

A photograph of a brick building under renovation. The building is covered in scaffolding and wooden planks. The sky is clear and blue. The title 'Pray For New York' is written in large white serif font across the top half of the image.

Pray For New York

PRAYER GUIDE

HOPE HOPE
FOR
NEW
YORK

Pray For...



Victims of Trafficking

It is estimated that 20-36 million people globally are victims of human trafficking, and New York City is one of the largest destinations for trafficked victims entering the United States. A form of modern-day slavery, human and sex trafficking is a \$150 billion industry worldwide. Traffickers use violence, threats, deception, debt bondage, and other manipulative tactics to force people to engage in commercial sex or provide services against their will. Their employers exert such physical or psychological control that victims believe they have no other choice but to continue working for that employer. Vulnerable populations are frequently targeted by traffickers, including immigrants, runaway and homeless youth, and victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, war, or social discrimination.

PRAY

- that those who are caught in human trafficking would find safety from their abusers. Pray that they would find emotional, physical, and spiritual healing.
- that survivors of trafficking would be provided with the resources they need to start a new life. Pray they are able to find a safe home and meaningful work in order to take care of themselves and their families.
- for the continual protection of those enslaved—and that justice will be brought to their enslavers.
- for Restore NYC as they work to rescue victims of sex trafficking, care for and shelter women in crisis, and provide a fresh start for women. Would they be resourced and supported in their work.



PSALM 10:17

*O Lord, you hear the
desire of the afflicted;
you will strengthen
their heart; you will
incline your ear*



The Homeless

In recent years, homelessness in New York City has reached the highest levels since the Great Depression. Each night, thousands of unsheltered homeless people sleep on New York City streets, in the subway system, and in other public spaces, with the large majority being people living with mental illness or other severe health problems. More than 60,000 homeless New Yorkers sleep in the NYC municipal shelter system each night, with families making up more than three-quarters of the shelter population. African American and Latino New Yorkers are disproportionately affected by homelessness—approximately 58 percent of shelter residents are African American and 31 percent are Latino. The primary cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing.

PRAY

- for all the men, women, and children who have no place to call home. Pray they find shelter and access to adequate food and health care.
- for the removal of any physical or emotional barriers homeless individuals face in finding a stable home.
- that men and women experiencing homelessness would find shelter where they would feel known and loved and establish dignity—and ultimately would learn that their identity is secure in Christ.
- for the following organizations as they serve the homeless on a daily basis: St. Paul's House, Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Don't Walk By, MAPC-SJ Shelter, All Angels' Church, Back on My Feet, Bowery Mission Medical, Isaiah 58, The Inner City Ministry of CRU, and Habitat for Humanity.



ISAIAH 58:7

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; When you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?



The Elderly

Approximately 998,000 New York City residents are 65 and older, and that number is expected to increase by 35 percent in the next two decades, to 1.3 million in 2030. The poverty rate among older adults in New York City has continued to increase (now 19.1 percent), even as the national poverty rates for seniors has declined (now 9.5 percent). Seniors in New York face a number of issues. Nearly 120,000 people age 60+ have experienced elder abuse, with many of those suffering from financial abuse. Some 31 percent of seniors living in NYC are living alone, and 15 percent of New York senior households have an annual income of less than \$10,000 and 36 percent less than \$20,000.

PRAY

- for our elderly neighbors who are living by themselves, without family close by, and experiencing the difficulties of aging in a big city.
- that the elderly would find community whether interacting together at a center or in a local church amongst all ages.
- that we would not forget the many elderly who can't do for themselves—that we would come alongside them to care for and support their needs.
- that loneliness, bad health, and unsafe living conditions for seniors would be addressed and improved for the flourishing of these individuals.
- for local centers like Upper East Side Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, Project FIND, Gifted Hands, and Citymeals-on-Wheels, that they would be resourced to provide meals, shelter, and community to our elderly neighbors.

