Council of Christian and Jews
Rabbi-Clergy Action Network

SAFE CAR WASH

Ending modern slavery in the hand car wash industry

A CCJ guide for religious communities

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“The Lord answered me and set me free.”

Psalm 118:5

CCJ’s guide to ending modern slavery in the hand car wash industry has been created in partnership with the Clewer Initiative. Following on from CCJ’s Freedom Seder and our Freedom Sunday resources, we aim to help communities play their part in tackling modern slavery, through awareness-raising and information gathering.

Modern slavery is hidden in plain sight on our high streets. The National Crime Agency believes there are tens of thousands of people being exploited in the UK, forced to work long hours, for little or no pay, and under threat of violence.

Some of these people are being exploited in hand car washes, which have sprung up across the country in their thousands. Many of those hand car washes are legitimate businesses, but some of them are not. Police raids in hand car washes have unearthed victims living in horrendous conditions.

Although law enforcement and the government are clear that this problem exists, there is no reliable data on just how widespread it is. This lack of information means that victims could be falling through the net, becoming more enmeshed in the cycle of exploitation.

Jewish and Christian scriptures share the Exodus story, the transformation of the Israelites from slaves into a free people. The prophets call on us to free the oppressed. As Jews and Christians, we can work together to free the slaves of today. Let us walk together down the paths of justice.

Photo by Ira Gelb

The Safe Car Wash app has been developed by the Clewer Initiative along with the police, the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority to allow the general public to engage with the problem. It will enable the largest community intelligence gathering exercise ever attempted in the United Kingdom.

Download the free app onto your smartphone and then when you are using a hand car wash, simply open the app and complete a short survey about the working conditions of the car wash. The data the app collects will be anonymised and shared with the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority.

The following resources are designed to raise awareness of the app and of the Safe Car Wash campaign, within your community or in a wider interfaith context.

CHRISTIAN SERMON IDEAS

We have themed the sermon template for the Safe Car Wash campaign around hands and the potential of hands to bless or curse. You can find more sermon ideas on the topic of modern slavery on The Clewer Initiative website under the Resources section.

Suggested passages

Mark 10:13-16

Luke 4:40

Acts 8:14-24

Notes on modern slavery

Conservative estimates of modern slavery in the UK suggest there are at least 13,000 victims in the UK.

Victims are forced, coerced, or deceived into difficult and demeaning work in legal and illegal businesses, receiving little or no payment.

The Clewer Initiative and CCJ believe that the tools to end modern slavery are present in the community, and the challenge cannot be left to law enforcement alone.

Notes on modern slavery in hand car washes

There are roughly 18,000 hand car washes in the UK, most of which have sprung up in the last 10 years.

Many hand car washes are run by legitimate business owners, but some are vehicles for money laundering and exploitation including modern slavery.

Law enforcement agencies like the police and the National Crime Agency have seen cases of modern slavery in hand car washes across the country.

Those who are trapped in modern slavery in car washes must use their hands to wash cars, exposing their skin to water, heat, cold, and dangerous chemicals in the cleaning fluid.

One sign of exploitation is that the workers are not wearing gloves to protect their hands.

Workers may be beaten by the hands of those who control them. They are controlled and threatened and are therefore unable to put up their hands and declare their suffering. Jesus himself was struck by those oppressing him at his trial.

Notes on the Christian response to modern slavery in car washes

Throughout the New Testament we see hands being used as an instrument of blessing and commissioning.

As Jesus lays his hands on people, the blind see, the lame walk, and the dead come to life.

In the gospel Jesus repeatedly draws our attention to the marginalised and those who have been cast aside by society, those who are unseen.

Through the Safe Car Wash app church members can use their hands to help bring an end to exploitation and draw attention to an injustice happening on thousands of high streets in the UK.

JEWISH SOURCE SHEET

You may wish to use these sources as the basis for a dvar torah, teaching, or shiur.

Deuteronomy 24:14

לֹא־תַעֲשֹׁק שָׂכִיר עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מֵאַחֶיךָ אוֹ מִגֵּרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּאַרְצְךָ בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ׃

You shall not abuse a needy and destitute labourer, whether a fellow countryman or a stranger in one of the communities of your land.

Isaiah 58:6

הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֶבְחָרֵהוּ פַּתֵּחַ חַרְצֻבּוֹת רֶשַׁע הַתֵּר אֲגֻדּוֹת מוֹטָה וְשַׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חָפְשִׁים וְכָל־מוֹטָה תְּנַתֵּקוּ׃

No, this is the fast I desire: to unlock fetters of wickedness, and untie the cords of the yoke; to let the oppressed go free; to break off every yoke.

What is the difference between the 'fast' and untying the cords of the yoke?

Shulchan Aruch (Code of Jewish Law), Yoreh De'ah 252:3

כָּל רֶגַע שֶׁמְּאַחֵר לִפְדּוֹת הַשְּׁבוּיִים, הֵיכָא דְּאֶפְשָׁר לְהַקְדִּים, הֲוֵי כְּאִלּוּ שׁוֹפֵךְ דָּמִים.

