



Authorised Mess — MICAH

Your details

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Church: St Nicholas, Yate

Bible book	Micah
Theme of session	Justice, mercy and humility (Micah 6:8). How can we demonstrate God's justice to the world? What is mercy? What does it mean to walk humbly with God?
Notes	Whole session as yet untried, although some crafts have already been successfully trialed.

Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants	Scratch art heart magnets	Think of something you could do to be kind, or merciful, to someone in your family. 'Scratch' a picture of this kind action on to your heart magnet.	Scratch art heart magnets from www.bakerross.co.uk .	For the youngest participants, showing mercy at home will probably equate to kindness so this activity encourages them to think and talk about being kind at home.
Older participants	'Stop the Traffik'	Have a go at doing the 'STOP THE TRAFFIK' quiz either on your own or in small groups. Go through the answers together. Were you shocked by some of these answers?	'STOP THE TRAFFIK' quiz from www.stophetraffik.org/resources/ .	Encourage people to go on the 'STOP THE TRAFFIK' website at home. By joining this campaign, we can really do something to promote justice in the world.



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Girls	Heart clips	Using the stencils, cut out three different sized hearts in three different colours of funky foam. Starting with the largest, stick your hearts one on top of the other on to the flat side of a wooden clothes peg. Use your completed clip to keep all your letters or homework together.	Wooden clothes pegs, funky foam in various colours, pre-cut card heart stencils (three different sizes), scissors, PVA glue.	This is not a difficult craft, but it takes a while to do so you could ask participants if they know what the word 'mercy' means. Can they give any examples of times that they have been merciful? What might it mean to say that God is merciful?
Boys	Foil handcuffs	Make a pair of handcuffs from silver foil, and try them on somebody else if they will let you! Break the handcuffs in half and stick the two halves on to a piece of A4 card with a gap in the middle. Write the word 'freedom' between the two halves of the handcuffs. Can you use a really interesting type of writing/'font' to make the word stand out?	Silver foil, A4 pieces of card, PVA glue, felt tip pens and/or glitter glue in tubes.	We cannot really talk about justice without thinking about those around the world who have been unfairly imprisoned, including those who have been imprisoned for their faith. A good discussion on these issues could take place during this craft activity.



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Word-based	Framed Footprints poem	Stick a copy of the Footprints poem in the middle of a sheet of A4 card and decorate around the edge with beads, sequins, stickers and so on. Punch two holes in the top of the card and thread a piece of ribbon through so that you can hang your poem up.	A4 card, glue, beads, sequins, stickers, funky foam shapes, hole punch, ribbon. Printed copies of the Footprints poem from www.footprints-in-the-sand.com/index.php?page=Poem/Poem.php .	It's quite hard to know how to 'walk humbly with your God'. This visual representation of walking humbly with God tries to show that as we walk with God, he will walk with us, at all times.
Food-based	Fairtrade tiffin	Melt the butter and mix with the melted chocolate, milk and honey. Stir in the other ingredients and press into a greased square tin. Chill in a fridge for about an hour, then cut into pieces.	100 g Fairtrade chocolate, melted; 100 g butter; 2 tbsp Fairtrade honey; 1 tbsp milk; 250 g crushed digestive biscuits; 50 g Fairtrade raisins; 50 g chopped Fairtrade dried apricots. Greased square tin.	One way that we can seek to demonstrate God's justice to the world is to make sure that people are paid fairly for the crops they grow and sell. Talk about buying fairly traded goods—maybe encourage people to try to buy one more fairly traded item than usual before the next Messy Church.



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Explores global aspect of faith	Fairtrade tasting station	Blindfold participants and ask them to identify various Fairtrade foodstuffs either by tasting or sniffing them. Remove the blindfold and see how many they got right. Say which country each substance comes from. Can they find that country on the map/globe?	Various Fairtrade foodstuffs, such as spices, dried fruits, bananas, honey, mango, cocoa, chocolate. A large map of the world or a globe. Airline masks to use as blindfolds.	One way that we can seek to demonstrate God's justice to the world is to make sure that people are paid fairly for the crops they grow and sell. Talk about buying fairly traded goods—maybe encourage people to try to buy one more fairly traded item than usual before the next Messy Church.
Opens up great art	Bible verse banner	Invite everyone to fill the three words in bubble writing with pictures/photos from magazines of all different sorts of people. Use the finished banner as a backdrop for the celebration later.	Magazines, scissors, glue. A large banner with the words: Act justly , love mercy , walk humbly with your God. The words justly, mercy and humbly should be in bubble writing.	Justice and mercy, in particular, are issues of worldwide concern to Christians. Talk about the sort of things we could do to show mercy to people in other countries.