ISAIAH 46:4

Even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.





People with Disabilities

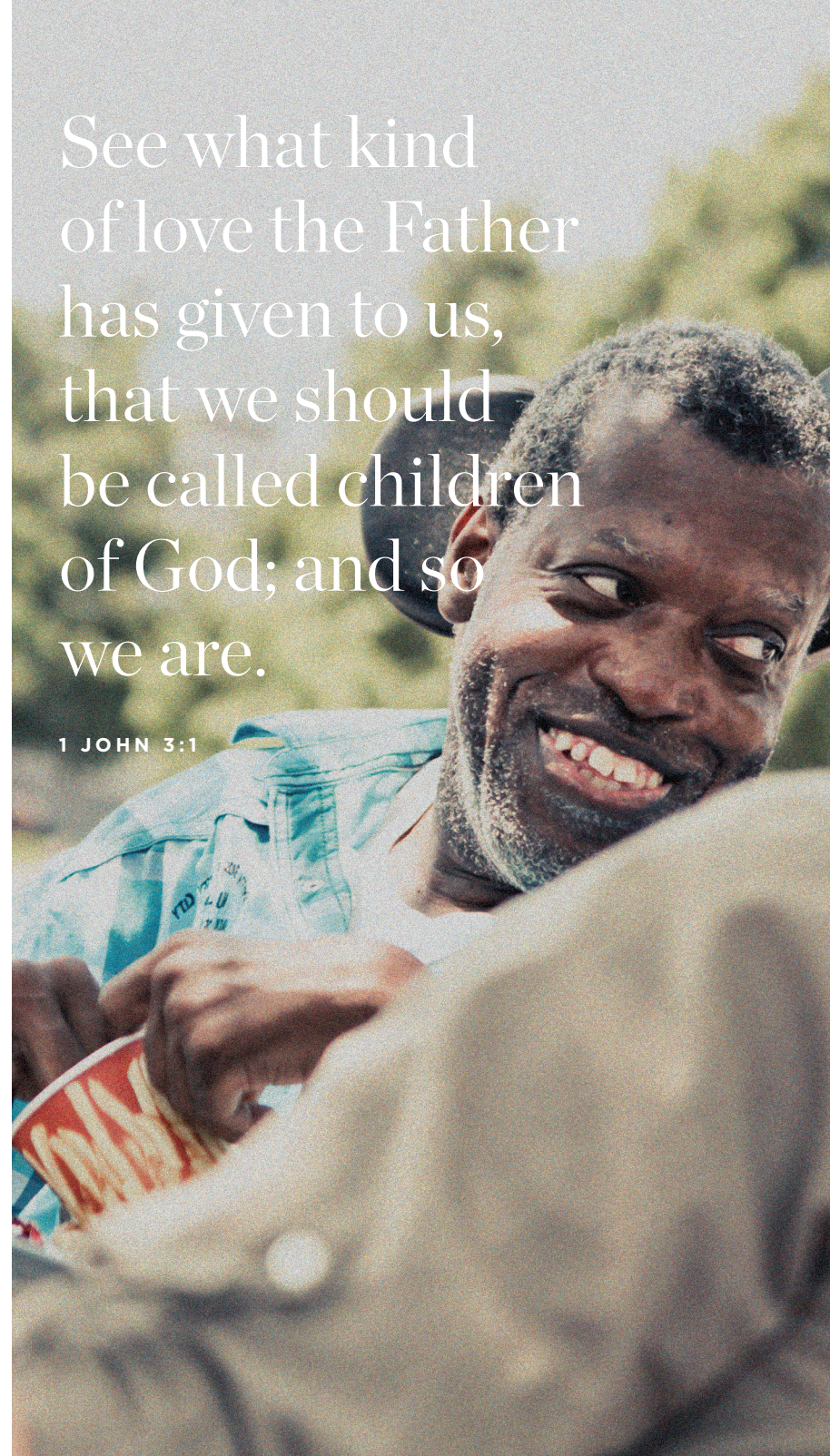
New York City's Human Rights Law defines a person with a disability as anyone having a physical, medical, mental, or psychological impairment, or a history of such impairment, that limits any system of the body. Nearly 900,000 people in New York City live with disabilities. Lack of accessible transportation, unequal education, unemployment and underemployment, lack of affordable/accessible housing, poor health care, and lack of access to the internet are among the common barriers people with disabilities face. Only 41 percent of students with disabilities graduated high school in 2015, while 70.5 percent of students without disabilities did. And while the general employment rate is 70 percent, only 29 percent of people with disabilities are employed full- or part-time.

