

# GaMBLiNG: RiChEs OR PoVeRtY?

Explain that you are going to experiment with gambling. Distribute **play money**, **bingo cards** and **bingo tokens** to each group member. Provide a *small* amount of money (\$200-300) to some members and a *large* amount of money (\$2,000-4,000) to others. Each bingo card costs \$100, and players may buy and play as many cards as they wish or can afford. Play the game. For each round, the first person to complete bingo wins all the cash paid for that round.

Play at least six rounds before discussing:

■ Who is "broke"? Who is "wealthy"?

■ In what way are we "gambling"? What difference would real money make?

■ If you won money, how did you feel? How did winning affect your desire to play again?

■ If you only lost money, how did you feel? How did losing affect your desire to continue playing?

■ Imagine that the play money represented our actual wealth. Who took the biggest "gamble," the wealthy or the poor? Explain. Who risked their shelter, food and clothing, the wealthy or the poor? Explain.

■ Consider God's role in gambling. How does our bingo game demonstrate trust in God? in self? in "chance"? in money? How is God involved when we play the lottery? when we feed slot machines? when we bet on sports events?

## WITHOUT A HOME

**Before your meeting** contact a local shelter or social service agency to get **current statistics on the homeless near your community**. The shelter or agency may provide speakers (including members of your community's homeless population) to meet and talk with your group.

Share the information you have gathered. Ask: Imagine life without a home. If you were homeless in your town or city, what would you miss most? Where would you look for food? for warmth on cold nights?

for clothes when yours wore out? for friendship when you felt lonely? for medical care when you were sick?

■ What is your personal reaction to homeless people?

■ Why do we sometimes fear homeless people? What are we reminded of when we see homeless people?

Plan and carry out a project to help relieve the suffering of the homeless in your area. A local shelter or food pantry may have projects you could help with, or organize your own collection and distribution program for food or clothes.