

# Worship resources

For Quaker meetings

Faith  
Will...



**An uncertain world can test faith. Yet when we are united by hope, our faith will tackle injustice – and support communities everywhere to achieve lasting change.**

**Your Faith is powerful,  
and so is your Will.**

Christian Aid is bringing together Quaker meetings and churches of all kinds to encourage people to remember their own faith, and Christian Aid, in their Will.

Whether you've got five minutes or one hour, whether your Quaker meeting is large or small, in this guide you'll find everything you need to inspire members of your meeting to think about their legacy.





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Faith  
Will...

## ...inspire your meeting

This section of the guide will support you to tell friends about gifts in Wills, which are how you can stand with a global community to make change that lasts.





**'We are a community that helps one another a lot... if people face a problem, we do not allow them to suffer alone.'**

Esther Saizi

Esther is a pigeon pea farmer from Malawi. With support from Christian Aid partner the Nandolo Farmers Association, Esther has been able to increase her yield and the price that she can achieve for her crops. This income helps Esther to support her family.

## Why Faith Will?

By leaving gifts in their Will to Quaker work and Christian Aid, members of your meeting can:

- Tackle injustice and support communities in the UK and globally to achieve lasting change.
- 'Let their lives speak' and let their values live on.
- 'Pay forward' the generosity they have received in their lifetime – see the prayer activities on [page 14](#) for more on this.

**'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.'**

**Hebrews 11:1**





**Faith  
Will...**

## **...inspire all ages**

**This section of your guide will help you inspire all ages about Faith Will, and teach children and young people about the power of faith.**

**In this section you'll find:**

- **An all-age talk based on Hebrews 11:1.**
- **An activity for young children called 'Mighty oaks'.**



# Faith Will: What can you do to involve young people?

Children will love the all-age 'Mighty oaks' talk which is based on Hebrews 11:1.



Knowledge Chikondo harvests wild fruits from a tree in Zimbabwe.

## 1. Bible verse

'To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.'

Hebrews 11:1, Good News Bible

## 2. Suggested talk: Mighty oaks

*To deliver this talk, you'll need an acorn (or a picture of one), and an image of an oak tree.*

[Read 'Mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow' in full on page 14](#)

## 3. Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the small things of the world: the acorn that grows into a mighty oak, the smallest acts of kindness to others.

Sometimes the problems of the world feel too big for us to change.

Help us to have faith that even our little actions can make a difference, and that we can make a better world, in our local community and beyond.

In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

## 4. Mighty oaks: Activity for young children

If your meeting includes young children or if you are running a separate children's group you may wish to use this version of the talk.

Try making the talk interactive. You could combine it with a craft activity, like making a collage or picture of a mighty oak growing from a tiny acorn.

*To deliver this talk, you'll need an acorn (or a picture of one).*

[Read Mighty oaks talk for young children on page 15](#)



Faith  
Will...

## ...inspire reflection

This section of your guide will help you use creative activities for self-reflection during your Faith Will conversations.

In this section you'll find:

- Reflective activities and ideas.



## Faith Will: How can you help people think and reflect?

There are plenty of ways you can make a discussion active and engaging. Try setting up one of these activities to engage Friends.

### 'Faith Will... leave a legacy'

An activity about faith, and trusting in God's promises even if we sometimes don't see the results immediately, or even in our lifetimes.

[View in full on page 19](#)

### 'Faith Will... let our values live on'

An activity that reflects on Hebrews 11, and the old Quaker saying of 'Letting your life speak'.

[View in full on page 20](#)

### 'Faith Will... pay it forward'

An activity about generosity, reflecting on when we've received it in our lives and how we can pay it forward.

[View in full on page 21](#)







Faith  
Will...

## ...inspire ministry

This section will help you discover inspiring words to use in prepared ministry or to inspire others in your meeting to action.

In this section you'll find:

- Quotes from the Quaker Faith and Practice, advices and queries and the Bible.



# Faith Will: What words can you use?

What words can you use? Quaker Faith and Practice and the Bible are full of passages that speak to the values of charitable giving, and the legacy impact we can all have by leaving a gift in our Will.

## Legacy as Gift: Faith Will... let your values live on

‘Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you go, so that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them.’

**George Fox, 1656**

‘Our testimonies arise from our way of worship. Our way of worship evokes from deep within us at once an affirmation and a celebration, an affirmation of the reality of that Light which illumines the spiritual longing of humanity, and a celebration of the continual resurrection within us of the springs of hope and love; a sense that each of us is, if we will, a channel for a power that is both within us and beyond us.’