PRAY

- for adults and youth in our city who are living with mental and physical disabilities—that they would know their worth and importance in our society because of genuine friendships and relationships within their communities.
- that schools, churches, and institutions would seek to support these individuals and their families through staff training, wheelchair accessibility, and collaborative partnerships.
- that organizations like Center for All Abilities, Do For One, and Young Life Capernaum would be resourced to bring awareness to the needs of and services to our neighbors living with disabilities.

See what kind
of love the Father
has given to us,
that we should
be called children
of God; and so
we are.

1 JOHN 3:1





The Formerly Incarcerated

The United States comprises five percent of the world's population, but 25 percent of the world's prisoners. Each year, approximately 10 million people are released from county jails back into their communities, and more than 650,000 are released from Federal and State prisons annually. More than two-thirds of those released will be rearrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years. Upon returning to New York City, the formerly incarcerated often struggle with substance abuse, lack of education and employment skills, limited housing options, and mental health issues. They rely heavily on their families for housing and financial support—families for whom economic security is often a day-to-day uncertainty.

PRAY

- that formerly incarcerated men and women would be welcomed back by friends and family with love and grace. Pray that severed relationships would be mended and strengthened.
- that they would find employment and that employers would be fair and gracious in their treatment of them.
- that awareness of the issues surrounding our punitive systems would be resolved through your wisdom and guidance, and that we would administer justice through a fair lense.
- for organizations like Defy Ventures and Exodus Transitional Community as they provide support to the formerly incarcerated. Pray their work would have a lasting impact on individual lives and neighborhoods.

ISAIAH 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.



Immigrants

Since the 1965 passage of the landmark Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments, New York's foreign-born population has more than doubled, to 3 million people and 37 percent of the city's population. New York City's immigrant population faces many obstacles, and those are exacerbated for the undocumented. Undocumented immigrants struggle with finishing high school, with a dropout rate of about 50 percent. While the city has taken steps to help undocumented youth get jobs and pursue higher education, New York City's aging immigrant population is slipping into poverty. Just below half of the city's population over age 65 is foreign-born, but two-thirds of elderly people living in poverty are immigrants.

