



seven week  
full resource  
for families



For use during Lent 2014: March 5<sup>th</sup> until April 19<sup>th</sup> 2014

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## Introduction

### what is 40acts?

40acts is a generosity challenge, which invites people to do Lent a bit differently.

During the forty days of Lent, 40acts participants will be invited to take part in forty simple acts of generosity that will challenge them to 'do Lent generously' in 2014.

Lent marks a pivotal point in the history of the church, when Jesus prepared to give himself up as a sacrifice.

Traditionally we mark Lent by giving something up, but what if it could be more than that? What if Lent was a preparation for a lifetime of big-heartedness?

Small acts of generosity, performed by thousands of people across the UK and beyond, have the power to make a big change to our communities, to our churches and ultimately, to our world.

This year we want to encourage all 40acts Together groups to finish Lent with a celebratory event for their community. It could be a large whole community event, a gathering of friends or a small and quiet meal for a few people at home. Whatever you choose to do, we are sure that it will be a blessing for the people around you.

### how to use this resource

This resource pack is full of simple, creative ideas to help make Lent more meaningful for the whole family. At the heart of the Easter message is God's amazing generosity. Why not share that generosity and take up the 40acts challenge with both daily and weekly activities?

Times of quiet reflection are mixed in with practical generous acts that can be done by even the youngest members. You don't have to do all the actions; you could choose to do a few – like planning a 'giving jar' or picking something to do at the weekend.

These quick-fire Bible-based sessions look at seven generous acts Jesus performed/did from John's Gospel. Seven sessions, seven actions from Jesus for the seven weeks of Lent.

Once you have started, let us know how you are doing. You can upload your photos to Twitter or Facebook, using the official hash tag #40acts.

You'll also find some useful recipes and a kids wall chart at the back.

## week one: generous on purpose

### read

#### John 2: 1- 11 NIV

##### *Jesus Changes Water into Wine*

*On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realise where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.*

#### THINKING TIME

What is your favourite drink and how do you feel when it runs out?

The guests at the wedding would have been pretty fed up when the drink ran out, which is probably why Jesus' mother asked him to do something. Can you imagine how much water is in the six stone jars – there was probably enough to fill up three baths. Can you imagine how much water that would be?

So Jesus performed this amazing miracle and turned all this water into wine. Now notice that he didn't just turn it into cheap wine, but he

turned it into the best wine possible.

Jesus was very generous and produced the very best wine. What is the best thing you have done for someone else?

The wedding guests were surprised how good the wine was, as usually the cheaper wine is brought out later on. Do you always do your best for others?

How do you feel when someone is generous or very kind to you?

What can you do this week to be generous on purpose and to do your very best?

### prayer

Heavenly Father, forgive us that we don't always do our best and we are not always generous with our families and friends. Help us this week to be more generous, to be kind and to try and do our very best.

Amen

### extra activities

Sometimes we can be our own worst enemy. We often underestimate our ability, critique our characters and generally see a very different face in the mirror to that seen by others.

This week's activity is about helping you to see what others see. Gather the family and ask everyone to write their name at the top of a piece of paper. In a clockwise motion (you don't need to be in a circle but make sure everyone knows who is to their left) pass on the sheet. Now take 2 minutes to list all the qualities, gifts and special talents about the person whose name is at the top of your sheet. When the 2 minutes are up, pass the sheet clockwise and repeat the

process until everyone has their own sheet back. Read and talk about the results! If there are any surprises for you, find out why that person sees what they see. You might want to say a prayer of thanks at the end for the things that make each of you special and ask God to show you how you can use these gifts in generous ways.

Next, put aside a generosity jar which could be an actual jar or you could use a combination of a jar and an online family giving account: <http://www.stewardship.org.uk/giving/family-account> (Some will require cash, so a physical jar is essential).

Ask everyone in the family to commit to a set amount that they will add to the jar each week. The contents of the jar will be used to bless others during 40acts.

