



FACILITATING CHANGE THROUGH RESEARCH

In this paper:

- An action research strategy
- Methodological strengths and limitations
- Advice for others considering action research
- Results from the initial baseline survey

An action research strategy

From its inception, this project was designed as a piece of action research dedicated to cycles of knowledge and action to produce on-the-ground change in the piloting of six discipleship approaches by Messy Churches in three dioceses – Bristol, Hereford and Durham.

What counts as participatory action research in a strict sense can be confusing, but this research has included the word participatory to reflect the collaboration between practitioners and researchers, the value placed on local knowledge and the goal to empower local Messy Churches leaders who are often over-stretched and under-supported in doing the work of deeper discipleship with their teams and families.

This project was influenced by the theological action research model developed by the authors of *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology*.¹ Two theological action research elements were incorporated into this research:

- 1) the joint discernment process between the ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ researcher groups
- 2) prayerful reflection (something akin to lectio divina) trusting in the active work of Holy Spirit to help a group discern where God is at work

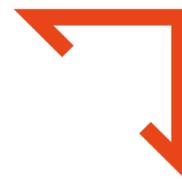
Action research is a relative newcomer to the suite of methodological approaches usually called on to assess the impact of Anglican mission initiatives. This research did not seek to compare the impact of the six approaches and draw a conclusion on which is the most effective to be prioritised above the other five which should then be discarded. Respecting the individual and unique mission contexts that all churches exist in, wisdom about what has been learned within all discipleship approaches is the aim; this is to enable Messy Church leaders to do the necessary work of double listening lest they uncritically import a preferred model of discipleship where that model is not appropriate.²

Appreciating the desire to see numerical growth included as a marker for evidence of impact, this research project did include a quantitative survey. Participating Messy Churches submitted statistical data at the beginning of the research period to set a ‘baseline’. The survey was due to be repeated at the end of the research process as a data comparison to contribute towards evidence of impact.

Due to the unexpected disruption caused by COVID-19, the research partners agreed not to repeat the baseline survey in December 2021; findings would have been too affected by outside variables. The results of the survey conducted in 2019 are included in the final section of this paper and we recommend that individual dioceses complete the second survey in 2022 or at a time when COVID-19 disruption has sufficiently subsided for these Messy Churches.

¹ Cameron, Bhatti, Duce, Sweeney & Watkins (2010) *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology*, London: SCM Press.

² Cray, G. (2004) *Mission-shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Culture* GS 1523, London: Church House Publishing, pp. 104-105.



Partners in the research process

Insider researchers (practitioners):

Messy Churches in the Diocese of Bristol:
 St Nicholas Yate
 Christ Church Downend
 St Christopher's Brislington
 West Swindon Partnership
 St Johns and St Andrews Parks and Walcot
 Village Messy Church St Mary Purton
 Ridgeway Farm Messy Church St Mary Purton
 St John Peasedown (Methodist)
St Chad's Patchway (withdrew)
Kingswood Parish (withdrew)
St James Mangotsfield (withdrew)

Messy Churches in the Diocese of Hereford:

South Wye
 Ridgeway Parishes
 Leebotwood Benefice
 Leominster Parishes
 All Saints Broseley
 St Lawrence Church Stretton
 Sutton Hill
St Mary's Westbury (withdrew)

Messy Churches in the Diocese of Durham:

St Albans Windy Nook
 St Matthews and St Wilfrids Sunderland
 St John's Neville's Cross
 St Clare Newton Aycliffe
Woodhouse Close (withdrew)

Outsider researchers:

CARU (Church Army's Research Unit):
 Naomi Maynard - project lead until April 2020
 Claire Dalpra - project lead from April 2020
 Lu Skerratt – assistant researcher

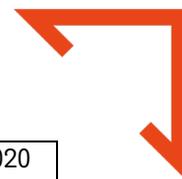
BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship):
 Lucy Moore

Diocesan leads:

Sharon Pritchard - Durham diocese
 Dan Jones – Bristol diocese
 Kathy Bland – Hereford diocese

Components in the research process

Activity	Aim	Who	When
Training session for each diocese	CARU/BRF to introduce the project and the action research activities.	Messy Church leaders (insider researchers)	July-September 2019
Baseline survey (quantitative component)	Online (or paper) survey to note discipleship developments before project. This was to be repeated at the end of the project and the differences used to help measure impact of the project.	Designed for Messy Church leaders to complete as a team	July-September 2019
Islands activity	A creative resource for leaders to introduce the research (and in particular the approach they piloted) to their participants.	Messy Church leaders to run session, plus one leader to make notes	September-October 2019
Discipleship strand began			
Reflection forms completed	To record ongoing observations of how approach is going.	Messy Church leaders and their teams	September-December 2019