**Lorna M Marsden, 1986, Qf&p 20.16**

## Legacy as Commitment: Faith Will... act

‘Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak.’

**Advices and queries 27**

‘For a Quaker, religion is not an external activity, concerning a special ‘holy’ part of the self. It is an openness to the world in the here and now with the whole of the self. If this is not simply a pious commonplace, it must take into account the whole of our humanity: our attitudes to other human beings in our most intimate as well as social and political relationships. It must also take account of our life in the world around us, the way we live, the way we treat animals and the environment. In short, to put it in traditional language, there is no part of ourselves and of our relationships where God is not present.’

**Harvey Gillman, 1988 Qf&p 20.20**

## Legacy as Resolution: Faith Will... move mountains

‘Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.’

**Hebrews 11:1**

[View full sermon starter on page 18](#)

## Legacy as Harvest: Faith Will... bear fruit

‘All species and the Earth itself have interdependent roles within Creation... All parts, all issues are inextricably intertwined. Indeed the web of creation could be described as of three-ply thread: wherever we touch it we affect justice and peace and the health of all everywhere. So all our testimonies, all our Quaker work, all our Quaker lives are part of one process, of striving towards a flourishing, just and peaceful Creation – the Kingdom of God.’

**Audrey Urry, 1994, Qf&p 25.04**



Wanstead

Local  
meeting

# Quakers for climate justice

Faith  
Will...

## ...inspire action

Whether you have five minutes or an hour, there are plenty of other ways you could choose to talk to your meeting about gifts in Wills. Every word, every conversation and every presentation could help create lasting change.



## What other ways could you inspire your meeting about gifts in Wills?

Use our free resources and these ideas to hold a legacy moment. There are many ways to inspire your Quaker meeting to consider leaving a gift in their Will.

**How?** Get the conversation started in **5 minutes**:

- **Show our short campaign film to your meeting.**  
This could be at a coffee morning or a meeting – go to [caid.org.uk/FWResources](https://caid.org.uk/FWResources) to view and download the film.
- **Give away seeds** to show what's planted now grows and bears fruit later (foxgloves and poppies are seeds that like to be planted in the autumn).
- **Upload information** on Faith Will to your meeting website giving page.
- **Order and give out Faith Will leaflets** and highlight this information in your meeting or service.

If you have **10-15 minutes** free:

- **Share testimony from a community project** that benefitted from meeting funds.
- **Show a local map of your meeting's impact.**
- **Show a global map of Christian Aid projects around the world.**
- **Highlight stories of ordinary people** from your meeting or denomination's history who have left a lasting legacy.

If you have **longer** free:

- **Hold a legacy supper.**
- **Hold an in-memory celebration** of loved ones in your meeting and their legacies.
- **Encourage conversation about legacies in café meetings** eg, how you would like to be remembered or what you hope your legacy of faith will be.
- **Hold a small group discussion** using questions on [page 25](#).



Jane took up training, as part of the BRAC project, to be a lead farmer in climate smart agriculture and improved livestock production. Jane passes on what she's learnt to a group of 65 farmers once or twice a month.

# Appendix

Please  
remember to print  
in black and white  
to save ink!

## A Faith Will prayer

*This prayer could be read as part of prepared ministry.*

Transforming God,  
who brought the worlds into being through your word,  
making visible what was invisible,  
**hear us as we pray in faith.**

In a world where resources are not shared equally,  
where crops fail and parents go without to feed  
their children,  
in a country where too many rely on  
foodbanks to get by,  
we ask that our faith will...  
**help us to support communities who are hungry.**

In the midst of wars and conflicts,  
where neighbour attacks neighbour  
and the innocent suffer most,  
we ask that our faith will...  
**bring peace between nations.**

In the face of a climate emergency,  
where land is scorched or flooded,  
and habitats destroyed,  
we ask that our faith will...  
**protect God's creation.**

In a culture of fear of the other,  
where people are vulnerable  
and rejected,  
we ask that our faith will...  
**give sanctuary to the persecuted.**

Standing in a long line of people of faith,  
we pledge ourselves to your service  
and to working for a transformed world.  
We ask that our faith will...  
**leave a legacy.**

Merciful God,  
you have promised to hear our requests.  
We pray for the coming of your kingdom  
of justice and peace,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## All-age talk: Mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow

Today in our service we are talking about leaving a legacy. Does anyone know what this means? *[take suggestions]* Well, leaving a legacy is a bit like planting a seed and watching it grow – we don't always see the results but planting the seed can have a huge impact.