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do these acts on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> (generosity jar) and Friday 7<sup>th</sup> (tool up!)**

**Share your experiences with us, and the 40acts community! Post a photo of your generosity jar on Twitter or Facebook, using the hash tag #40acts.**

## week two: generous with our actions

### read

#### John 13: 1 – 17

*So Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

#### THINKING TIME

We all love sand! Playing with it, walking on it, building something out of it, lying on a beach. But by the end of the day we all hate sandy feet, particularly between our toes. In Jesus' time the streets and roads were sandy and dusty, everyone wore sandals as it was very hot and everyone had dirty feet. Usually, a servant would wash everyone's feet when they came home or were visiting somewhere else. Imagine washing all the members of your family's feet after a day walking around in mud!

Why do you think in this passage, Jesus washed his friends' feet?

If you read the longer version, Peter complained about it. Why did he do that?

Jesus was about to be arrested and leave his friends forever so he wanted to show his love for them by his actions, something normally done by

louder than words'. Why is this? We don't wash each others feet now (thank goodness!), but what unpopular, dirty or smelly jobs still need doing?

Toilet cleaning is probably for adults, but what other jobs could you do this week?

### prayer

Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus showed his love by his actions. Help us this week to show our love by the things that we do and not just what we say. We pray that we can be helpful this week, to offer to do unpopular jobs for our families and friends.

Amen

### extra activities

This week you are going to use the generosity jar. Think about who has really blessed your family in the past: perhaps someone who has helped you or been a good friend. The Bible tells us to outdo one another in honour and this is a chance to give back in style.

Together, find the appropriate gift (within budget) for that person or people and use your jar to get and give it to them.

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do this act on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>!**

**Share your O.T.T story on Facebook and Twitter, using the hash tag #40acts.**

## week three: generous with possessions

### read

#### John 6: 5 – 14

*When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

### THINKING TIME

We all look forward to days out and picnics and doesn't food always taste better outside on a warm sunny day? The little boy in the story had his favourite lunch packed by his mum: warm, freshly baked loaves and some little fish.

Hasn't your mouth started watering already! After listening to Jesus for a few hours, he was probably very hungry and his stomach was rumbling. When Jesus' disciples starting asking for food donations, can you imagine giving up your lunch? But that's exactly what the boy did – gave his lunch to Jesus.

If you are honest, would you offer your lunch to someone else and be prepared to go hungry? In the story of course, the little boy didn't go hungry, Jesus performed a miracle and there was enough food for everyone and plenty left over.

The point is that the boy didn't know that when he gave his lunch away. When we give things to God,

we don't always know the end of the story. Make a top 10 list of your favourite possessions. Now think about all the rest, do you really need them?

### prayer

Dear God,  
Thank you that you have given us so much: warm houses, food to eat and a safe place to live. Thank you for the possessions we have and forgive us when we hoard them, don't share them and don't look after them. Help us to be generous with our things, and to think of others that may need them more.

Amen

### extra activities

Lavish your neighbours with homemade cakes, biscuits, sweets or whatever you feel like baking. This particular activity is about taking the time and trouble to make something with your own hands, so no cheating!

Organise time as a family to do your baking. One of you should probably take charge of the kitchen area and delegate your mixers, weighers, bakers, decorators and cleaners. For extra fun let a child take an active role and you can play the role of overseer! Think about who you are baking for. For instance, do you know if that person is gluten intolerant or has any allergies? Do they have a particular love for certain colours or flavours? If you are struggling for recipe ideas then check out our Pinterest board ([www.pinterest.com/stewardshipuk/40acts/](http://www.pinterest.com/stewardshipuk/40acts/)) for some tasty ideas.

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do this act on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>! We really want to see your messy kitchen, floury-faced and yummy cake photos. Send them to us using the hash tag #40acts on both Twitter and Facebook.**

## week four: generous with words

### read

Mark 4: 35 – 39

*Jesus' words calm the storm*

*That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*

### THINKING TIME

Have you ever been really frightened? Not just watching a movie or a TV programme, but in real life? Talk about some frightening moments in your life.

