

Create a Warmhearted Home

MAKE YOUR HOME A LITTLE BIT OF HEAVEN ON EARTH.



HOME IS WHERE WE can experience a taste of heaven on earth, no matter what kind of house we live in or whom we share it with. With a little care we can infuse our homes with Christian values and create places that soothe and refresh. My Danish relatives call this experience *hygge* (“hooga”), which is roughly translated as a happy, friendly, simple, and cozy sense of togetherness. (But it’s much quicker to say *hygge*!)

Creating a warmhearted home isn’t just about making your house more attractive. It involves helping everyone who lives there to feel happier and calmer and less likely to feel anxious or quarrelsome.

Read together Proverbs 24:3, 4. Then, as a couple or family, make a list of your home values. You might include such things as warm welcomes, togetherness, joy, comfort, peace, helpfulness, gratitude, and an atmosphere of simplicity and beauty that reflects the presence of God. Then blend these values into your home so that they create an atmosphere of love.

WARM WELCOMES (Romans 15:7)

The response you experience from others the minute you step through your front door is very important. Do people welcome you, hug you, help you bring in the groceries, or sit down with you and chat about your day? What kind of welcome would each person like? What can you do to make your homecomings a little more warm and joyful?

The Wilson family has a welcome ritual. Whenever anyone arrives home, everyone else stops what they’re doing for five minutes. They sit down together, light candles, and take time to reconnect.

When my husband comes home at the end of a busy evening, we sip fruit tea, share a square of chocolate, and talk about our day. It’s a tiny little thing, but it keeps us connected and gently slows us down for bedtime.

Pastor Jack asks everyone in his family the same questions every evening: “Where did you see God in action today?” and “How did you show God’s love to someone today?” These questions help everyone to look for God in unexpected places and to find creative ways to show kindness to others.

TOGETHERNESS (Psalm 133:1)

Recent research has helped us to understand the importance of eating together. It’s more than just feeding the family. It’s a time to talk about your day, discuss your ideas and your values, share your experiences, be thankful to God, celebrate the good things that have happened, and comfort each other when sad things have happened. Eating several family meals each week helps protect teenagers from all kinds of peer pressure and negative influences.

One family shares, “We make our family mealtimes screen-free and drop all the gadgets in a basket. We light low candles all year round because they make us feel more peaceful. Everyone has to spend at least five minutes helping to make the meal and at least five minutes helping to clear up. And we try to make that time cozy and peaceful too.”

“We installed a woodburning stove in the family room. It draws us together in the winter, and we all want to be close to the warmth. We don’t have a TV in the room, just a pile of our favorite family games and a stack of good books.”

JOY (Philippians 4:4)

Tell each other about the happiest moment in your day, and thank God for the experience.

Find natural things that bring you joy, such as flowers, interesting seeds, beautiful shells, rocks, and photos of nature, and arrange them in your home.

Collect favorite Bible verses and quotes. Create small posters and pictures that include the quotes, or look for inspirational printables to download. Place them around your home where they can inspire you every day.

Share the funniest thing you saw, did, or heard during the day. Watch funny video clips of animals, children, or Christian comedians.

COMFORT (Proverbs 31:21, 22)

Create a home where you enter and breathe a sigh of relief, because just being there comforts your heart.

Add softening touches to your home and make it a comforting place to be: vintage quilts, soft woolen throws, white embroidered linens, and hand-stitched pillows. Natural materials such as wood, ceramic, and glass are more pleasant to use than plastic. Bake homemade bread and simmer warming soups to make your home smell comforting.

PEACE (1 Samuel 25:6)

Flickering candles soothe our stress. Battery-operated tea lights and strings of fairy lights can also add a glimmering sparkle.

“I feel much more peaceful when my home is tidier,” says Julia. “It doesn’t have to be clinically perfect, just neat. Whenever a person leaves a room, they have to leave it tidier. They pick up their stuff and take it to their room, or they carry something to the kitchen and stack it in the dishwasher. All these little things help to make our home a nicer place for everyone to live.”

“We’ve decided not to yell in our house,” explains Heather. “It’s so much nicer to find each person and talk to them face-to-face, even when we want to tell them dinner’s ready! In fact, sometimes we whisper in their ears instead of yelling, and it’s made our home a kinder and gentler place to be.”

HELPFULNESS (Galatians 6:2)

If we’re struggling on our own, we often feel sad, lonely, and even resentful. But when someone offers to help us, it feels like we’ve been given an incredible gift!

Do chores together. Offer to help each other with something challenging for five to 10 minutes. Make it fun to help in the home, bake pizza, and create a positive atmosphere around teamwork. Doing things together also helps to build our children’s confidence and character.

GRATITUDE (Psalm 107:8, 9)

“We decided that we weren’t paying enough attention to gratitude in our home,” Dave shares. “Every day God blesses us with more gifts and treats than we can count, even when times are hard, and we hardly ever thank Him for everything. We have a large chalkboard in our kitchen, and everyone writes or draws on it anything they want to thank God for. But we’re not allowed to repeat the same thing twice in a week! It’s helped us become more aware of God’s gifts.”

He adds, “Sometimes we go on a gratitude walk through our home. We have to find at least 20 things to thank God for in each room before we move on!”

TIME TO REFLECT

- What are your favorite tips for creating a warm-hearted home?
- What difference does it make to you and your family when you grow the *hygge* in your home?
- How can your home be a blessing to everyone who lives there and everyone who walks through the door? **7**

Karen Holford is director of Family Ministries for the Trans-European Division.

**ELLEN WHITE’S
WARMHEARTED
WORDS**

“Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness”
(The Adventist Home, p. 16).

“Troubles may invade, but these are the lot of humanity. Let patience, gratitude, and love keep sunshine in the heart, though the day may be ever so cloudy”
(The Ministry of Healing, p. 393).

“The home may be plain, but it can always be a place where cheerful words are spoken and kindly deeds are done, where courtesy and love are abiding guests”
(The Adventist Home, p. 18).