

# SUBmerge

## Turn to God

### Dive deep

Use these activities to wrap up last week's Bible readings.

#### Footprints in the sand

Get hold of the song 'Footprints in the sand' by Leona Lewis and play it to your group. You may also want to print out copies of the lyrics for them to look at (links to these will be on the **SUBmerge** website). Then read out the famous 'Footprints in the sand' reading. You may like to purchase a bookmark for each young person in your group with this reading on it. In small groups, encourage the young people to pray for tough situations they each face at the moment. Also, invite anyone who would like the opportunity to speak and pray with a leader to do so afterwards if they are going through a difficult time at the moment. You may like to conclude by singing one or two songs that remind us that God is always with us through all the struggles of life. For example, 'Faithful One' by Brian Doerksen or 'I'm Gonna Trust in God' by Steve Earl.

#### Taking action

At more than one point during the week the young people have been encouraged to consider what they can do to make a difference in people's lives. As a group, think about these questions:

- >> How can we support each other when people in this group are going through a tough time?
- >> How can we support our friends and family when they're going through a tough time?
- >> How can we best support and encourage people who are unwell?
- >> How can we best help people who are starving?
- >> How can we reveal God's power and authority to the people around us?
- >> How can we help meet the needs of others? (Begin by discussing what the needs are in your local community.)

As part of this discussion ask the young people to share with the group what they found out from the 'Do it' activity on 29 April about Christian relief agencies working in areas affected by famine.

Conclude this time by deciding one or two things you are going to do as a group. For example, pray regularly for a particular charity, sponsor a child or raise money for a relief organisation.

# Knocked about, not out!

MJ09 Week 1: Psalms 9–15

## For you

The Psalms are a collection of poetic songs that express the feelings of the writer. They discuss personal life experience, written in the midst of both good times and bad. Throughout, there is a pervading knowledge of God's presence and support. Which of your feelings does the psalmist mirror in his writing?

## For the young people

These life experiences are still contemporary in twenty-first century society. The aim of this week's readings is to enable the young people to identify with and learn from them that God is with them in the complexities of life.

## GRID it

*theGRID* this week looks at Genesis 29–31. In these passages Jacob learns that God is with him in life's 'ups and downs' which links well with what the young people will learn through studying the Psalms in their **SU**merge notes this week.

# Dive in

Use these activities to introduce this week's theme.

## Write it

We started to look at the book of Psalms last month when background information was given and themes introduced. Hand out paper and pens to the young people and ask them to write down what they remember. How would they describe the book of Psalms? Ask group members to share their ideas.

## Do it

Read the introductory **Dive in** from the young people's notes as a lead in to the 'Do it' exercise. As a group activity this can be approached in a slightly different way. Pre-prepare a chart displaying the 'weather' graph from page 1. Explain the analogy of the weather conditions being as changeable and unpredictable as our feelings. Ask group members to collectively decide on 'feelings' that match the weather conditions and get them to add them to the chart.

Give them the opportunity to plot their current mood on the weather graph.

## Read it

Ask for two volunteers to read Psalm 9 to the group in two parts: first – verses 1–10; then second – verses 11–20. At the end of each section, ask group members to suggest where the writer's feelings might fall on the graph. Re-read the following verses – vs 1–2, vs 9–11, and vs 13–14 – and then plot them on the chart.

Conclude by saying that David, the psalmist, responded to trouble with praise. This is because he knew the Lord. In verse 10 it says, 'Those who know the Lord trust him, because he will not leave those who come to him'. You may like to use these words as a prayer together asking God to help you learn more about how to trust him during the 'ups and downs' of life.

# Day-to-day contact

This week, get in touch with your group by email, phone or text and ask them these questions (in your own words):

### 6 May 2009

Have you contacted any of your Christian mates today?

### 7 May 2009

How do you feel about being honest with God?

Find the **Dive deep** activities for this session at the start of Week 2 leaders' notes.