

Harvest

Who helped with the Harvest?

Equipment: Box or bag, pictures of various animals who help to produce the food which we eat. Here are some suggestions/ideas:

- 🐾 **Bees/insects**-More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the crops upon which human depend for food are pollinated by insects. Without creatures like bees we couldn't feed ourselves. Also insects often prey on other insects, helping to keep species which destroy or damage crops in check.
- 🐾 **Working/helping animals**-Sheep/guard dogs; oxen (still critical for ploughing/draught in some parts of the world), donkeys, horses and mules.
- 🐾 **Hedgehogs and badgers**-Anyone who has brought in home grown vegetables for the harvest table may (knowingly or otherwise) owe these animals a debt, as they eat slugs and 'pest' insects from garden.
- 🐾 **Birds and small mammals**-Creatures like these spread seeds and help new plants to grow. They wouldn't be many blackberry pies/crumbles made without help from wildlife!
- 🐾 **Dairy**-Hens, ducks, cows and goats.

Activity-Take it in turns to pick a picture out of the bag, and explain/guess how the creature contributes to our food supply.

Purpose/teaching-Like all of God's creatures, human beings exist within eco-systems. And in like many other animals we also form relationships with other species for our benefit. It is humbling to think that we depend upon animals for our very survival, without them we would literally starve to death. God created human beings and animals to exist in a relationship with one another and their environment (think about the Creation story in Genesis 1). We have a duty to honour this relationship and to be good stewards of God's world. And as is so often the case, if we don't show the love and respect which God teaches us, we are damaging both ourselves and others.



Fair Cow Cakes

Equipment: Oven, microwave, mixing bowl, baking tray for fairy cakes, paper cases and scales (if ingredients not pre-weighed at home). Ingredients (to make 12 muffin sized fairy cakes)-150g butter or margarine, 150g caster sugar, 160g self raising flour, 15g cocoa powder, 3 eggs, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Ingredients for decorating cakes- 100g plain chocolate, 2 tablespoons milk, 50g butter, 75g icing sugar, banana shaped sweets OR white ready to roll icing OR alternative sweeties for making horns.

Activity: After the discussion set out below, make the Fair Cow Cakes.

- 🐾 Cream together the butter, sugar and vanilla extract.
- 🐾 Mix together the flour and cocoa powder.
- 🐾 Add the eggs one at a time and stir in 1/3 of the flour/cocoa mixture with each. Spoon the mixture into cases, and bake in a pre-heated oven at Gas Mark 4/180'C/350'F for around 20 minutes or until risen and firm to the touch.
- 🐾 To decorate, melt the chocolate and butter together (although it's heresy to say so, the butter means that you can do this in a microwave without burning the chocolate, provided that you are *very* careful. Zap it a little bit at a time. Or if you prefer, melt them together in a saucepan). Add in the milk and icing sugar and stir together. Spoon over the cupcakes whilst still warm. When it has begun to set a little bit, put in sweets or rolled pieces of icing-sugar to make horns.

Purpose/teaching: The Bible has lots of references to justice, and a repeated message that we should help rather than take advantage of others, especially the poor and vulnerable e.g. Proverbs 13:23 and James 1:27. Jesus of course had a great concern for the weak and poor e.g. Luke 4:18. This focus on justice is not confined to human beings either. The Old Testament contained instructions that animals like oxen be included in the Sabbath rest (Exodus 20:10), and that they should not be muzzled when treading out the grain (Deuteronomy 25:4). Clearly they deserved kindness and a decent quality of life.



Think about the ingredients for the cupcakes, what people and what animals were involved in producing them? E.g. farmers, transport workers, hens and cattle. Have a discussion about what kind of needs and rights those people and animals have e.g. rest and leisure time, enough food/good quality food, space to live and play, freedom of pain etc. It's striking how many of the basic needs of human beings and animals are the same or very similar!

The point can also be made that caring for people and animals is not an either/or choice. Rather if we take our Christian duty to be caring and to think about justice seriously, then we inevitably are concerned about all beings with thoughts and feelings. If the Bible tells us that the quality of life enjoyed by domestic/farm animals is important, then who are we to dismiss it as unimportant?

Also note that we can and do make ethical choices every time we go shopping. Needless to say it matters a lot that the ingredients used for the Fair Cow Cakes are 'fair' in terms of Fair Trade and Animal Ethics!



Honey HopScotch

Equipment: This game can either be played in the conventional way, in which case you need some floor or yard space, some chalk and a pebble. Or it can be played on paper, in which case you need paper, a pen and a paper-clip or other counter.

Activity: Draw a hopscotch grid on the floor/table. With the children/young people draw, talk through each of the ten points below, and then draw a picture in each of the boxes to represent the point. Once finished, play hopscotch! Because it's a step by step game, it encourages players to remember/think about each of the stages/ideas in the squares. If playing on paper, 'hop' with fingers rather than feet! Obviously the tricky bit is still getting your paper-clip/counter to land on the right square.

Point for the squares:

- 1) God made the world.
- 2) And plants, with flowers.
- 3) And bees.
- 4) And humans and animals.
- 5) Bees land on flowers to slurp up nectar.
- 6) Bees get sticky pollen on their six little feet.
- 7) Bees fly off to another flower, some of the pollen rubs off there.
- 8) The flower and pollen means that the plant can make seeds.
- 9) The seeds become baby plants.
- 10) The baby plants grow to become food for animals and humans-all thanks to the bees.

Teaching/purpose: To emphasise that despite humanity ingenuity and hard-work, we still could not survive alone. We are one part of the wider world which God has made, and we are dependent on tiny creatures like bees for our food. Also the bee population was in serious trouble only a few years ago, largely due to human activity. Our failure to take our duties as stewards of God's Creation seriously very nearly led to disaster and a crisis in our food supply.

