

WEEKLY SERMON

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Have some cake!

It is amazing news! Get your aprons and mixing bowls at the ready. Channel Four have announced that Bake-Off is restarting later this month. It has to be one of my favourite programmes and I look forward to it returning each year. What's not to like? It is an all-round, feel good programme. There's cake, pies, pastries, jam, even blancmange, all served up with an air of tension and suspense. Who will have a disaster? Whose will get a Hollywood-Handshake? Who will Paul flirt with this year? And who will try and get Prue a little tipsy?

I will admit to being a bit of a Bake-off Geek. I have a bit of a ritual when watching each episode, which involves a pot of tea (or maybe a Gin) and cake – normally home-made, after all you cannot watch all these culinary delights being created without one of your own, can you? I have a Facebook chat group with friends where we comment on each show as the series progresses. We get to know the contestants, we have favourites, we give them nicknames, we cheer when they do well and we are disappointed when things do not go their way. We are invested in them and their performance. We care, even though we have never met these people.

The contestants are always quite a mixed bunch, and they seem like genuinely nice people. Unlike other game shows you often see one participant helping their competitor when time is running out and they aren't quite finished. They develop friendships and help each other out when they are struggling. Although it is competition, they don't really compete, they want each other to do well.

If only life was more like that. In our daily lives we feel we are competing against others and in order to succeed, someone else has to lose out. At work, in our neighbourhoods and even at times in our churches we feel we have to do one better than those around us. Life does not have to be that way. We can take a leaf out of the Bake-off book and get to know your neighbours, help each other out. When people are struggling give them a hand. Encourage each other when times are tough. And if all else fails, have some cake together!

Rev Calum Crombie