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A secondary school teacher by training, she enjoys acting, walking Minnie the dog, marvelling at the alien world of her two teenage children and watching unsuitable television.



Messy Church is growing! Every month, families who have never set foot in a church before are enjoying Messy Church, and every month more Messy Churches are started all over the UK and worldwide. Messy Church is proving effective in sharing God’s good news with families across denominations and church traditions. We estimate that some 100,000 people belong to Messy Churches—and the number is growing all the time. For more information about Messy Church, visit [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk).

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# Messy Crafts

**A craft-based journal**

**for Messy Church members**

**Lucy Moore**



This book is dedicated with much love to my superstar goddaughter, Verity,  
and her family: Kathryn, Tim and Romilly.



### **Acknowledgments**

Thanks to the creative team at St Wilfrid's Messy Church, especially Lesley Baker, Denise Williams, Jackie Tutt, Bob and Louise Woodward, Sonia Passingham, Vicki Turner, Val Strutt, Paula Roxby and Jennifer Hall, Marlene Wylie, Colin and Angela Brown, Frank Aldous, David and Jenny Collins.

More websites and craft books than I can list have given me inspiration for the ideas in this book.

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# Foreword

Craft has undergone a renaissance in recent years, which confirms my belief that craft matters. To be able to 'think with our hands' has great value. Creativity is in our DNA and fundamentally important in ensuring our well-being. Unfortunately, due to our modern way of life, these activities have been largely neglected. How exciting, then, that this book provides routes, signposts and stimuli for individuals and groups to find ways back to engaging in creative doing and thinking in our churches.

Made easy, these pages will serve to inspire and resource you effectively and powerfully in your planning. The many ideas, suggestions and starting points demand immediate use. It is about development, adaptation and reflective practice.

What excites me about this publication in particular is the format and layout, the visual prompts and references that act as a catalyst to turbocharge the possibilities around messy spaces. It is exciting and accessible. Careful attention to detail in the mention of different levels of ability makes the activities inclusive and provides opportunities for guaranteed success and satisfaction.

The *Messy Church* series of books so far have been stimulating and provided much food for thought for church life and fellowship. Being concerned with the Why? What? and How? of Messy Church provides a much-needed framework for readers. *Messy Crafts* has a particular focus on the What? What you can do is this or that; encouraging, exploration, questioning, risk-taking and, above all, courage in the process of making.

Differentiation is the key to success. The interactive nature of this book supports the notion of personalised pages and leads me to envision what these pages may well look like in different hands with different thoughts and in different creative climates.

*Marlene Wylie*

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# Overview of crafts and themes

<b>TODDLER CRAFTS</b> 12	<b>1. Primeval swamp gloop</b>	<b>2. Blob painting (splat and slap)</b>	<b>3. Bubble printing</b>
<b>More ideas</b>	Playdough recipe Get tactile... Get your hands into...	Splattling different themes	Printing with and on different ideas
<b>Messy moment</b>	Critical reflection	Home prayers	Bubble prayers

<b>SATISFYING CRAFTS</b> 21	<b>1. Watercolour poppies</b>	<b>2. Quilled invitations</b>	<b>3. Silhouette portraits</b>
<b>More ideas</b>	Watercolour gimmicks	More quilling ideas	More ideas for portraits
<b>Messy moment</b>	Deserts in bloom	Colour-in cross	Our name on God's hands

<b>PRETTY CRAFTS</b> 30	<b>1. Prayer notebook</b>	<b>2. Star name family</b>	<b>3. Plastic pzazz</b>
<b>More ideas</b>	Other prayer crafts	Eraser people ideas	Other ideas for plastic
<b>Messy moment</b>	Family prayer	Clock face prayers	Rainbow prayer

<b>(REALLY) GROSS MOTOR SKILLS CRAFTS</b> 39	<b>1. Paintballing the cosmos</b>	<b>2. Pea-oneering</b>	<b>3. Bashing and screwing</b>
<b>More ideas</b>	More big pictures (with minimum fuss)	More messy models	Very simple bashing projects
<b>Messy moment</b>	Graffiti wall	The wonders of God	Body parts

<b>WORD CRAFTS</b> 48	<b>1. Candle holder</b>	<b>2. Coat hanger words</b>	<b>3. Honey letters</b>
<b>More ideas</b>	More ideas with words and crafts	Other ways of making writing fun	Paper ways of displaying verses
<b>Messy moment</b>	Draw what you see...	How do you see God?	Jesus in pictures and words

<b>FOOD CRAFTS</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1. Paradise garden</b>	<b>2. Elijah's cheesy chariot</b>	<b>3. DIY meals</b>
<b>More ideas</b>		Other sweet food ideas	More savoury food ideas	Other meal ideas
<b>Messy moment</b>		Cups	Prayer about food	Decorate a table of good things

<b>GLOBAL CRAFTS</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>1. Link church (trash fash)</b>	<b>2. Wall displays</b>	<b>3. Global art</b>
<b>More ideas</b>		Other link church ideas	More wall displays on global theme	Art from other countries
<b>Messy moment</b>		World map	Changing the world	Fruits of the Spirit

<b>GREAT ART</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>1. Squaring up</b>	<b>2. God's world</b>	<b>3. Models from art</b>
<b>More ideas</b>		More great art ideas	More art activities	Art in technology
<b>Messy moment</b>		Candle flames	Painting flowers	One thing you love...