Mid-point sense-making session for each diocese	A gathering to reflect together on one another's reflections, discern key learning and make changes to the implementation of their approach.	Outsider and insider researchers	January 2020
Reflection forms completed	To record ongoing observations of how approach is going.	Messy Church leaders and their teams	January 2020-

The impact of COVID-19 led to a redesign in the final phase of the research process. The final sense-making session planned for June was postponed to the autumn in the hope that lockdown would be lifted by the summer and Messy Churches would have time to resume their gatherings and activities relating to their approaches.

The unexpected lack of activity in lockdown provided the opportunity for CARU to interview insider researchers to support them in the reflection process, completing reflection forms on their behalf.

With the normal pattern of things so disrupted, the decision was made not to repeat the baseline survey as the impact of COVID-19 would skew findings. However, the survey as a tool for measuring progress in discipleship development will be available on the Church Army website for wider use by Messy Churches (or other churches).

The redesigned conclusion of the research took shape as follows:

Interviews	To record ongoing observations of how approach is going and is likely to be affected by lockdown. Also provided an element of pastoral support at a time of national crisis.	CARU by telephone/Zoom	April–July 2020
Gathering participant data	To create space for participants (teams or families depending on the approach) to give feedback about the approach being used	Messy Church leaders gathering their own data from participants	September–November 2020
Final reflection form	To record ongoing observations of how approach is going.	Messy Church teams	September–November 2020
<i>Discipleship strand (formally) ends</i>			
End sense-making session for each approach	A gathering to reflect together on one another's reflections and participant data, to discern key learning.	Outsider and insider researchers on Zoom	October–November 2020
Compiling learning document as research findings	Distilling learning as evidence to the effectiveness of these approaches for deeper discipleship. Includes case studies, illustrative quotes and further action.	Outsider researchers in consultation with insider researchers regarding case studies	January–March 2020



Methodological strengths and limitations

Strengths of this approach:

- This approach has worked *with*, rather than *on* or *for* the researched. Messy Church leaders as local experts have taken on the role of researcher. They have taken action ‘*to construct their own knowing*’.³
- This collaboration with local leaders helps to facilitate this as a sustainable change process.
- The cyclical process created at least two opportunities to adjust their approach in light of ongoing learning.
- The collaborative nature also strengthens the discernment process. A group approach to identifying where God is at work feels somewhat more secure than the risks involved in an individual researcher making such claims.
- This approach acknowledges subjectivity is key to the way we know things and helps in understanding what is real. The gift of the ‘non-expert’ expert in the process ensures insights are focused on practice and practical outcomes.
- Data from participants (either teams or families) is part of the process – attention is given to hearing as many ‘insider voices’ as possible (including children) so conclusions are drawn from more than only the leader’s perspective.
- A change in mindset - not only a change in activity – is enabled through 1) reflective practice that prioritises the question ‘where are we seeing God at work?’ in the life of the team and the lives of Messy Church families, and 2) a heightened listening to the experience and perspectives of participants.
- One advantage of this approach was its adaptability. It was flexible enough to be reimaged; we could continue despite the cataclysmic upheaval of COVID-19.
- The research process is one that could be easily adapted to other church contexts.
- The learning gathered through the process – borne out of practical experience - inevitably generates wisdom for others. As such it has been extremely rewarding.

Limitations of this approach

- The pace of the project has been difficult to control. Messy Churches took longer to get started. Some churches left the process and one joined halfway through. COVID-19 left outsider researchers in the hands of the insider researchers as the latter managed local decisions about if, how and when they continued to work with the approaches in and after lockdown.
- The research process relied upon the ability of leaders to observe and reflect on-the-ground. Busy, large gatherings can make this difficult, but leaders were encouraged to reflect together in their teams and shortly after the event while it was easy to recall what happened.
- For local leaders, the skill of ‘stepping back’ to discern where God is at work without self-criticism of their own leadership role is a new one for many. The sense-making sessions needed careful planning and facilitation to ensure this was happening. Less confident voices were encouraged to contribute through smaller group work.
- With a relatively large group of people involved in the joint discernment process, there is potential for additional ‘layers’ of interpretation - original observations may be loaded with greater significance than they had in the first place.

