

Caring for the world we live in

A wealth of perspectives, ideas & materials to help you make a difference!

Messy Church GOES WILD



Edited by **Lucy Moore**





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ISBN 978 1 80039 009 6
First published 2022
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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed with vegetable-oil based inks by Gutenberg Press, Tarxien, Malta

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This book is dedicated with much love and gratitude to the inspirational Jane Leadbetter who, during her time on the BRF Messy Church team, galvanised our thinking about our Messy responsibilities to God's planet. The generous gifts from the Messy Church community around the world to mark Jane's retirement in December 2020 have helped cover the extra costs of making this physical book as environmentally friendly as possible.

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Introduction

Lucy Moore



Lucy Moore is the founder of Messy Church. She is the author of a number of books for BRF and is now head of the Growing Faith Foundation for the Church of England. She is on the team of her local Messy Church.

What's it about, this Messy Church Goes Wild? Is the Messy Church team suddenly expert in the great outdoors? No, emphatically not. But sometimes you feel the tidal pull in your ministry drawing you in a particular direction and you can't ignore the compulsion to follow and see where it all takes you. In about 2017–18, that was the sense we had as a team. We'd been aware for many years that one of the ways children in particular find it easy to meet with God, to sense the numinous, to tap into something full of awe and wonder, to wander into the thin places of the world, is out in nature. If it is true of children, it may also be true of many adults. Church buildings for some are places that make it easier to worship; for others they can be oppressive. Perhaps we were sensing something about going out to another 'edge' and finding a new group of people who have an affinity with meeting God through the glory of the natural world.

One team member, Jane Leadbetter, to whom this book is dedicated with much affection, felt herself propelled into doing whatever she could to combat the wastage and pollution caused by single-use plastics. This led the team into a growing awareness of environmental issues. Jane's chapter explains more about her passion for marine life and her fury about plastic waste.

Messy Church has always been humbly rooted in practicalities, and another aspect of this environmental concern was our responsibility as a network in worshipping through a very ‘stuff-hungry’ format. In other words, you need a great deal of equipment and materials to put on a Messy Church. What could we do to encourage leaders to use natural materials instead of synthetic ones, to recycle and upcycle instead of buying more and still more new products, to take seriously our responsibilities towards the planet with regard to what we cook for the meal, what we use to eat and drink from and how we handle food waste? It’s interesting that when one of the Scandinavian Messy Churches was invited to write a case study for this book about how they do Messy Church sustainably in their country, they refused, on the grounds that it was so obvious that care for the environment was a given, they couldn’t possibly write anything meaningful. Worldwide, it would be great if every country were at this point in our ecological awareness, but sadly many countries have a long way to go. At the very least we can start reading, thinking and talking together about it. Hence this book!

Another tidal tug towards the outdoors being somewhere to explore was lockdown, of course. During the pandemic, plenty of Messy Churches in the UK looked seriously at the outdoors as a safer place to meet, rather than second-best to a building. Messy Church trails took place; churchyards, church gardens and parks saw Messy picnics; and Messy Church in a box, bag or even bucket were distributed. Other countries have been meeting outdoors for far longer, not having the joyous unpredictability of the British weather to contend with.

Lastly, perhaps it’s worth mentioning the tradition in Messy Church of not relying on words as the sole means of communication, but instead trying to move away from the printed word, lengthy liturgies, scripture pinned down to paper and ink. Allowing the activities themselves to communicate the truths of scripture has always been important, non-verbal communication being as important as (perhaps more important than) verbal communication. This helps as we venture outside. When you’re miserably aware that your favourite Bible or your

carefully printed handouts are going to be reduced to papier mâché by a downpour, or blown away to litter the countryside in a gale, you look for other means of communicating, other ways of praying, of singing, of storytelling, rather than depending on the printed word.

Our family moved from Hampshire to the Peak District between lockdowns. From our new, very rural location (our nearest neighbours are sheep), let me mention three things which illustrate something of why I think God is drawing Messy Church into a fresh sense of concern for the planet: a pond, a walled garden and an Easter morning.

I am ridiculously proud of my wildlife pond. What better thing to do during lockdown in a new garden but to dig out a pond? I read up on the need for shallow pebbly beaches, indigenous plant life and the ever-present threat of blanket weed. I had yearnings for great crested newts and envisaged them stampeding in their hundreds up the hill to immerse themselves in my amphibian luxury spa. What I got was a rat. And the world's laziest pigeon, which more or less falls off the drystone wall into the pond when it wants a drink or a bath. And an obese squirrel, which frankly could use some exercise legging it down to the stream for a drink, rather than chilling out by my pond. As well as these less-welcome guests, to be fair, my malevolent diving beetles are huge fun, the pond skaters and hoverflies keep things lively and a growing colony of great pond snails have appeared from nowhere and evidently find it a romantic spot, as they grow in number daily.

