

LOAF Meals

Jesus blessed and broke bread and gave it to His disciples saying, "Do this in remembrance of me." He celebrated communal meals with His followers. We can follow His example with a Harvest or Alpha supper, or a picnic, choosing food using at least some LOAF principles. Invite people to think about the food that they are eating while enjoying their meal.

Some churches provide simple meals of homemade soup and bread with local, organic ingredients. Others offer local cheeses, meat from humanely-reared animals, salads, pickles, bread, desserts and drinks – all labelled to show where they were produced and highlighting LOAF principles.

One church distributed seeds in Spring, and celebrated Harvest with vegetables grown from them.



At Green Christian events we invite people to bring vegetarian/vegan food to share.

The decisions we make about food have far-reaching effects, influencing how it's produced and how animals are treated. They raise questions about land use, over-exploitation of soil and people, fishing methods which destroy ocean floors, and industrial agriculture's dependence on oil for transport, fertilisers and packaging. Each meal is an opportunity to care for the bodies God gave us and the planet entrusted to us.

**"Give us this day
our daily bread"**

Matthew 6:11



Green Christian

About: We are a community of ordinary Christians from all backgrounds and traditions. Inspired by our faith, we care for creation through prayer, action and encouragement. We walk alongside those of faith and no faith.

We welcome new members. Join us!

greenchristian.org.uk/join-us

Events: Conferences, courses, retreats and workshops – online and in person.

Projects: Borrowed Time (response to climate crisis); Joy In Enough (green economics); Food; Way of Life Community; Rainforest Fund.

Resources: Annual brochure, twice yearly magazine, monthly *Prayer Guide*, free email newsletter for all, members' email discussion group. Leaflets for use in church: Seven Rs: Respecting Creation, Food: Use Your LOAF! Nine Ways of Living Gently, Nature: God loves all things.

Visit greenchristian.org.uk/resources for prayers, poems, hymns, news of workshops and courses, posters and videos to inspire you and your church.

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Food

Use Your LOAF!

Local
Organic
Animal Friendly
Fairly Traded



GreenChristian
Responding to the Cry of the Earth



Locally Produced

There is a season for everything (Ecc 3:1)

We're called to care for the Earth and the abundance it brings. But the incredible variety in our supermarkets comes at a cost – carbon emissions from air freighting food, and tough global competition for local farmers. UK imports of soy, beef, cocoa and palm oil have been linked to deforestation.

If we choose seasonal, local food, we support local growers and cut emissions. And berries are sweeter as a summer treat, not a year-round staple!

Grow your own, or join a community growing scheme. Sign up for a local veg box scheme and support farm shops, farmers' markets and independent food retailers.

Organically Grown

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it (Psalm 24:1)

Caring for God's creation includes the soil and water which feed us. Genesis says that Adam was created from soil; we coexist with many creatures - including millions living in the soil.

Pesticides and herbicides cause biodiversity loss and pollute rivers. They threaten the pollinators we rely on for food production, and can also harm human health. Soils without organic matter become lifeless, instead of teeming with worms and other creatures.

Choosing organic food means healthier soils, storing more carbon and giving more resilient crops. We'll see meadows rich with wildflowers, birds and insects, and rivers full of fish again.



Avoid chemicals in your own garden or allotment, and check labels or ask growers about their practices.

Animal Friendly

The righteous care for the needs of their animals (Proverbs 12:10)

Caring for the needs of farm animals means not causing them to suffer ill-treatment through intensive production or long-distance transport. By carefully choosing eggs, dairy products, meat and fish, we can avoid contributing to their suffering.

The climate and nature crises cannot be addressed without a large reduction in meat and dairy consumption. Some people follow vegetarian or vegan diets; others eat less meat and buy only higher welfare products, respecting the creatures God made.



Aim to reduce your meat and dairy consumption and choose organic or free range produce and MSC labelled fish.

Fairly Traded

Do not exploit the poor (Proverbs 22:22)

We're called to act justly and not exploit the poor. Farmers and producers, here and abroad, deserve fair prices for their produce. Some foods can't be sustainably grown in a temperate climate, e.g. bananas, citrus and coffee. Often, farmers' prices don't even cover their costs, and many thousands of workers live in poverty. Trade must be sustainable and fair.

Fair trade means that farmers and workers producing food get fairer pay, better environmental practices, safer working conditions and community investment.



Look for the FAIRTRADE Mark. Encourage your church to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee.

The Cost

LOAF principles can seem expensive – but there are ways to cook from simple, unprocessed ingredients that are affordable. In the UK we spend a lower percentage of our incomes on food than in the past, and less than in most other European countries.

Many prepared ingredients and ready meals sold in supermarkets are expensive. Meat is a costly form of protein compared to beans, peas and lentils. Consuming less meat may enable the purchase of free range/outdoor reared produce. Churches could offer shared meals, buying in bulk and food growing projects.

Beyond LOAF

LOAF principles highlight sustainable and ethical approaches to food. But there are other ways to think about food in more Godly ways:

- Saying grace at meal-times reminds us to appreciate food, and the people and environment that provide it;
- Fasting as a discipline can change attitudes to eating;
- Reflecting on developments such as gene editing and lab-grown meats;
- Sharing food can build and strengthen communities.

Green Christian has set up a Food Project promoting Christian perspectives on food. We run events, produce information sheets on seeing food through a Godly lens, and collaborate with like-minded organisations. To find out more, visit our website and sign up for our food e-newsletters.



Mylor Community Garden, Diocese of Truro, Creation Care project