

**THE  
BUMPER  
BOOK OF  
RESOURCES**

**LENT**

**INCLUDING**

**SHROVE TUESDAY  
ASH WEDNESDAY  
MOTHERING SUNDAY**

**EDITED BY JOHN COX**

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# FOREWORD

This Bumper Book (together with its companion volumes) draws together material from a wide range of sources and a number of top authors to create an invaluable resource for anyone seeking help with prayers, services, sermon ideas and illustrative material both for general and all-age worship.

The other books in the series are:

Volume 1: Harvest, All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance

Volume 2: Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

Volume 3: Holy Week, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost

Volume 4: Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Lent

Volume 5: Dying, Death and Funerals

Volumes 1 to 4 are accompanied by a CD-ROM providing activity sheets and illustrations that can be reproduced to enliven learning and interactive worship.

**SHROVE TUESDAY**

# PRAYERS

## Pancakes

Father God, thank you  
for pancakes  
with sugar and syrup  
or chocolate and lemon  
or any kind of combination.  
Please help us  
to remember the reason  
why we have pancake day,  
a start of a new season,  
the beginning of Lent,  
a feast before the fast,  
a time when people make sacrifices,  
a time when we remember Jesus,  
and what he sacrificed for us.

*Tony Bower*

## Feast Prayer

This prayer is an ideal grace to use before a parish pancake party.

### Resources

A bag of flour, a bottle of milk, a box of eggs, a bowl of cut lemons, a bowl of sugar and a plate of fresh pancakes placed on a table at the back of church

*Volunteers to bring these things forward.*

**Leader**     *(Standing at the altar.)*

Before our feast today, we are going to give thanks for all these good things.

### Prayer action

Generous Lord,  
thank you for flour, milled from the wheat which grows in the fields.  
*(Bring the flour to the altar.)*

Thank you for milk, squeezed from the cow at the end of the day.  
*(Bring the milk to the altar.)*

Thank you for eggs and for all the animal products we enjoy.  
*(Bring the eggs to the altar.)*

THE BUMPER BOOK OF RESOURCES:  
LENT including SHROVE TUESDAY, ASH WEDNESDAY, MOTHERING SUNDAY

Thank you for lemons, ripened by the sun and swelled by the rain.  
*(Bring the cut lemons to the altar.)*

Thank you for sugar, grown and refined and turned into a sweet treat.  
*(Bring the sugar bowl to the altar.)*

Thank you for the pancakes we enjoy together today.  
*(Bring the plate of pancakes to the altar.)*

### **Closing words**

Thank you for all the good things we enjoy.  
Feed us at the feast and sustain us during the fast;  
when we are full, help us to remember those who are always hungry.

*Then serve the pancakes from the altar!*  
*(See page 16 for the full Pancake Service)*

*Claire Benton-Evans*

# ALL-AGE MATERIAL

## Peculiar Pancakes

You will need: a range of sweet and savoury foods (e.g. onion, honey, lemon, ham, jam, cheese, etc.), four ready-cooked pancakes, two blindfolds.

No Lent is complete without pancakes! Explain the origin of pancakes – to use up the rich food and prepare for a period of restraint. Then ask for two parent-and-child pairs to come to the front. Blindfold the adults, and ask the children to choose two of the foods available to put into a pancake for their parent to eat! Fill two pancakes with the chosen ingredients and ask the adults to eat them. Then if there is time repeat the process with another two couples.

*Nick Harding*

## Speed Eating

You will need: a bag with four pairs of items of food in it such as two apples, two lumps of cheese, two raw carrots, two cold burgers, two yoghurt drinks, two biscuits, etc.

Invite two people from the congregation to come to the front. Explain that Shrove Tuesday was a day to quickly eat up all the food before the 40 days of Lent, and this is a chance for speed-eating too! Then the volunteers should race each other, eating one pair of food items at a time. If you have time repeat it with the second pair of food items, and so on.

*Nick Harding*

## Shrove and Ash

You will need: pens, paper.

Briefly explain the meanings and purpose of Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday.

Shrove Tuesday was the day when people cleared out their larders and food stores, eating pancakes to use everything up. This marked the beginning of a period of reflection and confession in memory of Jesus in the wilderness. The word 'Shrove' is derived from the medieval word 'shrive', which means to confess our sins and be forgiven.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the confession and reflection period. When people confessed all that they had done wrong to God they used to dress in hard, rough sackcloth and mark themselves in black ash from their fires as a sign that they were sorry.

Ask the congregation to form small groups of families and others, and write an acrostic poem or series of sentences to explain Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, based on the words SHROVE and ASH.

