

ANTI-SLAVERY DAY

RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES



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The Clewer Initiative has worked closely with clergy from across the UK to pool together some resources for use at Anti-Slavery Day services.

RESOURCES INCLUDE:

- 1 POTENTIAL BIBLE READINGS
- 2 POTENTIAL HYMNS / SONGS
- 3 AN INTRODUCTION
- 4 A CONFESSION
- 5 PRAYERS
- 6 SERMON STARTER
- 7 IDEAS TO STRUCTURE CORPORATE PRAYERS
- 8 A SERIES OF SEVEN HOUSE GROUP SESSIONS TO INSPIRE ANTI-SLAVERY ACTION

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1. POTENTIAL BIBLE READINGS



- 1 PSALM 146:5-10
- 2 PROVERBS 31: 8-9
- 3 ISAIAH 58
- 4 AMOS 5:8-15
- 5 MATTHEW 22:34-40
- 6 LUKE 18 V1-8
- 7 JAMES 1:26-27, JAMES 2:14-17, JAMES 5:1-4

2. POTENTIAL HYMNS/SONGS



Churches often wonder what hymns to choose for Anti-Slavery services. We have pulled together a selection of hymns and songs that we would recommend.

Sheena Evans and Simon Hancock have written two new hymns that perfectly embody God's heart for the poor and marginalised and our calling to respond in love.

We are called to welcome strangers was composed in 2021. *Care for the Hidden* has been

written this year for The Clewer Initiative. The music and words can be downloaded at <https://clewer.org.uk/resources/two-new-anti-slavery-hymns>

OTHER SONGS OF PRAISE

O for a thousand tongues to sing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-dEfz6Vms>

The Servant King <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrQiLEO4D5s>

The Compassion Hymn, Kristyn Getty <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMR85VnEluM>

Lord of all Hopefulness (51) Lord of all hopefulness - YouTube

And can it be <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu2uA6U4Fvg>

SONGS OF COMMITMENT

Jesus Christ is waiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJCEhs5nqeQ>

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind (51) Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind :: The Choir of the Abbey School, Tewkesbury - YouTube

O Jesus I have promised <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuxh6bSJXOY>

Let there be love (51) Let there be love shared among us - YouTube

Let there be peace on earth https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_DxNpW1kHQ

God of Justice, Tim Hughes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TCh31xg4vA>

SONGS OF LAMENT

Take Heart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0XqP4jP-2g>

Everlasting Arms <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvNfjLmlvil>

There is a Higher Throne <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAGX9iWQ8kl>

3. AN INTRODUCTION



Welcome to this service in which we remember those in the shadows of our communities and across the world who are in slavery and being exploited. We join with countless others who are marking Anti-Slavery Day this week and renew our commitment to making our communities slavery free. We long for the day when vulnerable people will not be targeted, groomed and humiliated.

Let us seek God's guidance in our worship today to help us learn to notice, respond, and care for our sisters and brothers who are hidden in plain sight, and suffering deeply.

We ask for God's help to better equip each one of us in our service of Him and to give us wisdom about how we can make our communities slavery free.

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4. A CONFESSION



Lord Jesus Christ, we join our prayers with people across the world to ask for your guidance and grace, that we may learn to notice the unnoticed, especially those trapped in modern slavery. Bless all who work to fight this crime and bring freedom to those being exploited.

Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy

We pray for so many of our sisters and brothers who are suffering through forced labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced begging, county lines drug trading, forced marriage or forced organ donation.

Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy

Especially we ask for the courage and wisdom to discern how we might play a part in reaching out with your love and healing, and in helping our own communities to become more slavery free.

Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy.

All: AMEN

5. PRAYERS



Lord, you are a God who sets the captives free.

Your Spirit searches restlessly for those in despair, that they may find the life you are calling them to. We pray for those who are being trafficked and callously put to work in our region.

On the cross, you were powerless and subject to the cruelty of others.

Look with mercy on those who suffer this way.

May we, who are blinded by the shallow distractions of daily life, feel the fear of the cornered and be roused to action.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

God of all grace, whose love desires the flourishing of all Your children, send us out to witness to this transforming power and to be agents of such amazing Grace, and the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.

Amen.