If not, can you imagine a really frightening thunderstorm, with claps of thunder that rattle the windows and forks of lightning shooting to the ground? Now imagine a thunderstorm like that but you are now in a tiny wooden sailing boat being tossed and turned by gigantic waves crashing down all around you. Apart from feeling really, really seasick, you would be scared for your life. This is how Jesus' disciples felt and they pleaded with Jesus to do something.

What does Jesus do? What does Jesus use? Jesus says 'Quiet! Be still!' Jesus' words were very powerful and had an effect.

Our words are also powerful and can have an effect on other people. When we say something unkind or hurtful we can't take those words back.

Why are the words we speak so important?

We often speak before thinking about the words we are using, what can we do to help us think before we speak?

### prayer

Loving God,

Thank you that you always listen to our words. Please forgive us for the times when our words have been hurtful or harmful. Help us this week to use our mouths to say things that are always generous, kind and thankful.

Amen

### Extra activities

Your challenge this week is to find opportunities to pray for people. It can seem a little intimidating at first, but discussing it as a group may give you extra boldness. Children often lack the inhibitions that adults have, so encourage them especially to take the lead in this activity.

Meet as a family and individually commit to praying for at least two people each for the next week. Ask each family member to write the names of those they will be praying for on a piece of paper or a post-it note, and then put it somewhere that will remind them to pray each day. Then have a time of prayer as a family.

Next week, use 5-10 minutes of your family together session to feedback how the week went and to pray together again.

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do this act on Friday 28<sup>th</sup>!**

This is a flexible act but it also a potentially very personal one. Feel free to shout about the benefits of praying together as a family, but it's best to keep names and details out of your Facebook and Twitter posts to protect the privacy of those you're praying for. If you have any inspirational stories to share once the week of prayer is up, let us know using the hash tag #40acts.

## week five: generous with our hearts

### read

#### John 4: 46-54

*Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe." The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed. While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him." Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed. This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.*

#### THINKING TIME

What do you love most in the world?  
 This Royal Official in our story loved his very ill son so much he needed to do something. The Bible passage says he begged Jesus to help. Can you imagine him down on his knees, probably interrupting Jesus and pleading with him to help? The man would have been a complete stranger to Jesus, but Jesus didn't ignore him or tell him off. Jesus first of all listened, and then spoke. He gave time to the man and performed a miracle.  
 Why did Jesus do this?

Jesus didn't just love his friends and family, Jesus loved everyone, including this father and his son he had never met. Jesus' heart went out to this family and he performed a miracle. Besides our family and friends, who are the other people around us we can love like Jesus?

#### ACTIONS THIS WEEK

Draw a large heart and inside it put some of the ways you could love other people. They could be simple things like smiling, saying thank you, holding the door open for someone or baking some cakes. Discuss as a family the different ways to love people.

#### prayer

Dear God,  
 Thank you that Jesus loves us and loves different kinds of people all over the world. Help us this week to show love to people we will meet. Help us to bring a smile to our teacher, the shopkeeper, and our next door neighbour.  
 Amen

#### extra activities

Remember to feedback and pray for last weeks act!

Be guerrilla, in a good way! As a positive gang get out there and surprise people with generous offerings of serving: you could offer to clean a neighbour's car, cook a dinner, babysit or any other practical offering or odd job you can think of. Just make sure that they're happy with what you're offering before you leap in!

This act is all about the hands-on, practical serving. It is about taking away stress and day-to-day chores from other people and is a great way to show generosity. Since you are working as a team it will again be worth one of you taking the lead and delegating certain tasks to the other members as you go about your serving.

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do this act on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>!**

**Share your family guerrilla-serving photos. Take some snaps as you serve your neighbours and post them on Facebook and Twitter using the hash tag #40acts.**

## week six: generous with our faith

### read

#### Luke 19: 1 – 9

*Jesus visits Zacchaeus*

*Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."*

#### THINKING TIME

Zacchaeus was an unpopular person; he was different from other people, maybe because he was very small, or maybe because he was a very rich man.

He was seen as a loner, an outsider and nobody seemed to like him. Jesus was the exact opposite, he was so popular, crowds came out to see him, to hear him and to be with him.

