

Flipping to make a difference

Pancake Day 2024

**School, Child Care and
Community Group
Resources**



The United Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia



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Where did Pancake Day come from?

Shrove Tuesday is the last day before the period Christians call 'Lent' – the 40 days leading up to Easter when Christians remember the time Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness. The word 'Shrove' comes from the Old English word, Shrive - to confess one's sins. Shrove Tuesday is a day where one confesses their sins and asks God for absolution. Though it is named in English, the day before Lent being a time of fasting is an ancient custom, perhaps going all the way back to the earliest Christians.

Historically during the time of Lent, people gave up luxury items including foods such as butter and eggs. This led to the tradition of making pancakes on the day before Lent to use up the butter and eggs. Shrove Tuesday and pancakes became perfect partners! Today, although people tend to give up less vital dietary ingredients such as chocolate, coffee or soft drink; pancakes are still eaten around the world.

Perhaps the best-known Shrove Tuesday celebration is the Pancake Day Race in the town of Olney in Buckinghamshire, England, which has been held since 1445. So the story goes, hearing the church bells ring out for the service, a townswoman fled her house fearful of being late as it was important to attend the Shroving service before the start of Lent (a time to confess sins before Ash Wednesday). She ran the distance down the High Street to make it to the parish church - still clutching her frying pan and wearing an apron.

Now, the event is still commemorated hundreds of years later in the Olney Pancake Race. The women of Olney compete in traditional apron, cap, and holding a frying pan with a real pancake. They must toss their pancake once at the start (outside The Bull Inn) and once at the finish by the church. The race starts at 11.55am. The Olney High Street is shut, and spectators line the route from the Market Place all the way to Olney's St Peter and St Paul Church.

For the fastest Olney runner, there's a prize - but there are prizes too for the oldest participant and the one who raises the most for charity. The town of Liberal, Kansas in the United States also runs a race over the same distance on the same day, and the best of Liberal compete with the best of Olney for the fastest time.

The pancake itself has a very long history and is featured in cookery books as far back as 1439. The tradition of tossing or flipping them is almost as old too.

The ingredients for pancakes can be seen to symbolise four points of significance at this time of year:

- Eggs – Creation
- Flour – The staff of life
- Salt – Wholesomeness
- Milk – Purity.

Pancake Day around the World

Shrove Tuesday is celebrated in many different ways around the world; the Brazilians samba in Rio and the people of New Orleans throw their most famous party of the year - Mardi Gras (literally 'Fat Tuesday' in French). In England the day is also called Pancake Tuesday. It is also known in other countries as Carnival (from the Latin for 'farewell to the flesh'), and Fasnacht (the Germanic 'night of the fast').

Pancake Day is a time of celebration and generous hospitality. In some cultures, it is traditional to eat as much as possible on Shrove Tuesday ... up to 12 times a day!

In Provence, France, there is a superstition that if you hold a coin in your left hand while you toss a pancake you'll be rich.

Also in France, in the region of Brie it is traditional to give the first pancake to the hen that laid the eggs for the pancake.

UnitingCare Pancake Day

Each year in Australia, thousands show their support for people in need by flipping and eating pancakes at events state-wide in SA, VIC and TAS throughout the months of February and March. Hundreds of groups including schools, churches, businesses and community organisations join in the fun.

Donations and money raised from the sale of pancakes goes directly to local UnitingCare organisations to help them provide practical support to South Australians in need including those without a home, people living with disabilities, vulnerable children and adults, older people and families in crisis.

Since its inception in 2002, more than one million pancakes have been sold and over \$600,000 has been raised by groups state-wide!

Pancake Day Activities

Early Learning to Year 2

- Make a feelings face using a paper plate.
- Make Penny Pancake finger puppets,
- Make Cut-out Paper People to show working together.
- Discuss and write about favourite pancake toppings.
- Make invitations to send to parents/family members the children wish to invite to your Pancake Day event.
- Talk about the history of Pancake Day.
- Organise for your school canteen to host themed lunch days to encourage students to sample different flat breads from around the world e.g. Pita bread, Turkish bread, Tortillas, Indian Chappitas.

Primary School (Year 3 - 5)

- Organise a practical exercise (shopping on a budget, paying rent, Centrelink based incomes) which could involve a visit to the local shopping centre, collecting catalogues that price items to encourage students to think about what constitutes as a 'life necessity' and how they might live without them. What impact would this have on their life?
- Write a story telling how Penny Pancake could help people in need in your local community.

Middle School (Year 6 - 9)

- Ask students to organise a UnitingCare Pancake Day event.
- Research what the media tells us about poverty. Is it accurate? Does it fairly portray people in poverty? Compare the implications of poverty in first world to third world countries.
- Create a poster to advertise UnitingCare services and programs (class competition).
- Write a story from the perspective of a homeless person.

Art Activities

Banner

You will need: A sheet of paper large enough for everyone to put a hand print on (e.g. A2 size), 2 – 3 different coloured paints, 1 -2 paintbrushes per paint colour, trays for paints, and paper towels (or hand washing facility).

