



Messy Christmas

By Hannah Tarring

Christmas is such a special time and although things are different this year, we can still gather and celebrate the birth of a very special baby... a baby who changed the world!

This Messy Church at home session focuses on the true meaning of Christmas and explores the theme of God's gift to us in Jesus.

Thanks be to God for his gift that is too wonderful to describe!

2 Corinthians 9:15 (ERV)

Activity time

Try these activities and see if you can start guessing what might happen in our story today. If you can't get exactly these materials, just see what you can find around the house instead!

1 Nativity collage



You will need: paper or card; coloured pens or crayons; glue; different materials from your home or garden

Create a wonderful Nativity picture using different materials! Gather materials from around the home, and enjoy a nature hunt outside to find natural items such as sticks, stones, soil and leaves. Draw, colour and stick to make your messy Nativity collage.

Talk about all the different people, animals, textures and smells in the Nativity story. Can you imagine what it must have been like in the stable? Talk together about how perfectly messy the Nativity story is and how from it, we received the best gift ever in Jesus!

2 Christmas stars



You will need: paper or card; glue; tin foil and/or shiny paper; coloured pens or crayons; string or ribbon (optional)

Draw a star on your paper/card, or use the template at the end of the PDF. Cut out your star and cover it in foil or shiny paper (you could glue this or wrap it around tightly). Decorate your star and make it shine! You could make your Christmas star into a hanging decoration by adding ribbon or string.

Talk about the very important star that led the way to baby Jesus in the stable. The star was a very important part of the journey made by those looking for the new King. Isn't that amazing? Would you have trusted God and followed the star?

3 Junk model nativity scene



You will need: clean junk from the recycling bin; glue; scissors; colouring pencils or crayons; paint (optional)

Have a rummage through your recycling bin and choose some junk to make your Nativity scene. You could think about finding material for:

- The stable
- The star
- Mary and Joseph
- Baby Jesus
- The angels
- The donkey (and other stable animals)
- The shepherds
- The wise men (although they didn't arrive until a little later!)

Stick, glue, colour, and paint to create your very own Nativity scene. Use your imagination and get creative!

Talk about all the different people and animals in the Christmas story. Talk about the great gift of Jesus and how, although he was king, he came to earth as a tiny baby in a stable.

4 Bobbing oranges



You will need: a large bowl or container of water; oranges or clementines

Float your orange or clementine in the water and watch it float to the surface. Peel the orange and try again – what do you think will happen? Watch as the orange sinks – wow! Enjoy a tasty snack. Orange peel is full of tiny air pockets; making the orange float to the surface when put in water! Removing the peel (and all the air pockets) means that the orange is heavier and will sink.

Talk about God sending Jesus as a gift to the world – *a gift for you and for me!* Think about the orange peel enabling the orange to float. Jesus is like the orange peel with the air pockets – he wraps his love around us -and with him, all things are possible!

Celebration

Take a look at some of the key scriptures for the Christmas story:

- Mary visits Elizabeth: [Luke 1:39–45](#)
- The birth of Jesus: [Luke 2:1–20](#)
- The shepherds: [Luke 2:15–20](#)
- Jesus is the light: [John 1:9–14](#)
- God’s love: [John 3:16](#)
- The wise men (Epiphany): [Matthew 2:1–12](#)

You could also look at the Christmas story in different Bibles:

- *Rhyming Bible* by Bob Hartman
- *The Lion Storyteller Bible* by Bob Hartman
- *The Jesus Storybook Bible* by Sally Lloyd- Jones
- *The Big Bible Storybook* by Mark Carpenter

Spend some time reading the Christmas story together and remembering the wonderful gift of Jesus. Perhaps you could reflect on some questions together. I wonder...

- How do you feel about the story today?
- How does the Christmas story make you feel?
- Why do you think God sent Jesus?
- Would you have followed the star?
- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt to be given the job of being Jesus’ mum and dad? Why do you think this?
- What does Christmas mean to you?

Less-traditional worship song ideas (can be accessed via YouTube):

- 'Hush! There's a Baby' (David Heath-Whyte).
- 'Sent from Above' (Simon Parry).
- 'Way Maker' (Hillsong).
- 'Jesus, Savior of the World' (KidSpring Children's Ministry).
- 'Jump for Joy' (KidSpring Children's Ministry).

Prayer

Lord God,
Thank you for our Messy Christmas celebration!
Thumbs up!

Help us to remember that you sent your Son Jesus as a baby to save the whole world!
Put your arms together and rock them like a baby.

Thank you for sending Jesus as a gift to us.
Put your hands in front of you, like you are receiving a present.

Help us to show your love to others and shine your light in our world.
Cover your heart with both hands and make 'twinkly star' shapes with your hands.

Amen
Put your pointing finger out in front of you and move it in a spiral shape as you say 'Amen'!

Finish with the [Lord's Prayer](#) and the [Messy Grace](#).

Mealtime

Christmas is often a time where we enjoy treats and tasty food. As well as enjoying your orange from our 'Bobbing Oranges' activity, here are a few other Messy Christmas food ideas:

- Why not decorate some biscuits together as a family? You could make Christmas patterns using festive colours or draw some Nativity characters with icing pens. Add sprinkles for some extra sparkle!
- Roll some fondant icing into a ball and decorate with icing sugar or tubed icing. As you enjoy your sweet treat, remember that Jesus came to earth for the whole world.
- Enjoy a warming hot chocolate treat. Perhaps you could enjoy this when you're reading the Christmas story.



