

Session 6

Let's celebrate



This intergenerational celebration is for all ages together. You may wish to invite families to join you. Or perhaps you could use the celebration ideas to host an event for your church and invite members of the congregation and leadership to think about whether they could become a Commitment for Life congregation or contribute to the URC appeal for Ukraine (see the QR code). Perhaps there are people in your congregation from Ukraine or others you could invite who could share a little about their culture too.



Decorate the hall

Decorate your hall with images of Transcarpathia and Ukraine such as flags, banners, coats of arms, pictures – some of these can be downloaded from our website (https://bit.ly/Greta_Connect_Resource). Can you make a big banner to say Welcome (Ласкаво просимо! [laskavo prosymo]) in Ukrainian?

Greet one another

Добрий день [dobryi den'] – Hello! (formal)

Привіт! [pryvit] – Hi!

Watch

The Revd Kevin Snyman, URC Programme Officer for Commitment for Life, visited Hungary and Transcarpathia to gather information about the Reformed Church's efforts to support those fleeing war in Ukraine and to explain why we in the United Reformed Church of Britain want to help them. It would be good to watch this together: <https://bit.ly/4j5CuO9> (7:39)

To eat – Sunflower Bread

Using a basic bread recipe or mix, make up some bread dough and divide it into four equal parts. Working with one part at a time, roll out the dough into a 25cm diameter circle. Place in the middle of a baking sheet, lined with baking paper. Spread some green pesto over the circle. Repeat this process with the second and third parts of dough, layering the dough circles on top of each other as you go. Roll out the fourth circle in the same way and lay on top of the third circle. This layer does not require any pesto.

Take a cookie cutter (about 3cm in diameter) and place it in the middle of your rolled out circles, pressing it gently into the circles to create an indent. Using a sharp knife, make 32 parts by cutting quarters then dividing each quarter into eight, taking care to leave the middle indent of 3cm as is (see picture). Working gently, twist each petal 3-4 times and press it down. Cover the sunflower bread and allow to stand for 30 minutes.



Combine
½ tsp turmeric powder;
1½ tbsp milk;
½ tsp honey or sugar in a glass or bowl and, using a brush, paint the bread yellow all over. Sprinkle either sesame seeds or sunflower seeds in the middle circle.
Bake in the oven gas mark 7, for 18 to 25 minutes, or until the top is golden.



To drink – Kompot

1.15 kg fruit (suggestions: apple, pear, cranberries, cherries, raspberries, strawberries, peaches, apricots, plums), 1 litre water and 2-4 tablespoons of sugar.

Wash and chop the fruit of your choice, place them in a pot with water, cover, bring to boil – reduce heat and simmer for five minutes. Turn the heat off and stir in the sugar – let it stand to cool for at least two hours, strain before drinking. Will intensify if kept in fridge.



Suitcase game (courtesy of Scout Association)

This can be done individually or in groups. Give everyone a piece of paper and a pen and ask them to draw a suitcase on their paper, with enough space for five items.

Explain that everyone is going to go on a journey to explore what being a refugee might feel like. They can take five items with them on their journey. Give them a few minutes to add them to their suitcase.

It's time to leave, but the suitcases are too heavy. You need to leave one item behind. You can choose which one, then cross it out.

You've reached a border. An official takes one of your items as payment for you crossing the border. You can't choose what they take – someone from another team should cross out one of your items.

You take your suitcase onto a bus. The journey is rough and bumpy, and another item gets broken. Close your eyes, wave your hand in front of you, then point to your suitcase. The closest item to your finger is broken – cross it out.

You're now left with just two items. Having found a safe place to stay, you discover it's very small and there is only room for you and one of your items. Which one do you choose? How do you make that choice?

You could use these questions as a reflection on the exercise:

- How did it make you feel when you lost your objects?
- Did it feel the same each time, or were some losses worse than others?
- What sorts of things did you think about when you had to make your final choice?

Toys

Either as a large group or sharing with those near you of a different generation, talk to each other about a toy that reminds you of home or your childhood. What is it about that item that reminds you? Many children who flee from war may need to leave their favourite toy behind. Here are some of their stories.

<https://uni.cf/41PVUQ9>



Songs

Sing along with 'Twinkle little star' in Ukrainian https://youtu.be/zsp-bh72X_I (first song on this video)

**Zirko, zirko, merekhty,
Nedasyazhna v nebi ty!
Syayesh nizhno ty meni,
Mov koshtovnist' u pit'mi!
Zirko, zirko, merekhty,
Nedasyazhna v nebi ty!**

**Shchoyno sonechko zayde,
Temryava nakryye vse.
Zirko, v nebi zapalay!
Son, malyat oberihay!
Zirko, zirko, merekhty,
Nedasyazhna v nebi ty!**



National anthem in Ukraine <https://bit.ly/4lhDHnx>

Šče ne vmerla Ukrainy i slava, i volia.
Šče nam, brattia molodii, usmichneťsia dolia.
Zhynuť naši vorižeńky, jak rosa na sonci,
Zapanujem i my, brattia, u svojij storonci.

□ Dušu j tilo my položym za našu svobodu,
I pokažem, ščo my, brattia, kozaćkoho rodu.