Alternative prayers can be found at:

<https://clewer.org.uk/resources/prayers-for-ending-modern-slavery>

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6. IDEAS TO STRUCTURE CORPORATE PRAYER



TSP PRAYERS

For an All-Age service, you may like to structure your prayers, using the TSP abbreviation - Thank you, Sorry, Please. Thank God for his character, his love, his empowering. Say sorry for the ways we have contributed to people being exploited and overlooked. Say sorry for when we don't notice people or care about others. Ask God to bless our efforts to care for victims, bring slavery to an end, inspire and mobilise Christians to action.

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

You could pray in concentric circles – for example, pray for our response, our churches, our country, our world. You may want to focus on initiatives you know about in your church, our country and our world. You may want to focus on a particular country or form of modern slavery.

CATEGORIES

You could pray under categories – pray for victims, for organisations and churches working with victims, for our politicians, for our response.

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Pray for the work of The Clewer Initiative – that God would use our efforts to mobilise many churches and communities and ultimately to identify and care for victims of modern slavery.



7. SERMON STARTER

Today's Bible passages are 2 Timothy 3 v14 - 4 v5 "Be persistent – proclaim the good news" and Luke 18 v 1-8 "God will grant justice".

This week, people around the world, are observing International Anti-Slavery Day. Sadly, slavery was not totally abolished by William Wilberforce and others in 1807. In our times, we are witnessing a huge increase in modern slavery – more than 40 million people worldwide and many thousands in our own country.

The cause is a perfect storm: an increasing number of vulnerable people, desperate for money and work; a huge increase in part-time and agency work, which cannot be easily monitored; a massive demand amongst all of us for cheap goods and services – our concern is about the price not the people providing them; and a huge criminal network capturing and controlling people in order to make vast profits.

The churches have a key role. The Clewer Initiative is the Church of England's response to modern slavery and uses the strap line 'we see you'. Modern slavery is hidden – people like the widow in our gospel – crying out – but generally ignored by those in authority, and by most of the rest of us. Yet God longs to grant justice.

2 Timothy tells us to be persistent in our proclamation of the Gospel – good news for the poor and the oppressed. We have a message of hope and healing. We need to learn how to notice, how to respond, how to support and invite our exploited sisters and brothers to share in the blessings of God's love.

There is a challenge in today's gospel – will the Son of Man find faith on Earth? We are called to be people of faith – to believe in the good news for the poor and oppressed and then to act accordingly.

The Clewer Initiative provides some great resources – about spotting the signs, looking out for the homeless, helping young people and their families caught up in county lines, taking appropriate action to combat this terrible crime, and offering hope and grace to those being so cruelly brutalised.

Let us ask for God's guidance to be strong in our faith, to be persistent in proclaiming the good news for the poor and the oppressed, and to pledge ourselves to play our part in helping all of our communities to begin to take steps to become slavery free.

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8. HOUSE GROUP SESSIONS —SEVEN LETTERS TO THE CHUCHES



Modern slavery is a worldwide phenomenon and expanding. It is growing because of a number of features which feed each other:

- the rise in the number of vulnerable people in the UK and across the globe
- an increasingly sophisticated criminal network offering false promises and trapping people in situations of brutal exploitation
- an indifference in many of us as to how our goods and services are provided or by whom. We are concerned about cheap prices, not the welfare of producers.

Modern slavery is a form of exploitation which is often hidden. Without citizens and consumers noticing, suspecting or asking questions, it is very difficult for law-enforcement agencies and businesses to know where to look or how to respond.

The Clewer Initiative calls Christians and all people of goodwill to become proactive and more fully committed to going the extra mile and seeking to notice and respond – whether inviting proper investigation of suspicious behaviours or deals too cheap to be true, or supporting victims, raising awareness and building community resilience.

This year, we are inviting you to “receive” the seven letters to the churches from the Book of Revelation – and to make them an opportunity for prayer, reflection, and the identification of appropriate action against modern slavery.

John wrote the seven letters at a time of great anxiety and uncertainty. Each church was in Asia – on the front line of the church’s potential for sharing the Gospel in new cultures and contexts. In your house group, we hope you will use the material to reflect on your individual and church response to the evils of modern slavery and exploitation. At the end of the seven weeks, we invite you to respond with a “return” letter. This will give you a focus and targets for effective mission, and enable The Clewer Initiative to identify how it can better serve the church and communities in the coming months.

To download these seven house group sessions,
visit: <https://clewer.org.uk/resources/seven-letters-to-the-churches>

With thanks to the Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones, the Bishop of Tonbridge; The Rev’d Edwina Fennemore, Canon Jane Brooke and Bishop Alastair Redfern for their help in putting together these resources.

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