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Welcome to the 2013 Winter edition of the Australian Messy Church Newsletter!

Exciting stories continue to emerge from all over the country of the difference Messy Church gatherings are making in the lives of children, young people, adults and local church communities. Let me encourage you to continue to share the story of how God is at work in your Messy Church community amongst the local networks you are part of and the wider Messy Church network (eg. through sending material through to me and posting on relevant blogs).

You might also like to consider hosting an Introducing Messy Church session (see second page of this Newsletter) and, if you haven't already done so, it would be appreciated if you could make sure you have [registered as a user](#) of the Messy Church website.

Thank you for the important role you play in facilitating, sustaining and encouraging Messy Church in your context.

Yours faithfully,

Chris.

Messy Church at Golden Grove Salvation Army South Australia



Our 22nd Messy Church was held in May and the topic was The Holy Spirit (just before Pentecost - so very topical).

Families arrived around 4.00 pm and joined in with several games being played, including Balloon Wind Soccer and Wind, Wind, Fire - introducing them to our theme of The Holy Spirit's Power.

Activities included making Rockets (to encourage thinking about power) and Gift Bags (to encourage thinking about the Holy Spirit as God's gift to us). Other options included making Windsocks, Holy Spirit Cup Cakes and Holy Spirit Pinwheels.

As families entered for the Celebration time, photos were being shown on the big screen of the earlier activities and fun and games. We sang several songs and then explored together the coming of God's Holy Spirit as a gift to us who empowers us and helps us to live a Christian life.

After prayer and grace was said we enjoyed a delicious meal of savoury mince followed by the cup cakes that they had decorated earlier.

Bev (Golden Grove, South Australia)

Holy Spirit Rockets

- Tea Bags
- Matches
- Plastic bottles
- Corks
- Vinegar
- Bicarb Soda

VINEGAR and BICARB ROCKETS

1. Fill the plastic bottles with vinegar to the mark on the bottle (1/2 cup).
2. Place 2 teaspoons of Bicarb Soda in a tissue.
3. When ready, put the tissues into the bottle, put a cork in the top and shake 3 times.
4. The cork will be pushed out rapidly with the build up of gas (approx 2-3 sec).



TEA BAG ROCKETS

1. Cut along the top of tea bag with a straight edge.
2. Empty the contents.
3. Open out the tea bag into a long tube and stand on its end.
4. Light the tea bag from the top, when the flame reaches the bottom the tea bag will lift off.

Messy Church Australia Resourcing Messy Church in Holland

I thought you might find this interesting. Friends of mine in Holland are starting up a Messy Church. He is a priest in the Old Catholic church (sort of like the Dutch version of Anglican). I've just sent him some material we used at St. Andrew's (Bendigo, Victoria) and put him on to the Messy Church website. It is amazing how far Messy Church reaches!

Kathryn (Geelong, Victoria)



Messy Church Celebration Time

Celebration is the name given to the most traditional worship part of Messy Church - the 15-25 minutes of story, song, prayer and whatever else we bring into the gathered worship of the whole session. It's also a broader term for marking with joy or sorrow a significant event, for making that event count in our community's life.

Celebration can be engaging, fun, joyful: where people's perception of church is that it is boring, we need to show them that the church worships a God who is totally engaging. Celebration is about significance and giving families and individuals a sense of their own identity - celebrating who they are in the eyes of a loving God and in the cosmic story of faith. 'You are more than just an isolated individual: you matter!' What might this mean to broken families in your Messy Church?

Celebration is about making the meaning of something matter: it might mean marking a death or a loss as well as a joyful event. Messy Church might be the only time a family comes into a church building to grieve a loss.

Celebration is a state of mind. Jesus would have spent plenty of time every year as he grew up joining in Jewish festivals until the emotions, foods, rituals and stories were engrained in his very being.

Celebration is about remembering the past and looking ahead to the future with the insights given by that past and the way we interpret it as a community. In broken communities the vision we can provide in Messy Church is all the more important.

Celebration is about other people - we get together as families, churches, friends to celebrate. It is a thumbprint of Kingdom. We bring people of all ages together intentionally.

Celebration gives people with drab lives something to look forward to, perhaps even to live for. Maybe just a hot meal; maybe just company, but these are things which feed soul and body.

So where do people see celebration bubbling up in your Messy Church?

Article re-printed from the April 2013 Messy Church newsletter from BRF.

Introducing Messy Church – Launceston

A great new initiative in Tasmania (that you might want to consider for your part of the country) is the very first *Introducing Messy Church* afternoon. The idea is that people who want to find out more about Messy Church can pick and choose which parts of the afternoon/evening they attend, depending on their interest/needs. This concept has also been picked up in Victoria, where an *Introducing Messy Church* afternoon has also been planned.



Sample *Introducing Messy Church* program
2.30-3.30pm Introducing Messy Church – what is MC, how do we do it, getting it started.

3.30-4.00pm Planning multi-age worship
4.00-4.30pm break
4.30-6.30pm Experience Messy Church
6.30 -7.30pm Unpacking why we did what we did, translating to your context

From the Web

- [Godly Play & Messy Church – some thoughts](#)
- [Messy Church Australia](#)
- [Messy Church Canada](#)
- [Messy Church North West \(UK\)](#)
- [Messy Church Website \(UK\)](#)
- [Messy Church Newsletter \(UK\)](#)
- [Messy Church Events & Stories \(UK\)](#)