The glory and will of Ukraine has not yet perished,
And yet still upon us, brothers, fate shall smile once more.
Our enemies shall melt away, like the dew in the sun.
And we too shall rule, O brethren, the homeland of our own.

Soul and body shall we lay down for our liberty,
And we'll show, O brethren, that we're a Cossack family.

(<https://bit.ly/4cbzv4w>)

Dance – Who can manage to do these well-known Ukrainian dance moves?
<https://bit.ly/4bSzo2>

Zirka star prayer

Allow a few minutes for everyone to decorate and assemble their star. Each person should create two stars and then swap one of them with someone else, preferably from a different generation. Once ready, join with the prayer together.

Assembling the star: place two stars on top of each other with the points alternating. Carefully (you can put blu tac behind to help) push a split pin through the middle of them both and through the top of the straw. Pull out each side of the pin to secure; do not tighten it too much as you will want the stars to spin. If there is time, stick some wool on the ends of each point of the top star. You have made a Ukrainian Christmas star.

Prayer: Before your prayer starts, blow on your star to make it move like a windmill.

God of love – hold the star to your chest

We pray for our world – blow on the star to make it go round

We pray for countries facing war – move the star quickly from side to side

We pray for refugees – move the star away from you and then near you

We pray for those who have been hurt – spin yourself round

We pray for the world – blow on the star to make it go round

Amen – blow on the star to make it go round

Share

How might you share with one another the things you have learned about Transcarpathia and Ukraine?

In intergenerational teams, perhaps you could create a display or a news report or a quiz to share as part of your celebration. You could maybe make a documentary or put together a magazine. Or perhaps you could make a short video for your church website or Facebook page. The Children's and Youth Work team at Church House would love to see what you've done, so send your videos and photographs to children.youth@urc.org.uk

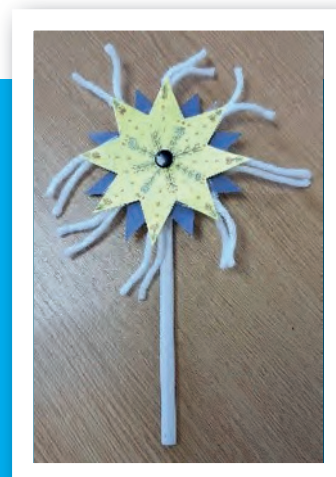
To make

Bags out of T-shirts

You will need an old T-shirt to recycle and a pair of sharp scissors which can cut fabric.

After laying out the T-shirt as smooth and flat as possible, cut off the sleeves (along the edge of the seam) and the neckline. Using the scissors, cut up from the bottom of the T-shirt an 8cm strip (cutting through both sides of the T-shirt). Repeat along the bottom of the T-shirt roughly a centimetre apart.

To create the base of the bag, tie together one strip with the corresponding strip and repeat until all strips are tied together.



Pyramid money boxes

The URC is holding an appeal to raise money to support our friends in the Transcarpathian Reformed Church as they seek to help the many displaced Ukrainian people who are seeking safety in that region. Use the pyramid template to create a mountain-shaped money box to collect spare coins in which you could then donate to the appeal. Cut the shape out of card and fold up into a pyramid, gluing the tabs to hold it together. Perhaps you could decorate it with images such as sunflowers or the Transcarpathian coat of arms or some words about safety, sanctuary and welcome.



Sunflower embroidery

Any material can be used to create this coaster; however, felt is a nice material to use for beginners. Start in the middle of a small square of fabric using lazy daisy stitch to create your sunflower petals. Be creative – it's effective if several colours are used. Fill the middle of the flower with french knots to represent the seeds. You may want to create a stem and/or a border round the edge.

Lazy daisy stitch: Starting in the middle, guide the needle up through the material, create a loop holding it in place with your finger while guiding the needle back down the same hole you came up in. Then guide the needle back up through the material next to where the end of the loop is and back down immediately on the other side of the thread as in picture 2. This should create a firm loop. Take the needle back to the starting point in the middle and repeat to create a series of petals in a circle.

French knots: Guide the needle up from the bottom of the material in the centre of the flower. Using the point of the needle, wrap the thread round the needle three times as in picture 3 and use your finger to pull the loose thread, as in picture 4, as you guide the needle back down.



As you do so, allow the thread under your finger to follow and you should end up with a small knot (these can take practise).

Prayers

We asked Ukrainian young people who are refugees in the UK what we should pray for. Here is their response:

God who hears,

For years we have prayed, mourned and lamented. Three years of war in Ukraine. Three years of invasion, of violence, of death.

Sometimes it slips from news broadcasts and from people's consciousness. But we know you, O God, have not forgotten.

We hold before you refugees who still feel like strangers, unsure when or if they will ever see and hug loved ones again.

Keep safe those who remain in Ukraine. Protect them from the mental and physical wounds of war. We ask for a miraculous end to this bloodshed. Help us, even when we feel powerless, to act where we can. To care, to listen, to sit with those who grieve. To give, to protest, to continue to pray:

Your kingdom come, your will be done on Earth as in Heaven. Amen.