*[optional Harvest introduction]* Harvest is a time when we say 'thank you' to God for all that we have, especially for the food we eat and those who produced it. When a farmer or a gardener plants a seed or a bulb, they have faith that it will grow up into a healthy plant.

Some plants grow quickly. I wonder if anyone has ever sown any cress? If you've done that, you may have seen the seeds sprouting within a day. Or if anyone has planted a sunflower seed? A sunflower seed can grow to a plant that is 12 feet tall in three months!

But some plants take much longer to grow!

Today I want to talk to you about oak trees *[show picture of an oak tree]*. Does anyone know how an oak tree starts? *[take suggestions]*

That's right – an oak tree starts off life as a tiny acorn. *[show acorn or picture of one]*

There is a well-known expression, 'Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.' But do you know how long it takes an oak tree to grow from an acorn? *[take suggestions]*

Most oak trees won't produce a crop of acorns until they are 50 years old. They then take another 100 years to grow into adult trees. So they are not regarded as adult trees until they are 150 years old! A mature oak can grow up to 45 metres tall and nearly as wide.

At 700 years old, the oak has reached old age and its growth starts to slow. At 1,000 years old, it is approaching the end of its life.

Do you know how old the oldest oak tree in the UK is? *[invite guesses]* Well there are several that are over 1,000 years old, including one at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire that is said to be about 1,050 years old.

*[hold up the acorn again]* How many acorns do you think an oak tree can produce in its lifetime? *[invite guesses]*



*(All-age talk: Mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow – continued)*

It's actually 10 million! 10 million of these tiny acorns *[hold up acorn or show picture]* – all of which have the potential to grow up into tall oaks like their parent tree!

When we plant seeds, we have faith that they will grow up into tall and healthy plants. Of course, we don't sit back and do nothing – we look after the plant by watering it, feeding it if necessary and weeding it. As we have talked about, some plants grow quickly – and we see the results of our work quickly. Other plants, such as trees, like the oak, take much longer to grow. But having faith means believing that the plant will grow – that something mighty like an oak tree will come from a tiny acorn and may live for 1,000 years.

The Bible verse we read at the beginning from the book of Hebrews reminds us that we can't always see the results of what we do immediately, and the impact might not be seen until long in the future. But it reminds us to have faith that good results, that may last forever, will come from the right actions.

That can happen when someone leaves a legacy to the meeting and to Christian Aid, a charity who work with people across the world to support them to live full lives, free from poverty.

Think about how small acts of kindness can make a big difference to someone else's life. Can you think of some small acts you can do this week *[take suggestions]*. Can you be kind to someone at school who is being bullied or feeling left out? Can you pray for someone who is unwell and send them a card? Can you help out a bit more at home? Can you save something from your pocket money to give to charity? Or can you think of ways to raise money for charity – for example by doing some baking or washing some cars?

Are there any things you feel passionate about and want to change in the world? What can we do to help people who live in our local area? What can we do to help people who live further away?

Let's remember that 'mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow', but that it can take a long time – 150 years in fact! And just like the one oak tree that can produce 10 million acorns, by having faith that God will bless our small actions, they can all add up to something much bigger – a movement of kindness that can change the world for the better, long into the future! (Just like leaving a legacy.)

## Young children's talk: Mighty oaks

*Invite the children to stand in a circle around you, and lead them in the following:*

We can see trees and flowers all around us.

We can see the mighty, tall oak that grows from a small acorn like this one *[show acorn]*.

When we pray for others, or do kind things, it is like planting an acorn. Over time, the acorn will grow into a mighty oak tree.

I wonder if you can pretend to be a little acorn, fallen from the oak tree and now sleeping in the ground, waiting for the sun to wake it up?

Let's curl up into a tiny ball.

*Lead children in curling up into a ball.*

In the spring, as the sun comes out and the ground warms up, we begin to grow. The seed in the acorn sends out a taproot.

Let's show our roots with our fingers.

*Lead the children in wiggling fingers.*

We need to let our roots grow down deep into the earth.

*Lead the children in wiggling fingers down.*

Then, after three, let a little shoot pop up.  
1,2,3... Pop!

