

# CHILDREN'S MOMENT

*Constructed to be used in your own words, or to be followed as a script, this children's moment illustrates some of the difficulties that arise from lack of access to clean water. Please adapt for your setting and particular community. The script and design may be adjusted to fit your virtual or hybrid worship context. You might recruit a family member to record themselves carrying the bucket, or experiment with other creative ways of carrying the bucket away from the camera to show relative distance.*

## THEME

Week of Compassion helps “let love flow” by providing clean water via wells. Wells significantly increase the prosperity of a community AND allow for women and children, especially, to participate in education, commercial work, and rest!

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- An affirming listening ear, eager to engage children's ideas!
- A large bucket with a handle, filled about 1/2 way with rocks or weights OR a large 3-5 gallon jug filled with water and sealed so it won't spill. Total weight should be 33-55 pounds.
- Week of Compassion coinboxes to pass out.

## SCRIPT SUGGESTION

Do you know where your water comes from? Yes, of course! For a lot of us it comes from the tap! How many places in your house can you name me where you can get clean water?

*[Children might answer: bathroom sink, kitchen sink, hose on the outside, bathtub, shower, toilet (eww, but true), refrigerator dispenser, etc.]*

Right! And what are some of the things you need all that clean water for? How many can we name?

*[Allow time to list all the things clean water is needed for. Highlight the basic needs like cooking, and especially keeping clean hands to prevent disease!]*

All of those are really good and important uses of water! How far in your house do you have to walk to get clean water? 10'? 30'?

*[Let the children show you or tell you].*

Phew! That's a good thing because we need water for all those things you mentioned!

But not everyone has it that easy. Not everyone has a tap. What does a family do if they don't have any clean water in their house?

*[Make space for their answers: bottled water? Borrow some from a friend? Walk until you find some? Affirm each answer]*

All of those are good answers, but in too many places in the world, NO ONE in the whole town has water. Every family has to send someone to carry water from wherever it can be found, and sometimes that is a LONG WAY. I've got [“water”] or [“some weights to represent how heavy a full water bucket would be”] here. I wonder if anyone could help me carry it all the way down the aisle and back. This represents about 5 gallons or 20 litres of water. If you were VERY CAREFUL and didn't waste a drop, that might be enough for 4 people each day.

*[Invite the children to try to lift the bucket, but be very careful not to squash your helpers. Give them all a try at lifting it. Now help them move it down the aisle. If you get tired, enlist some parishioners. Have them help carry the heavy bucket even for a few steps. Bring everyone and the bucket back up to the front]*

In many of the places where Week of Compassion helps people, they have to carry this much water an average of 3.7 MILES every day just to live.<sup>1</sup> Every day!

*[Allow time for reactions]*

It takes so much effort that sometimes the whole family has to help, including small people like you! It takes hours! If you are getting water, you can't play. You can't go to school. Your mom or your dad can't work or earn money during that time. The whole family has to put everything on hold. But when we all contribute to Week of Compassion, we work with whole communities to help put in a well! Then people only have to walk to the end of the block! It just takes minutes! Some communities even put pipes right to the houses just like yours! That would make a huge difference, wouldn't it! You've carried this bucket and we got tired just up and down the aisle here, so you know!

*[Ask the adults who helped carry to affirm that they know, too! Next, pass out Week of Compassion coinboxes to children and families OR arrange for them to be given out at an appropriate time.]*

Here is a special bank so you can help "let love flow" in all the places where people need wells. At home, I'd like you to think about all the times you use water and how easily it flows. And with your family, maybe each night at dinner, or when you have breakfast, think and pray together about how you want to make a difference. Maybe you want to put in a dollar for every tap you have in your house. Or maybe you want

to count all the times you've used water each day and add an amount of money for every time. I bet you can think of a lot of creative ways to help. It's a way of being mindful of all that we have, being grateful, and helping others. And the water does so much more than just keep people from being thirsty! With a well, families can grow food in gardens. With a well, children don't have to walk miles and miles carrying water. They can go to school! Adults can have time to work, or start businesses, or have more time with their children. Everyone benefits when love flows!

*[Share any details about when your community will be receiving the offering, and when and how they should return the coinboxes]*

So now that we know how much work it is, can we pray a blessing together on these banks and on the offering we'll receive with them? What do we hope God will do?

*[Allow for all their prayer requests. They may say "help people get water" or "make people's lives easier." Be prepared for anything, but all prayers are welcome!]*

Very good! Let's pray:

*[If you are comfortable doing so, incorporate the specific requests and wording offered by the children in your prayer with them. And/Or you may wish to use this prayer:]*

Dear Lord, we are feeling very lucky that we don't have to carry heavy water long distances. Please help us to help everyone who does! Please help us to let love flow, so that all of your people can thrive! This we ask in Jesus name, and everyone says... "AMEN!"

*[Encourage the children and adults to participate by saying the last "Amen" together.]*

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<sup>1</sup> "10 FACTS ON WOMEN AND WATER" <https://waterfortheages.org/>. In Asia and Africa, the average distance that water must be carried is 3.7 miles, and is borne mostly by women and children. Some distances are much longer, requiring as much as 2/3 of waking hours to source the water needed for daily food and cleaning.