



# Toilet Twinning



## #discipleship: individual

**‘For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.’**

Jeremiah 29:11 (NRSV)

**‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’**

John 10:10 (NIV)

**‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’**

Mark 12:31 (NIV)

It’s funny how something as earthy and humble as a toilet can be the basis for thinking about God’s limitless love for his people! God’s love, as reflected in the heartfelt verses listed above, longs for the best life possible for every human being. He made us as beings whose spirituality is inextricably linked to our bodies: our relationship with him and with each other, our worship, our well-being – these all work in bodily ways as well as in the realms of the soul or spirit. One of the most touching passages from the Christian mystic Julian of Norwich describes her awe at the way our bowels work! She linked spirituality to bodily functions in an unforgettable way: ‘A man walks erect and the digested food in his body is closed up like a very splendid purse. And when it is time for the call of nature, it opens and is closed again in a very seemly fashion’ (from ‘A Book of Shewings’, translated by Alexandra Barratt in *Julian of Norwich: A book of essays*, ed. McEntire and Salisbury).

If we read a few verses earlier in Jeremiah, we see that the well-known verse quoted here is in the context of settling, building, farming, marrying and bringing up children, and includes the well-being not only of the people of God in exile but also of those in the land who don’t yet know God. Living well includes these everyday earthly tasks. Living well includes loving our neighbour. Our call is to transform our world to become more and more like the kingdom of heaven. While we’re in human bodies, toilets are going to be an inevitable part of that mission. We know that many ancient church buildings are unsuitable for Messy Church, simply because they have no toilet! On a much wider scale, Toilet Twinning brings to our notice how good sanitation can be a step closer to kingdom living around the globe and that this health and well-being is a sign of God’s kingdom alive and well.

## #discipleship: team

### Messy health check

Good toilets start at home: when did you last talk about your building’s toilets in the context of good hospitality?

### Messy team theme

- What are you most grateful for about your building’s toilet facilities?
- How can your toilets be more missional?
- How have you been helping people think about the wider world in recent Messy Church sessions?

### How does this session help people grow in Christ?

This session shows people that God cares for each and every one of us and has plans to give us a future with hope. It helps people think about how they can be part of God’s plan to provide hope for other people and about the difference it makes when we take seriously Jesus’ invitation to ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ and show love to other people.

Toilet Twinning give us an example of how we can do this, as they show love across the world by teaching communities about toilets and sanitation, making a huge difference to many people’s lives.

## #discipleship: families

### Mealtime card

- What’s the funniest toilet joke you know?
- What do you think is the best thing about toilets?
- Have you thought of twinning your home toilet too?

### Take-home idea

Give out loo roll money boxes (or instructions on how to make one: stick a piece of card to each end of a loo roll and cut a slit in one end big enough for pennies). Encourage people to spend a penny and say a thank-you prayer when they use the loo.



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# Toilet Twinning



## Question to start and end the session

So... what have toilets got to do with God?

## #discipleship: extra

Take a collection towards getting your toilets twinned. Have collection pots by the toilets and encourage everyone to spend a penny when they use the toilets.

## Activities

If you want even more ideas, see the Toilet Twinning Pinterest board: [pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/toilet-twinning](https://pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/toilet-twinning).

### 1. Selfie biscuits

**You will need:** round biscuits such as digestives; icing; writing icing; strawberry/cola laces; other edible decorations

Do this activity in pairs – an adult and child together, or two friends. The younger person makes a selfie biscuit of what they look like now; the older person makes a portrait of what the younger person might look like in ten years' time.

**Talk about** what you think will change about you in the future. Is this a good thing, a bad thing or just different?

### 2. Making waste safe

**You will need:** finely chopped red cabbage; boiling water; large pans; sieve; vinegar; bicarbonate of soda; clear cups

Spread the chopped red cabbage between a few pans, then pour the boiling water over it and leave to cool for a bit. The water should turn purple. Remove the chopped cabbage using the sieve. (This can be done the night before, or just a little before your Messy Church starts, as long as it is cool enough to be safe.)

Pour some of the red cabbage water into a cup to about 1/3 full. This acts as your indicator. What happens when you add some bicarbonate of soda? (It should turn blueish.) Why? (It's alkaline.) What happens if you add some vinegar? (It should go back to the original colour and if you keep going, become more pink.) Why? (It's acidic, opposite of alkaline. Each can be used to cancel out the other.) You may want to keep a little of the red cabbage water separate to compare these against.



# Toilet Twinning



**Talk about** how waste from toilets needs to be made safe so that it doesn't make people sick or affect plants. With the right things added to it, it doesn't cause problems. Toilet Twinning teaches communities how to build toilets safely.