*Lead the children in poking hands up above your head like a little shoot.*

As the sun warms up and the rains fall, we begin to grow tall!

*Gradually stand up, swaying like a growing stalk.*

Taller and taller, onto our tiptoes...

*Reach up with pointy hands and on tiptoes.*

Let's turn our faces to the sun!  
Then let our branches spread out wide.

*Stretch arms slowly outwards.*

Now we're an adult tree, producing acorns of our own that can grow up into more mighty oaks.

*(Young children's talk: Mighty oaks – continued)*

*Wiggle arms about.*

Now we're ready to stand tall for 1,000 years!

*Stand tall and proud, wiggle about if you want to.*

*Now invite the children to sit in a circle. Praise their actions – eg, saying 'What fantastic growing you did! What beautiful oak trees you grew into.'*

*Then conclude with the following prayer with actions.*

When we do kind things or pray for others, it is like planting an acorn. It may seem like a small thing but it can have a big impact.

Let's pray together, using our hands to make the actions.

**For our world:**

*Make a circle shape.*

**Jesus, hear our prayer!**

*Open hands upward to God.*

**For our meeting:**

*Praying hands.*

**Jesus, hear our prayer!**

*Open hands upward to God.*

**For our friends and families:**

*Arms around yourself.*

**Jesus, hear our prayer!**

*Open hands upward to God.*

**For the sick and lonely:**

*Fingers imitating tears falling down cheeks.*

**Jesus, hear our prayer!**

*Open hands upward to God.*

**For the hungry:**

*Both hands rubbing tummy.*

**For everybody!**

*Circle action above head.*

**Lord Jesus, hear our prayer!**

*Open hands upward to God.*

**Adapted with permission from Sharon Moughtin, Diddy Disciples, Book 1: September to December, SPCK, 2017, p.98 and p.96**

## Alternative prayers

### 1. A prayer based on Hebrews 11:1

Faithful God, the same yesterday, today and forever.

Thank you for the witness of those who trusted your promises, even when the way ahead was uncertain.

When difficulties and obstacles arise, give us their hope and conviction that faith can make a difference, and that lives can be transformed so that all may flourish.

In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

### 2. A prayer suitable for Harvest festivals

Generous God, at this Harvest time, we give you thanks for the bounties of the world you created: for our food and all those who grow, harvest and transport it.

Open our hearts as we consider how to live out our faith and share the generosity we have received with others, that our values might live on and we may leave a legacy that transforms the world.

In Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

### 3. Alternative intercessory prayer 1

Compassionate God, trusting in your promises and unfailing love, we bring before you the needs of our world.

We pray for our local community and for all who work for good within it:

for our schools, community centres and places of work. We extend our gaze outwards to the wider world, asking in particular that where there is conflict, you would bring peace, and where there is famine, you would bring a bountiful harvest.

Help us to not despair but to hold on to hope. Inspire us to act to make a better world, help us to be wise stewards of our resources,



*(Alternative intercessory prayer 1 – continued)*

be with us as we consider how to leave legacies of faith  
that can transform the world.

May we have confidence that even our smallest actions  
can have a mighty impact,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

#### **4. Alternative intercessory prayer 2**

God of all comfort,  
You promise to be with those who pray to you in faith.  
Hear us now as we pray for the needs of our world.

We pray for those who are discouraged and in despair,  
and for those in our local community who are struggling  
to get by.

Show us how to help them, Lord,

**and inspire us to leave a legacy of hope.**

We pray for those who labour but see little reward,  
who toil yet see their crops destroyed through  
drought or disaster.

Show us how to help them, Lord,

**and inspire us to leave a legacy of hope.**

We pray for our meeting community,  
forgive us when we are distracted by our own  
internal concerns.

Help us to be better servants of our community

**and inspire us to leave a legacy of hope.**

Lastly, we pray for ourselves.

Make us good stewards of all that we have.

Help us to let our lives speak through our actions now  
and in the future,

**and inspire us to leave a legacy of hope.**

# Ideas for Ministry

## Legacy as resolution: Faith Will... move mountains

‘Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.’

**Hebrews 11:1**

- **Giving has been made difficult by current economic challenges**

We live in difficult times. The world is now so small in terms of communication it can make it harder for us to be sure how to live a compassionate life of faith. Public media bring us need and conflict and environmental emergency and leave us struggling to respond. With the current cost of living crisis, it is particularly hard if we know that what we have and are truly thankful for is not immediately available for giving. For we also need to eat and have shelter and the means of life, and we also face difficult decisions about spending, saving and giving. We want to give but may be constrained by current circumstances. We all have mountains to climb. How can thinking about legacies help us here?

