



**LENT 2018: 40ACTS GENEROSITY CHALLENGE  
A MISSIONAL MOMENT FOR YOUR CHURCH**

40ACTS 2018

WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY TO SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2018

**40ACTS THEME 2018: FAITH IN DEED**



*in our villages, towns & cities*



40acts.org.uk

40acts Hope Church Guide

BROUGHT TO YOU BY: **stewardship<sup>®</sup>**



## WELCOME TO 40ACTS!

When Stewardship launched their Lent generosity challenge, back in 2011, the idea was simple. A simple daily reflection throughout Lent, accompanied with a simple generosity challenge to complete that day. 40 days, 40 reflections, 40 simple acts of generosity.

Isn't it amazing what God can do with the simplest ideas?

Fast forward to this year and the impact and missional potential for churches that 40acts provides is clear:

More than 100,000 people now receive the daily emails or follow the challenge on social media; hundreds and thousands of churches, small groups, youth groups and Christian Unions have already committed to 'do Lent generously'.

And, in recent years, hundreds of schools have joined the challenge and dedicated weeks in their term to learning about the Christian value of giving, through tailor made assemblies, lesson plans and activities.

Hope and Stewardship have partnered together over many years and I'm thrilled to recommend 40acts as a missional moment for your church to consider in 2018.

Along with the other free resources available at [40acts.org.uk](http://40acts.org.uk), this guide is designed to help you get started with your church, with an easy structure to follow through Lent to help you make the most of this incredible mission opportunity.



Roy Crowne, Hope

P.S – we love to hear what groups are doing so please keep in touch with us on social media (@40acts), whatsapp (+447468 40 40 40) or by email to [40acts@stewardship.org.uk](mailto:40acts@stewardship.org.uk)

### WHAT IS 40ACTS? A QUICK GUIDE

- 40acts is a generosity challenge for Lent – think of it as a daily devotional with a practical edge.
- Lent 2018 starts on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February.
- It is 100% unashamedly Christian, with reflections provided by a wonderful mix of Christian church and ministry leaders, writers and teachers.
- The daily challenges cover an accessible range of generosity-related themes. Some days are about giving time, others about giving practical help, while some deal with generosity of our finances, our influence and much more.
- Sharing and celebrating online is actively encouraged, with thousands following the #40acts feed on social media each year.
- We provide additional resources for churches to complement the daily reflections. This includes sermon guides, small group studies, and resources for youth. All available for FREE on our website ([www.40acts.org.uk](http://www.40acts.org.uk))



## LAUNCHING 40ACTS IN YOUR CHURCH

### GETTING EVERYONE READY AND EXCITED!

- ✦ Plan well in advance – use the slides and other promotional templates to build some anticipation. Use our customisable leaflets and posters available for purchase/download [here](#).
- ✦ Invite the church to start praying for outreach opportunities through the 40acts challenges.
- ✦ Take a look at our suggested 7-week activity guide and plan in the events, recruit some volunteers and prep your small groups.
- ✦ Contact local schools and ask if they're taking part – send them the link to the [website](#) and suggest they watch this [video](#) of a school that took part in a previous year.

**40ACTS HAS HELPED OUR CHURCH FAMILY TO BE MORE  
OUTWARDLY FOCUSED AND TAUGHT US HOW SIMPLE ACTS OF  
KINDNESS CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S LIVES.**

*Simon Fenn, Head of Mission, Cromer Church*

### IDEAS AND TIPS

- 👉 Announce it several weeks before Lent to your congregation;
- 👉 play our promotional [films/videos](#) (which will begin to be released two weeks before the beginning of 40acts);
- 👉 use social media to create a buzz (create an online group specifically for 40acts);
- 👉 ask your congregation to commit/pledge to the challenge as individuals and sign up for the daily emails;
- 👉 circulate the bible study notes resources amongst group leaders and hold a pre-planning meeting so that they can get to grips with the content before Lent begins;
- 👉 hold a launch event – this could be a special announcement in a service on the Sunday before Lent, or could be a 'stunt' on Shrove Tuesday or Ash Wednesday (we've seen churches give out free pancakes and muffins at their local railway stations before – very effective!).



## LENT – YOUR CHURCH’S MISSION MOMENT

As well as the daily challenges and the teaching and preaching, 40acts provides the perfect opportunity to be intentional about reaching out into the wider community in faith and deed. Here are our suggestions to make the most of Lent 2018...

