

*Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for Building a Christ-Centered Community*

Available September 12, 2017  
\$16, 210 pages, paperback  
978-0-8308-4138-7

*“Beginning at an ordinary parish with an extraordinary idea, the ripples of Messy Church have been felt across the globe. In this highly anticipated book, Lucy Moore and Jane Leadbetter tell the story of this creative approach to all-ages worship and community and offer a vast array of ideas for how to use it in your congregation. One read through and you’ll be itching to start making church messy!”*

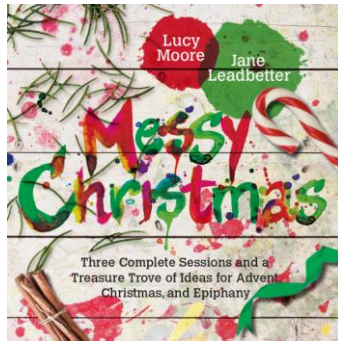
— David M. Csinos, founder of Faith Forward, coauthor of *Children’s Ministry in the Way of Jesus*

## IVP Introduces the Messy Church Series

The Messy Church series provides resources to help your church bring together people of all ages and stages of faith, allowing them to experience a creative and fun-filled Christian community. *Messy Church*, the first book in the series, offers your church a tool to create a unique, come-as-you-are experience built on the following:

- Creativity – allowing space for all to play and create
- Celebration – worshiping God and his redeeming work in Jesus
- Hospitality – sharing a meal where all are welcome

With instructions for starting a program at your church, *Messy Church* includes fifteen sessions for use throughout the year.

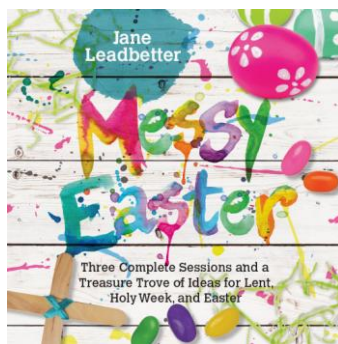


Available September 12, 2017  
\$14, 96 pages, paperback  
978-0-8308-4139-4

### ***Messy Christmas: Three Complete Sessions and a Treasure Trove of Ideas for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany***

Christmas can be complicated. Parties, gifts, and family tensions dominate the season. So maybe it’s time we explore what Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are really about.

These three once-a-month sessions include Christmas prayers, global action suggestions, games and competitions, Christmas food crafts, and many other ideas to experience joy during this time of the year.



Available November 28, 2017  
\$14, 96 pages, paperback  
978-0-8308-4140-0

### ***Messy Easter: Three Complete Sessions and a Treasure Trove of Ideas for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter***

Chocolate bunnies, marshmallow chicks, colored eggs, and baskets are a lot of fun, but is that all this season is about?

These three once-a-month sessions help your messy church learn more about Lent, Holy Week, and Easter in a creative multi-generational way.

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Lucy Moore is the founder of Messy Church, a rapidly growing ministry now in over twenty countries worldwide. Lucy promotes the movement through training and speaking events. Her books include the Messy Church series, *Bethlehem Carols Unpacked*, *The Gospels Unplugged*, *The Lord's Prayer Unplugged*, *Topsy Turvy Christmas*, *Colourful Creation*, and *All-Age Worship*.

Follow Lucy on Twitter:  
 @messylucy.

## The Story Behind Messy Church

A few years ago an ordinary, smallish Anglican church in Hampshire, England, decided to do something to give local families more opportunities to come to church together and stay in church together. The traditional services were fine for established Christians but weren't attracting new people to church, so we had to ask around humbly to find out what families would actually like to do in church together. We had to look honestly at the gifts and limitations of our church members, and we had to ask and keep on asking God what was the wise way forward. Out of this inadequate and fairly made-up-on-the-spot listening process, Messy Church began in 2004, and, through the energy of an unsleeping God, has been growing ever since.

The strength of Messy Church lies in its simplicity and the robust set of values that underpin it. It's a simple format that usually consists of a warm welcome, an hour of hands-on activities around a Bible theme, a short gathered celebration (worship time), and a meal around tables. It's easy to see how the gradual building of community happens through this shape. But the shape is undergirded, more importantly, by five values: being *Christ-centered* and using every moment to invite people to come closer to Jesus; being *hospitable*, with the challenge of being God's guests and welcoming hosts; allowing space for *creativity*, for the God-spark in each of us to come to life as we get our hands into the stuff of the earth and play together; *celebrating* and expressing the joy of the life-giving love of Jesus; and being *intergenerational*, a community where the old feel as treasured as the young, where the children and teenagers feel as valued as the adults. Recent research on both sides of the Atlantic shows that the best way for faith to "stick" into adult life is by bringing up children in a church where all the generations worship together.

I would also argue that Messy Church's success lies in the way it is led by such ordinary, extraordinary people: people who have no accreditation or licensing within the different denominations but who are amateurs in the best sense of the word — doing what they do for love. People who have been ministered to in churches for years and who now want to minister to others and share God's love and message of life with the families in their community. People who understand that many of us grow in Christ as gently as a child grows up within a family, and that a local church can provide that transformative space where young and old can grow together in Christ.

This simple, robust framework has led many churches to start their own Messy Church, and, with the sacrificial support given by its home organization, the Bible Reading Fellowship ([brf.org.uk](http://brf.org.uk)), the network continues to grow. There are Messy Churches in all the mainstream United Kingdom denominations (and quite a few of the smaller ones) and in more than thirty countries around the world. In churches large and small, rural and urban, high and low and middle of the road, Christians are discovering for themselves what it means to become an outward-facing, mission-minded, Christ-centered church, and God is blessing

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# BOOK EXCERPT



Jane Leadbetter leads the regional coordinators as part of her work on the Messy Church team. With experience in early childhood education, she also worked in children's ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool for twelve years. Her books include *Messy Nativity*, *Messy Easter*, and *Messy Prayer*, and she is the coauthor of *Messy Christmas*.

Follow her on Twitter:  
@MessyJaneLead.

[messychurch.org.uk](http://messychurch.org.uk)

that willingness to serve him by sending hundreds of thousands of new people through the doors of churches to encounter his loving welcome and life-giving community there. A rough estimate gives the number as 500,000 people attending Messy Church each month, of which probably around 200,000 are new to church.

As Messy Church grows in the United States, we warmly encourage you to see what God is already doing and join in. Become part of this generous, loving family that shares ideas, support, and resources around the globe. Take the five values seriously but have fun reinterpreting the shape for the families in your own context. Be bold, but be connected and remember that in our mobile world you may well have families moving into your community who have experienced Messy Church in their previous home, so let the "brand" keep its integrity too.

God has been so generous to us. Messy Church is one way in which we can share that abundant generosity with families and others who never before have had the chance to experience the love of God and of his people. Who knows what changes in society this will lead to? Let's change the world together by getting messy – one painty finger at a time.

– Adapted from the introduction for Messy Church