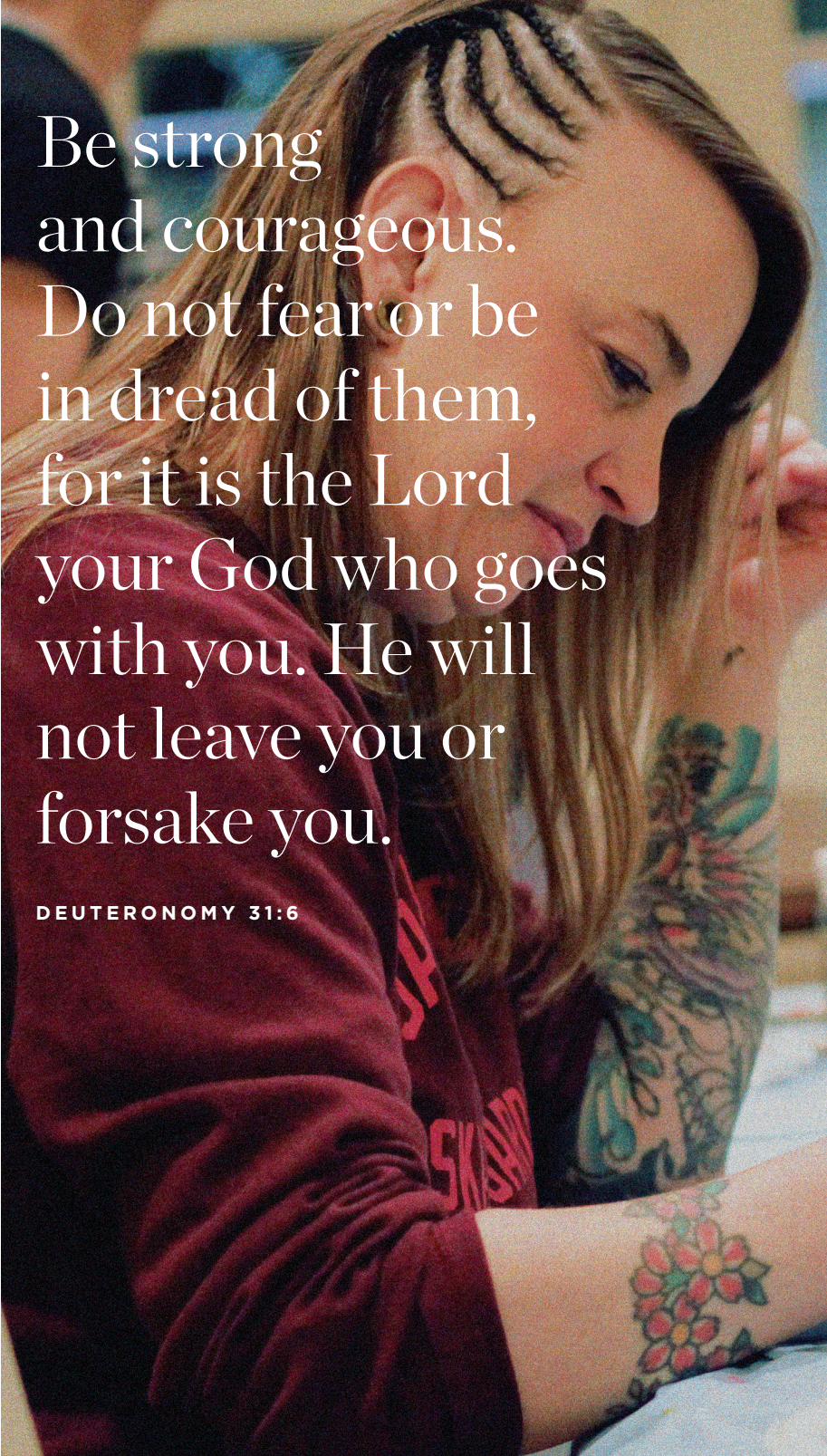
PRAY

- for strength as immigrants to New York City transition into a new culture and way of life. Pray that they would be surrounded by encouraging neighbors and find jobs to support their families.
- for children of immigrants, that they would be protected and well cared for as their parents start new jobs and they attend new schools.
- that immigrants would be connected with Gospel-driven churches that would support them as they adjust to a new place. Pray for our government and for fair treatment of immigrants in the legal system.
- that organizations such as the Brooklyn Arab American Friendship Center, The Open Door, The Father's Heart, and Living Waters Fellowship would support the integration of immigrants, while encouraging their unique cultures to flourish here.



LEVITICUS 19:34

You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.



Be strong
and courageous.
Do not fear or be
in dread of them,
for it is the Lord
your God who goes
with you. He will
not leave you or
forsake you.