An example would be:

- Saying sorry
- Hearing God speak
- Removing all temptation
- Only thinking about God
- Very important
- Everyone should do it
- Asking for forgiveness
- Serious about God
- Hoping to be better

*Nick Harding*

## Pancake Service

### Theme

The Transfiguration; looking towards Lent

### Scripture

Mark 9:2-9

### Running order

Total: 50 minutes

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Welcome</b>       | Contemplating the shining cross ( <i>5 minutes</i> )                               |
| <b>Introduction</b>  | Opening the theme  |
| <b>Storytelling</b>  | The Transfiguration – visual retelling with ‘picture reveal’ ( <i>5 minutes</i> )  |
| <b>Music</b>         | Be still, for the presence of the Lord ( <i>5 minutes</i> )                        |
| <b>Exploring</b>     | What does the Transfiguration reveal? Explaining the picture ( <i>10 minutes</i> ) |
| <b>Music</b>         | Sing to God a song of glory ( <i>5 minutes</i> )                                   |
| <b>Prayer action</b> | Pancake prayer – active thanksgiving ( <i>5 minutes</i> )                          |
| <b>Activity</b>      | Pancake feast ( <i>15 minutes</i> )  |
| <b>Conclusion</b>    | Closing prayer and invitation  |

### Resources

- The shape of a cross, made out of bright white LED lights (*see note 1*)
- Picture and requisite technology for the ‘Picture reveal’ activity (*see note 2*)
- Music and words
- Plates and cutlery for the pancake feast
- The following things placed on a table at the back of church:
  - A bag of flour
  - A bottle of milk
  - A box of eggs
  - A bowl of cut lemons

- A bowl of sugar
- A plate of fresh pancakes, enough for one each
- You will need more pancakes as the feast continues. It is usually easiest to make these earlier and quickly reheat them in a microwave

## Leaders

Minimum: 2

- Leader
- Activity Leader/cook

Optimum: 7

- Leader
- Storyteller
- Music Leader
- Explorer
- Prayer Leader
- Activity Leaders/cooks x 2

## Suggestions for additional music

He is exalted

'Tis good, Lord, to be here

## Welcome

As people arrive, invite them to look closely at the cross made out of bright white LED lights and see if they can still 'see' the shape of the cross when they look away or close their eyes.

## Introduction

This is the last Sunday before Lent: today we will be thinking about how we might prepare for the season ahead. First we will hear the story of a miraculous moment in Jesus' life. For his disciples, it was a special kind of preparation for everything which happened to Jesus afterwards.

## Storytelling

*Show the 'picture reveal' activity with all the pictures covered up.*

Jesus grabbed his three best friends and said, 'Come with me! I want to show you something.' Peter, James and John jumped up, but they didn't have a clue what he had in store that day. They set off towards the mountains and Peter guessed they were in for a long hike. They started to climb higher and James wondered if they were going to look at the view. They climbed higher still, and John imagined that they were climbing up into heaven itself. But none of them had any idea what was going on.

When they reached the top, they stood to catch their breath. They looked at Jesus expectantly – but they were dazzled.

*Show the dazzling figure.*

His clothes had become as white as the desert sun. His friends squinted into the blaze.

*Show Moses and Elijah.*

Then, at the edges of the brilliant light, two figures appeared. One held tablets of stone and the other wore robes which glowed like fire. No Jew could mistake them: they were Moses and Elijah.

*Show the cloud.*

James and John didn't know what to do – they were scared out of their wits. Peter didn't know what to say, and blurted out the first thing which came into his head: special tents! They could build one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. But before anyone could answer, the friends were enveloped by a strange, bright cloud. In the cloud they heard a voice speak sternly in their ears:

*Show the speech bubble.*

'This is my beloved Son – listen to him!'

They turned around and there was Jesus, looking like his ordinary self again. They hugged him with their hearts full of the knowledge of what they had just seen. They didn't need to wonder any more. They knew. The man they loved and followed was God's Son.

## **Music**

Be still, for the presence of the Lord

## **Exploring**

*Show the 'picture reveal' activity again, with all the pictures covered up.*

Today's story marks one of those key moments in Jesus' life when we glimpse who he really is. But what exactly is revealed on that mountain top? Let's look at the pictures we uncovered as we heard the story.

*Show the dazzling figure.*

First of all there was the bright white figure of Jesus. Mark's Gospel tells us that his clothes were whiter than anyone on earth could bleach them: this ordinary-looking Jewish man is suddenly transformed by an unearthly light, and this is a clear sign that he is someone very special.

*Show Moses and Elijah.*

Then there were the two important men who appeared and talked with Jesus: Moses and Elijah. The Jewish people honoured and revered them because Moses had given them God's law and Elijah was a great prophet. For them to stand on either side of Jesus was a visual

stamp of approval which said to the Jews, 'Jesus is one of us.' Furthermore, their presence shows that he had indeed come to fulfil what the law and the prophets had promised (Matthew 5:17), rather than abolish them as some people feared.

