

What people have been saying...

Messy Church has enabled us to reach out creatively to those on the periphery of our church and helped us to make and maintain links with families who would not or cannot be with us at our 'usual' gathering times.

Rev Bob Morris, Cirencester Baptist Church

Just wanted to let you know about the amazing success of our Messy Church.

We are now on our fourth month and it has grown each month. At this week's session we had 106 people, including our team of helpers, and the vast majority of our guests have no other church contact. It's so exciting to be involved in such a good group. Thank you so much for the ideas. The challenge now is to figure out how to fit them all in!

Rev Allie Kerr, St Dunstan's, Upton

Messy Church has made a HUGE impact on worship in one of the two parishes where I am a minister.

Rev Dr Robin Hill, Longniddry, Scotland

We've been running Messy Church in our parish (just outside of Toronto, Canada) for the past two years, and God has been doing amazing things in helping us connect with unchurched or dechurched families.

Rev Judy Paulsen, Christ Church Anglican Church, Oshawa

I suspect that all that is needed for Messy Church to help people grow into quite mature informed discipleship is implicit in the basic picture and model.

Bishop Graham Cray

It has been fascinating seeing the kids and families take on board such a fresh way of being church.

Rev Christine Moimoi, Uniting Church, Drysdale, Victoria, Australia

Sometimes God does a new thing... and it seems to me that at the moment God is doing a new thing around the world through Messy Church and that we must praise him and thank him for that, pray that it'll go on growing and, wherever we can, bless the work and encourage it on.

Dr Christina Baxter

Through much prayer and preparation, we have reached out to some 15 fringe or non-church families who are now die-hard Messy Church-goers. They inform me it is the highlight of the week for their children, and one father shared with me that he never thought he would ever say he goes to church weekly and enjoys it.

God is doing some amazing things here. We assumed it would taper off after the first couple of weeks, but the families are beginning to invite other families because it is a great environment to discover and learn.

Rev Tim Waghorn, St Augustine's Church, Melbourne, who runs a weekly Messy Church



An Introduction



Messy Church

is growing fast. It started in 2004 at an Anglican church near Portsmouth, UK, and has since spread around the world and across all the major Christian denominations. The number of Messy Churches registered on the website directory is increasing month by month.

Messy Church

- Is for families who don't yet belong to church
- Is a congregation of the church, not a stepping stone to the existing service
- Is for all ages, not just children
- Is not a franchise but a model to adapt to different contexts
- Is resourced, enabled and supported by BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship)

A typical Messy Church might run once a month on a day and at a time to suit families in the area.

It would have elements like these:

- A relaxed welcome time with drinks and snacks
- An activity-based learning time, with Bible-themed crafts, competitions, games, prayers and other activities
- A short celebration, usually with story, song and prayer
- A sit-down meal for everyone

To be a Messy Church, it will express the values of

- Christ-centredness
- Hospitality
- Creativity
- Celebration
- All-age, as equal priority is given to the needs of adults and children

Messy Church needs:

- A core team of three or four, plus a larger team of any number of people with different gifts
- To be seen as another congregation alongside the existing congregations
- A leadership team who spend time listening to God, reflecting on their local community's needs and communicating effectively with the wider church congregation



How to start

Details can be found on the website www.messychurch.org.uk, in *Starting your Messy Church*, in the first *Messy Church* book and *Messy Church—the DVD*.

- Visit another Messy Church
- Read the resources
- Listen to God and to your community
- Contact your Regional Coordinator
- Gather a team
- Plan thoroughly
- Be faithful to the values of Messy Church
- Publicise effectively
- Review regularly
- Enjoy it!

Resources

A range of Messy Church resources is available to help you start and run a Messy Church.

Messy Church, *Messy Church 2* and *Messy Church 3* each give 15 sessions of Messy Church ready to use and useful details of the thinking and theology behind the practice. The magazine *Get Messy!* provides a ready-to-use session for each month and up-to-date stories, news and advice from across the network.

Other books to inform and enrich Messy Churches are also available at www.messychurch.org.uk. A range of licensed Messy Church branded clothing, publicity and other merchandise is available from CPO. www.cpo-online.org.uk.

The Messy Church team is available to run training. For details, please see the website or contact the administrator: messychurch@brf.org.uk or 01235 858246.

Cost

BRF, a registered charity, makes no charge for a church to run a Messy Church but invites churches to support the work of the Messy Church team as part of its home mission. By giving directly to the work of Messy Church you are enabling more churches to hear about it and to continue BRF's work of supporting and sustaining existing Messy Churches. For further details, see the website or contact the administrator: messychurch@brf.org.uk or 01235 858246.

Messy Church is part of BRF, a Registered Charity. BRF, 15 The Chambers, Vineyard, Abingdon OX14 3FE