Why did I feel the urge to build a pond? Because human beings have used up so much of the countryside for building, altering the watery habitats to suit the needs of agriculture and tourism, that the land, which was meant to be a biodiverse home for all sorts of creatures, is no longer as hospitable as it should be. Half a million natural ponds in the UK have been lost over the last 100 years, according to the Wildlife Trust. Half a million! My understanding of being a good host is that hospitality involves grace in making space for all sorts of vulnerable life, human, flora and fauna, to thrive. For me, the pond is a small symbol of trying to be a good, hospitable 'ruler' of all living things (Genesis

1:28), a ruler who tries to rule how God would rule. This means compensating for the damage my species has done to the homes of others by doing what I can to create a new safe space for them. It means being hospitable to the unwelcome guests to my pond as well as the dragonflies and damselflies. And one day, perhaps, a newt will appear and my joy will be complete. Messy Church has always had hospitality at its heart, as we make a safe space for all sorts of people to come together as the church family. Messy Church Goes Wild extends this hospitality in a new dimension and invites us to discover what it means to be good hosts to all life and good guests on a planet where God is the ultimate host.

Second, the walled garden. This is a centuries-old vicarage vegetable garden, bounded on three sides by a wall and fenced in along the lane edge, just opposite our house and the church. Fancifully, Charlotte Brontë probably ate potatoes grown in it when she visited her friend Ellen Nussey in the vicarage in 1845 and got the idea for *Jane Eyre* (though maybe not from the potatoes). Leaning on your fork, you get a delightful view down the valley towards Stanage Edge, about a mile away. A few decades back, the vicar invited various villagers to use it rather like an informal allotment and take over a patch to grow their own vegetables and fruit. Since then, gardeners have come and gone and herbs, rhubarb, beans, raspberries and onions flourish in the hands of retired people, young families and single people who have no garden of their own.

It's scruffy, as is the way with works in progress: there are sheets of old swimming-pool lining stopping the weeds and some rickety (but fiendishly effective) compost bins. My little patch has sprouted a crop of viper's bugloss, which was thick with bees all summer, and beans, a gift from one of the gardeners locally, as was a marrow plant. During lockdown, the 'tenants in the vineyard' came and worked their plots, escaping from their imprisonment at home, finding healing in their care for the land from the traumas they were going through and the side-by-side companionship every allotment gardener recognises.

However, the church feels the need for more space for parking, so there is talk of reappropriating the garden and putting down a meshed hard surface so that cars can be parked there. This raises the question of the responsibilities of ownership. Leaving aside the complexities of whether the land belongs to the diocese or the church (or indeed the vicar), the situation has to make us wonder about our responsibilities as 'owners' to 'to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill', as Jesus asks in Mark 3:4 in the context of what the sabbath is all about *really*. In the case of the walled garden, the church effectively has the power over what happens to it. In the case of Messy Church, God has entrusted each Messy Church team with the power to shape what happens in that Messy Church: 'to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill'. The opportunity and privilege is to keep on searching for how to make the absolute most of every opportunity, to take a space and create the most amazing, phenomenal, miraculous environment our imaginations are capable of. For the walled garden, this could be a car park. Or it could be a community orchard, an outdoor worship space, a spot for a firepit and community gatherings and open-air concerts. For a Messy Church, it could be about incorporating care for the planet into all we do, shaping the space into something even more beautiful. As Jesus' parables about tenants and rulers hint, with power over a household, vineyard or kingdom comes responsibility. And part of Messy Church's responsibility as the owner-tenants of a movement is to be responsible about the way we tread on the earth.

Lastly, a reflection on Easter morning 2021. Apart from the actual getting out of bed, I have always enjoyed dawn services on Easter mornings, but there was no tradition of this in the new church. So I set off on my own in the dark to walk up the valley and scramble up onto Stanage Edge to watch the sun rise. There were about ten people scattered around the boulders with a similar idea, all standing still and separate. We waited chillily as the light grew and grew, then exploded from the horizon in the east. It was glorious. It bellowed silently about a new day, a new life, new beginnings, darkness to light and transformative resurrection power. And I walked back home again.

