



## Living Hope Community Listening

### ***'Expect Great Things from God; Attempt Great Things for God'***

All over the world, Scripture Union is attempting an awesome, immense and challenging exercise – listening with expectation to children and young people, and those who nurture them. We believe that this listening exercise is the first of its kind. Whilst there are many statistics looking at global 'well-being', few have set out to listen to people qualitatively as Scripture Union is doing. SU is going deeper than statistics and tick boxes to explore what is on hearts and minds, finding out what really matters to people and what their hopes and fears are.

The listening is focussed on the subject of Hope. Children and young people represent the future. Whatever situation they might be in around the world, for young people to look positively towards the future they need hope. Hope is not just wishful thinking about a better life, it is a real belief that a positive future lies ahead. Hope helps people to overcome current challenges.

Scripture Union is listening to people in small groups, and we hope that those listening locally will be inspired and enlightened by what they hear. One challenge is how to retain the richness

of the local listening. We want to hear what God might be saying within individual communities, but also to harness that richness on a global scale. We want to hear what God might be saying to Scripture Union in each region and globally. To do this we have produced a guide for listening and exploring the subject of hope in the many global situations.

The listening exercise is based on Cantril's Ladder, which was developed specifically to look at the well-being of children and young people worldwide. Today it is being used by many organisations, including the World Health Organisation which is measuring the well-being of children in 43 countries. Cantril's Ladder is also a basis for the Gallop Well-Being Index which measures 'life evaluation', grouping people into 'thriving', 'struggling' or 'suffering'.

Through a series of listening groups worldwide, Scripture Union will be:

- Exploring the greatest hopes and worst fears for children and young people
- Finding out about what their lives are like now, including what matters to them and their relationships with others
- Listening to what their hopes and fears are for the next few years, and exploring what fills young people with hope or hopelessness

- Hearing what they think about God and their relationship with God
- Exploring the relationship between God and hope
- Discussing what God and young people might want to say to each other, and what God might be saying to Scripture Union

Through this listening exercise we hope to learn more about how God is at work in the world with children and young people, and to hear what He might be saying to Scripture Union.

After listening to the world, we will enter a time of discernment and listening to each other – thinking about how and what we have heard can guide Scripture Union in sharing the living hope that we find in Christ.

This is an awesome, immense and challenging exercise, but we are 'Expecting Great Things from God' as we 'Attempt Great Things for God'.

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