Every moment that one delays unnecessarily the ransoming of a captive, is considered tantamount to murder.

What might be an 'unnecessary delay' (rega shemachar) in today's world?

Pesachim 116b:3

בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא

In each and every generation a person must view himself as though he personally left Egypt.

What does it mean to view yourself as though you left Egypt? How does this affect our lives today?

Rabbi Yitz (Irving) Greenberg, The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays, Chapter Two: Passover

On one level, this is a very specific incident in the particular history of a small, Middle Eastern tribe…On another level, however, the entire experience is highly paradigmatic… The freeing of the slaves testified that human beings are meant to be free. History will not be finished until all are free.

HOW TO RUN A COMMUNITY HAND CAR WASH

Promote the Safe Car Wash app and raise awareness of modern slavery in hand car washes by hosting a hand car wash in your church or synagogue's car park, or get in touch with other local communities to make it a joint interfaith event.

What you will need:

Willing volunteers to wash cars. We think 7-10 people should be enough, but the more the merrier! Volunteers should be decked out in appropriate safety gear, including gloves, boots and reflective jackets.

Materials for washing the car. We suggest car wash shampoo, three buckets (two for washing, one for rinsing), a hose, cloths or towels to dry the cars, wash mitts, a large sponge, and maybe a brush to scrub tyres with. You will also need a water supply, an outdoor tap would be perfect.

Leaflets to promote the Safe Car Wash app. You can find ready-made leaflets on The Clewer Initiative's website. Print off a supply to give to those who come through your car wash.

A big signpost for the car wash. Make a large sign that promotes the car wash on the day and shows people where to drive into.

What to do:

Pick a date and a venue for your car wash. Pick a weekend or holiday, and ideally hold your car wash in a spot that people drive past regularly. You could hold the car wash as part of a summer fête or fair.

Promote your event. Let your church or synagogue know that you will be running the car wash, and make sure everyone gets the date in their diary. You could put flyers in local businesses, the post office and library, and promote it via social media.

Gather your volunteers. Give everyone a briefing on how to wash a car, modern slavery in hand car washes, and how to download the app. Your volunteers might find it helpful to learn the indicators and to familiarise themselves with the app.

Hold your car wash! We recommend having a few people washing the car while one person chats to the driver about why you are hosting the car wash and shows them the app on their phone. If you have good wifi you could even encourage people to download the app there and then. You should also have one or two people directing the cars in and out of the car wash.

Tell us how it went. We would love to know how your car wash event went. Do get in touch with us via Twitter @CCJUK or email us at jessica.spencer@ccj.org.uk.

RUNNING A STALL TO PROMOTE THE SAFE CAR WASH APP

The British summer brings with it that great institution – the summer fair. Setting up a stall with games and information is a great way to get the word out about the Safe Car Wash app. Here's everything you need to know to help you run a successful stall, including two games for children to play.

What you will need for the stand:

Tables to lay out materials and put the game on. You might want one for the game and one for any leaflets you want to give out.

Boards with posters and promotional material. Download posters from The Clewer Initiative website, and make your own. Make them big and bold to attract attention!

Leaflets promoting the Safe Car Wash App, and cards with the indicators to look out for. You can find these on The Clewer Initiative website.

A few volunteers to man the stand.

Prizes for the game.

Two games you could play:

The Great Car Wash Race

Materials you will need: Two washing up bowls or buckets, sponges, rubber gloves, washing up liquid, water, toy cars, and something to make the cars dirty, you could use soil, or charcoal or flour.

The rules of the game:

We call this game 'Racing to Clean Up'. It pits two competitors against each other to see who can wash the most toy cars in 30 seconds.

First, get a collection of toy cars – big ones, small ones, shiny ones and plastic ones. The only requirement is that whoever owns them doesn't mind them getting a bit dirty.

Get the cars dirty in whatever material you have decided to use. It could be soil, or flour. You will need a supply on your stand too for when you refresh the game.

On your stand, set up two washing up bowls with soapy water. On the other side of the stand, put two piles of toy cars of roughly similar size.

Get two competitors to stand in front of their bowls, wearing gloves. They have to run to the pile of cars, take one, run back to their washing bowl and clean it up. As soon as they have finished that one, they should run back, get another car, and repeat the process.

Whoever washes the most cars in 30 seconds wins! If it's a tie you can judge who cleaned them the best.

Sponge Attack!

Materials you will need: 3-5 sponges, a couple of buckets filled with water, a chair, plastic sheets.

The rules of the game:

This game requires a willing volunteer to get sponges thrown in their face! If you're holding the stall at a school or community fair you could ask if any of the teachers or the rabbis/clergy would mind volunteering, or you could get the parents of the children to sit in the hot seat!

First, get the volunteer to sit in the chair, and cover their body with the plastic sheet. The easiest way to do this is get a large sheet and cut a hole in the middle so they wear it like a poncho.

Position your sponge throwers a couple of metres away, or a little closer, depending on how strong their arms are!

Give the throwers the buckets of water and the sponges and encourage them to throw the sponges at the volunteers face.

