**Refresh the Mess Opening Session – Engaging with the 5 Messy Church Values**

*Adapted from notes by Melissa Neumann, Uniting Church Synod of South Australia*

For those who have been around Messy Church for awhile hopefully the following is a refresher on the importance of the 5 values and how they make Messy Church Messy Church. For anyone new to Messy Church this is just a brief introduction to how the 5 values are at the core of Messy Church and how you might use them as you prepare for Messy ministry.

If you have some paper you might like to write down the 5 values or print off the colouring pages (available here: <http://messychurchaustralia.com.au/refresh-the-mess-national-online-conference/>) which are about the values. You might like to draw or doodle or make notes about the values as you go through these notes.

**The 5 Messy Church values are:**

* **Christ centred**
* **All-age**
* **Creativity**
* **Hospitality**
* **Celebration**

The 5 values run through Messy Church, they’re the DNA. We need to let these values grow and let them develop the shape of your Messy Church. Don’t try tinkering with the shape of Messy Church, work on the values. As we come out of a year where our Messy ministry has looked different or hasn’t happened it’s a great time to consider:

* How are these 5 values at the core of your Messy Church?
* How have we expressed these values really well and how can we refresh how we express the values more effectively?

*Christ Centred* – Messy Church is about Jesus, about growing as disciples of Jesus, from first encounters to moving closer to Jesus, to embracing Jesus, to being a disciple each day every day. – how might that be expressed in Messy Church?

*All – age* – everyone is welcome, this isn’t a kids club, it’s for people of all ages – what might that look like?

*Creativity, Hospitality and Celebration* – are just that. Let’s be creative, hospitable and let’s celebrate as we gather as a team, in our welcome, through the activities, in our celebration/gathered time and in our meals.

The 5 values shape how we do all of the elements that make up a Messy Church service.

You can discover a whole lot more about the Messy Church values in many of the Messy Church resources.

**Either on your own or in small groups:** I invite you to choose one value at a time and spend at least 15mins reflecting on these three questions for each value.

**Question 1: What does each value look like in a COVID normal world?**

We understand that part of this conversation is about how are we keeping each other safe BUT we really want you to think about what the values look like through the lens of how that value will drive your ministry forward in the midst of keeping people safe. Focus your brainstorming on what you can do in a COVID safe way rather than the things we can no longer do. What is important when we think about the value through a ministry or mission lens?

For example, a discussion around the value of creativity might include how we plan in new creative ways, how we creatively gather together, how we creatively explore the Bible or themes in family groups or how we get creative in story sharing and connecting together.

**Question 2:** **How do we want to continue to express that value? How can we refresh our expression of that value?**

For many of us we’ve had a very different year of ministry or perhaps our Messy ministry has been on pause for most of the year. This could be an ideal time to review what you used to do that you want to continue with and to also consider want you want to refresh.

Use the 5 values as a lens to focus your review. For example, as you think about the value of hospitality – how did we use to express hospitality? How can we refresh our expression of hospitality? What might some new ways look like?

**Question 3:** **How do we make this value an important part of Messy Church?**

It may be helpful to write down some notes as you reflect and/or discuss these questions. At the conference, we invited people to send in their reflections and these are listed below.

**Next steps:**

Don’t leave your reflections here. As you plan for Messy ministry over the coming few months, choose one value as a team to focus on and improve how that value is expressed in your Messy ministry. Then choose another value to focus on for a few months. Be in contact with your Regional Coordinator or someone from the National Team if you would like any further resourcing or advice about using the 5 values.

**Refresh the Mess participant reflections on the 5 Values**

***Hospitality***

A COVID normal world: join with another family and bring your own picnic meal. Get pre-packaged food. Make sure everyone responsible is trained in safe food handling. We need to connect more than once a month. What about a What’s App group where we share activities we are involved with, how do we create community.  We need to continue to emphasise hospitality in all we do, and look for creative ways to do it.

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***Hospitality***

Q1: What does this value look like in a covid normal world?

* How do you show without food?
* How do you show it when we are separate?
* Provide everyone with the same recipe to prepare in advance
* Have non-communal foods - salads don't work, a single cup cap does
* Drop something off to everyone during the week to eat together on the day eg - Homemade biscuits

Q2: Using the values as a lens to focus your review?

* Have a small gift for everyone coming to take home
* Prepare food in separate boxes and pass out
* While the weather is still good move outdoors

Q3: How do we make this value an important part of Messy Church?

* Hospitality is providing for other - doesn't need human physical contact necessarily
* Ensure there is still time for 'just chat'
* Much smaller groups at tables set out to talk together

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***Celebrating-***

Celebrate in local parks for important Christian Events-Easter egg hunt exploring the story of Easter.

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***All Ages***

How can we attract more boys and the 9 plus ages

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***All Ages***

