

Recipe for Life

Harvest assembly for primary schools

On the following pages you will find a ready-to-go Harvest assembly. It explores the theme of sharing, which is a major aspect of this Christian festival, and focuses on a USPG-supported community project in Villa Felicidad, a small settlement on the outskirts of Progreso, Uruguay.

Curriculum links

- RE: the parables of Jesus, serving others, church life
- Science: cooking, properties of yeast, healthy eating
- Maths: weighing
- English: instructional writing of recipes
- Geography: comparing localities
- PSHEC: healthy living, sharing, working together, thinking of others

Have ready

Clearly marked ingredients to make bread. Quantities do not matter as the bread will not actually be made.

Ingredients: flour, salt, sugar, yeast and water. Tip: make sure bags/packets are well sealed as they will be handled by the children.

You can use either children or teachers to be your helpers. You need to give them one ingredient each before the assembly so they can bring it up to the front when asked.

If you would like to show where Uruguay is in comparison to the UK, then also have a globe to hand.

Welcome

1. What is your favourite food?

Ask the children what their favourite foods are or, alternatively, what they had for breakfast that morning.

That all sounds yummy! What a variety of different tastes and meals. Now, I have a challenge for you to think about. If you could only eat one type of food for two weeks, what would you choose? Don't put your hands up; just have an idea in your head.

Leave a short time for thinking.

Now, who thought sweets? Hands up!

Most of us love sweets, don't we? I wonder, though, how we would feel if all we ate for two weeks were sweets? I think we might have a tummy ache! Would sweets fill our tummies up? What about our bodies? Would it be the best choice to keep us healthy? No, probably not.

Now, who thought vegetables or fruit? Hands up!

Well done! A much healthier choice, and much better for your teeth and your bodies. I'm glad those children chose so sensibly.

I wonder if any of you thought of bread? Hands up!

If any children did choose bread, ask them why.

Bread is what we call a staple food. It is an important part of lots of peoples' diet. It fills us up and gives us energy, with brown bread being especially good for us. People around the world who don't have much to eat often see bread as very important and will make their own bread using very simple ingredients.

2. How do you make bread?

I asked some children/teachers earlier if they liked bread and if they did I gave them ingredients to use to make some of their own.

Call up the first volunteer and ask them to show their ingredient, saying what it is in a loud voice.

Well done, now, have you made some bread?

The volunteer answers, 'No'.

Oh, why not? I thought you liked bread? I gave you some (insert ingredient) to make it.

The volunteer says, 'I didn't have everything I needed.'

Oh dear, what a shame. Let's try somebody else.

At this point, you can choose whether, as they come up, all the volunteers stay at the front or remain seated. If they stay at the front, it is easier to show them all sharing what they have later, but if you feel the children are better to sit back down, you can arrange the ingredients on a table.

Call up the next volunteer. They show their one ingredient. Comment in passing about the importance of each ingredient, especially the rising property of yeast as this is relevant for later on. Repeat the process making sure there is emphasis on each person having one ingredient, but not enough to make a loaf for themselves.

Oh no! This is terrible. I was really hoping that we would have a lovely loaf of bread to share in assembly this morning. I'm sure we have everything we need.

Clearly go through each ingredient.

Well, I suppose we will have to go without our lovely fresh bread, unless anyone has any ideas?

Take suggestions; you may have to be patient if they suggest going to the shops. Hopefully someone will suggest the idea that if everyone shares their ingredients, a loaf can be made. If not, you could 'suddenly' think of the idea yourself.

How wonderful! Yes, if all these children/teachers put their ingredients together, then we will be able to make some bread. Then, because we have shared our ingredients, we can then all share the bread.

Thank the volunteers, and if they are still at the front, they may now go back to their seats.

3. The story of Villa Felicidad, Uruguay

Do you know, this assembly has reminded me of a true story? It has happened in a place called Villa Felicidad in Uruguay, which is in South America.

Show Uruguay on a globe, point out the United Kingdom as a reference point.

Villa Felicidad is an 'unplanned settlement'. That means people have moved there because they have no-where else to live. They have built makeshift houses with whatever materials they can find and things like electricity and running water have taken a long time to come to the settlement. Most people who live there are very poor, but some people are working hard

to make it a better place to live. One of these people is Alejandro [pronounced Alley-handro]. He works for San Pablo church in Villa Felicidad and it was his idea to build a big oven next to the church. When people are hungry, they can come to the church to share ingredients with other families and then they can all use the big oven to cook together.

This has meant that people in the community are helping each other and making new friends.

It is also a way that the church can help and show God's love for the people in Villa Felicidad.

4. The parable of the yeast

Pick up the yeast.

One of the stories, or parables, that Jesus told in the Bible was about bread (Matthew 13:33). He spoke about God being like the ingredient yeast. Yeast has a very important job to do. You can't see it in the bread and you can't taste it, but without the yeast the bread wouldn't rise, it would stay flat and it would be thick and heavy. Jesus was explaining to people that you can have all the things or ingredients you need to have a good life, but without God it won't be the best it can be, just like bread without yeast.

Well, I'm so glad we have all the ingredients to make our bread. What a difference sharing makes, especially to people who don't have very much!

5. Time to think

Close your eyes and think about what a difference we can make if we share, even a little of what we have.

Short time of silence.

6. Prayer

Dear Father God. Thank you for all the good gifts you give us. Thank you that we have enough to share with others; help us to be kind and generous. We pray for Alejandro in Villa Felicidad. Be with him as he shows your love to others in that community. Bless our gifts at Harvest time. May they go to those who need them most. Amen.

7. Song

Lord of the Harvest (Come and Praise 2, p133)