Of all people, why do you think Jesus asked Zacchaeus if he could visit his home?

Jesus knew he was lonely, an outsider, not popular. Jesus' love and generosity means he looks out for the quiet, maybe lonely people. Jesus seeks out people who are just 'different'.

It is easy to hang around with the 'popular' people. But are you willing to be generous and to be friends with the 'less popular' people? Jesus became a friend of Zacchaeus. What effect did this have on Zacchaeus?

### prayer

God, our Father,

You gave us your only son, Jesus, to show your love for us.

Help us to think not of ourselves but to be friendly to people and other children like Zacchaeus.

And help us to live our lives as you want us to, Loving others as you have loved us.

Amen

### extra activities

This week's activity will require some creative thinking. Take some time together to talk about your favourite Bible verses.

If children are involved, ask them which ones they can remember and why they like them.

When you have each decided on your verse, think about some original ways of sharing it. If you are a social media user then that would be a perfect opportunity. You could simply tell a friend, or create a card with your favourite verse written inside along with a brief reason why and leave it somewhere anonymously.

Today is about finding creative ways to share our faith, so have some fun!

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do this act on Monday 7<sup>th</sup>!**

**Share your favourite verses with the online 40acts community too. Post them on Twitter and Facebook with the hash tag #40acts along with a brief description of why it is your favourite and any photos of the cards you have created.**

## week seven: generous with forgiveness

### study

#### Luke 23: 32 - 38

*Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One." The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

#### THINKING TIME

It is not surprising at all that Jesus forgave the actual people who were putting him to death. Forgiveness was very important to Jesus.

He was once asked how many times we should forgive someone (see Matthew 18: 21-35). Seven times? 'No', says Jesus, 'seventy times seven.'

That's a great challenge. But forgiveness and love have no limits. We either love or we don't love. We either forgive or we don't forgive.

Have you ever been hurt by someone?

Were you able to forgive them?

How difficult was it?

The second great thing about forgiveness is that it not only frees the other person but it frees us as well! It is easy to keep our love to ourselves, but then we run the risk of becoming bitter and isolated.

To share it with others is the big challenge. To forgive someone who has really hurt us is difficult, but we can ask God to help and then the hurt and pain will start to disappear. Are there things in your life now that causes you to feel bitter and sad? (You could discuss them with an adult or pray about your feelings). Have you ever been forgiven by someone? How did it feel?

### prayer

Loving God,

We have many challenges in our lives! Help us to be generous and to share forgiveness with others, so that we may be free to serve you and bring love to your world.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

### extra activities

The Bible teaches us that as we are forgiven, we are to forgive others.

Why not start the morning by saying sorry to each other for the little things you've done wrong (or the right things you've not done) and ask for each other's forgiveness? As the day goes on, however, you may need to be honest with yourself about some bigger things. If you have wronged someone then you need to ask for forgiveness and apologise. If you have been wronged then it is time to forgive.

Try to spend some time during the evening talking to one another about whom and what you want to forgive and then pray for each other.

And finally . . .

The other activity this week is the one you have been building up to all Lent! Check your event planner and make sure you have everything ready for your celebration event and that everyone knows what they're doing. Even if things don't go quite to plan, a generous heart and joyful attitude will be what everyone remembers!

**If you are following the 40acts Individual calendar then try and do these acts on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> (wipe the slate) and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> (celebrate)**

**The whole of 40acts culminates in this final celebration event! Join the world-wide 40acts community as everyone opens their doors and hosts some kind of generous event over Easter weekend. Be sure to post what you are doing on Facebook and Twitter with #40acts so that we can be a part of the last stage of your Lenten journey.**

## recipes – Easter story cookies

### ingredients

80gms whole pecans or any other nut, cashew or pistachio  
 3 egg whites  
 200gms sugar  
 1 tsp. vinegar  
 pinch salt

### equipment

Oven tray with baking parchment  
 zipper bag or plastic bag  
 tape  
 Bible

### instructions

1. Preheat oven to 150°C Place nuts in sealable bag and let children crush them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces.  
 Explain that after Jesus was arrested he was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19: 1-3.
2. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross he was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
3. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.
4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.  
  
