



This year CUF is inviting churches to make a donation to our work, either through a collection at a Harvest Sunday service, or by holding a shared lunch or other fundraising activity.

We've provided a number of different resources to help you introduce the work of CUF to your congregation, pray for the work we support and engage even the youngest members of your congregation.

This Harvest we are inspired by the words of [Matthew 25:35](#): for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Reflection on Matthew 25: 34-45

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

In this passage from Matthew, Jesus calls those on the margins - the stranger and those experiencing poverty - his brothers and sisters, his family. The Son of Man, clothed in glory and surrounded by angels, identifies himself not with power or status, but with those of lowest standing. It is no wonder the listeners are surprised and confused: *“Lord, when did we see you hungry...?”*

Jesus teaches us that how we respond to others is how we respond to him. When we show hospitality to strangers or care for those in need, we are not only acting like Jesus -we are welcoming Jesus himself.

This challenges us to look more closely at the people around us and to be attentive to those who might otherwise be overlooked. As Revd Matt Mason reflects through his work supporting Ukrainian men in Birmingham:

“It’s held up a mirror to the Gospels for us, helping us see more clearly what it means to serve... bringing the love of God into focus, one person at a time. Serving others becomes an encounter with Christ, drawing us beyond the walls of the church and into the realities of the world.”

Through its work, CUF encourages churches and communities to build relationships, offer hospitality, and love their neighbours - living out this Gospel call in practical ways.

CUF'S work

At CUF our vision is a future where everyone in England can access a community of support when they need it most.

Our mission is to tackle complex challenges like poverty and exclusion across England by mobilising people, churches, and whole communities to make a positive difference.

We aim to transform the lives of those in poverty and strengthen communities by reducing loneliness, increasing self-confidence and building stronger communities.

Show our short video or use the simple script to encourage your church to support the work of CUF through giving and prayer.

This 5 minute video describes CUF's mission and features some of the churches and groups we work with.

Hear how we help churches and community groups provide a wider welcome by offering free spaces for people to meet, increasing participation, building community and supporting refugees.

Themes for prayers of intercession:

- Pray for unity and peace in communities, especially where there is division and difference.
- Thank God for those who are working to build bridges, promote understanding and bring people together.
- Pray for those who are lonely and isolated, and those who are shut out and pushed aside.
- Thank God for community groups and places in your area where people gather for friendship and connection. Pray for opportunities to give and receive generous hospitality that builds community.
- Pray for those who don't have enough money to buy food that they would be given the support they need.
- Thank God for local projects that provide food, support and advice to those in need.
- Pray for a greater awareness of issues of inequality and injustice and for a more just and equal world

A prayer from CUF

Lord Jesus, help us to see you in the faces of those we meet, especially the vulnerable and overlooked.

Give us hearts of compassion, open hands to serve, and courage to welcome the stranger.

Teach us to love not only in word but in action. Strengthen us to seek justice and to stand alongside those treated unfairly.

May we encounter you in serving others, and grow in faith, humility, and kindness.

Amen.

A prayer for justice

God has blessed us, but still God's children go hungry.
Lord, have mercy.

God has blessed us, but still the poor cry out for justice.
Christ, have mercy.

God has blessed us, but still we see inequality and oppression in the earth.
Lord, have mercy.