³ O’Leary, Z. (2004) *The Essential Guide to Doing Research*, London: SAGE p. 144.



- This post-positivist approach to research which celebrates subjectivity (and is less concerned with objectivity) lays itself open to bias in interpretation. Researchers were predominantly white, middle class females involved in local church life. Aware of this dynamic, writing up has been a collaborative process with an agreed aim to present disappointments as well as progress.
- Terms such as ‘discipleship’ remain as open to interpretation as always. The Islands exercise was designed to give as much clarity and definition to the term as possible.
- Enough Messy Churches were motivated to take part at the beginning of the project to be able to measure the effectiveness of each approach. Initially 32 showed interest, but eight pulled out in the first six months. With the impact of COVID-19, a few more churches withdrew. Some approaches had only two Messy Churches taking part in the final sense-making.
- With two Messy Churches remaining in three of the approaches, it became more difficult to claim with absolute certainty whether the research process alone facilitated change or whether there were alternative contributing factors to the changes the Messy Churches were experiencing.
- The outsider team gave clear instructions for ethical approaches at the start and for gathering participant research. As newcomers to research, ethics can be intimidating for practitioners. The need to adhere to careful guidelines may have prevented a few leaders from gathering participant feedback where it was an already daunting prospect.
- There is some learning from this research that can speak to any and all Messy Churches regarding discipleship e.g. don’t let the leadership burden of a Messy Church fall on only one person. However, there are no shortcuts to deeper discipleship; the experience of the participating Messy Churches was tied closely to the time and energy they committed to developing their approach alongside the discipline of regular reflective practice.
- As lay volunteer leaders – often juggling family, work and inherited church commitments – there is a risk that the ‘scaffolding’ (e.g. support, coaching and encouragement) this formal research process has provided will leave participating Messy Churches with less impetus to continue to prioritise what is needed for ongoing change. Where dioceses and parishes can, they should take on this scaffolding role when the formal research period ends. BRF can and will provide support and encouragement, although it is important to acknowledge that apart from Lucy Moore and the small team at BRF, this is otherwise an impassioned but informal network of volunteers.

Advice for others considering action research

- Don’t rush the exploration stage of churches deciding whether this kind of research is a good fit for them. It can take time, but local leaders are investing in a lengthy process they shouldn’t be hurried into. That said, don’t give churches too much time to consider. Some Messy Churches were glad of the incentive to get involved and work to an outside timetable.
- Keep training simple. Focus on facilitating each stage at a time. Make sure you explain that reflection forms are crucial for the sense-making (joint discernment) process. As facilitators, you need reflection forms capturing detailed observations (i.e. more than ‘it went well’) and you need reflection forms to be submitted ahead of time.
- Asking leaders to prayerfully reflect on another Messy Church’s reflections sounds relatively straightforward, but in practice it was quite a shift in mindset. Yet, it is vital to the process. The midway sense-making sessions needed enough facilitators for one facilitator to two Messy Churches to walk through the process. Sessions began and ended with prayer to help create an atmosphere of prayerful discernment.
- Include the question ‘Where is God at work?’ in reflection forms rather than wait until sense-making gatherings. The question is a new one for many and takes time for leaders to get used to working with. A sample reflection form is available.⁴

⁴ A sample reflection form is available on messychurch.org.uk/deepening-discipleship



- For lay volunteer leaders, daytime and evening sessions are needed for training and sense-making sessions. Zoom worked well for the final sense-making, although papers for prayerful reading needed to be submitted and re-sent to leaders in advance. Building lectio divina type prayerful reading into the Zoom meeting (with audio and screens turned off) worked well.
- Don't underestimate how intimidating it can be for leaders to ask for feedback from families. 'Ten ways to gather feedback' is an easy-to-access resource to help leaders settle on the best way to gather feedback from their participants.⁵
- Introduce light touch opportunities for gathering responses from teams and families as soon as possible to begin to develop a culture where feedback is normal e.g. what made you smile at today's Messy Church?
- Be clear about ethics. Create templates that leaders can use easily at the beginning of a project. Offer clear guidelines about gathering participant data where data is recorded by audio or visual.
- Aim for generating insight and gathering wisdom for continued action rather than solving problems or identifying one approach as the right solution.

Testimony from Durham diocese on the impact of the research

We have learned throughout the research that our Messy Church teams really do value each other! We knew that already but have a sense that the way the research was designed has helped us see that much clearer than ever before. It's evident that having the dedicated focus and time to concentrate on our teams can and does reap huge rewards.

