

## OUR BACKGROUND AND VISION

Gratitude Initiative was founded in 2015 by Girma Bishaw to encourage and promote a gratitude culture in Britain. Our vision is to introduce gratitude as a tool and language that transforms and fuels the way we approach solving individual and social problems resulting in harmony and wellbeing.

## WHAT IS GRATITUDE SUNDAY?

An annual church service involving the community to express gratitude to God and to appreciate individuals. It is our vision for UK wide churches to host a Gratitude Sunday service annually, starting on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

## WHY HOST A GRATITUDE SUNDAY SERVICE?

1. To connect with the community.
2. To facilitate a platform for collective gratitude and to celebrate the lives of those we have lost due to the pandemic.
3. To create a bridge and gospel opportunity.
4. To express our gratitude with one voice to God for His provision & protection over our nation.
5. To inform and transform the way we see and relate to each other.

## HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY PEOPLE TO INVITE TO THE GRATITUDE SUNDAY SERVICE?

- Asking our congregations to participate in the invitation process
  - They know the heroes in their neighbourhood
  - They know positive stories that happened in the area
  - They know people who have lost their loved ones and willing to share their story
  - They can invite their neighbours to join the gratitude service
- Identify Charities or Initiatives which started particularly, not exclusively during the pandemic and invite them to the service.
- Identify individuals who are in the public sphere and live in the neighbourhood
  - A councillor, journalist, politician etc. to come and participate
- Prepare invitation letter. (Template to be provided)

## SERVICE IDEAS

- Songs
- Poem (on resilience, gratitude etc.) (you can start a poem competition and choose the winner to read at the service)
- Selected stories
  - From people who benefited from the help of someone or organisation to share their story
  - From people who want to share and celebrate the life of their loved ones
- Silence and prayer in remembrance of the people we have lost in our community
- Recognising and gift-giving to the heroes and organisations

- Give young people an assignment to do research on identifying our community's strength and good and present their discoveries on the day.
- A video clip of children recorded expressing their gratitude (can be recorded the week before)
- Activity involving the congregation:
  - Asking the congregation to write a gratitude card to someone they are grateful for and post it after the service. (Cards to be provided)
- Talk/sermon on gratitude
- A gratitude prayer
- Next step/Call to action
  - Journal
  - Cultivating a habit to start a conversation with acknowledging the good.
  - Expressing our gratitude with generosity
    - Find a charity to support
    - Reach out to someone in your neighbourhood/ someone who is different from you.
- Refreshments

## CHILDREN

- Write or draw a gratitude card to someone
- Game (gratitude game ideas to be provided)
- Story from the Bible (study ideas to be provided)

## NEXT STEPS

If you are happy to be part of this exciting initiative and are willing to host one of the first Gratitude Sundays, please send an email to [clare@gratitudeinitiative.org.uk](mailto:clare@gratitudeinitiative.org.uk) to confirm your interest by **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April**, we will then send out the following information.

- Annual Gratitude Sunday logo.
- Invitation Template
- A pre-recorded talk and talk outline. (For you to play or preach yourself)
- A short video about Gratitude to aid a better understanding
- Game outline and bible study for children.
- Gratitude postcards to use on the day.

For those willing to take part and host a Gratitude Sunday service we would be delighted to share your service details on our website and social media in the lead up to the day. We would also love to share your stories, news, videos and photographs following the service, if appropriate, to encourage more churches to take part in 2022.

Thank you!

**Girma Bishaw**

Director & Founder