On a large sheet of paper, write in the middle, 'Together, we make a difference.' Individuals paint one of their hands and make a hand print on the poster around the writing. Hand prints may overlap, colours may mix.

Talk about: How might our hands be used to help others? Discuss different ways we use our hands to work together, serve others, and make a difference in people's lives. For example, give a hug, carry something together, bake a meal, and tidy a garden. Consider how the handprints mixing together is like us working together. We can see signs of beauty, creativity and newness when we work together.

Card making

You will need: Light card in various colours and sizes (no bigger than A4), textas or pens, stickers, other various materials e.g. decorative hole punches, crepe paper, pictures, glue, Bible verses that encourage (could be printed on stickers/labels or printed on paper to cut and glue on).

Make a card to give to someone to encourage them.

Talk about: The word encouragement means add and courage. When we encourage someone we are 'adding' courage to them. How can we encourage people? What are encouraging words and actions? How does being encouraged make a difference to you and others? Can you think of any other Bible verses that encourage?

Donation tin/box

You will need: Light cardboard with a box template outline, scissors, tape, textas - or - money tins, paper labels with printed UnitingCare - or - Pancake Day logos, glue or tape, textas, scissors

Decorate the template/label with messages and pictures about the organisation/purpose you will be fundraising for e.g. UnitingCare. For the box: cut out the template, fold and tape it together into a box. For the tin: cut out the label, glue onto tin.

Talk about: The organisation you are fundraising for and have information about them for people to take home and find out more. Talk about how a gold coin donation, for example, can make a difference for that organisation or project. Discuss how that organisation or project will make a difference in people's lives.

Recipe books

You will need: Light card, staplers, textas, and an assortment of recipes (ask team members to type up or photocopy their favourite recipes). Photocopy or print one recipe per page. Pages need to be the same size e.g. all A4 or all A5. Provide multiple copies of each recipe for people to choose from. Recipes could either be about your regular meals at home or variations on pancakes or recipes that all begin with 'P' (e.g. pizza, pancake, pastas or potato recipes).

Choose up to 5 recipes that you like the look of and two pieces of light card. Gather them into a booklet with the light card for the front and back covers. Staple them all together (down side or across top) to create a booklet. Decorate the cover e.g. My Recipe Book or Favourite Recipes or Messy Recipes.

Talk about: Food we can cook for others, times when people might be encouraged with a gift of food, foods we are thankful for, food that is easy to share and food that is difficult to share.

Pancake Making

You will need: Your favourite pancake mix/recipe and ingredients to make enough for everyone in your group, measuring spoons and cups, an electric frying pan, slide, mixing bowl, spoon, plate with paper towel, small plates or serviettes, butter knives and an assortment of pancake toppings.

Have parents and children practice mathematics skills by measuring and adding/subtracting measurements to make the batter.

Learn about safety in the kitchen while cooking the pancakes. Have children count how many people will be eating and figure out how many pancakes will be needed (multiplication).

Follow the recipe to make your pancake batter. Cook a pancake and add a topping. Enjoy yourself or give to someone else. Provide gluten and/or dairy free pancake mixes if necessary. Be careful with children around the frying pan.

Talk about: How the different ingredients don't make much on their own but when mixed together make pancakes. Compare how we can make a better/more effective difference when we work together than when on our own or in competition. Can you think of examples of working together being better? For example, we each bring different skills some welcome, some play, some make, some bake.

Listening/Discussion

UnitingCare Stories

You will need: Someone from a UnitingCare organisation, for example a chaplain or a volunteer, who can share about the work of UnitingCare, some cushions or comfy chairs to sit on, coloured paper strips, textas and staplers or tape. There are also some UnitingCare Christmas stories available in a Word document. Just call the Pancake Day team to request the details.

Listen to stories about UnitingCare or your local UnitingCare organisation. What difference are they making in people's lives? Write a message on a paper strip to encourage your local UnitingCare organisation and those they work with. Loop your strip with other strips to make a paper chain.

Talk about: Ways you could work with UnitingCare to make a difference.

Explore Pancake Day

- Group discussion works well in groups of 3-20 children.
- A good discussion develops when the discussion leader keeps the group on track with questions and allows healthy discussion to form - even if it is not directly following the question plan.
- The aim of a discussion is not to answer questions or respond correctly but rather to create a comfortable environment for meaningful conversation.
- The leader needs to present questions and thought concepts in a way that encourages group interaction.
- All opinions, comments and thoughts should be valued and respected by all group members. Group inclusion may be new to some children who are familiar with 'closed questions' and 'answering the teacher' style of learning.
- Where appropriate, questions can be directed at individuals, but remember to give them time to think. Children who often don't say much during discussions don't because they need time to think first and therefore don't put their hand up quickly.

General discussion questions

- What can you tell me about why we have Pancake Day?
- What are some of the things that you have that others may not?
- What is the most important thing in your life?
- Why is it so important?
- In what ways could we help others?