



Authorised Mess — 1 JOHN

Your details

Name: Helen Ellis

Church: All Saints, Hoole, Chester

Bible book	1 John
Theme of session	Light, Love and Life
Notes	Theme done for an April Messy Church linked to Easter—Messy Easter Life—but can be used without the Easter message.

Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants (New Life)	Plant a bean	Plant two/three beans on moistened cotton wool in a jam jar. Decorate the jar with the stickers.	Runner beans, jam jars, cotton wool, water, stickers.	As a reminder of how life begins for a plant and to watch it grow. In the same way, Jesus came to bring us life (link to Easter) and we can grow in faith through knowing God.
Older participants (Light)	Light catchers	Cut out a design from the black sugar paper. Stick pieces of tissue paper over this cut-out design and hold up to the light.	Black sugar paper, tissue paper—different colours, glue, scissors.	God can see into our hearts just like the rays of light from outside shine on to the light catchers.



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Girls (Life)	Fondant eggs	Make the fondant icing and shape into an egg. Decorate the egg with icing pens and add a bow on the top.	Fondant icing packs, greaseproof paper, icing pens, small bows, wooden egg cups.	Easter is a time of year when there is new life all around us. Talk about how chicks hatch out of eggs and link to the Easter message of the empty tomb.
Boys (Life)	Giant fishing net	Wrap the wool (or string) around some chairs and tables laid out in a huge design. Get the children to climb in and out of the net, without breaking it!	Wool/string and crash mats if possible.	The writer of the book of 1 John was possibly the same writer as the book of John's Gospel, who was one of Jesus' disciples and a fisherman by profession.
Word-based (Love)	Foam crosses	Assemble the foam crosses with the words 'God' and 'Love' on them.	Foam cross kits, available from http://religiouscrafts.co.uk .	1 John 4:8 says 'God is love'.
Food-based (Love)	Heart-shaped biscuit	Decorate the biscuits with the icing sugar—use the food colouring to make different colours—and add sprinkles.	Biscuits (either ready-made or make), icing sugar, food colouring, sprinkles, greaseproof paper.	1 John 4:11 reminds us that God loves us but also that we are to love other people.



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Explores global aspect of faith (Life)	Global family	Glue a picture of the world in the middle of the paper plate and write these words round the edge: 'God loves the whole world'. Make a hole in the top of the plate and thread with some ribbon so you can hang it up.	Paper plates, images/pictures of the world, felt tips, glue, hole punch, ribbon.	We can live as people of God not just where we live but around the world too.
Opens up a great art/Quiet	Holman Hunt's The Light of the World painting (Behold I stand at the door and knock...)	Display a print of this work of art, as large as you can find. Use the same picture to spend some time asking Jesus what he can see in your heart that needs light shining on it.	A print of Holman Hunt's painting from the Internet. A quiet space somewhere in the room or perhaps a small tent set up with soft cushions or bean bags. Notice saying 'Quiet space'.	Sometimes it is good to spend a little time quietly listening to what God might be saying to us. He also speaks to us through the Bible.
Really messy (Life)	Shaving foam pictures	Squirt some shaving foam on to a clean table/surface, add a few blobs of red paint and create pictures in the foam. When finished, lay a piece of white A4 paper on top and carefully remove to reveal a picture.	Shaving foam, red poster paint, white A4 paper, bowl of soapy water, and cloths to clear up and start again.	The paint is like all the things that we do wrong and it spoils the lovely white foam but then when we wipe the table clean it is like when Jesus forgives us and makes us clean. The prints are a reminder of Jesus' forgiveness when we say we are sorry.



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Competitive	'Minute to win it' egg roll	You have a minute to whoosh eggs from one spot to another, one at a time.	Pizza boxes, eggs (raw!, hard boiled or pretend), mat to start on and a mat to get them on to, timer or stopwatch, paper and pens to record results, Easter egg(s) as a prize.	Just pure Easter egg fun!

Celebration suggestion

Song: 'God's love is big' by Simon Parry (Vineyard Songs, 2005).

Talk about all the activities you have done based around a very small book in the New Testament part of the Bible called 1 John. This book may have been written by one of Jesus' special friends, called John, who was a fisherman until Jesus asked him to follow him—hence the fishing net activity. Look at some of the other activities—either photos or what the children have made.

Talk about just how big God's love is for us. And because we are loved by God, we should show love to other people.

Introduce the YouTube film (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdA3Egu1I3s&feature=related>, 4 min 50 s) about a father and son competing the Ironman triathalon, the most difficult triathalon that exists—a 4-km swim, 180-km bike ride and 42-km run.

Prayer: Dear God. We are amazed at just how big your love is for us. Help us to remember that throughout each day and also, because of it, to show love to those around us. Amen.



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Meal suggestion

- ✿ Spaghetti (God's love goes on and on), meatballs and tomato sauce with peas or sweetcorn.
- ✿ Fish fingers (fishing theme) and mash with peas or beans.
- ✿ Congregation cakes—ask members of the Sunday congregation to make cakes for the Messy Church congregation to show them that they are all part of God's family.

Faith in Homes suggestion

Read 1 John 4:7–21 as a family. Give each family member two cellophane-wrapped little Easter eggs (or sweets, if not doing this at Easter time) and talk as a family about who you would like to give the second egg to and why.