

RESOURCES

HOMELESSNESS

Worship Aids



## HOMELESSNESS – Worship Aids

### SCRIPTURE

Acts 3:1-10

Mark 6:6-13 & 6:30-44

Matthew 25:31-46

Jeremiah 29



## MUSIC

*Abide With Me* (Henry Francis Lyte, SASB 670)

*Behold the Face of Christ* (Bernadette Farrell, MV 114)

*Come Thou Fount* (Robert Robinson, SASB 313)

*Come, Now, You Blessed* (Ruth Duck, VU 592)

*Dear God, Who Loves All Humankind* (John Greenleaf Whittier, VU 608)

*For the Fruit of All Creation* (Fred Pratt Green, VU 227)

*He came to give us life...* (SASB 274)

*His Banner Over Me is Love*

*Hope of the World* (Georgia Elma Harkness, VU 215)

*People Need the Lord* (Steve Green)

*There's a Spirit in the Air* (Brian Wren, VU 582)

*They'll Know We Are Christians by our love*

*What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (Joseph Medlicott Scriven, SASB 645)

*When a Poor One* (J.A. Olivar & Miguel Manzano, VU 702)

*When I Needed a Neighbour* (Sydney Carter, VU 600)

*Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life* (Frank Mason North, VU 681)

*Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands* (Calvin Weiss Laufer, VU 537)

SASB – Salvation Army Song Book

VU – Voices United

MV – More Voices

## PRAYER

One: In a world where there isn't enough affordable housing, where living conditions are often adequate and many men, women, teenagers and children are left to live on the streets, we pray for justice, equal opportunities and fair legislation

Many: *God of all Comfort, hear our prayer.*

One: We pray for individuals and groups who have been displaced from their homes, forced to leave because of war, famine, drought and disaster.

Many: *God of all Comfort, hear our prayer.*

One: While many of our neighbours are cold, wet, exposed to the elements, unprotected and afraid, we pray for safety and for shelter, warmth, protection and adequate clothing.

Many: *Many: If we see someone who is hungry, help us find a way to meet that need. If we see someone who is thirsty, help us find a way to meet that need. If we see someone who doesn't have enough to wear and keep warm, help us find a way to meet that need. If we find someone who is homeless, help us find a way to meet that need.*

One: If we, your people, are meant to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world, and are meant to make a difference, then we pray for unity in the church and passion to move us to action. Help us to communicate to those who are lonely and hopeless, sick or addicted, angry and tired, that you love them.

Many: *God of all Comfort, hear our prayer.*

One: We pray for those who work tirelessly on behalf of the homeless, advocating for them, serving and helping others, we pray your strength and wisdom for each of them. We long too see the fruits of their labour in the world. Show us how to help them.

Many: *God of all Comfort, hear our prayer.*

One: We pray that one day we will see an end to homelessness and inadequate housing. We pray that the Kingdom of God will come to earth and that we will all be finally at home, at peace and at rest with You.

Many: *God of all Comfort, hear our prayer.*

## PRAYER

Mighty and tender God,  
voice of the voiceless,  
power of the powerless:  
we praise you for your vision  
of a community of wholeness,  
a realm of peace,  
in which all who hunger and thirst are nourished,  
in which the stranger is welcomed,  
the hurting are healed,  
and the captive set free.

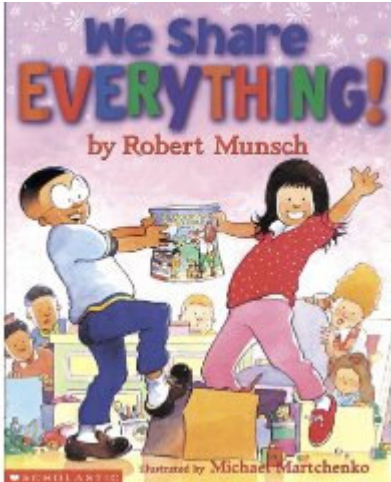
Guide us by your truth and love,  
until we and all your people  
make manifest your reign of justice and compassion.

We pray in the name of your anointed one, our servant-king,  
to whom with you and the Spirit, one Holy God,  
be honour, glory and blessing  
this day and forever.

Amen

Paul Fayter  
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## CHILDREN'S TIME



*We Share Everything*, by Robert Munsch  
You could link this to Proverbs 22:9 and Jesus' teaching on helping the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and strangers in Matthew 25.

## OTHER



One Homeless Night: Street Experience ([www.onehomelessnight.com](http://www.onehomelessnight.com))  
Play one of their short videos and spend time in prayer, considering the issues that have been raised.

## SERMON

Prepared by Captain Rick Zelinsky

Text: Acts 3:1-10

When I was 10 years old I used to love superheroes, and I always thought it would be cool to have superpowers like the superheroes. Now, I'm not talking about being a good swimmer like Aquaman or having cool toys like Batman, but to have real full fledged superpowers, and there were 2 in particular. I wished I could fly and be invisible. I'm the kid who jumped off the garage roof with a garbage bag because I thought it would work like a parachute, and thankfully I didn't break my leg. I quit after the 3<sup>rd</sup> try. Now being invisible I couldn't try, but I would sit and think about all of the things I could do if I was invisible, and not the kind of invisible where you have to take off your clothes, but the Star Trek kind, with the cloaking device. Being that kind of invisible would be totally cool.