DEUTERONOMY 31:6



Vulnerable Women

New York City is home to 4.4 million female residents (52 percent of the population). A woman gives birth in NYC every 4.4 minutes. In 2012, there were 73,815 abortions in NYC—with Black and Hispanic abortions comprising 73 percent of the total abortions. Among all women in NYC, single mothers are the most economically insecure. Close to 300,000 households in the city are headed by single mothers, and 40 percent of those households are impoverished, compared to 13 percent of two-parent households. Additionally, women disproportionately face domestic violence, with 1 in 3 women experiencing physical or sexual violence during their lifetime.

PRAY

- that women facing unexpected pregnancies would find loving care. Pray that they would ultimately choose life for the child and be hopeful about their future after giving birth.
- that women facing domestic abuse would be brave and know their true value. Pray that they would confide in someone they trust about the dangers they are facing at home.
- for organizations like Avail and The Bowery Mission Women's Center as they seek to provide safe places for women to find emotional, physical, and spiritual healing.



Those Seeking Free Legal Aid

Free legal and counseling services available to low-income New Yorkers are limited and often inadequate. As a result, each year more than 2.3 million low-income New Yorkers have to navigate the complexities of the justice system in disputes over the most basic necessities of life without the assistance of counsel. For every 10,000 people living in poverty in New York, there are only three civil legal aid attorneys available to take on their cases. As a result, only 20 percent of the legal needs of poor New Yorkers are being met. Free legal aid can mean a home, a chance to work, benefits, and more for low-income New Yorkers.

PRAY

- that lawyers and legal professionals representing these individuals would approach these cases with wisdom and compassion.
- that families and individuals in troubling legal situations would be at peace, resting in the assurance that one day the Lord will make all things right.
- for Open Hands Legal Services as they provide low-income families and individuals access to free legal aid so the essentials of life would be met.

PROVERBS 31:8

Open your mouth for the mute, For the rights of all who are destitute.



Children and Youth

More than 1.8 million children live in New York City, with 500,000 of them living below the poverty line. Nearly 40 percent of youth in the Bronx and 30 percent in Brooklyn live in an impoverished family. While 10 percent of all American students will drop out of high school, 37 percent of New York City public school students will. Only 21 percent of NYC 8th graders can read proficiently, and only 26 percent can do math proficiently.

PRAY

- that youth would be encouraged to work hard in school and that parents or guardians would support their dreams for a bright future.
- that NYC children would meet caring and loving mentors in the community who would act as positive role models and windows to the opportunities available in our city.
- that they would experience safe and nurturing relationships at home, and that their communities would be renewed by families coming together to make a better neighborhood for all.
- that organizations like Chinese Christian Herald Crusades, Graffiti, A House on Beekman, Mont Lawn City Camp, Morris Academy Mentoring Program, Operation Exodus, StreetSquash, Shiloh NYC, His Toy Store, and World Vision would be resourced to provide strong programs, healthy environments, and relational support to our kids and their families.



MARK 9:37

Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.




Those Experiencing Addiction

More than one million New Yorkers struggle with substance-use problems, and New York City has among the highest number of people using illicit drugs in the United States. Prescription drugs, including sedatives, painkillers, tranquilizers, and stimulants are the most-used substances, excluding marijuana use. In addition, NYC also has a high number of people (some 400,000) struggling with alcohol-use problems. A quarter of a million drug and alcohol users in New York City are enrolled in some type of rehabilitation and drug or alcohol treatment program.

PRAY

- for the many men and women recovering from various addictions in New York City. Pray that they would experience freedom and liberation from such debilitating diseases as alcoholism and drug addiction, and that they would find ultimate satisfaction in Christ.
- that the prevalence of illegal drug sales in this city would decrease and that law enforcement would respectfully and wisely restrict the usage of illegal drugs.
- for organizations such as the Bowery Mission Transitional Center, New York City Rescue Mission, Brooklyn Teen Challenge, and The Bridge as they provide services for men and women battling addiction. Pray that they would have every resource they need to serve these men and women well, and that they would celebrate successful recovery with them.



