



# A NEW COURSE FOR LENT 2022

## #CHILDRENINTHESHADOWS

Worldwide, there are about 10 million children living in modern slavery. In the UK, it is harder to gather exact numbers but we know that in 2021, 41% of cases reported to the UK Modern Slavery Helpline related to child victims.

To help shine a light on the suffering of children, The Clewer Initiative has launched **Children in the Shadows**, a new Lent course for churches, community groups and individuals.

Many thanks to those who have contributed to this resource – we are grateful for their time, insight and support.

### PARTICULAR THANKS GO TO:

Hestia [www.hestia.org](http://www.hestia.org)

Ben Lindsay, the founder of Power The Fight [www.powerthefight.org.uk](http://www.powerthefight.org.uk)

Becky Lewis, the Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager at Bristol City Council

Bill Crooks and Fiona Kendall of FCEI-Mediterranean Hope [www.mediterraneanhope.com/en\\_en](http://www.mediterraneanhope.com/en_en)

And the team at The Clewer Initiative: Bishop Alastair Redfern; Caroline Virgo; Myles Dunnett;

Amy Bishop; Sabina Ford and Claire Walford



# AN IN-DEPTH AND REFLECTIVE LOOK AT CHILDREN AND MODERN SLAVERY

## FOREWORD BY BISHOP ALASTAIR REDFERN, CHAIR OF THE CLEWER INITIATIVE

In Children in the Shadows, we invite you to consider the various forms of child exploitation, the scale of the abuse, and the need for us all to increase our awareness and effective response. There is a particular focus upon county lines – one of the fastest expanding areas of child exploitation in the UK. In the final week, we provide a global perspective and consider our responsibilities as privileged citizens in a fragile world.

Each session contains definitions, statistics, examples of current good practice, a bible reflection and ways in which individuals and churches can make a significant contribution to extending care and strengthening resilience and resistance in their communities.

We conclude each session with the words of two new hymns, written for The Clewer Initiative by Sheena Evans and Simon Hancock.

## WHY CHILDREN IN THE SHADOWS FOR LENT 2022?

Lent is a time of year when the Christian community pauses to reflect on what we have and how we can help others as well as remembering our Saviour's journey to the cross. Over the last couple of years, The Clewer Initiative has produced a Lent Resource

which has been widely used by churches and individuals. In 2020, we launched the County Lines Lent Resource and in 2021, the Women in the Shadows Lent resource.

There are many reasons why we have chosen to reflect upon Children in the Shadows. Firstly, when people consider modern slavery, they might not usually picture children and young people. The general public is usually more familiar with the concept of adults labouring in car washes or

fields, women being sexually exploited or adults being smuggled across the Channel in lorries.

Secondly, the data shows that child exploitation, particularly county lines, is rocketing in the UK and the pandemic has not, in any way, slowed its growth. As a society, we need to get to grips with this terrible phenomenon and

begin to make strides in tackling it and protecting vulnerable children.

Finally, the subject is relevant to everyone. We all have a part to play in the protection of children. This is not just the responsibility of parents – a community response is required.

We hope that many people use Children in the Shadows throughout the season of Lent and, as a result, see the urgent priority of reaching out to and protecting children in our communities from exploitation.

“  
*To be a child is to be, by definition, vulnerable. Sadly, many unscrupulous and criminal people deliberately take advantage of this susceptibility and exploit children for financial gain. The damage done to children abused in this way never goes away.*  
”



# AN IN-DEPTH AND REFLECTIVE LOOK AT CHILDREN AND MODERN SLAVERY

## NOTES FOR GROUP LEADERS

The resource has been designed to help explore the realities of child exploitation and encourage people to consider making an appropriate and effective response. Through the Lenten discipline, we pray it will help us refine our priorities and practices in discipleship.

*“ There is an urgent need for churches to support the creation of more resilient and healthy communities where all children can grow and develop in safety. The church also has a key role in identifying children in its orbit that are being exploited or who may be susceptible to exploitation. ”*

Each session begins by providing some information, and it would be useful to invite participants to share their reactions, and any other insights or experiences from their own knowledge and contacts.

At the heart of each session is a Bible study. Why not try reading the passage out loud, perhaps inviting people to go round the group, each reading successive verses. There is a small section suggesting how the passage might provide a helpful

perspective, and then a few questions which seek to open up reflection and prayer. We hope that by exploring the details and dynamics of the scripture text in relation to the issues, challenges and possible responses will arise.

The Bible study is followed by a prayer for the week. You could ask someone to read the prayer aloud, and then give the group a few minutes of silence for further prayer and reflection.

The last section introduces further resources in terms of ideas and actions that could be pursued. You could suggest that participants report back next week on their progress and reflections.

At the end of the session, we recommend:

- Summarising any important ideas and actions that participants could consider taking away for further prayer and as possible follow up
- A second reading of the prayer which follows the Bible study, and then closing with the Lord's prayer, and the Grace.
- Depending upon musical abilities and inclinations, you could invite people to sing the hymn for the week! Or you could simply listen to the YouTube link. One of the hymns has been specially written for us.



# AN IN-DEPTH AND REFLECTIVE LOOK AT **CHILDREN** AND **MODERN SLAVERY**



## **CARING FOR YOURSELF**

This resource is about a subject which is emotive and upsetting. Before you start, think about how you will care for yourself and others. If you are distressed by the subject matter or it has triggered painful memories, we would urge you to share your concerns with others who might understand. Alongside the children who suffer, each of us needs grace and healing and the opportunity to recognise and process our own vulnerabilities.