In reality, being invisible really isn't cool, and in the story we read in scripture today (Acts 3:1-10) the problem this man had wasn't that he couldn't walk. His problem was, He Was Invisible. He wasn't invisible in the cool Star Trek cloaking device kind of invisible, but he was invisible in the sense that he had become forgotten, a common fixture on the road to the temple, a gargoyle of sorts giving watch over the gate Beautiful. His invisibility is punctuated in that he is out front of the temple at a busy time of day when worshippers were going into the temple. Surely they would see him and yet his expectations of them tell a different story. You can imagine people clamoring to get the best seat in the temple to worship, but in the rush of the moment they missed an opportunity to see this man, to restore his visibility. We know he had become invisible to people because as he calls out to Peter and John, he is shocked when they look at him.

A friend of mine, Mark Tavener, a pastor at an inner-city church in Edmonton, was walking downtown with a group of pastors, and they passed a man who held out his hat asking

for help. Mark reached in his pocket and as they were walking he placed some money in the man's hat when they passed. All of a sudden the attention of the pastors switched from the conversation of the moment to the man who previously had been invisible to them. Mark shares, "They asked why I gave the man money. He would only use it to buy drugs or alcohol." Mark stopped and walked back to the gentleman, and asked him why he was asking for money. He shared, "I'm beginning a job training program, and I need a faster computer to complete my training at home. My computer is too slow, so I'm going to upgrade." Mark, "See, he's not buying drugs or booze. He's upgrading his PC." Whether or not he was upgrading his computer, buying alcohol, or seeking his next meal, the real problem is that a group of pastors did not see Jesus standing on the street corner with his hat out to them.

Jesus said, "You will inherit the kingdom of God when you feed me, give me something to drink, invite me into your home, clothe me and visit me when I'm sick or in prison". And the disciples asked him...

BUT LORD WHEN DID WE SEE YOU HUNGRY, THIRSTY, NAKED, COLD, OR LONELY?

LORD, WHEN DID WE SEE YOU????!!!

I was the man begging on the street to upgrade my computer. People will inherit the kingdom of heaven when they have eyes to see those they previously have made invisible through their ignorance or indifference.

Peter and John must have remembered this discussion with Jesus because they did notice the man when he asks for help. IN FACT, scripture tells us they looked straight at him, and in that moment he becomes visible to these two worshippers. Something would happen which this man did not anticipate, for he had long abandoned expectations of the worshippers who went up to the temple to pray.

"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

Taking the man by the hand Peter helps him to his feet, and that day God was worshipped in the temple. He began jumping around and praising God. "I've been healed, look my feet are strong. Praise God I've been healed!" AND he wasn't the only one healed. The vision of the people was healed. Scripture records in verse 9 'When all the people SAW him...they RECOGNIZED him...and they were amazed.'

It's cool to be visible. It's cool to be recognized, and there is a world full of marginalized people, invisible people, who need the vision of the church to be healed to remove their invisibility. There is blessing in seeing the poor and marginalized in our community. The answer to the disciple's question, "Lord when did we see you?" is "I am the hungry man, I am the thirsty child, the unclothed woman seeking love, the person inflicted with AIDS living in isolation, the person in prison haunted by the sins of my past. I am them. They are me. Open your eyes and see, and you will inherit my kingdom."

But it isn't enough for us to just see Jesus in the faces of the poor and marginalized. Peter reaches out his hand and he helps the man to his feet. Peter reaches out his hand and invites the man to dance. Church, people of God, body of Christ, we need to be people of vision who do not only see, but seek ways to feed the hungry, and offer a drink in hospitality to the thirsty. We need to find ways to love the unlovable, and invite them into our homes or at the very least support those in our community who do. We need to be friends and listening ears to the lonely. It isn't enough to see them. We need to reach out OUR hands and invite them to dance. Now, I'm no dancer. In my day dancing looked like this... (demonstrate), so the invitation to dance is far more risky in my estimation. It is an incredible blessing to which Jesus has invited us. "Some enchanted evening, you will meet a stranger, across a crowded room, and suddenly you'll know." Friends, Jesus is that stranger, and he is inviting us to dance with Him, to serve and to love him in others.



Jesus can heal the blindness of his worshippers, and when that happens people in the margins lose their invisible cloaks. We need to have our blindness healed, and like Peter, we need to reach out our hands and invite people to dance. We need to have eyes to see others, and when they are no longer invisible we can dance and praise God with them.

This week Jesus visited our city. Laura Wasacase, aged 68, stood holding an eagle feather and listened intently as church leaders apologized for the atrocities committed against aboriginal children in residential schools.

Peter looked at the man and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" and all the people saw him walking and praising God.

The once invisible Laura spoke to a hushed crowd who had now turned their attention to her. "I've been waiting how many years being in residential school, and enduring all this pain, but at the same time, I saw enlightenment today". On that Monday morning in Winnipeg, Jesus spoke to us through her words, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, SEE".