

LOCKDOWN LENT

taking childhood spirituality seriously

Godly Play^{UK}

There are all sorts of ways to mark the time through Lent while we are still not able to gather. Here are some ideas, drawn from Godly Play and various Christian traditions.

Shrove Tuesday *Tuesday 16 February 2021*

Pancakes

This is Pancake Day. So be sure to have pancakes! Making them is great fun and recipes are easy to find. There is one here: www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/easy-pancakes. In some places, the time before Lent lasts more than one day and is called Carnival. If it's fine, you could dress up in silly clothes and have races outside with your pancakes. Or could you make a clown face on your pancake before you eat it, using sauce?



ALLELUIA

Be ready for Easter in really good time!

Lent always seems long, but when Easter comes, there is always so much to do to get ready. So be prepared! Find eight pieces of paper, about A4 size. You could recycle the backs of letters you have received or something like that. In great big writing put one letter of the word ALLELUIA on each of the pieces. Lay them out to spell the word, just to make sure you have all the letters! Then colour them with bright Eastery colours. Mark the midpoint at the top of each letter sheet and make a little hole about 6cm from each side of the mark. Thread some string or ribbon through all the holes and leave some at each end of your letter strings so you will be able to hang up your Alleluia banner at Easter. Then, very carefully, fold it all up and put it in a safe place till Easter. (But remember where the safe place is! Sometimes safe places are so safe that we forget where they are!)

Ash Wednesday *Wednesday 17 February 2021*

A space for Lent

Ash Wednesday is the day when Lent begins. You could make a special place in your home. Cover it with something purple – it can be paper or fabric, or some painted cardboard. Another possibility is a piece of sack or rough material. In ancient times, people sometimes dressed in sacks to show they were sorry. They called this wearing sackcloth. And they even sometimes put ashes on their heads – that is how we get the name Ash Wednesday.

(You can read a story about people being sorry and wearing sackcloth. Even the animals wore sackcloth! Read it in the Bible, in The Book of Jonah, Chapter 3. It would make a good cartoon strip!)

Perhaps you could use the Lent calendar on this website to tick off the days as they go by. Maybe you could draw or write something on each square. Or you could go outside and collect something to add to your special Lent place each day. Watch the world change. As the days of Lent go by, spring will come, and your special place will become more and more interesting.

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Prayers

You could say these prayers together or put them in your special place for people to use when they want to.



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Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.
Amen.

Holy God,
our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Words to think and wonder about

The Prophet Isaiah wrote these words. They are good words for our own times.

The Lord says, 'The kind of fasting I want is this: Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own relatives.'

'Then my favour will shine on you like the morning sun, and your wounds will be quickly healed. I will always be with you to save you; my presence will protect you on every side. When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond.'

'If you put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt, and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never goes dry. Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses.'

(Isaiah 58.6-12 Good News Bible)

THE FACES OF EASTER LENT PACK

You might like to buy the Faces of Easter Lent pack.

The pack contains:

1. The 8 Faces of Easter drawings
2. The words to tell each of the seven stories taken from the American Godly Play Foundation Parent Pages, together with advice about using the stories
3. The Easter Egg story from the Parent Pages
4. A Guide to Wondering about these stories, created by Godly Play UK
5. The Mystery of Easter Puzzle

The pack costs £4.50 and can be used in any way that is appropriate in your community. Please pay online www.godlyplay.uk



Godly Play UK is indebted to the Godly Play Foundation for sharing the Parent Pages and allowing us to make them available in the UK.

Baking

Hot Cross Buns for Good Friday

500g strong bread flour
1 tsp salt
70g caster sugar
1 tbs oil
7g dried yeast

300ml warm milk
50g butter
1 egg
100g mixed dried fruit, or just raisins
grated rind of an orange

1 tsp mixed spice
75g plain flour and a little oil to make the crosses

1. Put the flour, salt, sugar, spice and dried yeast into a large bowl, and stir it together.
2. Warm the milk to body temperature, around 36°C, and melt the butter in it. Beat the egg.
3. Stir the milk and butter mixture and the beaten egg into the flour mixture and stir until it is well mixed. Then use your hands to knead it.
4. Once you have a single lump of dough, tip it out onto a floured board and knead it some more. Everyone can have a turn. When the piece of dough is really smooth, put it back in the bowl, cover it with a small amount of cooking oil and cover the bowl with a tea towel. Leave the bowl in a warm place for at least an hour, so the dough can rise. When it is ready, you should be able to press it with a finger and it will leave a little dent.
5. When the dough has risen, add the orange zest and the dried fruit to the bowl and knead the dough again, to mix in the fruit. Try to tuck all the little pieces of dried fruit into the dough.
6. Now tip the dough onto a floured board again and divide into 12 pieces. (Cut the big ball of dough in half, and then cut each half in half, and then divide each of these quarter pieces into three pieces. That way you should get 12 roughly equal pieces.) Shape each of the smaller pieces into a smooth ball.
7. Grease two baking sheets and arrange your balls of dough between them. Put the baking sheets in a warm place and leave the buns to rise for about an hour.
8. Mix 75g flour with a little icing sugar, and little oil and 4 tablespoons of water. Work this to a stiff, pliable paste, adding more water very, very carefully if you need to. When you have a little ball of dough, divide it into 12 pieces. Roll each of these pieces into a sausage shape and flatten each sausage. (You could use a rolling pin.)
9. When the buns have risen, brush the top of each one very, very gently with a little water and then make a cross on top of each: take one of your flour paste sausages, break it into and place it as a cross on top of the bun.
10. Heat the oven to 220°C or Gas Mark 7. Bake the buns in the middle of the oven for around 20 minutes. They should sound a bit hollow if you tap them.
11. Hot cross buns are usually glazed with something sweet. You could use sieved, melted jam, or warm honey. Or you could make a sugar glaze by melting some sugar in a saucepan and then adding a small quantity of water. Bring this to the boil for about a minute then cool slightly before brushing it onto the cooked buns.
12. The buns are best eaten warm, with butter or spread.

Greek Easter bread



The night before you are going to make the bread, hard boil an egg in water with some red food colouring.

500g strong white flour
7g dried yeast

10g salt
60g butter
75g sugar
a pinch of cinnamon
the grated rind of an orange

150ml warm water
150ml milk
1 beaten egg
a few flaked almonds.

1. Put the flour, salt, butter and sugar into a large bowl. Stir in the cinnamon and grated orange rind.
2. Put the yeast into a jug and add the warm water. Stand this in a warm place until the yeast begins to bubble a little in the water. Stir this into the flour mixture and mix. Next add the milk, a little at a time, until you have a soft dough.
3. Turn this out onto a floured board and knead until the dough is soft and does not stick to your hand. You may need to add a little flour, or a bit more liquid depending on how it feels. Every batch of flour is different.
4. Put the ball of dough into a bowl, cover it with a tea towel and put it in a warmish place for at least an hour. You may need to leave it longer depending on the temperature.
5. When the dough has risen and is soft and spongy, turn it out onto a floured board again. Knead it once more and then cut the ball of dough into three equal pieces. Shape each of these into sausage shapes of equals size and length. Join your three sausage shapes and one end and then plait them together.
6. Line a baking tray with baking parchment and place the plaited loaf onto it. Leave this in a warm place again for another hour, until it has doubled in size.
7. Heat your oven to 200°C/Gas 6. Brush the top of the bread with beaten egg and sprinkle with the almond flakes. Push the red hard-boiled egg into one end of the plait.
8. Bake the bread for 20-25 minutes, then put it on a wire rack to cool.
9. Eat your bread on Easter morning.