- **Legacy as a form of ‘paying forward’**

This type of giving has grown in popularity in these days of hardship. As we acquire something for ourselves, we are prepared to put on account something good and helpful for another. When we make a Will and leave a legacy gift to our meeting or to Christian Aid we are similarly ‘paying forward’ with resources we cannot mobilise today but which we expect to be freed up later when we no longer need them.

- **Legacy giving as thankfulness**

As people of faith, we believe that all that we have comes from God. Thankfulness can impel us to get over the awkwardness of considering what will happen after our death. How can that grace-filled response continue and bring life to others even without us? We all hope to be remembered; a legacy creates a link with a future where what we have done will be celebrated because it has connected our brief human life with another’s.

- **Legacy giving as hope for the future**

Abraham’s journey of faith to understand the reality of the inheritance he was promised was not straightforward or short. God called him to leave what was comfortable and known to travel forward to the uncertain new pastures. Abraham lived a long human life before he saw the promise of the Lord come to fulfilment. We have hopes and dreams for the life we lead and the world we want to live in. Sometimes it seems that God’s idea of time is not ours at all. Our place is rocky and impassable and our time is running out. Abraham’s legacy lay in a future he could not see but believed in. And on his journey he learned to be faithful and generous to those the Lord put alongside him. You may remember the hospitality he showed to the three strangers he welcomed, and how blessed he was personally as a result of entertaining them.

We cannot know when we leave a legacy to Christian Aid or to our local meeting that has nurtured us, who will be welcome to the table we set or draw nourishment from the offering we make. We can only have faith that such hospitality will be life-giving.

- **What mountains could our legacy gift move?**

Practically, mountains are difficult to move. But mountains can be climbed, step by step. A legacy gift can support those who are building new communities after a disaster and brings possibilities to make what is currently difficult possible. A legacy gift can help us as a meeting to provide a welcoming space for the local community for generations to come. Mountains can also be circumvented, and people may need support and resources while they try new routes and test other ways to get to those new pastures and horizons. Our gift could enable them to view the mountain from another perspective and find a new, previously untested, solution.

Do we have mountain-moving faith? Faith can move us on a journey from thankfulness for the place we inhabit now through to a commitment to the new earth that we can help to usher in. A legacy gift can make that commitment real and transformative.



# Inspire reflection

## Activity 1: 'Faith Will... leave a legacy'

### You will need:

- A table.
- A large tray filled with sand.
- A picture of the night sky or the cosmos, filled with stars.
- Copies of key verses below about Abraham from Hebrews 11.
- Strips of paper and pens.

## For reflection

'Having faith' means doing what is right and trusting in God's promises even if we sometimes don't see the results immediately, or even in our lifetimes. Hebrews 11:1 expresses it like this:

'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.'

### Hebrews 11:1-2

One of those ancestors in faith commended in Hebrews 11 is Abraham.

Abraham trusted in the promises of God, even though at the time they seemed unlikely to come to fruition. Abraham was promised descendants even though he had no children with his wife, Sarah, and they were both past childbearing age.

Yet we are told:

'By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.'

### Hebrews 11:11-12

In the same way, leaving a gift in our Will to our meeting and Christian Aid is an act of faith. We may not see the results in our lifetimes, but the number of lives we can touch through our gift might be as numerous as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the seashore.

### Actions

- 1 Run your fingers through the sand tray and think about how many grains of sand might be in this one small space. Now ponder how many more there might be on a favourite beach. Abraham was promised numerous descendants – but only one was born to him and Sarah. Consider God's promises in your life: what has been brought to fruition? What do you hope is still to come – for yourself, for your local community and for the wider world? What impact would you like your life (and your giving) to have?
- 2 Look at the image of the night sky. Think about your own experiences of looking at the night sky. Often, we cannot see all the stars – some are invisible to us, certainly to the naked eye, but they are still there. Or we may have had the experience of being spellbound by a sky full of stars, too many to count. Abraham did not see his many descendants in his lifetime, yet he had faith in God's promise that he would leave a legacy. It can be the same with the fulfilment of our hopes and prayers – we may not be able to see the results of what we hope and pray for immediately. What hopes and prayers for the future would you like God to bless and multiply? Again, think on a personal, local and global level.
- 3 Write your hopes and prayers for the future on a slip of paper, fold it up and hide it in the sand.

