



Term 3, 2019

Messy Churches all over the country are supported and run by faithful people who put their hearts and energy into sharing God's love and faith with others. In this edition we celebrate with a couple of churches their Messy Church stories, and with their wider church communities who can't help but be encouraged by the ripple effects of Messy Church.
~ Beth Nicholls

They came, they experienced, they got messy!

Saturday, August 24th saw the Centre for Theology and Ministry filled with excitement, enthusiasm and energy. The gathering attracted over seventy participants from all over Victoria and even some from overseas (yes, Tasmania is over the seas). Throughout the day there were many opportunities to: listen, discuss, pray, learn from each other, sing, connect with a variety of Messy Church leaders, ask questions, explore the contexts of different Messy Churches and to unpack God's calling for your Messy Church.

A rich and stimulating experience, that empowered and resourced all participants from newbies to Messy Church, to those who have been involved in for many years.

Karen Morgan

Messy Church ripple effects

(Rev Beth Nicholls Regional Coordinator asks Rev Janie French)

I recently visited Banora Point Messy Church, which has been going now for almost 5 years. Before Messy Church there were no families with children regularly attending the ageing Sunday morning congregation. After starting Mainly Music in 2013, the church with a great team under the leadership of Rev Janie French began Messy Church. The ripple effect of Messy Church has meant a change in emphasis for the church that now welcomes families – they even built a fantastic playground. I asked Rev Janie to reflect on the impact of Messy Church.

When Beth rang and asked me to reflect on how Messy Church has impacted our church, I thought GREAT QUESTION! Messy Church you see, impacts beyond the idea of the potential to share faith into the community.

Within the church that hosts this ministry there are terrific and ongoing benefits. Over the past 5 years, probably upwards of 25 people have been trained and given opportunity to share their faith. This then impacts relationships far and wide. It has given a confidence boost within our Mainly Music ministry, and splashed into craft club. It has given courage for people to share with family and neighbours (who may never come to Messy Church).

Messy Church has been a boon to the local church. It has given a vehicle for people to try - and succeed - at embarking on the kind of discipleship Christians genuinely want to have in their lives.

Rev Janie French (Banora Point)



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God's faithfulness and a passion for Messy Church

In August 2015, two ladies, passionate about sharing God's love with children and their families set out from Sandgate Queensland on a 5 hour road trip to visit Messy Church at Bundaberg Uniting Church. Iris Gillingham and Cathy Gear were open to what God had in store. The enthusiasm for Messy Church that they experienced with the Bundaberg MC team was infectious. The 5 hour road trip back just fuelled their own enthusiasm to approach Rev Anne Hulbert about commencing Messy Church at Sandgate Uniting Church.

In September 2015, Jane Leadbetter from the UK ran a Messy Church workshop at the Anglican Church Sherwood. Iris and Cathy attended, gathering as much info as possible. They did their homework, they prayed and devoured the books and resources. Presenting MC information helped the regular Sunday congregation get a picture of Messy Church. In November, the congregation was invited to attend a meeting of those interested in starting Messy Church. 35 attended, and so from that with a great team formed, in February 2016 MC started.

Cathy says "Since commencing we have between 21 and 37 children and 24 and 46 adults attend each month. There is no doubt it is labour intensive, but the buzz in the courtyard says it all. We have seen God's almighty hand at work. We give all glory to God as we continue to nurture families, especially those on the fringe of faith, through the very strong Ministry of Messy Church.

Cathy Gear coordinator Messy Church Sandgate Uniting Church.

Ten years of Messy Church at Sherwood Anglian

Oh what a sight! Streamers and dead party-poppers spread over the length of the worship space, balloons, feed from their tethers, bobbing around up in the rafters. How did we come to this? Messy Church at Sherwood Anglican had been celebrating 10 years of connecting and sharing the Gospel with younger generations. It all started in 2009 when parents asked to do church differently. So Messy Church at St. Matt's was born and we began our messy outreach to our community.

We've had our highs and lows, people have come and gone. We've had visits by Lucy Moore to various training events; input from Jane Leadbetter; we become Regional Coordinators and did training for others all over Queensland. Over the years it has been rather wonderful to watch Messy Church grow into a lively community of faith within our parish. We are thankful to our team, who have become more 'daring' for the Gospel, and more creative than we thought we could be.

A Messy Church mum wrote: "Thank you for Messy Church. Thank you for allowing families, such as mine, to introduce their children to Christ and Church in a fun, safe, friendly, kind, compassionate, creative, truly Christian manner."

Christmas Designer Photo

These photo canvases make great presents. For Messy Church we asked families to bring along photos that we photocopied onto matt photo paper.

Materials:

- take your own photograph. We used our churches Christmas light nativity display.
- 1 x Matt photo paper
- 1x Canvas 13X18cm is a good size
- Glue for sticking photo (Clag + PVA mixed)
- Photo sealer Modge Podge or similar

Tools:

- brushes
- Scissors

How:

1. Take a photo.
2. Print photo on matt paper. You will need to work out where to position the photo on the matt paper and how to print it in the right position (e.g. in the middle of the paper).
3. Cut the photo to fit the canvas -allowing for edges to fold over to wrap around the edges of the canvas
4. Glue your photo to the canvas, wrapping the sides of the photo around the canvas to give a 3D look.
5. Seal the canvas with the photo sealer
6. Leave dry



Here is a new series of free videos from Here2Stay

A few years ago a consortium of children's ministry leaders got together to address the question of why young people are leaving the church. They found there is a matrix of reasons as to why people leave the church and the faith, and learnt that at the heart of this disturbing statistic and trend is a failure to critically consider what does it take to see people grow as long term, active followers of Jesus in response to His final command. The Here2Stay initiative was developed. Here2Stay is a discipling strategy created to develop a more effective approach to lifelong faith formation.

Here2Stay initiative is a resource that Messy Churches may use to help us grow our discipleship forming practices. Tammy Tolman (on behalf of the Here2Stay team) has given permission to share the new series of inspirational videos (4-6 minutes long). Each video focuses on a real-life story which highlights its impact on the life of one person as well as drawing out the building blocks of the faith experience. A free small group Discussion Guide has been created for each. Go on the Here2Stay website to register to receive the videos.

The first Video and Discussion Guide was released on September 3rd and now every 2 weeks. Check out the resource, they would be suitable to use for Messy Church team training. The Here2Stay Team value your support in seeing parents and churches supported in this practical way.

[Click here](#) to register your email address to receive the 8 videos at fortnightly intervals.