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Just for fun!	Judges' wigs	Stick cotton wool balls on top of the shower hat. Now cut lots of thin strips of white paper and curl them by using the blade of a pair of scissors or a ruler. Then stick them around the sides of the shower hat to look like a judge's wig. Model your wig for everyone to see!	Cheap transparent or white shower hats, cotton wool balls, white paper, scissors, PVA glue.	Talk about the difficulties a human judge must face. What about God as a judge? How do people feel about the whole question of judgement?
Really messy	Paint footprints	Working in pairs of one adult and one child, both take off your socks and shoes, tread on the paint-covered sponges in the baby bath or plastic box and then walk side by side down the length of a long piece of lining/craft paper. Imagine that the adult footprints represent God and the child's represent someone 'walking humbly with God!' Wash feet before putting socks and shoes back on!	Bottles of ready-mixed paints, baby bath or large plastic storage box, sponges, roll of lining or craft paper, bowl with warm water and soap, towel.	It's quite hard to know how to 'walk humbly with your God'. This visual representation of walking humbly with God tries to show that as we walk with God, he will walk with us, at all times.



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Celebration suggestion

Song ideas

- ✿ 'Justice' from *It's Party Time* CD by Ishmael. For details, see www.ishmael.org.uk.
- ✿ 'What does the Lord require of me?' from *Everybody Sing* CD by Dave Bilbrough. For details, see www.eden.co.uk.
- ✿ 'God of justice' by Tim Hughes. In *Spring Harvest Praise 2006/07*, No. 26. For details, see www.acorndirect.co.uk.

Retelling the story

Today we're thinking about a book in the Old Testament part of the Bible called Micah. This book is named after a man called Micah who lived about 700 years before Jesus was born. Micah was a prophet. 'A what?' I hear you say. Well, a prophet is a sort of messenger, or a spokesperson for God. Prophets bring special messages from God to the people around them. Sometimes these messages may contain warnings; and sometimes they may contain promises of good things that are going to happen.

I think Micah may have found it quite difficult to tell the people around him about the message God had for them to start with because it was a warning type of message. God was actually quite cross with the people at that time because they were not really behaving that well. What sort of things were they doing?

- ✿ They were worshipping other Gods—not the one true God. Do you think people today worship other Gods? How about the Gods of materialism, power, shopping, greed —and probably many others too.
- ✿ They were also listening to false prophets—people who claimed to hear from God but were really telling lies. Do we have any false prophets today? How about some of the extremist views we hear and read about from people who claim they are speaking for God?
- ✿ He also tells off some of the leaders for the cruel way they were treating people. Do we have any cruel leaders today? How about some of the cruel dictators of recent years?

However, Micah's prophecy was not all doom and gloom! He also tells the people that God is longing to welcome them back into his family. If they change their ways and start living God's way again, God will forgive them and give them a fresh start. In our craft activities, we have been thinking about one small bit of Micah's prophecy that tells us something about what it means to live God's way because we think this advice is still very relevant for us today, as well as for the people who lived in Micah's time. The advice for living God's way, which we can read in the book of Micah 6:8 (NIV), says:



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*He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.*

Does that seem a bit hard to understand? Perhaps it would help if I read it again from a modern version of the Bible called *The Message*:

*But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do,
what God is looking for in men and women.
It's quite simple: do what is fair and just to your neighbour,
be compassionate and loyal in your love,
And don't take yourself too seriously—take God seriously.*

We hope some of the craft activities have given you some ideas about doing what is just—things like buying Fairtrade foodstuffs and joining the 'STOP THE TRAFFIK' campaign. Although it may not be the way of the world, we would always encourage you to be merciful and compassionate in the way you treat other people. Perhaps walking humbly with God, or treating God seriously, is the hardest bit to explain, but we're going to think about that a bit more now in our prayer activity.

Prayer

(Pre-prepare a picture of a long 'road' drawn on a piece of lining/craft paper and cut out enough footprint shapes for everyone to have one.)
Invite everyone to think of one thing they could do during the next month to take God more seriously. Offer a few suggestions, such as read a bit of the Bible you haven't read before; have a Bible story at bedtime at least once a week; say a 'thank you' prayer at the dinner table before your evening meal; talk with your family about what you have heard at Messy Church; visit a local church and spend some time quietly sitting and thinking about God; invite a new family to the next Messy Church. Get everyone to write their chosen suggestion on their footprint, then to come and fix it to the 'road' using a small piece of Blu-Tack. Finish by praying that as we all try to walk humbly with God, he would draw near to each one of us.

Meal suggestion

- ✿ Chicken curry and rice using as many fairly traded ingredients as possible.
- ✿ Fairtrade tiffin (made in the activity).



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Faith in Homes suggestion

- ☀️ Decide as a family to sponsor a child through World Vision (www.worldvision.org.uk) or another charity that supports children in poorer countries.
- ☀️ Order an 'alternative gift' for a friend or relative's birthday from World Vision (<http://www.musthavegifts.org>) or Oxfam (www.oxfam.org.uk).

Primary School RE idea

KS1: Read or act out the story of the Good Samaritan and talk about something kind (merciful) you could do for a friend.

KS2: Project work on fairly traded food and where it comes from.