They get as many tries as there are sponges, or you could give them a time limit of 30 seconds, it's up to you.

Talking points:

After the game, explain to people that while that is a fun game, unfortunately there are people washing cars in hand car washes who aren't having any fun. They are victims of modern slavery who aren't able to leave. Encourage them to use the app next time they go to a car wash, to help the police to see how big this problem is, and help them to rescue the victims.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

These activities could be used in Sunday School or Cheder, or in a joint interfaith youth session between communities.

Explain to the children that today are going to talk about modern slavery in hand car washes. Modern slavery is when someone is forced to do a job that they don't want to do. Some people are forced to work in hand car washes when they don't want to. They have to clean cars all day but they don't get paid properly for their work.

Inequality game

Hide 30 tennis balls around the room before the session (if you have a large group you may want to increase this number). Split the children into two teams and tell them that for each ball their team finds they will get one sweet or chocolate each (or a different, non-edible prize!).

Get each team to sit in a line and put a bucket at the top of each line. Each team can send one person at a time to find a ball, and as soon as they have found a ball and put it in their bucket, the next person can go. Give them 2 minutes to find as many as they can.

At the end of the game, count up the balls, counting out the prizes at the same time. But before you give the teams their prizes, tell them that there are a few costs that they need to pay first.

You provided the balls so they will lose a sweet to pay for those, and one for the buckets too. One or two for any refreshments you are providing, remove a few more because you organised the game. Keep taking away sweets/prizes for made up reasons until there are barely any left.

Explain to the children that people who are modern slaves are often cheated out of their wages. They are promised a fair wage for their job, like the children were promised a prize, but then their employers cheat them and don't pay them what they promised. If they complain they might hurt them to stop them. Then redistribute the sweets and say if someone has

promised you a fair wage for your work and then doesn't give it to you, you can refuse to do any more work for them.

Video suggestions

If you are able to show a video, this would be a good one to show:

What do you see? by Unchosen (https://youtu.be/xWQBvKzaNnY) 2 minutes.

Unchosen, Films Against Slavery

Bible story

We're going to look at a Bible story. This story will show us the power of our hands and how we can use our hands to bless people, or hurt people.

In Genesis 37, we read about Joseph, who is one of the 12 sons of Jacob. Joseph keeps having dreams where he sees his brothers, his mum and his dad bowing down to him. Whenever he tells them about his dreams his brothers and his dad ask 'do you really think you will rule over us'? His brothers aren't very happy about this, and one day when they are all far away from home tending their father's flocks of sheep, they decide to get their own back. They sell him into slavery.

Ways to present the story:

- **A play:** Choose volunteers from your group to be the characters in the story. You need a Joseph, a Jacob, his brothers (maybe not all 11!), and some slave owners. Narrate the story at a slow pace,

leaving gaps for the volunteers to react to the action you have given them.

- **Read the Bible passages:** Ask volunteers from the group to read the Bible passage.
- **Using pictures:** Split the children into groups and ask each group to draw one of the key characters in each story.

Questions to ask about the stories

Why did Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery?

Were they right to do it? Was it fair?

What do you think Joseph's brothers should have done instead?

What do you think Joseph's life will be like in slavery? How do you think Joseph felt?

Craft

Give each child a piece of paper and a pen and ask them to draw round their hand. Alternatively you could use a clipart template of an outline of a hand. In the middle of the hand ask them to write or draw a picture of their favourite bit from the story.

Cut out the hands and arrange them in a circle on a big piece of paper. In the middle, write Genesis 37:27 'He is our brother, our own flesh'.

FURTHER WAYS TO BE INVOLVED

Thank you for reading CCJ's resource on Safe Car Washes, produced in partnership with the Clewer Initiative. We hope that you are interested in becoming more involved with the campaign to end modern slavery. Here are some further ways to become involved:

CCJ's Rabbi-Clergy Action Network aims to facilitate partnerships and opportunities for both rabbis and clergy to work together on social action and to foster dialogue. With members from 17 denominations all around the UK, we operate locally and nationally. If you would like to join the Rabbi-Clergy Action Network or would like more information, please email jessica.spencer@ccj.org.uk.

This **Mitzvah Day**, the Jewish community's day of social action, CCJ and the Clewer Initiative are helping synagogues and churches to come together by holding interfaith training events on how to tackle modern slavery. Please contact jessica.spencer@ccj.org.uk if your community is interested in holding an event.

The Clewer Initiative enables Church of England dioceses and wider church networks to develop strategies for detecting modern slavery in their communities and help provide victim support and care. For more information, see https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/.

René Cassin is a charity working to promote and protect universal human rights, drawing on Jewish experience and values. You can find out about their campaign on modern slavery and human trafficking at http://www.renecassin.org/category/slavery-and-trafficking/.

STOP THE TRAFFIK works to unite people around the world by inspiring, informing, equipping and mobilising communities to know what trafficking is, how to identify it, how to respond, and how to protect themselves. For more information, see https://www.stopthetraffik.org/.

We hope you found this resource helpful. Please be in touch with CCJ to let us know how you used it and how it went, at jessica.spencer@ccj.org.uk.

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