Therefore,
if anyone is in
Christ, he is a
new creation.
The old has passed
away; behold, the
new has come.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17



The Hungry

Since 2000, food costs have increased across New York City by 59 percent, while the median earnings of working adults have increased by only 17 percent. Due to the combined impact of low wages, government assistance cuts, and food inflation, one in five New York City children—about 403,780—suffered from food insecurity in 2012-2014. In that same time period, some 1.4 million New Yorkers lived in households that lacked sufficient food. Some 42 percent of NYC households lack the income needed to cover necessities like food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and health care, but earn too much to qualify for government assistance.

PRAY

- for the 1.4 million New Yorkers who suffer from food insecurity and/or hunger, unsure of where their next meal will come from.
- for jobs to employ single parents who are unable to provide food for their families. Pray that they would receive the support they need to provide for their children.
- that shelters and soup kitchens throughout the city, specifically The Bowery Mission, New York City Relief, and The Salvation Army, would be resourced to provide food for men, women, and children experiencing hunger. Pray that churches would come alongside these organizations to provide financial and volunteer resources, just as Jesus cares not only for the spiritual needs of his children but also the physical.

Isaiah 58:10
If you pour yourself
out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire
of the afflicted,
then shall your light
rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as
the noonday.



Foster Care Families

Children who spend time in foster care often face serious challenges later in life. Not only are they more likely to experience teen pregnancy, homelessness, incarceration, and mental health issues, but they are also less likely to complete their education or find employment. In New York City, nearly half of foster youth face unemployment upon aging out of the system. There are currently more than 9,000 New York City children in foster care and more than 1,000 children are adopted out of the system each year.

PRAY

- for families in crisis or struggling to make ends meet, that they would find the support from local church communities and the services from local organizations they need to thrive.
- for new moms and dads who are navigating parenting by themselves or for the first time to be able to provide for their babies and to receive guidance as they lead their families.
- for the children of these families, that their homes would be a safe and loving place, and that they would know the great love of the Father who cares deeply about the weak and vulnerable.
- for organizations like Safe Families for Children and Inwood House, that their services would give confidence and guidance to parents, bring comfort and joy to children, and establish encouraging community around these families.



Psalms 68:5
Father of the fatherless
and protector of
widows is God in his
holy habitation.

Learn More

The following sources were used to compile data and provide context on these issues:

January

Restore NYC: FY 2015 Gratitude Report

February

Coalition for the Homeless: Basic Facts About Homelessness

March

Center for an Urban Future: The New Face of New York's Seniors

Under the Radar: NYS Elder Abuse Prevalence Study

Census.gov

April

The Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York: ADA at 26 in New York City Report

May

Defy Ventures: The Problem

June

New York City Department of City Planning: The Newest New Yorkers

Center for an Urban Future: The New Face of New York's Seniors

Think Progress: Undocumented Youths

July

NYC.gov: Gender Briefs Report

NYCDOH: Summary of Vital Statistics 2012 The City of New York, Pregnancy Outcomes

United Nations: The World's Women 2015 Report

The NY Women's Foundation: Economic Security and Well-Being Index for Women in NYC

