

Explanation of the Pathway Model – 7 rings of growing faith

Before I start on the model, I want to point out that in every step we can use our 5 Messy Church ideals to help us move along the pathway.

Remember:

- *Most important is to be Christ Centered - we need our faith to be Christ Centered. We need prayer and to be working on our personal faith, and we need in prayer for others. Get your whole church involved in praying for Messy Church and your community if you haven't already done that.*
- *All the other Messy Church Ideals help our thinking of how we might encourage others and meet needs.*

So let's go through Pathways.

1. The first ring is POTENTIAL CONTACT. This is someone who you may or may not know. They may be a friend or acquaintance or someone you happen to meet. They may be seeking something, or you may in your conversation learn something about them and about their belief or faith or lack of faith. And so you have an opportunity to invite and connect them to church and Jesus. You probably have got stories you can share about that.

2. IN TOUCH. You look for ways to put them in touch with Christians and church. You might invite them to an activity or event – maybe a Christmas Carol event or interest group, or to a fellowship group, or even to Messy Church. You will probably need to have several – touch points for that person to be able to move on. You might need to invite them several times, or keep the door open. You might have to be imaginative in finding ways. Here you can use the Messy Church ideals... for instance hospitality and creativity.

3. PARTICIPATING. In participating we invite them to participate in a church group. Could be a coffee group, or play group, or Messy Church... it is important to get them linked into the church community. We all know it's hard to do church by yourself (look at this covid time). Being part of a group helps them to find out more - hopefully they will hear about others faith and about Jesus. This is where the group needs to be intentional about their mission, what they talk about and how they act.

4. EMBRACING THE GOSPEL, RESPONDING TO THE MESSAGE.

In this ring we help people to learn about Jesus, and faith and the Bible so that they can make their own commitment to God.

Can you think of ways this might happen in your church? Put it in the chat.

Alpha groups, Christianity explained, attending church regularly, maybe a Camp (Greg's camp in WA), discipleship groups, Messy Conversations.

Plug into what you've got.

5. BEING A DISCIPLE, FOLLOWING JESUS. Deepening relationships with Jesus..... Feeding their faith..... This step is about helping people to engage and learn about what it means to live their faith. *Home groups, faith life groups, having a mentor or spiritual director or participating in social action – clean up Australia, the carbon fast for lent etc. These help people to deepen their faith.*

6. SERVING & LEADING. They respond to God's love for them and Jesus' call in serving and leading within church and in the community. *Messy Church, camps, kids and youth groups, hospitality groups, interest groups other groups we have mentioned before.*

7. FULLY CONNECTED TO JESUS WITH A STRONG AND ROBUST FAITH. You and I will know that this is a continual work. While it is the ultimate in the Pathway it is not the complete goal. As the Apostle Paul says: 'always striving to run the race marked out for us'. Hebrews 12:1

Example: The following page has an example of how the Pathways model worked with one family.

- As you read the story of Janet and her mum; what are some of the things you observe?
- If Janet was at your church what other pathways could you offer to Janet and her mum?

Workshop B Mission Beyond Messy Church

Example

The story of how Janet and her mum got know Jesus – and it all began with friendly conversations at the school gate pickup and responding to an invitation.

