

Leyland Baptist Church, Lancashire



Leyland is a town outside Preston, where Tony and Sandra Crawford have been working for a number of years to build the church and deepen connections into the community. Tony shares one recent story of a church initiative to get the engaged with local people in a way that would have had Paul Hollywood licking his lips...

“On a bright Sunday morning earlier this year, Leyland Baptist Church and friends from the local community met together to make bread. Everything was set out ready; large mixing bowls, strong flour, dried yeast and water. We all washed our hands and were ready to start.

The children, and many of the adults loved mixing the ingredients with their hands, making a gorgeous, sticky dough. Experienced bakers shared tips on kneading techniques while novices enjoyed the experience of working with the soft, soothing pliable mixture.

While the dough was left to rise we teased our brains trying to list as many different kinds of bread as we could remember. We were invited to consider some facts about bread. Did you know that over 12 million loaves of bread are sold in the UK each day? ‘Bread’ and ‘dough’ are often used as slang terms for money. Christians pray for their daily bread and in 1867, Mrs Beeton described bread as, ‘the complete life sustainer’.



Time for some more kneading. As everyone set to work the hall again took on a busy, cheerful contented atmosphere. Conversation came easily as all were engaged in the common task of bread making. The dough was shaped, placed on paper plates and then left to rise again. This time there was a short talk inviting listeners to consider how just as bread is important to our daily physical requirements so Jesus is vital in fulfilling our deepest spiritual needs, bringing purpose and value to our lives. Jesus is the real life sustainer.

At the end of the morning everyone had a loaf that they had made to take and bake at home. Before that though there was an opportunity to stay for a chat and lunch; homemade soup and, of course, bread!

John 6: 35 Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

For your thoughts and prayers:

- In what fun and creative ways could you connect with your local community while also sharing the good news of Jesus?
- This story is one example of relating one of Jesus’ “I am” sayings into the lives of people today. In what other ways could you share the “I Am” proclamations of Christ?