<b>QUIET MOMENTS</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1. Draw from the inside</b>	<b>2. In church</b>	<b>3. Model a story</b>
<b>More ideas</b>		Open-ended art questions	More ideas to do in church	Drawing spiritual moments, lifelines and prayers
<b>Messy moment</b>		God's dream for our family	Church is most like...	Linking friends to God

<b>REALLY MESSY CRAFTS</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>1. Paint the table</b>	<b>2. Messy marbling</b>	<b>3. Water worlds</b>
<b>More ideas</b>		Big messy art	More ways to marble	More painting ideas
<b>Messy moment</b>		The woman with perfume	Calming the storm	Zacchaeus and Jesus' invitation

# Introduction

This book is more—and less—than a craft book! Think of it more as a scrapbook or journal: something to scribble in and doodle on, something to make your own, to brighten up with bright colours and stick Post-it notes in. It will be unique to your family or church by the time you're done with it: a memory book of conversations, points of view and prayers as well as all those wonderful messy things you've made. It's designed to be part of everyday life, dog-eared, splodged, loved and used, not to be kept unopened on a high shelf in pristine condition and unloved. Rather like your local church, in fact—or life, or families.

It's less than a craft book because there aren't detailed instructions for every single craft. (There really isn't a need to provide them when the internet can give them at the click of a mouse.) What's really needed is inspiration, so we've tried to cram in as many ideas as we can, so that you can then search for more details on the internet or in books, if needed.

Messy families are always on the look-out for craft ideas. This book tries to inspire some ideas instead of just churning out suggestions that you can use just once. So there's plenty of space to scribble your own thoughts on the pages: your ideas for how these crafts might fit with your themes, websites, or adaptations you could make to improve them. So get out the gel pens, glitter and glue and brighten it up as you go along.

You might like to use it to help plan sessions, to suggest ideas to your Messy Church planning team or to have fun at home with your own family.

In a Messy Church session, we need to provide crafts for all sorts of different groups of people— young, old, male, female, dextrous and frankly clumsy, active and meditative—so the idea is that the chapter headings will provide a framework to check that you're supplying a wide range of activities. You might pick one craft from each chapter or just use the chapter titles to guide your planning each month.

We've added some Bible themes that relate to specific craft ideas, but many of the ideas cover such a rich seam of biblical themes and concepts that it would be hard to mention them all under one heading.

You'll find a 'Messy moment' every few pages: an activity to do together to help you chat, think, pray or just reflect as a family or friendship group. You don't have to be a Christian to do them. Anyone can enjoy flexing their spiritual muscles with them, though they are Jesus-centred, as we believe Jesus is pretty hot on spirituality. Where there's a bit from the Bible, it's usually from a modern

translation (the Contemporary English Version), or a rewording of what it says in a Bible. You might want to check out the real thing in your own Bible.

It was hard to find chapter titles that didn't exclude certain people. Yes, most toddlers enjoy playdough, but so do most teenagers. Yes, some boys enjoy hurling painty balls very hard at a wall, but so do a worrying number of grannies. So they're just broadbrush titles, not, for example, 'These crafts are ONLY for people over 65'.

## Health and safety

Health and safety is, of course, important, but you will already be aware of many of the issues and hazards and know how to avoid them. For example, you'll want to consider food allergies, objects that are too small for babies to play with, heavy objects, fire and blades, but you probably already err on the side of taking sensible risks rather than living in PC / insurance claim terror. You may already feel that it's much more important, in the long term, to learn to use dangerous things responsibly, or to discover what 'consequences' are, than to avoid anything remotely risky. In families, we all know that accidents happen and that it's probably far more damaging for children to be protected from everything than to take worthwhile risks. You will know how closely your children need to be supervised and will be able to act accordingly.

## And finally...

The way to end up with the most perfect crafts or pictures is for the one artistic person in your church or family to produce them and give them to you, wrapped in clear plastic. The way to end up with the most perfect thoughts about God is for the one really clever person in your church or family to tell you what to think and for you to remember that thought. But that's not what Messy Church is about. It's about exploring, questioning, and not being afraid of getting it wrong, of failing. It's about having guts, wasting and searching and giving it a go and being ourselves, not trying to be the people we think we ought to be. It's very messy, just as great artists are very messy and just as God enjoys working with people who know they're a mess. So these aren't prepackaged crafts; these are starting points for you to get creative with and improve beyond anything I could dream of.

Have fun! Get messy!

## Toddler crafts

### 1 Primeval swamp gloop



Before God separated the water from the land, it must have been so messy! Mess about with this swamp gloop and talk about messy beginnings.

#### You will need

2 cups cornflour

1 cup water

Food colouring (optional)

Glitter (optional)

Mix everything together with your hands to make a thick sludge. Set it out in a deep tray or wide bowl and simply play with it. Try hitting its surface, modelling it, or letting it run through your fingers. Provide a few tools to use with it: a sieve, spoon or cup.

