

Lots of talent auction

God has given us all talents – maybe not piles of silver – but abilities and possessions that each of us has for a reason.

This Harvest we're asking you to turn your talents to making small miracles possible for some of the world's poorest people with a Lots of talent auction. Ask everyone to contribute 'lots' – things they can do or give that might enrich someone else's life; the money others bid for these will enrich harvests all around the world.

How to organise your Lots of talent auction

Before

Choose your venue and set a date. Set a ticket price that will cover the costs of putting on the event – such as refreshments.

Publicise your event. Use your newsletter, noticeboard, emails and announcements to let everyone know it's happening. Maybe you can get a mention in your local paper?

Ask people to contribute their Talent Lots in advance. Remember, it needn't be anything that costs money. Talents might be an object (an unused and unwanted gift) or a place (your garden). Let your imaginations run wild – here are some ideas to get you started:

- bake a cake
- take photos at a special event
- a haircut
- decorate a room
- use of a holiday home
- baby sit
- wash a car
- email or Facebook lessons
- music lessons
- a bonfire party

Even if you're having your talent auction at church, encourage friends who may not be members of the congregation to offer a Talent Lot or come and bid.

You might want to use the *Enriching Harvest* recipes from this pack for your refreshments – choose from Indian sweets and mango or banana lassi.

Make sure you have secured a suitably witty and assertive auctioneer; get them to dress up in a bow-tie and borrow a gavel. You'll also need enough helpers to be sure things run smoothly and clear up afterwards – especially if you will be serving refreshments.

During

Make sure everyone knows why they're there. Use the presentations available with this pack as an introduction to MRDF's work and put up the posters.

Give guests the chance to consider the lots on offer before bidding starts – perhaps with a catalogue or display boards. Show details of what the lot consists of, who is offering it and any restrictions (eg the number of people or area).

Have each lot's details, including contact information of the person offering it, on cards that the auctioneer can read from and then give to the successful bidder. You may want to set a reserve price for each lot.

Ask people to use a Gift Aid envelope when they pay for the lots they buy if they are a UK taxpayer – this will make every £1 they pay worth £1.28 – at no extra cost. Each *Enriching Harvest* pack comes with 25 Gift Aid envelopes – but you can order more by calling 020 7467 5132 or emailing mrdf@methodistchurch.org.uk.

Take photos! We'd love to see how your event goes.

After

Get the money that was raised to MRDF as soon as possible so we can set it to work in the world's poorest communities right away!

As soon as you can, send in:

- any cheques made out directly to MRDF
- a single cheque for all the cash you have raised, payable to MRDF
- all the signed Gift Aid declarations
- a completed donation form (from the *Enriching Harvest* pack) or a cover note that breaks down the donation as per the following example:

Total donations	£274
Value of Gift Aided donations	£196
Value of non-Gift Aided donations	£78

In this example the total amount sent to MRDF would be £274 – but it will be worth £328.88 once we have claimed the Gift Aid on it – an extra £54.88 to enrich harvests with!

And don't forget to tell us about your event and send photos if you have any. You can email us at mrdf@methodistchurch.org.uk.

Make a night of it!

The PowerPoint presentations on the CD-ROM or website can be used to tell your guests about the small miracles they are making possible. You could also use any of the drama, games, quiz and recipes from *Enriching Harvest* to entertain your guests. Visit www.mrdf.org.uk/harvest or see the *Enriching Harvest* booklet.