egypt.
  5. Haroset (chopped apples and raisins) – represents the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves to make bricks.
  6. Shank of lamb – commemorates the Paschal (lamb) sacrifice made the night the ancient Hebrews fled Egypt.
  7. Boiled eggs – symbolic of sacrificial offerings which were performed in the days of the second Temple.
  8. Salted water – salt water symbolises the tears and sweat of enslavement.
- After exploring the items, ask: 'Is any food symbolic to you?'
  - What foods would they use to tell the Christian story in a meal?

It may be appropriate to ask where Communion fits in terms of telling the Christian story in a meal.

**The point:** To explore symbolism in food and to think about how symbolic food is to us

## Response

### 1. Title: Community meal

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Pens and paper

**Description:** Re-emphasise the fact that we have been thinking about the importance of eating together, how it builds trust and relationship, and that Jesus did it a lot. Ask the group to begin to organise a community meal, perhaps one they could invite their friends to, or one for the church council, older people in the community, perhaps even their parents/carers. Give them a budget to work to and allow them to get going. If your space does not provide any cooking facilities (or someone who could appropriately supervise preparing food), takeaway pizza could be ordered – and served as if it were in a 5\* restaurant!

**The point:** To live out providing spaces to eat together and grow trust and relationship

### 2. Title: Paper chain people

**Age groups:** 7–10, 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Prayer

**Equipment:** Paper, scissors, pens, stapler

**Description:** Get each person to create a chain of paper people, ideally by folding paper and cutting out a person shape and then unfolding. Have a stapler on standby for those who manage to cut individual people out, so they can be 'rejoined'. Once the people chains have been cut out, ask everyone to write their name on one of the people in the centre of their chain. Ask them to think about people they will eat with, or could invite to eat with them, over the coming few weeks. Get them to write their names

on the people and commit to pray for good conversations with them at these meals. If it feels appropriate with your group (or in smaller groups) get them to pray for each person by name.

**The point:** To get people to commit to pray for those they will eat with

### 3. Title: Planting for the future

**Age group:** 11–14

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Activity

**Equipment:** Seeds/bulbs, soil, plant pots, background music

**Description:** Over the course of this series there has been much opportunity to grow in how generous we are with our time, our resources and specifically our mealtimes. Allow people the chance to plant a seed/bulb as a sign of a commitment to become more generous in these areas. Depending on the season, you may want to plant simple vegetables that could be eaten together or given away to strengthen the idea of sharing mealtimes; or if the season does not allow this, grow a flowering plant that could make a gift to someone later down the line.

**The point:** To show lasting commitment to generosity

### 4. Title: Get your acts together

**Age groups:** 11–14, 15+

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Activity type:** Discussion

**Equipment:** Nothing (although you may wish to provide access to the internet and a device to view the 40acts website on)

**Description:** Take some time to discuss with your group what they have experienced and learned from taking part in the 40acts challenge. Encourage the group to share their experiences all together and then to take some time (either at the time or once they get home) to reflect

individually on the following questions:

- What difference has taking part in 40acts made to you?
- What changes will you keep up now that the challenges have ended or are drawing to a close?

If you have members of your group who have not been able to access the 40acts challenges, remind them where to find them ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk)) and tell them that it is not too late to read the

challenges and put them into practice!

**The point:** To reflect on the whole 40acts experience and commit to applying some (or all!) of the challenges in their own lives.

## Acknowledgements

This resource has been created by the content teams at Stewardship and Urban Saints

### About Stewardship

We help people give. Since 1906 Stewardship has provided advice, guidance, inspiration and practical tools to make it easy for people to give easily and tax effectively.

Stewardship giving accounts are currently used by over 25,000 people in the UK with more than £53 million distributed to charitable causes from Stewardship accounts every year. Over 19,000 registered churches, secular and Christian charities and full-time Christian workers are currently supported with Stewardship.

Stewardship is a charity that helps people to give. If you would like to find out more about how we can help you to give then visit:

[www.stewardship.org.uk/give](http://www.stewardship.org.uk/give) or find us at [www.facebook.com/stewardship](https://www.facebook.com/stewardship) or [www.twitter.com/stewardshipnews](https://www.twitter.com/stewardshipnews).

### About Urban Saints

Since 1906 Urban Saints (formerly known as Crusaders) has been reaching out to children and young people with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We are passionate about working with children and young people who have no church connection, helping them to realise their full God-given potential as they journey from childhood to adulthood.

For more online youth resources go to the Energize site on the Urban Saints website:

[www.urbansaints.org/resources](http://www.urbansaints.org/resources)