The opportunity to evaluate what teams were doing was very helpful and gave a clear sense of direction, where they had come from, where they were currently and where they were going.

The whole research meant that teams were able to think beyond the monthly Messy Church session. In thinking about what else, it gave opportunity to hold in mind the actual community / congregation it was for and to tailor it a bit more. It enabled people to think of creative ideas - Messy Splash and the infamous Doughnut event! It gave opportunity to get to know Messy congregations in an even more informal, relaxed way. Gave opportunities for relationship building and enabled people to feel a sense of belonging.

It didn't seem to be as onerous as people thought - doing something extra. Brought team together more. Enabled discipleship growth of team and congregation.

It was inspirational to hear the stories. Made us want to try those things ourselves! There was a sense of it being worthwhile when stories were being shared - maybe stepping back a moment to talk about what happened helped those involved appreciate what had happened.

We would encourage other dioceses to give it a go! We have been blessed in so many ways by being part of this research, and taking what we have got right and learning from what could have gone better will help us to move forward with our Messy Churches, teams, children, families and everyone Messy!

Sharon Pritchard, Children's Ministry Adviser and Anne Offler, Messy Church Regional Coordinator

⁵ *Ten ways to gather feedback* is available on [Recently completed research \(churcharmy.org.uk\)](https://www.churcharmy.org.uk)



Results from Baseline Survey

Hereford diocese

8 participating Messy Churches reported the following in the period September 2018 - July 2019:
Frequency of their main gathering:

- 6 met monthly/nearly monthly gatherings
- 1 met weekly gathering
- 1 had 8-9 gatherings per year

Size of team:

- Core: On average there were 4.5 adults (16+) in each core leadership team
- Wider: On average there were 7 adults (16+) in each wider leadership team
- 1 Messy Church also had 1 young person (aged 12-15) on their core leadership team.

Estimated attendance (including leaders) at their main Messy Church gathering:

Messy Church	Adults	12-15-year-olds	0-11-year-olds	Total attendance
Ridgeway Parishes	12	0	8	20
All Saints Broseley	11	1	15	27
South Wye	15	0	15	30
Leebotwood	23	0	13	36
St Mary's Westbury	25	0	12	37
Sutton Hill Church	30	0	20	50
St Lawrence's	32	1	23	56
Leominster	29	3	29	61

Percentage of attenders from each church background, based on leader estimates of church backgrounds at each Messy Church⁶:

- Existing Christians: 32%
- De-churched: 21%
- Non-churched: 47%

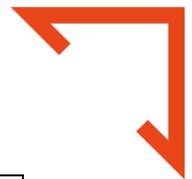
Indicators of discipleship journey for attenders - *the point on the journey leaders felt best fitted where their Messy Church was for each aspect of discipleship before the research*

Bible stories: Helping attendees become confident in their knowledge of the Bible and of the basics of the Christian faith	1: Starting out 3: Exploring this path 4: A familiar path
Knowing God: Helping attendees to grow in their understanding and relationship with God	8: Exploring this path
Journeying through life: Equipping attendees for life's major challenges (e.g. parenting, relationships, sickness, death)	3: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 1: A familiar path

⁶ Existing Christians: Those who already attend church or did so until very recently

De-churched: Those who have experienced established/traditional forms of Church in the past (e.g. as a child) but haven't for at least two years

Non-churched: Those who have never experienced established/traditional forms of Church, except perhaps for occasional offices (e.g. baptisms, weddings, funerals)



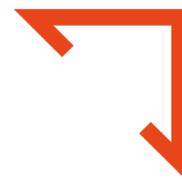
Doubts and questions: Creating opportunities for attendees to ask tricky questions about faith during a session	3: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 1: Exploring this path
Serving God: Helping attendees identify their strengths and abilities for serving God	4: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 1: Exploring this path
Care for the earth: Encouraging attendees to care for the earth	2: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 2: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Generosity: Encouraging attendees to be generous with their money, time or skills	2: Not part of our journey yet 4: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 1: A familiar path
Serving others: Encouraging attendees to serve others e.g. through volunteering	6: Not part of our journey yet 2: Starting out
Prayer: Teaching and encouraging attendees in prayer	1: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 3: A familiar path
Togetherness: Creating opportunities to hear each other's stories of how God is at work in our daily lives (e.g. at school, work, home or leisure time)	4: Not part of our journey yet 1: Starting out 2: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Togetherness: Encouraging attendees to be in contact with each other outside of the main gatherings	2: Not part of our journey yet 4: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 1: A familiar path
Sharing our faith: Equipping attendees to share their faith with people who are not Christians	6: Not part of our journey yet 2: Starting out

