

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

HOME

The following are fairly random suggestions from the three perspectives **Me, You and God**. A group that is sharing this theme might take things in any order, but it is important that some consideration is given to each perspective. Suggestions in italics/indented are for Generations projects, but not exclusively.

ME

What is your experience of 'home'? What makes a place home - neighbourhood and community, people and relationships, familiarity, local accent and customs, nationality?

What is your experience of 'moving'? How do you establish a new home?

MY HOME: draw a large outline of a house (for individual or group) indicate with words or pictures (magazine cut-outs) those things that you would want to make your home.

MEMORIES: explore things that are familiar household objects from the past - old utensils, food/soap/sweet wrappers, toys etc.

THIS HOME: explore what are the things that make this place 'home'. What is missing? Do you have hopes for the future (being reunited with loved ones) etc.

YOU

What do the media and lifestyle magazines offer as an image of 'home'.

'Ideal Home' Magazine - devoted to house, decor, furnishings etc.

'Woman and Home' Magazine - devoted to similar aspects of home life, but also includes much about relationships.

Take time to share in a group some of the things that have arisen in relation to 'ME'. Are there ways in which help can be given to develop 'home' for others (relationships, vision for future etc.)

Listen to the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers - those who are currently homeless and those who have established a new home in a different country. Research the internet for stories. (<http://www.restore-uk.org/stories/>)

Research the causes of homelessness

(<http://www.scah.org.uk/issues--articles.html>,

http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/tackling_homelessness/

[What_causes_homelessness](#))

How might we feel if we were in similar situations?

GOD

The Biblical story is of a people who were often 'homeless'. Slaves in Egypt, then with a long journey to 'the promised land'. Later exiled in Babylon but with the prophetic promises of restoration. There is a strong sense of 'home' in all this, maintained in the current state of Israel. However, the stronger message is that this 'home' is where God is, with a message of relationship that overrides the geographical.

'Did you not know that I should be in my Father's house?' - Jesus speaks of the Temple, but this is the place where he learns about his heavenly father and builds a relationship that is closer even than his human family.

'The Son of Man has no place to lay his head' -

'In my Father's house there are many rooms ...' - how do we relate our sense of 'home' with our 'heavenly home'? We often talk of heaven as if it were a geographical entity. How far is our relationship with God significant for us?

Matthew 12.46 - 'Those who do the will of my Father are my brother and sister and mother' - again the relationship with God is more important than family relationships, which relate to 'home'.

Revelation 21.3 "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'"

Housing Justice is the national voice of the Christian churches on housing issues. The following web page offers some Biblical reflection and prayers.

<http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/pages/prayers.html>