



# **MESSY MOMENTUM**

## **INFORMATION PACK**

### **ALL SIX APPROACHES**



# MESSY MOMENTUM PROJECT INFORMATION

## THE STORY SO FAR

With funding from the Church of England, we are looking into how we make Messy Churches more engaging for young people, seeking ways to ensure the Messy Church format is both youth-attractive and age-appropriate for all who come along.

In 2024, we surveyed the Messy Church network and found that in our hospitable, creative, celebratory and wonderfully Christ-centred Messy Churches, our 'all-age' value was often missing a certain demographic – namely, the teenagers. The survey showed that 50% of Messy Churches in the UK do not have anyone aged 12–16 years old attending.

With this 'missional challenge' highlighted, we decided it was time to find creative ways to address this age gap. We went to the Church of England with an innovative project proposal – and they granted us funding to run the pilots and find creative ways to keep young people in Messy Church.

We completed a listening exercise in February 2025 to hear the voices of young people, parents, carers and Messy Church leaders on this subject. We then took the findings and gathered together a range of experts in intergenerational and youth-specific ministry for a two-day creative workshop. From our innovative time together, we distilled **six approaches** that would work in a range of contexts across the Messy Church network.

These pilots will start in January 2026, but right now, we need Messy Churches all over the UK to sign up to be involved and run one of these pilots.

## THE SIX PILOTS

Our hope is that there is something for every Messy Church to try in these six adaptable approaches, so read on for the details and find which one works for you!





# 1: INTENTIONALLY INTERGENERATIONAL (II / AYE-AYE)



## This approach involves all ages in all aspects of Messy Church to capture the very heart of our Messy Church values

With either a brand-new Messy Church or a relaunched one, this pilot will start with a practical training session and resources to delve into the Messy Church values and, through a learning community with other Messy Churches in the pilot, will integrate all ages into the prayer, planning, preparation, presentation and participation of their Messy Church.

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- A new or relaunched Messy Church
- Focused training on the Messy Church values and intergenerational practice
- Actively developing input from all-ages, especially young people, in your Messy Church
- Participating in an online learning community throughout the pilot with other Messy Churches



### CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

You'll need a team ready to start a new Messy Church, or with the time and desire to rethink and implement an adjusted way of doing Messy Church that is intentionally all-aged.

### PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

One training session in the autumn term to deep-dive into values and practice (online).

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.



# 2: FRIDAY NIGHT MESSY



## Messy Church is redefining ‘Thank God it’s Friday!’ with a Messy Church for an evening community

This pilot of Messy Church happens in the evening (not just on Fridays!), in a community space, starting with a meal together, exploring a theme in a table-talk or discussion and then through various activities and spiritual styles before coming together again with reflections and tidy-up time! Everyone contributes to food, ideas and celebration!

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- Setting is key: relaxed and informal
- Still intergenerational, but naturally shifting to older children given the evening time
- Everyone contributes – food, clean-up, activities
- Same ‘Messy Church’ format, but different style
- Less preparation, with activities aimed at an older age group



### CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

You’ll need a space to run this in and a team with the ability to adapt the format. This should take less preparation than a normal Messy Church, with simpler activities, bring-and-share food and clean-up times integrated into the nature of the format.

### PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

One training session in the autumn term to deep-dive into practice and spiritual styles (online).

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.



# 3: PICK ‘N’ MIX



## Within your Messy Church, creating a youth-focused space to engage young people through one recommended format

By providing a space within your Messy Church that focuses on young people, you can engage with them and make it work alongside what you already do. In this pilot there are a range of approaches that you can pick-up as they are or adapt to work within your Messy Church context – a table for teens, a youth lounge, a Messy young people stream – the important thing is providing a specific opportunity to connect with and disciple young people within your current setting.

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- Fits into your current Messy Church
- Adaptable to work for your young people
- Range of options to choose from
- Minimal extra work – takes the place of one activity at your usual Messy Church



### CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

Discussion with your team, and young people, to see what they would want to add into your usual Messy Church gathering.

### PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

One training session in the autumn term to talk through the options and your choice.

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.



# 4: CO-JOURNEYING (CO-JOS)



## INTENTIONAL, RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP – THIS PILOT IS ABOUT INVITING INDIVIDUALS OF ALL AGES AND STAGES IN YOUR MESSY CHURCH ON A FAITH JOURNEY TOGETHER

This is a ‘mentoring-style’ pilot with a Messy Church flavour as we know that true discipleship is where everyone can learn from and grow more like Jesus by doing life and church together. This pilot connects adults in your local Messy Church with older children (approx. nine-year-olds) to become ‘co-jos’, inviting them to build a friendship and ‘co-journey’ their faith together. One person in your Messy Church (the co-jo co-ord) will be trained to spot and invite the co-jos (young and less-young) and connect them into discipleship pairs, after some initial training and preparation.

