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What a Messy Year!

What a Messy year 2013 has been! There are now 2100+ registered Messy Churches (130+ in Australia) and a growing network of around 60 Regional Coordinators! The Get Messy! magazine has been well received and there have been many more Messy resources published. Messy Nativity Sheep Trails have been taking over the planet this Advent in a very big way! Lucy, Martyn, Carole and Jane (from the UK), along with the various national and state coordinators here in Australia, thank God for you (and your team) and the wonderful part you play in this Messy adventure that God has led each one of us to. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Messy Church in 2014, hang on to your laptops as we celebrate with a special logo, more publications and of course lots of cake!

Chris Barnett (with thanks to Jane Leadbetter and Messy Matters).

Some Snippets

"Had an amazing messy noisy Christmas church yesterday at Pilgrim. Best church I've ever been to!"

Andrea (TAS)

"We are really excited by MC. Numbers are picking up and we are now getting people who come along to this from other activities like Toddler Jam and Playgroup. Our Messy Christmas event this month had 57 people from babies to grandparents - the most we've ever had. There were three families who don't attend church anywhere and two of these families have become regulars over the last few months, and wouldn't miss it. There is something about it that appeals to people who would probably never be attracted to Sunday morning."

Rob (WA)

"We have just run our first Messy Church at Blacktown. There were more than 50 people of all ages there – at one stage we had a table full of people decorating stars with glitter pens, etc – minimum age 70 years – quite delightful!! Feeling on a high when people were so involved and having fun together."

Blacktown (NSW)

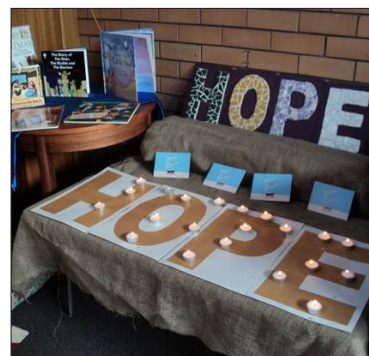
"Messy Church was born at Brighleigh on Thursday! I was calling it Family Fun Day, but it really is Messy Church – and we had 21 children (mostly pre-schoolers), one 5 week old baby (who was 8 weeks prem), over twenty adults and such fun. They all want to know when the next one is and can they bring their friends! I could not think how to wrangle them all coming in in dribs and drabs, so we just pointed to the tables and said, go for it – Playdough (in gorgeous colours), card making, hand prints, colouring and making things, Lego, a toy box for the littlies. It just went gang-busters!"

Christine (VIC)

Sharing Resources

If you have Messy Church programs that you would like to share with others, please let me know. For example, Susan from Stawell (Victoria) wrote "We started Messy Church recently and the next one is coming up soon. I have some great stories from it, including the Parable of the Potato, and if anyone wants our ideas/plan which worked well, I would be happy to forward it". If you are interested in the actual program (which was around Noah - though I'm not sure how Noah relates to the Parable of the Potato), please e-mail chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au.

Similarly if you have great promotional ideas, such as from The Corner (South Australia) who have printed the dates for their Messy Church services in 2014 on a coffee mug to give to parents for Christmas this year, please e-mail them through to chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au.



Web of Prayer

A great Messy Church activity, creating a web that filled the whole room. Prayers were attached to the web and participants reflected on the way in which God hears our prayers, no matter how messy the situation in which we find ourselves. Take a look at the video showing the results of the evening's activity [here](#).



Messy Meet-Up & Messy Theology Book Launch

The very first Victorian Messy Meet-up held at the Centre for Theology and Ministry in Parkville went extremely well. Over 25 people participated (a combination of those currently engaged in leading Messy Church expressions and those interested in finding out more about Messy Church), ranging in age from 0 to around 75.



