

Vision: to be part of creating a world where children's rights are not just documented in a charter but are realised in practical ways to allow freedom for every child to reach their full potential.

To realise this vision, they focus on three crucial areas:

- **HEALTH:** From community clinics to specialised hospital care, from babies to teenagers, health care for all children.
- **EDUCATION:** From the early years to teenagers, to see all children have an enjoyable, transformative education.
- **CHILD CARE:** All children need love, a safe place to grow and be protected from harm. So, they want to see children not only survive but to thrive so that they can reach their full potential in life.

Compassion – UK: compassionuk.org

Compassion works with the local church, to link a child living in poverty with a sponsor. Each sponsor gives their child access to education, health checks and the care of a local church-based Compassion project.

Pray, Bless and Encourage:

Pray for the resident children of families adopting or fostering children. They are often making unseen sacrifices of their own in making room for another person or other children in their family. They may have to share a bedroom with a sibling to create a spare bedroom for a new family member, or think about sharing their things with another person, coming to terms with cultural and or religious differences and bear with extra demands upon their parents due to meetings with social services, health care professionals and training engagements. Maybe you could think of ways to bless these children or to let them know you are thinking and praying for them.

Pray regularly for the adoptive/foster parents.

Pray for local government and council – find out the details of numbers of children needing homes in the local area and ask God to bring forward loving families and homes where children can be placed. 70 unaccompanied asylum seeking refugees were placed in Leeds this year. 30 children aged 10-18 desperately need safe homes every two weeks.

Pray for charities supporting orphaned, displaced, homeless, fostered and adopted children and receive newsletters etc... to look out for ways you can support them.

Pray for those being family to the lonely on their street, in their local community – maybe they look after the elderly, those with special needs and or are particularly vulnerable.

Adoption

Sunday

13th November 2016

Verses

Isaiah chapter 1 v 10 - 15

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah! "The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?" says the Lord. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations— I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of blood! Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight, stop doing wrong. Learn to do right, seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

James 1 v27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Psalms 82 vs3 Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute.

Deuteronomy 24 vs 19 When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

Isaiah 1 vs 17 Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.

Matthew 25 vs 40 The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

Psalms 68 v6 God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Give money - Charitable giving

Support a charity that looks after homeless, displaced or orphaned children:

- Sponsor a child
- Raise funds for them
- Pay for medical treatments
- Fund projects that look to meet the needs of the poor or lonely

Check out the following, but there are many others that you may prefer to support...

Home For Good: homeforgood.org.uk

Their vision is to find a home for every child who needs one.

Knowing that there are children waiting to be adopted and a desperate need for more foster families – **particularly older children**, children from ethnic minorities, sibling groups and children with additional needs – they see the UK Church being part of the solution.

- They want to see the myths surrounding adoption and fostering that exist, particularly among Christians, being dispelled, and churches having a better understanding of the assessment process and being supportive of social workers.
- They have a vision for more Christians choosing to adopt and foster, by being able to find an agency or local authority to adopt or foster with, and be connected with children who are waiting.
- They aim to equip the church to be a welcoming place, and a supportive community, for families who foster or adopt.
- They provide people who foster and adopt easier accessibility to a network of 'soft' support and signposting where they can turn to for professional support.
- They help agencies and local authorities to be better equipped to work with churches and work alongside assessing social workers so they have a better understanding of faith so can ask better questions during the assessment process.

Love The One: lovetheone.org

Love the One exists to stand alongside poor, abused, orphaned, exploited and marginalised children in developing countries, with their focus of work in India.

Since they began in 2007, they have evolved into a charity that is passionate about child-centred development. Children represent the future and are often the starting point for breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty, abuse and discrimination.

Can you give your time?

Volunteer: The Vine Child Contact Centre

Do you have any spare time to help once a month?
Could you help children see their mum or dad at a Child Contact Centre.

A child contact centre is a safe, friendly and neutral place where children of separated families can spend time with one or both parents and sometimes other family members. They are child centred environments that provide toys, games and facilities that reflect the diverse needs of children affected by family breakdown. It is a chance for children to meet with their parent who they no longer live with and volunteering with the Vine CCC is significantly helping out the families and children of Leeds.