# Inspire reflection

## Activity 2: 'Faith Will... let our values live on'

### You will need:

- Copies of the reflection below, including the quote from George Fox and from Hebrews 11:4.
- Speech bubble or fruit-shaped post-it notes or cut-out shapes.
- Some pens.
- [Particularly suitable for Harvest] If using the fruit shapes, you may want to include a photograph or drawing of a tree onto which people can stick their cut-out shapes or post-it notes.

## For reflection

In the passage, Hebrews 11, one of the ancestors commended for their faith is Abel, who was killed by his jealous brother Cain:

'By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks.'

**Hebrews 11:4**

'Let your life speak' is an old Quaker saying, and the title of a book on vocation by the contemporary American Quaker author, Parker Palmer. It is a paraphrase of something written in a letter by George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. Fox wrote:

'Let your lives preach, let your light shine, that your works may be seen, that your Father may be glorified; that your fruits may be unto holiness, and that your end may be everlasting life.'

**George Fox, 200th epistle**

Think about your own life and consider these questions:

- How does the way you live 'speak' of your faith and values?
- What 'fruit' do you show in your life? What would you like to show?
- What would you like your legacy to be? How would you like your life to 'speak' to others after your death and to people you will never meet?
- How can you make that happen?

### Action

- 1 Write your thoughts on the post-it notes or cut-out shapes (and add to the tree, if using this option).



# Inspire reflection

## Activity 3: 'Faith Will... pay it forward'

There are three options for this activity – choose the one that suits your context.

### For reflection

#### What are we grateful for in our lives?

We are a part of God's creation. At Harvest time and across the year we give thanks for our food, and for all those who have grown and made it. We praise God for the fruitfulness of the earth. We also think of those in need and how we might help them. It's an example of 'paying it forward' – gratitude for the generosity we have received motivates us to share generosity with others.



Robert Emmons is a researcher who has studied the impact of gratitude on our lives. He writes:

'We like to think that we are our own creators and that our lives are ours to do with as we please. We take things for granted. We assume that we are totally responsible for all the good that comes our way. After all, we have earned it. We deserve it. A scene from *The Simpsons* captures this mentality. When asked to say grace at the family dinner table, Bart Simpson offers the following words: "Dear God, we paid for all this stuff ourselves, so thanks for nothing."

'In one sense, of course, he is right... But on another level, he is missing the bigger picture... Gratitude implies humility – a recognition that we could not be who we are or where we are in life without the contributions of others... Gratitude serves as a key link between receiving and giving: It moves recipients to share and increase the very good they have received.'

**'Pay it forward', Robert Emmons, 1 June 1997, accessed at [greatergood.berkeley.edu](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu)**

# Inspire reflection

## Activity 3, option 1: Pay it forward web

### You will need:

- A large pin board.
- A few balls of string and scissors or pieces of cut string.
- Some pins.
- Post-it notes.
- Some pens.

## Actions

### ① What am I grateful for in my life?

Write this on one colour of post-it note and stick it on the board.

### ② Who has helped me in my life – through acts of kindness, generosity, time?

Think of specific people, their actions and the impact it had and write this on a post-it in a different colour. Place this second post-it at a little distance from your first post-it, then using the pins place a piece of string between the first and second post-it notes.

### ③ How can I 'pay forward' the generosity I have received? What do I want my legacy to be?

It might be an act of kindness, charitable giving or leaving a gift in my Will to my meeting and Christian Aid so my values and beliefs will live on. Write your thoughts on a third post-it (in a different colour from the previous two) and use two other pieces of string to connect your third post-it note to your previous two.

Stand back and look at the web of interconnectedness you have created, one that stretches back into the past and into the future and give thanks to God for it.





# Inspire reflection

## Activity 3, option 2: Paying it forward locally and globally

### You will need:

- Three display boards.
- A picture or drawing of your meeting.
- A map of your local community.
- A map of the world.
- Post-it notes.
- Some pens.

## Actions

Beforehand, prepare the three boards with the following images:

- 1 One with a picture of your meeting.
- 2 The second with a map of your local community, or pictures that represent it and some of the institutions within it, eg, schools, places of worship, factories and other places of work. It could also include foodbanks and shelters for people who are homeless.
- 3 The third with a world map, and images of any projects overseas supported by your meeting already.