*Show the speech bubble.*

Then there was the voice of God. What he said could not have been clearer: 'This is my beloved Son – listen to him!' The disciples now have proof that Jesus is God's Son, because they have heard it from God himself; later on, whenever their faith wobbled, that voice must have rung in their ears.

*Show the cloud.*

In this one moment on the mountain top, we encounter God the Son in the radiant figure of Jesus, God the Father in the voice from heaven and God the Holy Spirit in the mysterious cloud which overshadows the scene. The Transfiguration allows the disciples, and us, a glimpse of God's glory. We could not stand to see it all, but in the light, the cloud and the voice it is as if God lifts just a few squares off the whole picture.

This glimpse of God's glory comes at an important point in Mark's Gospel. Just before this event, Jesus admitted to his disciples that he was the Messiah. He went on to warn them that he would be tortured and killed before rising from the dead. They were understandably horrified, so on the mountain with Peter, James and John, Jesus does something to convince and reassure them.

*Show the LED light cross.*

Do you remember what happened when you looked at this bright white cross, then closed your eyes or looked away?

*Invite responses.*

The light leaves a bright mark on our eyes so that we still see it even when we look away or close our eyes. When Jesus shines with the dazzling white light of God's glory, it is as if he is giving his friends an image of his holiness which will burn itself forever onto their retinas and memories, so that whatever happens later – whatever suffering they see him endure – they will remember that he is the Son of God who will rise from the dead in glory.

## **Music**

Sing to God a song of glory

## **Prayer action**

The Transfiguration prepared the disciples for the hard times which were to follow, so it is an appropriate story to tell on this, the last Sunday before Lent. Lent is a time for repentance and for remembering Christ's suffering; it has traditionally been a time of strict fasting and plain food. People often prepare for Lent by using up all their meat and rich provisions in one last party. In some countries this is called Mardi Gras or 'Fat Tuesday' and we celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a feast of hot, sweet pancakes. We will be enjoying an early pancake feast today, so our prayer is one of preparation and thanksgiving before the beginning of Lent.

*Stand at the altar and invite volunteers to bring up the items from the table at the back as you name them.*

Before our feast today, we are going to give thanks for all these good things.

Generous Lord,  
thank you for flour, milled from the wheat which grows in the fields.

*The flour is brought to the altar.*

Thank you for milk, squeezed from the cow at the end of the day.

*The milk is brought to the altar.*

Thank you for eggs and for all the animal products we enjoy.

*The eggs are brought to the altar.*

Thank you for lemons, ripened by the sun and swelled by the rain.

*The cut lemons are brought to the altar.*

Thank you for sugar, grown and refined and turned into a sweet treat.

*The sugar bowl is brought to the altar.*

Thank you for the pancakes we enjoy together today.

*The plate of pancakes is brought to the altar.*

Thank you for all the good things we enjoy.  
Feed us at the feast and sustain us in the fast;  
when we are full, help us to remember  
those who are always hungry.

## **Activity**

Serve the pancakes from the altar, inviting everyone to come up and add their own lemon and sugar. Give people one each; when everyone has finished eating, pause for the closing prayer.

## **Conclusion**

Living Lord,  
as we look towards Lent and Easter,  
may we carry the image of your glory  
in our hearts and minds,  
now and forever,

## Notes

### 1. Shape of a cross, made out of bright white LED lights

These lights are often sold in packets of two or three in cheap electrical shops and pound shops. Usually advertised as wire-free lights for cupboards, they are small, circular lights which are battery-powered and often self-adhesive. Press them to switch on and off. You will need a minimum of six to make the shape of a cross; if you have bought the self-adhesive variety, you may like to stick them to a board which can then stand in front of the altar.

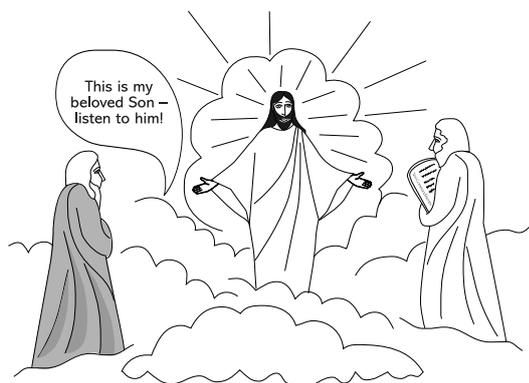
### 2. 'Picture reveal' activity

This activity can be as hi-tech or low-tech as you like. It can be done:

- *On a laptop and shown on a screen:* (Save the picture from the CD-ROM. Using PowerPoint, set the picture as the background, then use Autoshapes to put shapes over the picture. Then use Custom animations to make the shapes appear/disappear in the recommended order.)
- *On an OHP with a screen:* (Print off the picture, photocopy it onto acetate and mask it with numbered pieces of paper, then take them off one at a time in the recommended order.)
- *On a very large piece of paper, onto which the picture has been copied:* (Either print off the picture, photocopy it, cut it into quarters then photocopy and enlarge each piece onto A3, then trim and tape them together; *or* copy by hand by squaring it off and scaling it up. Mask it with numbered pieces of paper, then take them off one at a time in the recommended order.)