Leeds Vineyard offer the Vine Child Contact Centre which runs every fortnight from 10-12pm for children and parents.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or would like an informal chat about the Vine Child Contact Centre, please contact Elaine Sadler, Manager 07435788837

Support another individuals/families practically who adopt or foster

Families who foster children or provide supported lodging for older teenagers, must comply with several safeguarding regulations. Their homes must be safe, decorated to a good order and have fire prevention plans. Sometimes a family may need support with decorating their home, making boundaries secure in their gardens, stairgates, or making alterations to their home to comply with regulations or statutory recommendations. You could pledge your assistance when the need arises or actively seek out a family to assist with the regular maintenance of their home.

Those who foster young children, must have regular, named and DBS checked babysitters. You could arrange to be an enlisted babysitter for a family. This would require you having background checks to becoming an approved babysitter for a family.

Those renting rooms or providing supported lodgings must comply with a number of safeguarding rules to keep their own children, and those fostered, safe from allegation. This means that a family may need extra support with logistics of caring for their families around lifts, work commitments and holiday care provision. You may wish to identify a family or families that may need some support in this way and offer times when you would be able to assist.

Prayer

May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

How can I respond?

Contact Leeds City Council, Home For Good (homeforgood.org) or a Private Fostering and Adoption Agency:

- To make enquiries and find out more information
- Start an Adoption/Fostering Process
- Participate in a Rent a room scheme for young adults needing shelter
- Provide Supported Lodging for an older teenager

Speak to a family that already have experience of the above:

- Tim and Naomi Steere (timesteere@gmail.com)
- Ian and Liz Harden (ianharden@hotmail.co.uk)

There are others in church also who we can signpost you towards.

Contact Leeds City Council (www.foster4leeds.co.uk/www.adopt4leeds.co.uk)

to find out more:

- Harriet Hill (Harriet.Hill@Leeds.gov.uk)
- Fi Brazill (Fiona.Brazill@Leeds.gov.uk)

Visit the Home For Good Website and find out more or get involved:

- Homeforgood.org.uk



Adoption Sunday Prayer



Joining with churches around UK, we want to pray for vulnerable children and those who care for them. We acknowledge that in this broken world, 35,000 children come into care each year. They, like us, are God's children, known and loved by Him. They, like us, each carry a story. And so we pray:

Father God, we thank you for adopting us into your family as dearly-loved children.

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3.1)

God our Father.

Even when we were still sinners, ungrateful and undeserving, you opened your arms of love and invited us into relationship with you. Even while we can be disobedient and selfish, you cover us with grace and call us your children. Even though we have nothing to offer beside our hearts, you call us to purpose and want to use us to make a difference in this world.

Thank you, Father God, for adopting us into your family.

Affirm us, God our Father, as part of your great story.

Lord God, we pray for all those who care for vulnerable children.

We thank you for the privilege we have to serve you and be your hands and feet in this world. We pray specifically for those who open their homes, their lives or their hearts to vulnerable children – foster carers, adoptive parents, kinship carers, social workers, teachers, therapists and other professionals. Lord God would you strengthen, encourage and uphold each one.

As a church, would you use us to support families who foster or adopt and help us to be a place of welcome and acceptance. We pray now for families in this church and those who are known to us.

Show us how we can be part of their story as we stand with them.

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Ephesians 4.16)

Equip us, Lord God, to be part of their stories.

Lord Jesus, we pray for every child whose story is painful.

Lord Jesus, you are needed in every situation, in every circumstance, in every story, and we bring before you each child who has suffered.

Where there has been neglect, would you bring restoration and pour out your grace.

Where there has been abuse, would you bring healing and pour out your love.

Where there is loss and grief, would you bring wholeness and pour out your peace.

Where there is anger and hurt, would you bring comfort and pour out your hope.

Where there is confusion and the future is unsure, would you bring understanding and call your people to respond.

"We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4.19)

Encourage us, Lord Jesus, to pray and to respond, to be part of making their story better in whatever way we can.

Holy Spirit, move in our hearts. **Inspire us to be part of the story.**