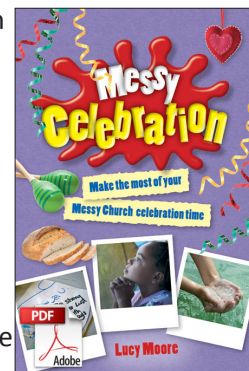
Immediately following the Messy Meet-Up, the Messy Church Theology Book Launch was similarly successful. The number swelled to around 45 people who enjoyed hearing from Beth Barnett & Tim Waghorn (as Australian contributors to the book) and the reflections of the official "launchers"-Rev. Dr. Tim Johnson (Anglican minister, Ridley College Melbourne Board Member) and Rev. Dr. Darren Cronshaw (Baptist Minister, Mission Catalyst & Researcher for the Baptist Union of Victoria). Not having organised a Book Launch before, it was especially pleasing that around 30 books actually sold! Copies of Messy Church Theology can be purchased from [MediaCom](#) or [Scripture Union Victoria](#)

Messy Church Roundtable

Following the success of the 2013 Australian Messy Church Roundtable, another Roundtable event is planned for 2014. Representatives from each state will gather in Adelaide in February to engage together with what is happening with regard to Messy Church around the country and to be part of the shaping of the development of Messy Church across Australia. If you have suggestions as to what you think it would be helpful for the Messy Church Roundtable to explore, please e-mail your thoughts to chris.barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au before January 31.

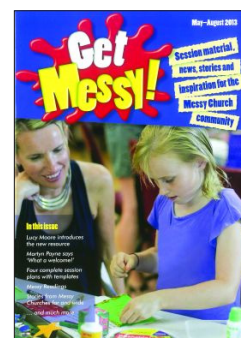
Messy Celebration

The celebration time in Messy Church plays a key part in communicating God's love to the families who come along, but it can be the hardest part of the session to do well. [Messy Celebration](#) is a resource for Messy Church teams who seek guidance or inspiration, building confidence in this area. It explores the purpose and main elements of the celebration time and equips the team both spiritually and practically, including thoughts on how the team can best function and presentation techniques for up-front leading. Copies can be purchased from [MediaCom](#) or [Scripture Union Victoria](#)



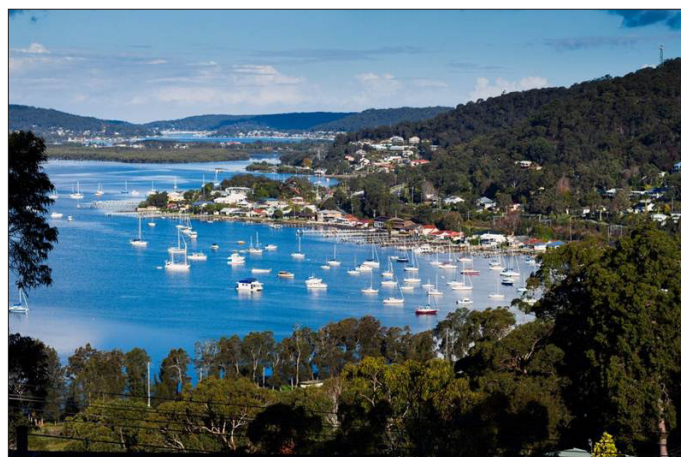
Get Messy!

Be encouraged to subscribe to [Get Messy!](#) from MediaCom in Australia. Each issue contains four session outlines (one per month), including planning sheets and take-home handouts, together with information on the latest resources and events. It also seeks to encourage and refresh Messy Church leaders by providing monthly Bible studies, a column on taking time to recharge, and many other valuable suggestions.



Thanks, Judyth!

As many are aware, Judyth Roberts has been instrumental in the establishment and development of Messy Church in Australia. Her passion, commitment, skill and gifting have been used by God in many amazing ways. As Judyth transitions into a new phase of life and ministry, we thank God for all she has done for Messy Church here in Australia and pray that she will be greatly blessed in the next phase of her journey.



(The view from Judyth's "retirement" home!)