My observation is hard to articulate because it's about mystery and by definition doesn't lend itself to a verbal explanation. It runs something like this: the world – the natural world – is shouting about God. In Messy Church we want to make opportunities where more people are able to hear these shouts and to respond in ways that draw them closer to Jesus. I would have loved to walk through the darkness alongside other Christians of all ages, just as the women went to Jesus' tomb in the early morning together – it would have been a shared experience rather than a solo one and would have been richer for it. But part of the joy lay in the fact that it was spontaneous and unstructured, rich in meaning and completely unpinned down by the normal scaffolding we build around communal worship experiences: instruments, liturgies, sung songs, spoken prayers, read-aloud scripture. As Messy Church goes wild, I want to find out more about what it means to worship the risen Jesus in and through the creativity of creation. This book is just the start.

In it, you'll find plenty of thought-provoking and informed passion to help us as individuals, as Messy Church communities and other intergenerational communities to understand more and take more action together to become more the people God calls us to be towards the planet.

In Part I we are challenged by seven experienced writers and practitioners to consider in depth what our response could be towards different aspects of the created world. George Lings muses on the concept of wildness in the very values of Messy Church. Dave Bookless leads us through an in-depth reflection on animals and birds in the Bible and beyond. Graham Hartland, one of the *Messy Church Does Science* authors, asks the apparently simple question, 'Why bother with plants?', and answers it with infectious enthusiasm and knowledge. This book's godmother, Jane Leadbetter, explores the oceans and seas and the problem of plastics that end up there, but offers achievable alternative actions and habits to cultivate in everyday life in response to the problem. Dave Gregory, a climatologist, helps us think through climate change and how we can behave differently to

make a difference. From the USA, Crystal Goetz challenges us to love our neighbours – God’s Messy people – in a rich variety of ways. Rachel Summers, from her rich experience of being outside with children and families, encourages us to slow down and notice more of the world around us and to follow the example of children in the way we relate to it.

In Part II, we enjoy stories from Messy Church leaders from different parts of the world as they reflect on their own Messy experience and story, some with case studies and some with the environmental considerations of a particular aspect of Messy Church or family life. These accounts are almost certain to spark off ideas for new approaches in your own context.

Finally, Martyn Payne and the Young Messy Leaders team offer two worked-out sessions for exploring wildness in your own Messy Church or other intergenerational setting. We are deeply grateful to all the contributors to this book for making it such a delightfully biodiverse set of writings!

1

Messy Church - wild at heart

George Lings



After 22 years of parish ministry, George worked for Church Army from 1997 to 2017 directing its Research Unit, publishing stories and statistics of young churches. His long-time membership of the Northumbria Community fostered his BRF book *Seven Sacred Spaces*. He is married to Helen and they have five grandchildren. His hobbies include skiing, cycling and a model railway of a Derbyshire 1938 location.

What do you mean by ‘wild’?

I wonder how you react when you read the word ‘wild’? It’s a word that can evoke very different feelings. It could be fear of things out of control and ‘gone wild’ – whether that is the untended garden rather inconveniently ‘going back to nature’ or, more worryingly, being with a person who is raging with anger or gone off on one, or even the unwelcome surprise that the pet dog has suddenly bitten you! Wild here is bad, to be resisted and brought back under control.

But the reaction to wildness could equally be awe at being in the splendid grandeur of a wild landscape that cuts us down to size, or a wildflower in bloom which protests to you that it really doesn’t deserve to be called a weed. It could be delight during a David Attenborough programme watching the impressive life of a wild animal at home in its environment, being the glory it was always intended to be.

It could be more of an inner reaction – like a wild hope growing within you, as a passion for something you value looks like it might really happen. Wild here is good, to be honoured and its freedom respected. Sometimes it just isn't clear. Was the American 'Wild West' good or bad – or both mixed together?

Knowing that variety of meanings and reactions, this chapter argues that Messy Church Goes Wild should not be understood to mean that Messy Church used to be tame and safe, and has now got dangerous. Nor does it simply mean that Messy Church has joined the green movement and wants to care for the planet and all life on it. But as the title of this chapter, 'Wild at heart', implies, Messy Church has always had an element of wildness at its very core. That is when that word 'wild' is understood in the positive sense and when it rightly presents a wake-up call to other ways of being church that are so tame that, to mix a metaphor, they have gone stale. And 'tame' is another of those words whose meaning so depends on context; a tame dog can be such a delightful companion, whereas a tame husband is bound to be a disappointment!