The basic idea is that you begin with a concealed picture which you reveal bit by bit, in the following order:

1. Jesus' dazzling figure
2. Moses
3. Elijah
4. The cloud
5. The speech bubble



*Claire Benton-Evans*

# Don't Waste It

## Reading

Luke 12:42-48

## Aim

This talk, designed for Shrove Tuesday (so, strictly speaking, outside of Lent), picks up and enlarges on the significance of making pancakes, asking what lessons this tradition might have for us today.

## Preparation

Make three pancake shapes out of modelling clay or playdough, and then, using more modelling clay of another colour, mould some letters to spell out RESOURCES, GIFTS and LENT. Press these down (making one word for each) into the 'pancakes'. Place the two 'pancakes' labelled GIFTS and LENT into a large mixing bowl and the one labelled RESOURCES into a frying pan, word facing downwards. Position the mixing bowl and frying pan on a table at the front of the church. Conceal a box of eggs, a pint of milk, a bag of flour, a container of salt and a pat of butter somewhere around the church.

## Talk

Depending on the time/day of the service/talk, ask how many people had or will be having pancakes today/this week. Ask if anyone can tell you why pancakes are traditionally eaten on Shrove Tuesday. Explain that pancake-making is a particularly English tradition, originally started to use up stocks of fat, butter and eggs, which, along with meat (not used in pancakes!), were all foods forbidden during the period of Lent, when Christians traditionally fasted to mark the 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness before facing temptation. These food items would not keep for 40 days, but poor people particularly couldn't afford to waste precious provisions, so they used them up in the pancakes, enjoying something of a feast in doing so.

In some places, Pancake Day races are still held, such as in the Buckinghamshire town of Olney, where races have taken place ever since 1445, when, so the story goes, a woman was cooking pancakes and, hearing the church shriving-bell summoning people to confession, rushed to church in her apron, still clutching hold of her frying pan.

Ask if anyone can find the ingredients of pancakes that you have hidden around the church. As they are brought forward to you, explain their meaning:

- eggs – symbol of creation
- milk – symbol of purity
- flour – the staff of life
- salt – symbol of wholesomeness
- butter – used as a fat to cook the mixture in.

Tell the congregation that you want to focus particularly on the idea behind pancakes of avoiding waste. Place these 'ingredients' (still in their containers) into the mixing bowl on your table; as you do so, place the modelling-clay pancakes labelled GIFTS and LENT on top. Tell the congregation that you are going to make three special pancakes for them, and that you will need three volunteers to toss them for you. Give your first volunteer the frying pan to hold, and ask him or her to toss the 'pancake' inside it. Afterwards, hold this up,

revealing the word RESOURCES. Of all the things we cannot afford to waste, resources are perhaps those most often in the news today. We are increasingly coming to realise that supplies of commodities like fuel, minerals, timber and much else are limited and therefore need to be used thoughtfully and wisely, and recycled where possible. As Christians, we have a responsibility to be at the forefront in stewarding this world's resources.

Take the 'pancake' marked GIFTS, place it in the frying pan, and ask a second volunteer to toss it, once again displaying the word on the pancake afterwards. If there's a danger of wasting resources on a global scale, there's equally a danger on an individual level – namely, wasting our gifts. We may be gifted in science or languages, maths or literature, music or graphic design, or perhaps in sport, carpentry or metalwork. Do we make the most of such gifts, developing them to their full potential? Equally, there are gifts in a wider sense: things like health and education. Again, do we make the most of what God has given us?

Ask a third volunteer to toss your final 'pancake', this time revealing the word LENT. Not as many Christians fast today during Lent as was once the case, but many still observe the season in some way. Some make time for prayer or quiet reflection, some meet with Christians of other denominations in study groups, some attempt to kick a bad habit, while others deny themselves certain 'luxuries', giving the money they would have spent to charity or other good causes. Lent marks out 40 days distinct from the rest of the year – once again, we should not waste it.

The simple pancake, as well as providing a tasty meal, has much to teach us. Its lesson is summed up in the last verse of our reading:

'From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded'  
(*Luke 12:48*).

Whatever God gives you, don't waste it.

*Nick Fawcett*