

Messy Matters NZ

Issue 6

November 2013

Being Family Together

One of my prayers for our Messy congregation is that we would be community together, a family. There are big challenges to forming community when we only meet once a month...

"At 4pm, as people started coming through the door, the buzz and excitement grew. A young man, who lives in difficult circumstances, arrived with two cartons of custard to share with us for dessert. We have never asked our congregation for food, and I could sense his joy in being able to give. A grandmother pressed a small donation into a team member's hand "This is for all you do for us".

People greeted each other as friends, catching up on what had been happening, what they were looking forward to. I could hear bits of conversation about work and school, friends and picnics.

Across the hall paper cup telephones were being used with lots of laughter as we whispered silly things to each other.

As we started our celebration time together, I noted that people moved freely to sit with others, especially as we formed small groups for our response time. One little girl left her mother's side to go and sit down next to the minister on the floor.

During our meal, I sat down with some of our single adults who come to Messy Church. The father of a large family joined us. As we were sitting, talking together, this man's wife sat down, too. "I've been sitting with our family", she said. "I've been sitting with our family, too", said the husband".

Sharing food, acknowledging our gifts, laughing together and talking about our congregation being family. God is so good and so faithful. And I'm still buzzing.

Love and smiles *Julie x*

Messy in Remuera

"These are some photos of our first Messy Church at St Aidan's; theme 'Getting Ready for Father's Day', celebrating special people in our lives and linking it into the Lord's Prayer and God's love, forgiveness, provision etc.

Over 80 attended with around 16 children (it was hard to count!!!), including 2 Mainly Music families. It was a good start with lots of very positive feedback.

We did 3 crafts, one activity and a Lord's Prayer walk/reflection. One little boy dropped 3 pebbles into the water to offer forgiveness to those who had hurt him and to ask God to forgive him for having held onto the hurt.

There is a lot of energy in the church across all ages, with already 16 already on the team. God is good." Rev Debbie Smith, St Aidens, Remuera.



Our next Messy Church is planned for Christmas Eve, 24th December.

messychurch@strandz.org.nz



Messy Matters NZ

Issue 6

November 2013

Messy Church on Marae

Te Haahi o Hakinakina Whanaungatanga i nga Marae

Waimana Kaaku is one of Tuhoe's beautiful valleys in the Eastern Bay of Plenty with the native bush and 11 marae. The Tauranga river meanders through the valley, farmlands, forestry and dotted with papakainga (homesteads) nearest to their hapu/marae. Whanaungatanga Hakinakina is the Maori name for Messy Church given by our bilingual Minister Tamiana John Thrupp.

Each marae is given the opportunity to host the Waimana Kaaku monthly meeting, once a month on a Saturday. This is the time for all Whanau and their members to return home to their marae to raise money for their own marae in the form of batons-up, raffles, sale of white elephant items, clothing, lots of food and bulk items usually brought home from the towns and cities and the hau kainga cooking the hangi and boil-up. So it is indeed the gathering of the hapu (many Whanau belonging to a common ancestor) A time to give to their marae. Fun and entertainment is had by all for the next two days.

Messy Church is also a special time for our parish (upon invitation) to prepare and host a special biblical theme on that particular marae the next day being Sunday. With the permission of our Kaumatua/pakeke of that marae we are able to enhance the marae into a biblical environment sharing the gospel through a certain theme e.g. Jesus Christ is the light of the world,

Daniel in the Lions' den and follow me I will make you Fishers' of men. Home readings of scripture are shared. Prayers for the health and well-being of the hapu and families are shared, along with prayers of safety in return travels. The gospel message is shared in the tipuna whare (carved ancestral house). Our TEAM of Elders and helpers are so talented in so many skills that we have a wide variety of activities in the Whare kai (hall). Children are so pumped they can't wait to get into the supporting activities. Through fun, bible songs, music, drama and playacting, we share the Word of God and have a verse to learn. Creating the ambience is so important, arousing the children, grandchildren and even our elders' curiosity, so from the beginning to the end there is such great interest and participation of the variety of art and craft activities, baking, games, music, fun, fun and more fun. It is indeed a unique devotional time, especially for the unchurched.

After a shared meal, we share our crafts, our laughter our wairua (spiritual well-being), our love that we have enjoyed making with our families and its off home until the next Messy Church at the Marae

Our thanks to **Ida Te Pou** (Elder of St James Presbyterian Maori Parish in Te Waimana) for writing about Messy Church on Marae.



messychurch@strandz.org.nz

