



## *Program ideas for 'Bringing our Gifts to 20/20 vision'*

### *Blessing or Joy Boxes*

These are greeting card boxes covered in pretty wrapping paper, with 7 small gifts inside, one for each day of the following week.

The boxes are given to anyone who is lonely, depressed, sick or in need of any sort, and who needs some encouragement.

The gifts are mostly made or provided by members and include: small felt teddy bear brooches, felt needle cases, small decorated candles, handkerchiefs or patterned tissues, teabags in a cardboard teapot, bookmarks, fridge magnets, small soaps, a note card and envelope, a notebook and a pen, a couple of wrapped sweets.

Each gift has a little card enclosed which gives a scripture verse or other Spiritual greeting. Other cards can also be included separately in the box.

Hold a meeting to prepare some of these boxes as a group, using the different talents of group members to cover boxes, make simple gifts, write cards.

#### **Speaker**

A talk could be given on 'Bearing each others' burdens' (Galatians 6:2)

### *A Crafty Eye View*

**Display** of people's crafts, and the opportunity for each person to speak about them  
**Demonstration** by calligrapher of techniques. Alternately you could have a card maker do a demonstration, or a jewellery maker, depending on who is available for your group.

**Craft** – making some simple cards, or jewellery, depending on the demonstrator.

#### **Devotions**

Thanks for the written word and the opportunity to read and learn, particularly from the Bible

#### **Speaker**

A historical overview of how the Bible has come to us (plenty of information available on the internet)

We are God's living letters to the world. What do they read about him in our lives?

Communicating the Gospel – use words when necessary

### *Caring for the Carers*

Those who are in the role of carers for others, whether they are looking after husbands, children other family members or friends need support, as their responsibilities are continuous.

Invite some of these carers from your parish to talk about their needs, and also if possible ask someone who is a professional in the area of caring for others (we asked one woman in our parish who coordinated the Anglicare Day Care Centre in the local area, and she brought with her a couple of the carers to talk about their lives).

This could lead to another type of support network with people offering to share the burden by being available to step in on a friendship basis so that the carer can have time to themselves occasionally.

## *The Importance of Grandparents*

Display of photos of group members' grandparents, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, family members

### **Panel**

Three or four members to share memories of their grandparents, and the positive values they were able to pass on (NB each should speak for 5 mins or less, make this clear when asking the speakers)

### **Devotions**

Thanks for all our family, prayer for love and wisdom in relationships.

### **Speaker**

The role of Grandparents in the family. The problems of proximity, the difficulties of distance.

Grandparents' opportunities to share the Gospel

A listening Grandma – a great safety valve

## *Handy Hints*

In the weeks before the meeting, invite people to write down some special hints they have found useful. Have a time limit to finish a few days before the next meeting, so that the hints can be typed up and collated.

These could be related to: kitchen, cooking, life-skills, relationships, gardening etc.

Have copies available at the meeting and ask a few of those who have contributed to talk for a few minutes about their special hints. If there are some easy recipes among the hints, these could be made up and sampled.

Spiritual hints that people have found helpful in focussing on God in times of trouble or being consistent in taking time with God when things are going well. Ways of using prayer, or particular ways of studying the Bible.

## *Scone Day*

### **Special Devonshire Tea to start**

**Demonstration** of scone making which could be done by several different people with recipes given out.

### **Devotions**

Thanks for physical and spiritual nourishment.

### **Speaker**

Encouragement in the ministry of hospitality 'A light touch and a hot oven' identifying the requirements for whatever God calls us to do.

'Some people just can't make scones' assessing one's strengths and weaknesses  
Getting back to basics in our spiritual life.

## *Songs of Praise*

Ask about 5 or 6 members to talk about their favourite song or hymn, and give the reasons and background for their choice.

Get the names of the songs beforehand, and organise to have the music/words etc available so that a musician can play for them to be sung if wished.

If you don't have a musician, you can use CD's, but make sure that the CD player is ready and WORKS!

You could also have a member/members research the lives of the authors of the chosen hymns. This isn't too difficult to do if they have access to the internet. Remember many hymns have two authors: the lyrics writer and the music composer.

### Devotion

You could conclude with a talk on the use of praise in the Bible.

## *UFO Coffee Morning*

Most women have some unfinished craft stored away in their cupboards. This can be a fun morning when everyone can bring theirs along – maybe get help from others if they are having problems, or just enjoy spending time working on their project.

### Speaker

A short talk about how God is still working on us to bring us to be more like Jesus could fit in with this.

## *Unopened Gifts*

**Craft** – making gift boxes, wrapping gifts, making gift tags, tassels or bows

**Display** of ideas for gift wrapping

### Devotions

Gifts of the Spirit, or thanks for the gifts God has given us.

### Speaker

Bible reading and prayer are gifts from God, often unopened by Christians

Giving to others, identifying what they need, not just what we want to give them

How am I using my gifts for God?