## **ABOUT THE CLEWER INITIATIVE**

The Clewer Initiative was launched in 2016 as the Church of England's response to modern slavery. We work to mobilise the Church and communities to take action against modern slavery and aim to share learning, signpost best practice amongst our partners and contribute to policymaking and more effective legislation.

The Clewer Initiative works with the Church of England's 42 dioceses as well as with other denominations, faith groups and community organisations. We share learning and knowledge through our network and help support community-based projects.

The Clewer Initiative is funded by the Clewer Sisters, an Anglican order of Augustinian nuns founded in 1852 to help marginalised, young women who found themselves homeless and drawn into the sex trade.



### **HELPFUL NUMBERS:**

**Modern Slavery Helpline:**  
08000 121 700

**Local police:**  
101  
or 999 in an emergency

**Crimestoppers:**  
0800 555 111  
(if you would prefer to remain anonymous)

**Childline:**  
0800 1111

# HYMNS FOR LENT 2022

These new hymns could help to bring together your thoughts and prayers. Care for the Hidden has been especially written for The Clewer Initiative this year. To listen to the hymns, visit The Clewer Initiative's YouTube channel.

To access the music, go to [www.theclewerinitiative.org](http://www.theclewerinitiative.org)



## We are called to welcome strangers

We are called to welcome strangers,  
offer shelter, food and rest;  
heal the wounds of mind and body,  
showing love with true respect.  
Those who flee from war-torn homelands  
or fear death for their beliefs,  
those who run from flood or famine:  
will we meet them in their grief?

Here we see our brothers, sisters,  
each the image of our God.

If we turn our faces from them,  
we deny his living word.

He would have us feed the hungry,  
free the captive, tend the weak,  
care for all who now are helpless,  
offer respite to the meek.

If we fail to challenge falsehood,  
if we bow to unjust laws,  
then the stranger's eyes will show us  
God's own eyes which weep for us.

Let us pray as Jesus taught us,  
"Father, let your kingdom come,"  
and with Christ-like loving kindness  
we will welcome strangers home.

*Words: Sheena Evans  
Music: Simon Hancock*

The author and composer give full permission  
for these hymns to be used in church services.



## Care for the hidden

Each one of us is neighbour to all of humankind,  
To friend and foe and stranger  
– to none can we be blind.

Our loving Father calls us to make  
a world that's fair

By seeking out the captives, and showing  
them his care.

We are all God's children, all in his image made,  
In every place we see his face,  
and wonder at his grace.

The signs are there around us,  
where people fear to speak,  
With faces pale and shadowed,  
and bodies thin and weak.

In overcrowded shelters, in life that is no life,  
Abuse and lies deprive them of  
all that made them thrive.

We are all God's children, all in his  
image made, In every place we see his face,  
and wonder at his grace.

God mourns for these his children,  
now made to serve as slaves,  
And we who are Christ's body must  
love them as they crave:

Bring light to darkest places, expose this evil trade,  
And, guided by his Spirit, give hope to the betrayed.

We are all God's children, all in his image made,  
In every place we see his face,  
and wonder at his grace.



<https://www.jubilate.co.uk/songs/we-are-called-to-welcome-strangers>

# WEEK BY WEEK GUIDE

Children in the Shadows is a five-week, pop-up Lent resource.

Each week includes definitions, statistics, insight from frontline experts (both written and on film), examples of current good practice, and suggestions of how individuals and churches can make a significant contribution to extending care and strengthening resilience and resistance in their communities.

Through the course, we work through Luke 18 and discuss how Jesus' interactions and parables can inspire our response. Each session closes with a prayer to draw our reflections together and the words of two new hymns, written for The Clewer Initiative by Sheena Evans and Simon Hancock.

## WEEK 1

### THE SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT CHILDREN & MODERN SLAVERY IN THE UK

Week 1 explores the different forms of child exploitation and the scale of the issue in the UK. It also explores how Ely Cathedral is raising awareness of modern slavery amongst school children and the different ways we can all join the fight to end slavery.

## WEEK 2

### THE PRICE THE FAMILY PAYS

Week 2 shines a light on the suffering and isolation faced by the children of modern slavery victims and the parents of child victims. Each group is affected by the trauma and exploitation in different ways and requires specialised care and support.

## WEEK 3

### COUNTY LINES – THE DOMINANT FORM OF MODERN SLAVERY AFFECTING CHILDREN IN THE UK

Week 3 focuses on county lines – one of the fastest expanding areas of child exploitation in the UK. It shares a story of hope from Bridgwater and introduces the various training courses The Clewer Initiative runs to inform people about county lines.

# CHILDREN IN THE SHADOWS WEEK BY WEEK GUIDE

**WEEK 4**

## THE PUSH FACTORS FOR COUNTY LINES

Week 4 continues the focus on county lines but this time exploring some of the push factors. It looks at the school to exclusion to prison pipeline and how this disproportionately affects children from Black and Brown communities.

**WEEK 5**

## THE GLOBAL SCENE - CHILDREN & MODERN SLAVERY ACROSS THE WORLD

Week 5 provides a global perspective on children and modern slavery and considers our responsibilities as privileged citizens in a vulnerable world.



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**CHILDREN IN THE SHADOWS**

resource: [www.theclerinitiative.org/childrenintheshadows](http://www.theclerinitiative.org/childrenintheshadows)