Sacramental development:

Communion within the main Messy Church gathering: 1 Messy Church
Agape: 1 church offered 2 Agape meals as part of their Messy Church worship
Baptism for Messy Church attendees within a Sunday congregation: 3 Messy Churches reported 6, 4 and 3 baptisms in this time period
Baptism for Messy Church attendees at another time but organised by our Messy Church: 1 Messy Church
Adult confirmations: 1 adult from 1 Messy Church congregation was confirmed between September 2018 and July 2019
Child confirmations: 1 child from 1 Messy Church congregation was confirmed between September 2018 and July 2019

Discipleship journey for team: *Had leading Messy Church...*

	Yes	Yes, but this is an area we want to develop further	Not this year	Did not answer
Equipped us, as leaders, to share our faith with people who are not Christians?	2	5		1
Included intentional discussions about discipleship in planning meetings?	4	2	2	
Encouraged us to be in contact with attendees outside of the main gatherings?	1	4	2	1
Been a safe place for leaders to have questions and doubts?	3	4	1	
Been a space where leaders grow in their faith?	1	6	1	



Bristol diocese

10 participating Messy Churches reported the following in the period September 2018 - July 2019:

Frequency of their main gathering:

- 9 met monthly/nearly monthly gatherings
- 1 had 4-6 gatherings per year

Size of team (*1 Messy Church did not record team size*):

- Core: On average there were 5 adults (16+) in each core leadership team
- Wider: On average there were 7 adults (16+) in each wider leadership team
7 Messy Churches had young people (aged 12-15) on their wider leadership team, 21 in total.

Estimated attendance (including leaders) at their main Messy Church gathering:

Messy Church	Adults	12-15-year-olds	0-11-year-olds	Total attendance
Ridgeway Farm	15	0	10	25
St John's Parks and Walcot	13	3	11	27
West Swindon Messy Church	18	2	12	32
St James Mangotsfield, Bristol	20	2	20	42
Purton Village	25	1	24	50
Peasedown Methodist Church	26	0	37	63
Christ Church Downend	32	5	39	76
Messy Church @St Nix, Yate	38	9	29	76
St Christopher's, Brislington	42	4	41	87
St Chad's	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percentage of attenders from each church background, based on leader estimates of church backgrounds at each Messy Church (*2 Messy Churches did not estimate attenders' church backgrounds*):

- Existing Christians: 29%
- De-churched: 30%
- Non-churched: 42%

Indicators of discipleship journey for attenders - *the point on the journey leaders felt best fitted where their Messy Church was for each aspect of discipleship before the research*

Bible stories: Helping attendees become confident in their knowledge of the Bible and of the basics of the Christian faith	2: Exploring this path 7: A familiar path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Knowing God: Helping attendees to grow in their understanding and relationship with God	1: Starting out 3: Exploring this path 5: A familiar path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Journeying through life: Equipping attendees for life's major challenges (e.g. parenting, relationships, sickness, death)	4: Starting out 3: Not part of our journey yet 2: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Doubts and questions: Creating opportunities for attendees to ask tricky questions about faith during a session	2: Not part of our journey yet 1: Starting out 6: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>



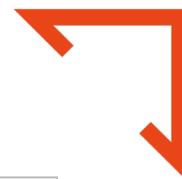
Serving God: Helping attendees identify their strengths and abilities for serving God	4: Not part of our journey yet 2: Starting out 3: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Care for the earth: Encouraging attendees to care for the earth	3: Not part of our journey yet 1: Exploring this path 4: Starting out 1: A familiar path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Generosity: Encouraging attendees to be generous with their money, time or skills	5: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 3: Not part of journey yet 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Serving others: Encouraging attendees to serve others e.g. through volunteering	5: Not part of our journey yet 4: Starting out 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Prayer: Teaching and encouraging attendees in prayer	2: Starting out 3: Exploring this path 4: A familiar path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Togetherness: Creating opportunities to hear each other's stories of how God is at work in our daily lives (e.g. at school, work, home or leisure time)	5: Not part of our journey yet 2: Starting out 2: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Togetherness: Encouraging attendees to be in contact with each other outside of the main gatherings	5: Not part of our journey yet 4: Starting out 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Sharing our faith: Equipping attendees to share their faith with people who are not Christians	5: Not part of our journey yet 3: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 1: <i>Did not answer</i>