August

Open Hands Legal Services: The Civil Legal Aid Crisis

September

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

The Bowery Mission: Facts About At-Risk Youth in New York City

October

St. Jude Retreats: Alcohol and Drug Addiction Rates NYC

November

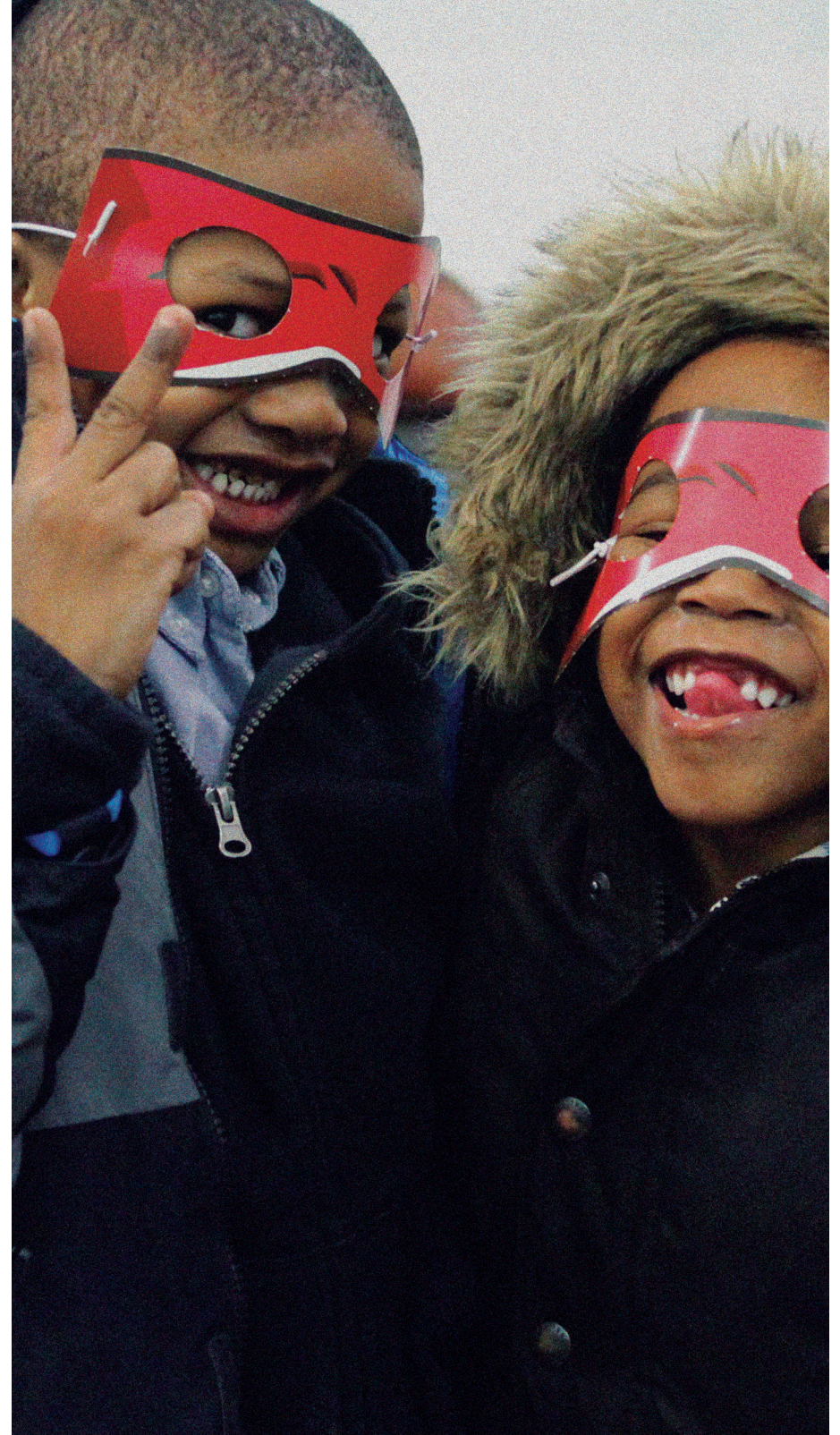
City Harvest: 2014 Self Sufficiency Standard Report

NYC Coalition Against Hunger: NYC Hunger Report, 2015

December

Center for Family Representation: Foster Care Facts

Photo Credits: Godwell Chan, Restore NYC, Do for One, Defy Ventures, The Open Door, Brittney Julian, Open Hands Legal Services, A House on Beekman, Brooklyn Teen Challenge, The Bowery Mission, Safe Families for Children





Join us in praying for our city at hfny.org/prayer

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