



## Top Tips for Messy Church

These have been provided by current South Australian Messy Church team members. Share your tips, questions and resources with Messy Churches in SA on Facebook - *search for Messy Church Teams SA*.

### Overall Planning Tips

1. Know the 5 core values of Messy Church and keep them at the centre of your planning.
2. Messy Church is a worship service or a different way of being church. It's not a program or event. Be aware of the language you use in team meetings, reports and at other church services/ministries.
3. Keep in mind all-ages when planning all elements of Messy Church.
4. Always review and reflect on each Messy Church service – what went well, what didn't, what could we improve – and then implement changes based on your reflections.
5. Simple ways to get the congregation involved - ask them for donations of iced cupcakes. Makes great for a sweet treat during food time, and paired with fruit platters – it's healthy and very popular. In addition, if you need a particular item for Messy Church craft, put it in your church bulletin and get the congregation involved through donated goods. (e.g. glass jars, egg cartons, etc). They love to give.
6. Purchase 'end of roll' butchers paper from a local newspaper - we get ours up at the Riverland for \$5 per roll. We use to protect tables from the activities. Then if we need we recover for the shared meal.
7. We provide pencils (in covered soup tins) for the children to doodle at the meal table.
8. I love Pinterest!! A fantastic tool to use for sourcing, storing and organizing ideas that you find.

### Team Roles

1. A good idea is to appoint a photographer to wander around and take photos but make sure you have parent permission. Would be a great job for an older child/teenager.
2. Appoint hosts from your Messy Church team – great way to get the older children involved. These people help welcome families and be on the lookout for anyone who may be feeling a bit lost or for those needing extra help with multiple children.

### Tips for Promoting Messy Church

1. Make a simple bookmark fridge magnet with dates and themes. Families love them.
2. Canva is a wonderful invitation program, available for FREE online. Keeps invitations fresh!
3. Personally inviting people to Messy Church is the most effective way of getting new people to come along.
4. Social Media is very helpful if you can, start a facebook page for your Messy Church.
5. Post beforehand pictures of what activities/fun will be had at Messy Church. Parents/Carers will then be keen to bring their kids along to make what is on offer.
6. Getting invitations handed out/ or ask to have a flyer displayed in your local school, kindy, playcentre, childcare, shops, library, local noticeboards.

### Add-ons

1. Encourage the development of relationships and community – amongst the team, amongst families and amongst Messy Church attendees and attendees of other church services and ministries.
2. Hold a Free Messy Movie night (also another chance to promote Messy Church).
3. Hold a Messy Picnic in your local park as an outreach to the community. We played games, had a very brief message. Then shared in a free sausage sizzle and ice blocks. We used the opportunity to provide an invitation to our next Messy Church back at the hall in 'prize bags' for the participants.
4. Show a presence of Messy Church by providing a free activity or 2 at your local show, fair or Christmas celebrations.

## Tips for Activities/Crafts

1. Name each activity/craft and how it relates to the celebration theme e.g. Bible Story of Sarah and Abraham. Activity: Sand Bottles – Can you count the grains of sand? It's impossible! The numbers just go on and on! We printed these on A4 paper with relevant picture, laminated them and displayed at the activity or put in A4 plastic sign holder (see next tip).
2. Use A5 or A4 plastic sign holders to put in your 'one liner' message from each craft. Still share the message verbally at your craft table, but have the sign as a visual back-up.
3. We use kitty litter trays to put the activities in for the tables. These can be found at Cheap as Chips for about \$2.50 or \$3ea.
4. Works best if you have someone at each table and activity.
5. We use named trays (which we place on the stage in the hall) for the participants to put their completed activity into, ready for collection for when they go home.
6. Outsource people from your local community/area to come and run an activity. We invited our local ambulance volunteers when we did the 'Good Samaritan'. They spoke to the children about what they do (basics). We also had band aids and slings that they gave out to participants (cheap slings were made from triangles cut from sheets from the op shop).
7. If using a prayer table, we tried this in the centre of the activities but in hindsight, it would have been better in the corner where it would have been more private for those who wanted to talk to our Minister, light a candle and pray.
8. Encourage youth involvement by asking young people to run some 'Messy Science' outdoors. Great activities for anyone to enjoy, but particularly the older boys who aren't into craft.
9. Get the Messy Science Book!! It is a fantastic resource to have!!! Especially if you are looking to engage the boys more 😊
10. Simple floor games for children. This is especially good when people arrive before Messy Church time and you're not quite ready for them to begin craft. Floor games: Tub of Duplo/Lego, Barrel of Monkeys, Jumbo Jigsaws, etc.
11. A large style noughts and crosses has proven popular at our MC, especially for those who aren't so art/craft inclined. Maybe a large connect four and chess board as well.
12. Playdough Table – always good to have at every Messy Church, for little people especially (although all of us like a little play dough fun!).
13. Sand tray Table – have a large container with sand and animal figurines and trees on a low table. Little children love playing with this.

### **Messy Together Program – June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

9.30am Doors open, registrations

10am Opening session, including keynote

*11.30am Morning tea*

12noon Workshop 1

*1.15pm Lunch*

2.15pm Workshop 2

3.30pm Closing session

4pm Finish