Show the picture of Sita and her boys. Sita, from the Ivory Coast, couldn't afford to buy medicines when her young children were constantly sick with diarrhoea. Sometimes she could borrow money but sometimes she couldn't, and she couldn't sleep for worrying about where the money was going to come from, and how she would keep her young children alive. She said, 'I got to the point where I didn't want to live this life anymore. Life felt hopeless.' But now, with a toilet, Sita's family is well. Their money doesn't go on medicines any more. Things have changed so much that her husband is even able to build them a new home! How do you think Sita's family felt when they built a toilet and stopped getting sick all the time? Do you think God can work through people like Toilet Twinning or you to bring others a future with hope?

## 3. Build-a-bog game

**You will need:** sheet and instructions from the toilet twinning website ([toilettwinning.org/app/uploads/2018/07/Build-a-bog-game.pdf](http://toilettwinning.org/app/uploads/2018/07/Build-a-bog-game.pdf)); dice; scissors

Each player will need a game sheet. Take it in turns to roll the die. The first person to roll all six numbers on the die and build their toilet wins!

**Talk about** how your life would be different if you didn't have a toilet.

Show the picture of Mira and Bishwo. In Nepal, Mira was in hospital for a month with dysentery and typhoid and missed a lot of school. Her family's toilet was built too close to the stream where they got their drinking water so their waste was contaminating their water with bacteria. Mira's granny Purna nearly died due to a diarrhoea-related illness, and Mira's dad Bishwo had to carry her in a basket on his back for more than 24 hours to get to the hospital in Kathmandu. When Toilet Twinning partners taught Bishwo how to build a proper loo in the right place, he sold two of his goats to pay for the materials. He was so proud of his new loo that he held an open day and invited neighbours to try out his toilet. Many villagers have since built a toilet for themselves. Bishwo said that if someone proposed to his daughter Mira, she would insist on her husband building a toilet at their home before she agreed to marry him!

## 4. Hope and love suncatcher

**You will need:** black card with one letter from the words 'hope' and 'love' cut out of each piece; tissue paper; glue; sticky tack

Invite people to stick pieces of the tissue paper over the back of the card to cover the letters. When they're done, why not stick them in a window to catch the light so everyone can see them?

**Talk about** how God loves all of us and wants us to have a future with hope. We can be a part of showing God's love to the world. Toilet Twinning is an example of how we can do this, as it shows love across the world by teaching communities about toilets and sanitation, making a huge difference to many people's lives. What can you do to make a difference?

## 5. Bathroom accessories memory game

**You will need:** a tray or table; a cloth big enough to cover it; various bathroom accessories such as toothbrush, tweezers, floss, shampoo, loofah, rubber duck, rubber snake, etc.

Lay all the items out on the tray or table. Give the people at your activity 30 seconds to memorise the items. Cover the items up and see how many they can remember.

**Talk about** what you would find strange not to have in a bathroom. Show the picture of Monica. Monica, from Zambia, used to hate going to the toilet in the bush because other children would laugh at her. One day she stepped on a snake and was terrified. Before her family built a latrine, Monica often fell sick. Her school work suffered and so did the family finances as they had to pay for medical treatment. 'If I had to go into the bush at night, it was dangerous. My toilet makes me feel safe.' Now Monica is much healthier. And because she's not missing school, her dream of becoming a nurse is much more realistic too. How would you feel if you found a snake in your bathroom?

## 6. Loo-roll stamping

**You will need:** cardboard tubes; coloured poster paint; large sheets of paper in different colours

You can use the toilet rolls as they are or with the end bent into different shapes, such as hearts or stars. Dip the ends in paint and stamp a design on to the paper to make a sheet of wrapping paper that you can use for the next present you give.





# Toilet Twinning



6



**Talk about** how giving a present to someone tells them we care about them. Fourteen-year-old Katy gave up her Christmas presents one year and asked for donations to Toilet Twinning instead. Katy had heard stories of children getting sick because their family didn't have a toilet and of teenage girls being attacked or bitten by snakes as they crouched in the bush to go the toilet. She knew that her giving could make a difference.

7



How would you feel about making a difference to the life of someone you don't know?

## 7. Toilet-tube planters

**You will need:** cut-up cardboard tubes (into 2-inch tubes); paper plates; cotton wool; water; cress seeds; colouring pens

Decorate your bit of cardboard tube – this is going to be a plant pot. Put the cardboard tube on to the paper plate and fill with cotton wool. Pour a small amount of water on to the cotton wool (just enough for the seeds to stick) and sprinkle the cress seeds on top. Don't forget to water it again when you get home!