Where am I coming from?

I write unashamedly as a Messy Church fan. I am convinced that it is both missionally effective and ecclesially creative. Equally important, it is no accident that those two factors are linked. Healthy wildness always reveals a balanced, interdependent relationship between a wild creature and its environment. So here, the creative values within a genuine Messy Church community connect with, and make sense to, those people it relates to in a mission context. For example, the quality of hospitality makes newcomers feel genuinely valued and treated well, or the creativity which is playfully welcomed unlocks that aspect of being made in the image of God that is in all of us.

I am also grateful to have been a small part in advocating that the best way to cooperate with the genius of Messy Church is to know

and live out its values. Then we can be flexible, confident and even relaxed about how these values will work out in practice, knowing that different contexts will need different interpretations. It is similar in the evolution of species in the wild, as the swimming iguanas, or the diverse finches, on the set of islands of the Galapagos illustrate.

2

Caring for animals and birds

Dave Bookless



Revd Dr Dave Bookless is director of theology for A Rocha International. A Rocha works in practical conservation across over 20 countries, and runs the EcoChurch programme (ecochurch.arocha.org.uk). Dave is also a part-time vicar, serves on various global committees, speaks and writes widely on creation care and loves spending time outdoors.

Caring for pets and wildlife comes naturally to many young children. Whether hamsters, rabbits or goldfish; cats, dogs or exotic pets; there's a deep delight in nurturing and being responsible for the well-being of another living creature. Many primary schools have incubators where eggs are hatched and chicks nurtured, as children learn about the wonders of life. And, of course, Noah's ark makes a fantastic children's Bible story, with animals, rainbows, mild threat and yet a happy ending.

Yet, the 'grown-up gospel' we teach in our churches and reveal in our mission priorities often says nothing at all about animals and birds. It's as if caring for our fellow creatures is a childish fad we're taught to grow out of. Therefore, it is important to understand how caring for animals and birds fits into the Bible's big story; how actually this is far closer to God's priorities than we often realise, and is an area where, to enter the kingdom of God, we need to become like and learn from children (Mark 10:14–16).

The Bible's big story (how we present the gospel) is often simplified to three main points:

- God made it all good.
- We've sinned and messed it up.
- Jesus offers us forgiveness and salvation.

In this framing of the story, 'creation', including animals and birds, appears at the beginning, but is left behind as the focus turns entirely to human sin and salvation. A much more biblical way of looking at the gospel, God's good news, is to present it not as a set of propositions, but rather as the big, true story that God invites us to be part of; a story that runs from creation to new creation. In this story, we humans are important but it's not just *our* story; it is God's story and includes plenty of other characters too, including animals and birds. They are part of God's plan and purpose from beginning to end, and the natural affinity to fellow creatures that many children have is not childish, but rather deeply connected to how God has hardwired us in a world of incredible variety and beauty.

Let's dip into God's big story to see what this means for how we treat our fellow creatures and how we can draw out these themes in Messy Church:

All very good: Right at the start we see God's delight in creativity, making a purposeful and ordered universe and filling it with an extraordinary diversity of creatures. At regular intervals, God stops to enjoy creation, declaring it 'good'. When complete, God looks at all that he's made and declares it all 'very good' (Genesis 1:31). This 'very good' includes humans but also includes all biodiversity – the variety of living things on earth. Interestingly, the Bible has no word for 'biodiversity' or even 'nature'. All of it, including both human and nonhuman creatures, is 'the work of God's hands'. Later in the Bible, Paul writes that 'since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made' (Romans 1:20).

Reflection and activity ideas

Where can we see God's power and nature in the work of God's hands? Encourage families to think about and draw or make collages of their favourite creatures (pets, wildlife, insects, even plants and trees) and to express what they learn about God's character from them. What does a dog teach about God? Let them enjoy the wordplay! Perhaps loyalty, love, joy – wagging tail; delight in physical exercise). How about cats? Maybe beauty, independence, playfulness. What about elephants, tigers, dolphins, hedgehogs, oak trees...? Another activity is to brainstorm ideas on what God is like (strong, loving, creative, relational) and then allow people to create their own imaginary animals that say something about God, using modelling clay, playdough or collage, or cut out pictures from magazines. Like Adam in Genesis 2, let them think of names for their animals.

10

Where were you when?