 So far the ingredients are not very appetizing.
5. Add sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16 (the most famous verse in the bible).
6. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the white colour represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 118 and John 3:1-3.
7. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto baking parchment. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matt. 27:57-60.
8. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt. 27:65-66.
9. GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20, 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matt. 28:1-9. HE HAS RISEN!

## recipes – traditional Easter marbled pace eggs

This is a very old British tradition & method of colouring and dyeing eggs to be boiled and eaten on Easter morning.

### ingredients

12 fresh organic eggs  
start collecting onion skins from red and yellow onions – as many as you can.  
aluminium foil or string or wool  
butter (optional)  
beetroot water (optional) or spinach water (optional)

### instructions

1. Find your collection of red and yellow onion skins and soak them in a bowl of water (this makes them easier to handle)
2. Wrap the skins around the eggs in a random way - you do not need to cover the egg completely.
3. Encase the eggs with the onionskins in a piece of aluminium foil - covering completely, OR tie pieces of thread/wool or string around the eggs.
4. Boil the eggs for about 7 – 10 minutes.
5. Take off the heat and allow to cool in the water.
6. Peel away the string, aluminium foil, onion skins and arrange the coloured eggs in a basket or egg holder - for the centre of the Easter Breakfast, Tea or Brunch table.
7. You can "polish" the eggs with a bit of butter to deepen the colours and give them a gloss.
8. Alternative dyes include, beetroot water and spinach water for red and green eggs!

The name Pace is thought to derive from the French word for Easter, Pâques...and in some parts of Britain – mainly Lancashire in the North West, these eggs are rolled down a hill, the winner being the owner of the egg which goes the furthest and has the least cracks or breaks in it!

You can play a simpler game around the dining table, by tapping your egg against someone else's, the one that cracks last is the winner!

It is also traditional to give one of these eggs to each person who visits your home throughout the Easter period – a novel alternative to a chocolate egg.

## recipes – cupcakes to make and give away

Makes 12 cupcakes

### equipment

paper cases  
a muffin tin  
tools for decorating, although icing can be done with teaspoons.

### ingredients

For the cake mix

- 110g/4oz butter or margarine, softened at room temperature
- 110g/4oz caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 110g/4oz self-raising flour
- 1-2 tbsp milk

For the buttercream icing

- 140g/5oz butter, softened
- 280g/10oz icing sugar
- 1-2 tbsp milk
- a few drops food colouring

### instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale.(this takes at least 5 minutes) Beat in the eggs a little at a time and stir in the vanilla extract.
3. Fold in the flour using a large metal spoon, adding a little milk until the mixture is of a dropping consistency. Spoon the mixture into the paper cases until they are half full.
4. Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes, or until golden-brown on top and a skewer inserted into one of the cakes comes out clean. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes, then remove from the tin and cool on a wire rack.
5. For the buttercream icing, beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
6. Then add the remaining icing sugar with one tablespoon of the milk, adding more milk if necessary, until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
7. Add the food colouring and mix until well combined.
8. Spoon the icing into a piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe the icing using a spiralling motion onto the cup cakes in a large swirl. Or spoon onto each cake and make smooth with either a spoon or knife
9. Decorate with anything to hand: sweets, chocolates, sprinkles etc.

## acknowledgements

### About Stewardship

We help people give. Since 1906 Stewardship has provided advice, guidance, inspiration and practical tools to make it easy for people to give easily and tax effectively.

Stewardship giving accounts are currently used by over 25,000 people in the UK with more than £53 million distributed to charitable causes from Stewardship accounts every year. Over 19,000 registered churches, secular and Christian charities and full-time Christian workers are currently supported with Stewardship.

Stewardship is a charity that helps people to give. If you would like to find out more about how we can help you to give then visit [www.stewardship.org.uk/give](http://www.stewardship.org.uk/give) or find us at [www.facebook.com/stewardship](https://www.facebook.com/stewardship) or [www.twitter.com/stewardshipnews](https://www.twitter.com/stewardshipnews).