**Shrove Style Feast**

***Table deco:***

***Set up:*** *cups, cotton wool, cress seed, print outs of instructions, flowers on tables, toilet rolls, hand washing bowls and towels, dishwashing bowls. A print out for each table saying: We share the gift of water, we share the gift of forgiveness. A print out of Mary Jones story for each table.*

***Welcome***

***Intro to Shrove Tuesday***

***Lords Prayer on handout***

***Community Cleansing bowl***

***Dinner and music.***

***Seeds - A time of growth***

***Speak to Robynne 6pm***

***Dessert - Kids can make fancy parade costumes with toilet paper***

***Present costumes***

***Benediction – Mary Jones Story & Prayer***

**Intro & opening Prayer**

This Tuesday coming in the church calendar is traditionally called Shrove Tuesday or pancake Tuesday. It is the day before lent begins which is 40 days of growing and changing before Easter Sunday. Shrove Tuesday is a day of celebration and eating up all the rich food in your house before fasting or eating more simply during the season of Lent. It is also known by the French term Mardi Gras, meaning ‘Fat Tuesday’ celebrated in many places with parades, costumes, dancing, and music.

In the old days and still in many countries and churches, people only eat simple food over lent, to remind them that they are in a special season and to help them be thinking about and giving to the poor.

 ‘Shrove’ means your sins are forgiven. Many years ago people would go to church on this day to be shriven – to confess their sins and be forgiven in preparation for a season of drawing closer to God.

Let’s being our Shrove Feast by praying the Lord’s prayer together. (on powerpoint)

**The Lord's Prayer**

In parts of Africa, you begin the meal by passing around a bowl of water and a jug to wash your hands. There is something special about doing this together. Right now we are going to pour water over each others hands reminding us of the forgiveness and cleansing that God gives us.

**Handwashing**

On each table is a bowl. A person at each table has the job of pouring water on each persons hand, reminding them of the cleansing and forgiveness God gives us.

The person says: We share the gift of water, we share the gift of forgiveness.

**Dinner**

**Seed Cup activity – small glasses, cotton wool balls, cress seeds.**

Lent is the time from this coming Wednesday that goes until Easter. It’s a special time when we get ready for Easter. A time when God’s people all over the world really think about our friendship with God and spend more time with him.

The word Lent means “Spring” or “springtime”. A time of growing and changing. A time when we work at planting ourselves in God so we can grow and become a thing of beauty and restoration to the world around us.

I invite each of you to hold a seed.

I am reminded of that verse that goes something like this in 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

*And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image..*

*And so we are changed, much like Jesus, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.”*

Take a cup, place some cotton wool in the bottom and sprinkle it with grass seeds. Take home these seeds, place them in a light spot and water them to remind you of the beauty of Lent - A time of planting our hearts in God in special ways. A time of roots going deeper and new growth. Looking after this little garden can remind you to look after and enjoy your friendship with God this season. Enjoying this garden can remind you to enjoy time with God, doing good things together.

**6pm Talk to Robynne & Kids make toilet paper parade costumes and present them.**

**Dessert**

**Closing story– Mary Jones and her bible. http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/uploads/content/projects/mary\_jones\_story.pdf**

**Benediction**

‘Be the gardener of my Soul’

Spirit of the Living God, be the Gardener of my soul. For so long I have been waiting, silent and still – experiencing a winter of the soul. But now, in the strong name of Jesus Christ, I dare to ask:

Clear away the dead growth of the past,

Break up the hard clods of custom and routine,

Stir in the rich compost of vision and challenge,

Bury deep in my soul the implanted Word,

Cultivate and water and tend my heart,

Until new life buds and opens and flowers. Amen.