### LAUNCH! SHROVE TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY



PLAN A PANCAKE GIVEAWAY FOR SHROVE TUESDAY (OR THE SUNDAY BEFORE) TO LAUNCH YOUR 40ACTS CHALLENGE

### SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY



VALENTINE CELEBRATION – ORGANISE AN AFTERNOON TEA PARTY FOR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS AT YOUR CHURCH



### SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY



40ACTS MESSY CHURCH – USE THE 40ACTS THEMED GUIDE TO RUN A SPECIAL GENEROSITY-THEMED MESSY CHURCH

### SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH



CELEBRATE ST DAVID’S DAY – SPEND THE AFTERNOON GIVING OUT BUNCHES (OR POTS) OF DAFFODILS AT YOUR LOCAL SHOPPING CENTRE

### MOTHERING SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH



ARRANGE TO VISIT YOUR LOCAL CARE HOMES WITH CARDS AND FLOWERS FOR RESIDENTS WHO DON'T HAVE REGULAR VISITORS



## SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH



COMMUNITY CLEAN UP – GRAB THE LITTER-PICKS AND BIN LINERS AND ORGANISE A CLEAN-UP. PICK LOCAL STREETS, OR MAYBE A LOCAL PARK, AND GET IT SPICK AND SPAN, BEFORE WELL-DESERVED REFRESHMENTS TO CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS!

YOUNG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY IN THE 20 - 40 AGE GROUP ARE TIME POOR, AND 40ACTS IS A BRILLIANT WAY TO EMBRACE LENT IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT WAY. THERE HAS BEEN GENERAL EXCITEMENT ABOUT DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT AND NOBODY PREDICTED HOW MUCH FUN IT WAS GOING TO BE. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND 40ACTS TO ALL CHURCH LEADERS.

*John Hawkins, Archdeacon of Hampstead*

## SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH



CREATE A LARGE PRAYER WALL AND CARDS FOR PASSERS-BY TO FILL IN. ADD SOME SEATING AND GIVE OUT DRINKS TO HELP ENGAGE CONVERSATIONS



## EASTER SUNDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL



THE BIG FINALE – ARRANGE AN EASTER EGG GIVEAWAY AFTER YOUR EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS.

IS THERE A LOCAL HOSPITAL, HOSPICE OR PRISON CHAPLAIN YOU COULD CONTACT, WHO WOULD WELCOME EASTER EGGS




AND CARDS, OR THE HOPE AT EASTER MAGAZINE

TO GIVE AWAY? (VISIT [PRISONHOPE.ORG.UK](http://PRISONHOPE.ORG.UK) FOR DETAILS ON LINKING WITH LOCAL PRISONS. ORDER COPIES OF HOPE AT EASTER FROM [HOPETOGETHER.ORG.UK/SHOP](http://HOPETOGETHER.ORG.UK/SHOP))








## EXTRA RESOURCES


### MARKETING TOOLS AVAILABLE

-  Customisable leaflets and posters found [here](#)
-  Promotional Film (Can be downloaded [here](#) one week prior to the beginning of Lent)
-  Use our press release [template](#) to let your local media know about particularly newsworthy 40acts events that you're organising – the launch of your challenge on Shrove Tuesday could be a good place to start!

### SOCIAL MEDIA ADVICE

-  Set up a specific Facebook group (and be sure to invite us @40acts to it) to share the experience together. Create a secondary hashtag, whilst still using #40acts. Make one specifically for your church.
-  Ask questions and engage through social media with your congregation on a daily basis about how they are getting on.
-  Follow the official 40acts social media accounts and repost the challenges and conversations each day.
-  Ask for ideas and begin conversations about how to tackle the daily challenge.
-  Use the group to plan your community project, set up events and keep your congregation in the loop with progress and needs they can meet.

### PANCAKE PARTY FUNDRAISER TIPS

-  Charge an entry fee/pancake price that will cover your set up costs and allow you to fundraise. Advertise to your congregation and flyer your local community. Put on some music for people as they mingle/eat their pancakes. Provide a 'pancake tossing' station for prizes (i.e. how many times can you successfully toss in a row), or a guess the flavour station. Use your imagination for ways you can engage with your community whilst fundraising for 40acts projects at the same time!



## MAXIMISING YOUR 40ACTS EXPERIENCE

### FREE RESOURCES

Check out and plan to use all the free teaching and small group resources available at [40acts.org.uk](http://40acts.org.uk).

This year's theme is 'Faith in Deed' – focussing in on what James can teach us about generosity

### HOPE

HOPE encourages every Christian to be intentional about making Jesus known, with something to say, something to give and an invitation offer. Check out HOPE's resources for something to give, such as the HOPE at Easter magazine or a copy of the gift book 'Who Do You Say I Am?'

### PRAY

Pray, plan and act on the ideas for corporate acts of generosity in this guide.

### JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Celebrate with us, learn with us, learn from others, share your experiences on FACEBOOK, TWITTER and INSTAGRAM using #40acts