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**Children’s Address**

**Weathering the Storm:**

Gather together some of the following items and put them in a large bag:

*Warm hat, Scarf, Gloves, Umbrella, Raincoat, Wellington Boots, Sun hat, Sun cream, Flip Flops*

Did anyone have look at the weather forecast today before they came to church? What about your parents, do they like to check the weather forecast?

I brought a bag of things with me today so that I’m prepared for whatever kind of weather comes my way! What kind of weather do you think this would be useful in? [pull out the umbrella].

That’s right, this would be useful if it rains. Did you know that in some countries people carry umbrellas when it’s really hot and sunny too because it gives them a bit of shade.

What about these? [pull out the gloves]

That’s right these are good for cold weather, maybe if it’s snowing outside.

Would these be good for the snow? [pull out the Flip Flops]

No, you’d get really cold toes if you wore those out in the snow.

Have you ever heard someone say that there is no such thing as bad weather, but only the wrong clothes?

What they mean by that is that whatever the weather as long as you have brought the right clothing, boots, gloves, hats, umbrellas and all the rest then you can be ready for it. Although personally I think that whoever says there is no such thing as bad weather, has never been on a camping holiday!

It’s not just in Ireland that we can get bad weather. I want to tell you about a country called Ethiopia which is in Africa. In Ethiopia it’s normally hot and dry from September to March each year and then they get more rainfall from July to September. But, more recently the dry part of the year has been getting longer and longer because the climate is changing.

For many people in Ethiopia this is really serious, because without rain it means the ground dries up and plants don’t grow properly, so it’s very hard for people to grow enough food to eat. Also during the dry season water in rivers, streams and wells dries up and so it’s hard for animals and people to get enough to drink.

Also, when the rain eventually does come – it can be so heavy that it floods the land and washes away the soil.

This year the Presbyterian World Development Appeal is going to be supporting people in Ethiopia through another church called the Ethiopian Evangelical Church. Jesus told us that we should love God and love our neighbour as ourselves.

Matthew 22:37-39

***36****“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”*

***37****Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’****38****This is the first and greatest commandment.****39****And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.”*

We want to put this into practice by loving those in need wherever they are in the world and this is what the Ethiopian Evangelical Church are doing for people in their own country.

They are working with people in Ethiopia to help them to be prepared for whatever the weather brings their way, whether it is long periods of dry weather or really heavy rain.

They are teaching people how to grow plants that can cope with the dry soil and that don’t need as much water, they are helping people to look after the land. They are also teaching people how to look after other animals like chicken, goats and cows. They also give people seeds so they can grow new food crops like potatoes, coffee and avocados.

All these things help them to be better prepared for the storms they might face, whatever the weather might bring.

One person who has been helped is Tigist Melese – as a result of the training that she received she says that she can provide “healthy food for our children” and now her children are healthy and safe. With the extra money that she has earnt she plans to put a better roof on her house and to pay for her children to go to school.

This is what we want for all people around the world. That just like we are able to choose the right clothes to prepare us for the storms or the heat that we might face when we go out the front door of our houses. We want to help people around the world to be prepared for the difficulties they may face so that everyone can be healthy and safe like Tigist’s children are now.

**Photographs of Tigist Melese at work and with family:**