# Variations on the theme of gloop

## Playdough recipe

- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- ½ cup salt
- Food colouring

Stir everything up in a saucepan on a very low heat until the contents thicken into a dough. Alternatively, microwave the ingredients together on high power for 1½ minutes, stir, then microwave again for a further 1½ minutes.

Notes

## Bible themes

- Being washed clean
- Finding unexpected treasure (if lucky dips are hidden in it)
- Hebrew brick builders in Egypt
- Noah's flood mud

## Other themes

Simply have gloop or playdough in a corner alongside comfy chairs for anyone to enjoy as a first stage in 'Getting messy'.

Get tactile with... bark, mud, sand, water, paint, glue, soap flakes whisked into water, shaving foam...

Get your hands into... bowls of porridge, mushy peas, jelly, instant whip puddings, pasta, dried pulses or beans. (You might want to ask around for out-of-date foodstuffs rather than using edible ones, as food is primarily for eating.)

# Messy moment

## Learning from experience

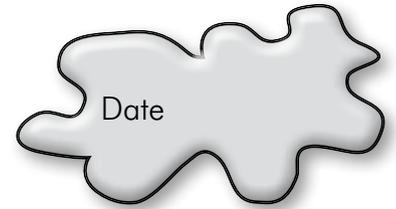
This is something important that happened to us this month:

It made us feel...

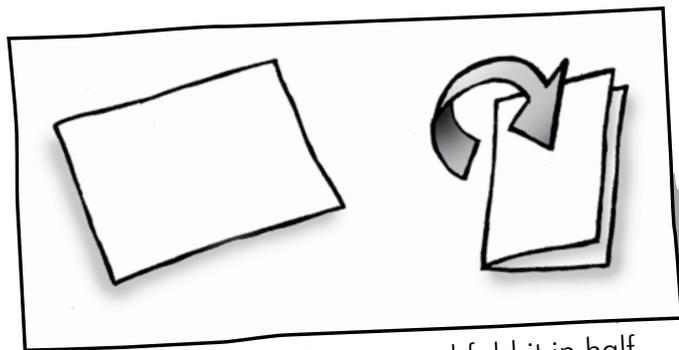
We think it made God feel...

This is what we'd like to say...

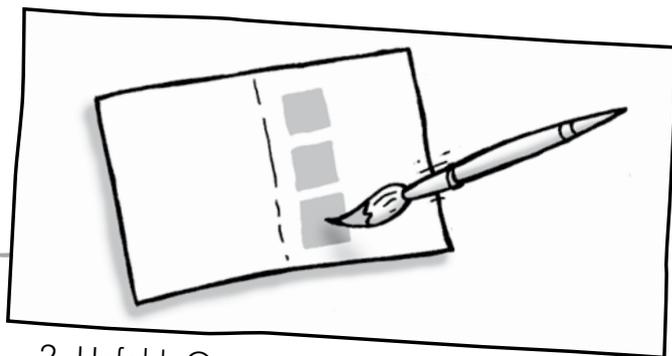
This is what we'd like to do...



## 2 Blob painting (splat and slap)



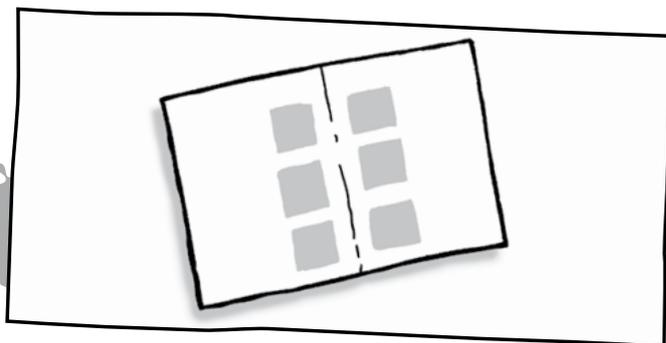
1. Take a piece of paper and fold it in half.



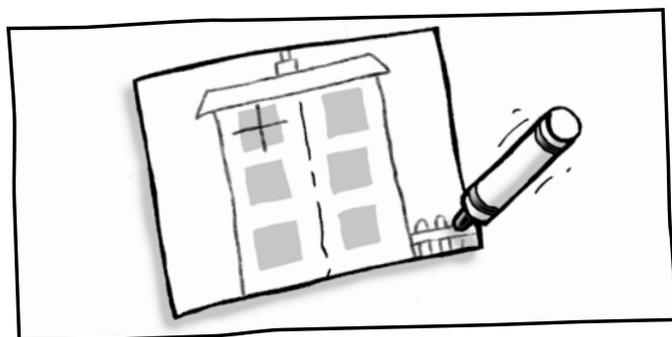
2. Unfold. On one half of the paper, close to the fold, paint three squares.



3. Fold again and press the halves firmly together.



4. Unfold.



5. Now add details with a felt-tipped pen. Add the words that Jesus said: 'There are many rooms in my Father's house... I am going there to prepare a place for each of you.'