



# Authorised Mess — HOSEA

## Your details

Name: Edmonde Openshaw

Church: Chinley Chapel

Bible book	Hosea
Theme of session	Hosea and God's great love, using the words of Hosea 11:8–9: 'How can I give up on you... I can't bear to even think such thoughts... And so I'm not going to act on my anger... And why? Because I am God and not a human. I'm the Holy One and I'm here—in your very midst' (The Message).
Notes	We used this session with families and children aged 3–8 years. Some needed help putting the two main pieces of the heart basket together.

## Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants	Heart basket	Make a heart basket then decorate with stickers. Write the message 'Love from XXX' on the outside and put a chocolate heart inside. Give to someone special.	Stiff paper/thin card (A4) in different colours, rulers, scissors, pencils, pens, sticky tape/double-sided sticky foam pads, stickers, ribbon (optional, for handle), chocolate hearts. Instructions to make a heart basket from the Internet, for example: <a href="http://gingerbreadsnowflakes.com/node/28">http://gingerbreadsnowflakes.com/node/28</a> .	Thinking about love as something we give. Heart basket is made for someone else.



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Younger participants	Red playdough	Make the playdough, coloured with red food colouring. Cut out all sorts of shapes from the playdough.	Flour, salt, oil, water, red food colouring, bowls, spoons, scales, cling film/freezer bags, plastic wheels, cutter shapes (including hearts), rolling pins. Recipe for making playdough from the Internet, for example: <a href="http://www.momsandkids.co.uk/makeplaydough.tpl">http://www.momsandkids.co.uk/makeplaydough.tpl</a> .	Fun.
Younger participants	'God loves you always' self-portrait	Paint a self-portrait on the pre-printed sheets between the words.	Pre-printed A4 sheets with 'God loves' at the top and 'always' at the bottom. Paints, paint brushes, water pots, protective aprons.	To claim God's constant love for oneself.
Younger participants	Relay game	Divide everyone into teams. Team members take turns to tackle the obstacles and then collect an object at the end of the course and take it back to their team. The first team to collect all the objects wins.	Objects to fetch and carry; obstacles like hula hoops to go through, plastic stilts to walk on, and so on.	Working together—love is like this. What would happen if people didn't cooperate?



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Older participants	A–Z game	Get everyone to sit in a circle. Take turns to say a word beginning with the last letter of the word the person before you said. For example: sweet, tadpole, egg...	None.	To think about how we depend on each other to make games/life work.
Older participants	The wedding	Dress up and act out the wedding service.	Service book—pick out vows and translate to age-appropriate language. Dressing-up clothes.	To think about big promises. For example, in wedding vows, the promise to love whatever life presents.
Girls	Friendship bracelet	Plait the threads, adding beads. Knot the plait at both ends. Give to someone special.	Coloured embroidery threads, beads.	Thinking about why we value friends. The gift is to acknowledge a friendship.
Boys	Large Jenga	Get everyone to play the game.	Large Jenga set.	Thinking about inter-dependence, cause and effect.
Food-based	Heart biscuit	Draw a heart on the biscuit with writing icing. Fill with red icing and then decorate with chocolate stars and sparkly sugar. Give to someone special.	Biscuits (digestive or rich tea), writing icing, red icing (make or pre-made), chocolate stars, sparkly sugar.	Thinking about love being something we show, not just something we say.



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Quiet	'I promise' card	Decorate the front of the card. On the inside, write a promise to do something for someone—for example, help to tidy up. Address the envelope and put the card inside.	Card blanks and envelopes, paper heart shapes/stickers, felt tip pens.	Thinking about love being something we show, not just something we say.
Really messy	Chocolate fountain	Dip the slices of apple into the melted chocolate and savour.	Chocolate fountain, chocolate, slices of apple.	Love is special, like chocolate.

## Celebration suggestion

Tell appropriate highlights of Hosea's story: Hosea loved a woman who hurt him. God told Hosea to carry on loving her anyway, like God loves us.

Possibly act out a wedding—be sensitive to broken marriages like Hosea's.

**Prayer:** Thank God for all the people who love us (who are they?) and what they do for us (what?) even when it's hard (like mum or dad getting up in the night to look after us when we're poorly).

**Song:** 'Jesus' love is very wonderful'.

## Meal suggestion

- ☀ Red (ish): baked beans on toast with grated red cheese.
- ☀ Heart biscuits or chocolate-covered apple slices (made in the activity).



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## Faith in Homes suggestion

- ✿ Keeping the promise on the gift card.
- ✿ Produce leaflets for adults with a summary of the Bible story, meaning and wonderings.

## Primary School RE idea

- ✿ **Assembly** (with visual aids): Is love like XXX? No! Love is like... .  
For example: Is love like candy floss, all pink and fluffy? No! Candy floss melts in the rain.  
Love is like a well-built house. It gives protection from the rain.  
Is love like a party dress? No! Party dresses look pretty but can easily get spoiled.  
Love is like jeans. They're ordinary but they last a long time.  
God's love for us is like a well-built house, like jeans (and... add ideas of your own).
- ✿ **KS2**: Children can think of their own 'opposites' and write/draw/act them out.