Invite participants to reflect on how they would like to pay generosity forward in each of these three locations, using the following questions.

*For all three questions below, you might want to consider the difference leaving a gift in your Will would make to these communities.*

1. **Reflect on all you have received in your life from others, perhaps from some in the local meeting community.** In an attitude of gratitude, think about how you would like to pay this generosity forward in your local meeting community. Write your thoughts on a post-it note and add it to the board.
2. **Think about your wider local community. How can you 'pay it forward' here?** Write your thoughts on a post-it note and add it to the board.
3. **Do the same for the wider world – the global community of which we are all a part. How can you pay it forward here?** Write your thoughts on a post-it note and add it to the board.

# Inspire reflection

## Activity 3, option 3: Paying it forward paper chains

### You will need:

- Paper chain strips.
- Some pens.
- Glue sticks.

## Actions

- 1 Use the same questions as for activity 1, but instead of writing answers on post-it notes and adding it to a pin board, invite people to write their thoughts on paper chain strips (one per answer) and to then join these together using the glue sticks.
- 2 Then join these to those made by others to create one large paper chain.
- 3 At the end of your service, invite someone to bring up the giant paper chain as an example of how we are all connected: to our past, present and future, and how powerful a chain of people 'paying it forward' can be.





# Small Group Questions

## Legacy as gift

1. Can you think of someone in your life or in the life of your church who has had a profound impact? What has their legacy been? What have their gifts enabled you to do?
2. It can be difficult to be a 'cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9.6) when we feel we have limited resources. How can we help one another see the value of small gifts and actions? Can you think of something small that someone did for you that made a big difference in your life?
3. What would you put in a time capsule to represent your church community or your personal journey of faith? What would you want to share about the practice of your faith with future generations?

### Starter for small group leaders:

*Prior to the session you might like to find out about and share some pictures of individuals from the history of Christianity whose faith has left a legacy of change. For example:*

- *Saints and martyrs, including a modern day figure like Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941)*
- *Founders of religious orders that continue to exist to this day*
- *Reformers like Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) and Josephine Butler (1828-1906)*
- *Civil Rights campaigners like Dr Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) and Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1931-2021)*
- *Musicians, artists and writers who expressed their faith through their works*

*As a conversation starter, ask your group what they know about the people you have chosen. Come prepared to briefly share their stories.*

## Legacy as commitment

1. How do you put your faith into action? How can we show love towards our local and global neighbours in practice? What action for change is your church involved in?
2. Have you ever had a sense of calling or vocation? This could be calling to a particular kind of service to others, to a type of work, or to caring for family and friends. Or perhaps you find it hard to discern what God is calling you to? Share your experiences with the group.

### Starter for small group leaders:

*Choose an occasion in scripture when someone receives a call from God (eg Moses in Exodus 3; Samuel in 1 Samuel 3; Deborah in Judges 5; Mary in Luke 1; Matthew the tax collector in Matthew 9; the Samaritan Woman in John 4; Saul in Acts 9). Read this aloud to the group and ask what they notice about the story. Then offer pencils and paper and invite people to draw a simple 'map' of their journey of faith so far. Is their journey a straight line from A to B or does it have lots of changes of direction? What happened at key points of change?*

## Legacy as resolution

1. Many of us are planners. We like to know exactly what will happen next. But life doesn't always go according to plan. Can you think of an unexpected turn in your life? How did you handle it? Has it made you see the future differently?
2. What are you most thankful for in your life?
3. What ways do you have to remember important people in your life who have died? How would you like to be remembered?

### Starter for small group leaders:

*Invite members of your group to bring with them an object or photograph that is connected to a special memory. If they are comfortable doing so, ask them to share this memory with the group.*

## Legacy as harvest

1. Do you find it easy to be patient? Have there been times when you have felt impatient with God? What helps you to wait and listen in your prayer time?
2. Can you think of a place which is special to you? Share with others in your group what you value about this place. What do you know about its history? Who is involved in looking after it for the future?
3. Waiting and hoping go hand in hand. When you plant a seed, you hope that it will grow and flourish in time with the right care. How do you hold on to hope for the future? What in our world gives you hope?

### Starter for small group leaders:

*Talk to your group about some different methods for taking time with God. These may be methods that you regularly use in your church or they could be something new for those present to try.*