



## Outdoor Suggestions for February's Messy Church Session: Justice for all

You may want to take your Messy Church outdoors for a few months in these uncertain times. Here are some extra ideas you could use outside alongside the session ideas and inspiration in [Get Messy!](#) One activity may be all you need for a shorter (chillier) session!

You'll find the Messy Church Goes Wild logo [here](#) and a risk assessment document [here](#).

### Activity time!

#### **1 Activity 7: steal the grapes from p. 26 of Get Messy!**

This would work well outside.

#### **2 Grow vegetables**

You could hold this session in someone's allotment or vegetable garden. Being outside is obviously a great opportunity to tend a garden plot or plant vegetables in beds, window boxes or pots. If you have someone handy with power tools, building window boxes out of old palettes or wood scraps would be good fun. [Microsalads](#) or [mini-veg](#) could be grown too. Or have fun planting seeds to grow at home from fruit and veg from the kitchen – slices of very ripe tomatoes placed on compost in trays; pips from oranges, avocados, apples, lemons, melons in pots; sprouting potatoes, onions or garlic simply planted like you would a bulb; carrot tops in trays of water; pineapple tops... Talk about Naboth from today's story, whose vineyard had been in his family for generations and how it must have felt when King Ahab demanded it from him.

#### **3 Chalk out the car park**

Using chalk, mark out the car park or other hard surface into plots. Invite each family to use chalk to turn their plot into a beautiful garden. Talk about *why* it would be unfair to take over the plot of another family, particularly one with younger children.

#### **4 Wall of protest**

Open and flatten out cardboard boxes and tape them together on the printed side, then use them to cover an area of wall. Talk about fairness and justice in a particular sphere that is important to you or to your community, or from the news such as Black Lives Matter or environmental injustice.

Provide paints and brushes and invite everyone to create a 'wall of protest', expressing in words and pictures what wrongs you think God wants you to help put right in the world today. Talk about why God is angry with people who use their power over others in a hurtful and selfish way, and how we can challenge injustice in our world too.

## 5 Dens

Make dens – either from natural materials or with items brought from home, such as clothes horses, cardboard boxes, bean poles, tarps and old sheets. Talk about what we might do if we like someone else's den better than ours. What stops us from taking it over?

## Celebration

Gather together in a socially-distanced but intimate-as-possible way and open with a prayer. You could use this one from the Messy Adventures:

The group could use simple actions like [BSL ones](#) to go with their responses as they say them.

**In faith:** touch your forehead and bring the side of your hand down onto your other hand in a chopping action

**And hope:** cross your fingers on both hands

**And love:** cross your hands over your heart

Leader: We've come together on this patch of earth

All: *In faith and hope and love.*

Leader: We've come together under this sky

All: *In faith and hope and love.*

Leader: We've come together with the creatures we can see and those we can't

All: *In faith and hope and love.*

Leader: We've come together with the people we can see and those we can't

All: *In faith and hope and love.*

Leader: Creator God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, we've come together in your name

All: *In faith and hope and love. Amen*

Invite everyone to **share what they've enjoyed** about the activity/activities.

Tell the story from 1 Kings 21 without using a book, if you possibly can – have a few notes on a card or just tell it from memory and invite families to read it from the Bible at home. It's such a powerful story that some simple questions will be all you need to provoke discussion, such as:

- Where did King Ahab go wrong?
- What is the saddest part of this story?
- Does it remind you of anything in our world today?

Some simple 'sorry' prayers to follow might be appropriate, and prayers for any issues mentioned about social justice today.

Finish with a **prayer** thanking God for [mention what you've learned together] and the Messy Grace or other prayer. Another suggestion from Messy Adventures, based on Philippians 2:15 and 4:8, is:

Wherever you go, walk lightly. *(Point out the way in front of you or in any direction.)*

Wherever you go, shine brightly. *(Raise your arms above your head like a star.)*

Wherever you go, hold tightly. *(Hold hands with people next to you, possible option here to hold a leaf or something – hold tightly to nature as well as people.)*

To everything true and pure and good, both daily and nightly. *(Shake hands on each beat.)*

In the name of Jesus Christ *(Let go of hands and touch each palm of your own hands.)*

Amen *(Punch the air.)*