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- A ‘co-jo coordinator’ in each Messy Church, seeking out co-jos to connect up
- Fits into usual Messy Church activities/time
- The co-jos, once trained (adults) and invited to connect, will meet during Messy Church
- If required, recommended resources can be used as a focus



### CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

You’ll need a leader to be the ‘co-jo coordinator’ to seek out the co-jos, young and old, to ask them if they would like to co-jo and then connect them with one another.

### PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Two training sessions in the autumn term, one specific to coordinators and one for coordinators and adult co-jos.

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.



# 5: MESSY GATHER



**The Messy Church network is wide and diverse – and we want our young people to see and own their place in that, connecting the young people from Messy Churches locally or regionally to grow their faith**

By connecting Messy Churches locally and facilitating ‘gatherings’ between young people – listening to what they want and what works for them – we want to foster a network of young people and Messy Churches that truly embodies our values and shows what church community is.

## WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- Facilitating fun, focused times with a group of young people
- Connecting with other Messy Churches in your area, or finding ‘gatherings’ to connect them to
- Being willing to host a gathering or transport young people to one (termly)



## CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

You’ll need a leader to be the ‘point person’ to connect with other Messy Churches or find local gatherings. People to help host or transport young people to gather together, within safeguarding guidelines.

## PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

One training session in the autumn term for initial set-up, guidelines and network building.

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.



# 6: ‘I’D LIKE TO TRY...’



## Have you had an ‘I’d like to try...’ new idea to engage young people that we haven’t thought of? Now is the time!

We know our Messy Churches know their communities best – and you know what will inspire and engage your young people! Whether you’ve had the inkling of an idea for a while, or one of your young people has a passion that you haven’t quite made into an action or activity, we want to hear about it and help make that happen! We will facilitate a listening and learning community for these new initiatives, so together we can improve and inspire innovation that works for you.

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

You know best! This will look very different depending on your ideas and what you want to make happen! We will be facilitating and coaching you with an online learning community to support your idea and its journey.



### CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

This will need you to have an idea you are willing to make a reality!

### PILOT-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Two training sessions in the autumn term, one kick-off and one coaching/learning community session.

The training and criteria required for all pilot approaches can be found on pages 9–10.





# SO, WHAT NEXT?

## PILOT CRITERIA

We are looking for 25–30 Messy Churches (roughly five per pilot) with the following:

- A cohort of nine-year-olds and older (minimum three children)
- Regular Messy Church gatherings (monthly)
- A volunteer team with capacity
- Time to commit to the two-year journey
- Leadership of the church on board



## CAPACITY AND COMMITMENT

All six pilot approaches have slightly varied levels of commitment, but all will require:

- **Initial training** in the autumn term
- **Termly check-ins** throughout 2026–27
- **Data-capture elements** (still to be confirmed, but most likely to include: feedback capture after each gathering, termly questionnaire alongside the online check-in structure and an annual survey)
- **Youthscape Essentials training** (ten-week course, in a variety of packages/forms, but we would ask at least two from every Messy Church pilot to attend)

### SIGN UP HERE!

If you are interested and fit the criteria, or want to have a conversation about any of it further, you can sign up here: [PILOT SIGN UP FORM](#)

### SCREENING CALL

We have a conversation with you about capacity, commitment and requirements

The paperwork! Ensuring we have everything in place for the pilot to be ready to flourish!

### CHECKS & AGREEMENTS







## SO, WHAT NEXT?

# ONCE YOU'RE ON THE PILOT

## TRAINING

**Every pilot will be required to take part in some 'Underpinning principles and set-up' sessions** (safeguarding training, Messy Church values refresher) **and approach-specific training** (support, guidance and learning community).

## RESOURCES

We will be resourcing every Messy Church that partakes in the pilot, not just with the training and support from the team, but with resources specific to each pilot that are relevant and adaptable for your Messy Church.

## PILOT SET UP TIMELINE

### Autumn term 2025

Sept

Oct

Nov

Dec

Jan 2026

Underpinning principles and set up sessions (ALL PILOTS need to attend one of four in September)

All pilot-specific training will occur in October/November (either one or two online sessions, pilot dependent)

ALL PILOTS start with their first gathering of 2026, and meet termly as cohorts over the two years

### Youthscape Essentials

This ten-session course will be run throughout the term. All pilot Messy Churches will be offered two places. National online courses start from Wednesday 17 September from 7.15–9.15 pm for ten weeks or from Tuesday 13 January from 7.15–9.15 pm for ten weeks. Messy Church-led course on Monday evenings from October, meeting fortnightly (five sessions pre-Christmas and five afterwards).

## CONTACT US

Mulling it over or have some questions?  
Our project lead, Sophie Harber, would love to talk to you – please get in touch.



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## OUR PILOT PRAYER

Lord God, we bring our hearts and plans before you, acknowledging your sovereignty and goodness. We pray the words of Joel over this project; as we seek to gather the people - the elders and the children - may this be your sacred assembly, consecrated and whole. Amen.



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