8



**Talk about** fourteen-year-old Bridget, who wants to become a nurse. Show the picture of Bridget. She has hopes and dreams for living life to the full. She knows she needs to stay healthy to realise these dreams, and not having decent toilets at school threatened all that. She didn't go to school when she had her period, and she started getting really behind in class and failing exams. Now that her school has decent toilets and changing rooms for teenage girls, Bridget thinks that becoming a nurse is now possible – and that makes her really happy. Did you think that building a toilet could make such a big difference to someone's life?

9



Green is (normally) a sign of being healthy in plants. Maybe when you see your cress growing at home, you could say a thank-you prayer for Bridget and the other people who are healthy and happy because they have a toilet.

10



## 8. Down the pan

**You will need:** twiggy bran cereal; ziplock bags; rolling pin; scissors; plate; warm water

Place the bran in a ziplock bag, then bang and squish it with a rolling pin. Add warm water, enough to make a solid consistency. Cut a hole in the corner of the bag and squeeze the mixture on to a plate.





# Toilet Twinning



**Talk about** how 2.3 billion people don't have somewhere safe and hygienic to go to the toilet, and almost 1,000 children die every day from preventable diseases linked to dirty water and unsafe toilets. Does this surprise you? Toilet Twinning is working to change this through teaching communities how to build proper toilets, how important it is to wash your hands and much more.

## 9. Spend a penny!

**You will need: kitchen timer; large bowl or container; small jar or yoghurt pot; water; pennies**

Place the jar in the middle of the container. Fill the container with water, making sure it comes up well above the top of the jar. If you are using a yoghurt pot instead of the jar, you may need to weigh it down with a couple of coins. Invite people to try and drop as many pennies as they can into the water, landing into the jar, in 20 seconds.

**Talk about** how the path to the goal of clean flushing water is difficult, but if we each help it can be achieved.

## 10. Water filtration

**You will need: a water bottle; scissors; coffee filter/muslin/kitchen paper; sand; pebbles; stones; dirty water made from garden soil**

Cut the bottle in half and remove the lid. Use the bottle neck end as a funnel and place inside the other. Put the coffee filter into the funnel and push it to the bottom, then add a layer of sand on top of it, then pebbles, then stones. This will clean up your water! Pour some dirty water into the bottle and watch it come out cleaner into the bottom of the bottle. Experiment with different filters and pebbles.

**Talk about** the fact that bad sanitation around the world causes disease and the cycle of poverty. Every small step of help will make a difference.

# Celebration

Show this video of Katy's donation and how it changed Monica's life: [vimeo.com/286860236](https://vimeo.com/286860236). You may want to ask someone to read the subtitles out.

Ask everyone what they liked best about the video. Ask everyone what surprised them most in the video.

God loves every one of us. Not just here in this Messy Church, but everyone in our town, our country and across the world. He wants to see us love each other too – Jesus said, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Katy gave us an example of how we can do this. She saw that she didn't need any of the things that she might get for Christmas. She knew it wouldn't change her life to have a new pair of headphones, but that there are other people who have very little and that giving up her presents to help them would make a big difference to their lives.

Some of us might want to be generous in the same way as Katy was. Some of us might want to be generous in different ways. Perhaps you can talk about that when you go home, remembering that small gifts are as valuable to God as big ones.

And as a Messy Church, we'd like to be generous together! So our goal is to... [*twin one toilet / twin all our toilets / twin the town centre toilets, etc.*]. I wonder how long it will take us if we all work together!

## Prayer

Take a toilet roll and have one person hold the loose end while you go around the whole congregation and encircle them with the unrolled toilet paper. People around the perimeter will need to hold up their part of the toilet paper. If it breaks, go around another time and invite people to hold the broken ends

Lord God, you wrap your love round us, just as we are encircled by this loo roll. You long for everyone in the world to be wrapped in your love and have life in all its fullness. Help us to share your love generously around your world, especially through the work of Toilet Twinning. May people everywhere have clean, safe toilets to help keep them healthy. Amen

## Song suggestions

'Make a difference' – Fischy Music

'I was here' – Beyonce ([youtube.com/watch?v=i41qWJ6QjPI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i41qWJ6QjPI))

'Man in the mirror' – Michael Jackson ([youtube.com/watch?v=PivWY9wn5ps](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PivWY9wn5ps))

## Meal suggestion

Spaghetti Bolognese (see [toilettwinning.org/app/uploads/2018/07/Monica-recipe-LR.pdf](https://toilettwinning.org/app/uploads/2018/07/Monica-recipe-LR.pdf))





# Toilet Twinning



**Ivory Coast**

**Sita and her boys**





# Toilet Twinning



Nepal

Mira and Bishwo





# Toilet Twinning



**Zambia**

**Monica**





# Toilet Twinning



**Bridget**