(in-person session)

Martyn Payne



Formerly part of BRF's Messy Church team, Martyn Payne is a gifted storyteller whose previous books, *The Big Story* (2011) and *Creative Ways to Tell a Bible Story* (second edition, 2022), demonstrate the variety of approaches he uses to bring the Bible alive for children and adults alike. He is passionate about the blessing that comes when generations explore faith together.

Job 38—41

Bible story

And now, finally, God answered Job from the eye of a violent storm. [God] said: 'Why do you confuse the issue? Why do you talk without knowing what you're talking about? Pull yourself together, Job! Up on your feet! Stand tall! I have some questions for you, and I want some straight answers.

'Where were you when I created the earth?... Who decided on its size?... Who came up with the blueprints and measurements? How was its foundation poured and who set the

cornerstone, while the morning stars sang in chorus and all the angels shouted praise? And who took charge of the ocean when it gushed forth like a baby from the womb?...

‘Have you ever ordered Morning “Get up!”; told Dawn “Get to work!”... Have you ever got to the true bottom of things, explored the labyrinthine caves of deep ocean? Do you know the first thing about death? Do you have one clue regarding death’s dark mysteries?...

‘Do you know where Light comes from and where Darkness lives so you can take them by the hand and lead them home when they get lost? Why, *of course* you know that! You’ve known them all your life, grown up in the same neighbourhood with them!

JOB 38:1–21 (MSG, abridged)

Pointers

The story of Job is a very ancient tale from around the fourth or fifth century BC. It’s all about how human beings struggle with questions to do with undeserved suffering. Job himself suffers terribly and is full of questions as he tries to make sense of what has happened to him – the loss of his home, his health and his family. His wealth and his status did not save him; his good life and faith in God did not stop the terrible things that happened to him. The story is from long ago but it is nevertheless a story for our time too, as we struggle with our unfair world, with global pandemics and natural disasters.

Friends try and reason with Job, but their words don’t help. Their words are well-meaning but fail to connect with what Job is experiencing. And then in chapter 38 God begins to speak. God answers Job’s questions with questions of God’s own. In fact, question after question comes for almost four whole chapters! And God’s questions serve to remind Job and us of who we are and who God is.

The questions focus on the wonders of creation which are not of our making and in fact are far beyond anything we could ever imagine, control or understand. What we have in these chapters is a poetic

retelling Genesis 1 – unpacking the variety, splendour and majesty of creation. Job is being asked to look again at the big picture of this world in all its beauty, and in this way put his own life into perspective. The world does not revolve around him and what happens to him, and that is true for us too. This planet isn't all about us. God did choose to create us in his likeness and that is amazing, but that should not lead us to get things out of proportion. We are created to be caretakers of this amazing universe and not behave as if it were all there to serve our needs.

We are not more important than the earth. Its future and ours are intimately connected, which is why the climate emergency is a spiritual crisis not just an unfortunate byproduct of human development. God's questions to Job begin to put this right by reminding him of the mystery and marvel of how this world works. So many things are beyond our knowing: we can't control the weather, the tides, the winds, the Earth's light sources, its storms or its seasons. The ways of wildlife too are a wonder and God's questions finally focus down in chapters 40 and 41, like a powerful episode of *Planet Earth*, on the wonderful descriptions of 'Behemoth and Leviathan' – the hippopotamus and a sea monster respectively – two of the many wonders of the natural world.

We are not God. We don't know everything and even what we do know is a gift from God anyway. Creation is marvellous without us and so we should honour it and look after it with great humility.

#discipleship: team

Messy health check

How will this Messy Church session increase everyone's appreciation of our home planet and the marvellous variety of flora and fauna upon it? How will wonder, thankfulness and responsibility be woven into all that we share?

Messy team theme

- Invite everyone to name the most amazing natural phenomenon that they have experienced and share how it made them feel
- Talk about how the activities for this Messy Church can contribute to better caring for God's world
- Does anyone have a story of how facing suffering brought them closer to God in the end, as it did for Job?

How does this session help people grow in Christ?

Job's 'comforters', as they are often called, failed to help Job and answer his many questions. Maybe this was because they insisted that they knew 'the right answers' and were trying to fix Job rather than understand him. There are no neat answers to the mystery of suffering, to natural disasters and to illness, pain and grief. Suffering can't be explained; it needs to be entered into – and that's exactly what Christians believe God did in the life, death and coming to life again of Jesus. In our Bible reading, God asks Job if he knows the first thing about death and its mysteries, and indeed where light and darkness live. In Jesus, God who created light, experienced darkness and death: Christ was at the very beginning when the stars sang with the angels to celebrate creation. All things were created through Christ and so like Job we can encounter God in all aspects of creation... and that includes Behemoth and Leviathan too!

Mealtime card

- What is your favourite wild animal and why?
- What do you like best about the environment where you live?
- What evidence have you seen of how our world is suffering at the moment?
- What are your top three things that would make this planet a better place to live on?

Take-home idea

In today's Bible story God asks lots of questions – and God wants us to ask questions too! God has given us enquiring minds; it's one of the ways we are like God.

At home, challenge everyone to come up with four or five questions about the world. Get these written down on paper and put them into a bowl which you could place perhaps onto a map of the world. Every main mealtime this coming week, each member of the family should pull out a question in turn to ask everyone else. And each question might hopefully lead on to further conversations about green issues (and indeed some questions might need internet help!) For example:

- How many different sorts of cloud formations are there?
- How deep is the deepest ocean/the highest mountain?
- Where is the driest desert in the world?
- How many sorts of butterflies can you name?
- Which is the fastest creature on Earth?

After each question time, pause for a prayer of thanksgiving to God for giving us such an amazing world.

Question to start and to end the session

Is there anything that leaves you speechless with wonder whenever you see it?

#discipleship:extra

‘Creation is not all about me, it is about God!’ Maybe this is the one big lesson that Job learned when he listened to God’s litany of rhetorical questions.

Why not explore the information and stories on the websites of Christian Climate Action (christianclimateaction.org), Tearfund (tearfund.org/stories/2020/09/why-christians-should-care-about-climate-change) or A Rocha (arocha.org.uk) and find out more about how people are campaigning to look after our planet better. Find out about local and national campaigns; and you might even be able to invite someone to come and speak at a Messy discipleship extra organised on this theme.

Social action

Following the pandemics of recent years, there has been much talk of ‘building back better’ and finding ‘a new normal’. This includes fresh thinking about how we care for our environment and how we tackle the climate emergency. Talk about some possible responses to this over the meal at your Messy Church session and decide on some action for the future, such as doing one of the following:

- planting a Messy Church wildflower garden that attracts pollinators
- organising a regular local litter pick in the area
- twinning your Messy Church toilet or bin with another around the world
- collecting particular items for recycling and raising money for charity, e.g. ink cartridges, plastic bottle tops, etc.
- exploring what is involved in creating and using eco-bricks; then work on making a Messy Church seat or table for future gatherings.

Activities

1 Cloud making

You will need: water; a glass jar with a lid; hairspray; blue food colouring; three or four cubes of ice



‘Who has wisdom to count the clouds? Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens?’ (Job 38:37). Heat up water (which you’ve already coloured blue) and pour the warm water into a glass jar about halfway up.

Quickly spray hairspray into the jar and immediately put on the lid. Place three or four pieces of ice on top of the lid of the jar. Watch a cloud form in the jar. After a while, release the cloud.

Talk about the importance of clouds for our weather systems and the different types of clouds there are. God has given us a planet that has just the right balance of water and sunshine, cold and heat, to sustain life. We unbalanced this at our peril.



Enabling all ages to grow in faith



Anna Chaplaincy
Living Faith
Messy Church
Parenting for Faith

100 years of BRF

2022 is BRF's 100th anniversary! Look out for details of our special new centenary resources, a beautiful centenary rose and an online thanksgiving service that we hope you'll attend. This centenary year we're focusing on sharing the story of BRF, the story of the Bible – and we hope you'll share your stories of faith with us too.

Find out more at brf.org.uk/centenary.

To find out more about our work, visit

brf.org.uk

MESSY CHURCH GOES WILD is the movement within Messy Church which aims to encourage Messy Churches to meet God outdoors, love the natural world, experience a sense of awe and wonder there and to be more eco-aware in all we do, both inside and out, as gathered and dispersed church, for the good of the planet.

Edited by Messy Church founder Lucy Moore, this unique collection of wisdom and practical materials covers a range of topics from caring for animals and birds through living as an eco-friendly household to greening up your Messy Church activities and running an online session on Jesus in the wilderness.

With chapters by Dave Bookless, Crystal Goetz, Dave Gregory, Graham Hartland, Jane Leadbetter, George Lings, Martyn Payne and Rachel Summers, and case studies from international contributors of all ages.



Lucy Moore is the founder of Messy Church. Most recently responsible for developing the work of Messy Church nationally and internationally at BRF, she is now head of the Church of England's Growing Faith Foundation.



Find out more at
messychurch.org.uk/goeswild

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