Sacramental development:

Communion within the main Messy Church gathering: 1 Messy Church on 1 occasion
Baptism in the main Messy Church gathering: 2 Messy Churches baptised 2 and 1 attenders respectively
Baptism for Messy Church attendees within a Sunday congregation: 12 baptisms took place across 5 Messy Churches in this time period
Adult confirmations: 1 adult from 2 Messy Church congregations were confirmed between September 2018 and July 2019. Another recorded adult confirmations took place but did not say how many.
Child confirmations: 1 child from 1 Messy Church congregation was confirmed between September 2018 and July 2019. Another recorded child confirmations took place but did not say how many.

Discipleship journey for team: *Had leading Messy Church...*

	Yes	Yes, but this is an area we want to develop further	Not this year	Did not answer
Equipped us, as leaders, to share our faith with people who are not Christians?		6	2	2
Included intentional discussions about discipleship in planning meetings?	3	2	4	1
Encouraged us to be in contact with attendees outside of the main gatherings?	7	2		1



Been a safe place for leaders to have questions and doubts?	4	3	2	1
Been a space where leaders grow in their faith?	2	5	2	1

Durham diocese

6 participating Messy Churches reported the following in the period September 2018 - July 2019:

Frequency of their main gathering:

- 5 met monthly/nearly monthly gatherings
- 1 had 4-6 gatherings per year

Size of team:

- Core: On average there were 4.5 adults (16+) in each core leadership team
- Wider: On average there were 11 adults (16+) in each wider leadership team
1 Messy Church had 4 young people (aged 12-15) on their core leadership team
2 Messy Churches had young people on their wider leadership team

Estimated attendance (including leaders) at their main Messy Church gathering:

Messy Church	Adults	12-15-year-olds	0-11-year-olds	Total attendance
Woodhouse Close	8	2	15	25
St Matthew & St Wilfrid	20	0	15	35
St John's, Neville's Cross	40	0	25	65
St Alban's, Messy Church	45	1	36	82
St Clare's Newton Aycliffe	52	32	43	127
Sunderland Minster	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percentage of attenders from each church background, based on leader estimates of church backgrounds at each Messy Church (*2 Messy Churches did not estimate attenders' church backgrounds*):

- Existing Christians: 32%
- De-churched: 21%
- Non-churched: 53%

Indicators of discipleship journey for attenders - *the point on the journey leaders felt best fitted where their Messy Church was for each aspect of discipleship before the research (2 Messy Churches did not complete this section)*

Bible stories: Helping attendees become confident in their knowledge of the Bible and of the basics of the Christian faith	1: Exploring this path 3: A familiar path
Knowing God: Helping attendees to grow in their understanding and relationship with God	1: Starting out 3: Exploring this path
Journeying through life: Equipping attendees for life's major challenges (e.g. parenting, relationships, sickness, death)	3: Not part of our journey yet 1: Exploring this path
Doubts and questions: Creating opportunities for attendees to ask tricky questions about faith during a session	2: Not part of our journey yet 1: Starting out 1: <i>Did not answer</i>
Serving God: Helping attendees identify their strengths and abilities for serving God	2: Not part of our journey yet 2: Exploring this path
Care for the earth: Encouraging attendees to care for the earth	1: Starting out 3: A familiar path



Generosity: Encouraging attendees to be generous with their money, time or skills	4: Exploring this path
Serving others: Encouraging attendees to serve others e.g. through volunteering	3: Not part of our journey yet 1: Exploring this path
Prayer: Teaching and encouraging attendees in prayer	1: Starting out 1: Exploring this path 2: A familiar path
Togetherness: Creating opportunities to hear each other's stories of how God is at work in our daily lives (e.g. at school, work, home or leisure time)	1: Not part of our journey yet 2: Starting out 1: Exploring this path
Togetherness: Encouraging attendees to be in contact with each other outside of the main gatherings	3: Not part of our journey yet 1: Exploring this path
Sharing our faith: Equipping attendees to share their faith with people who are not Christians	2: Not part of our journey yet 1: Starting out 1: A familiar path

Sacramental development:

Agape: 1 church offered 5 Agape meals as part of their Messy Church worship
Baptism for Messy Church attendees within a Sunday congregation: 2 Messy Churches reported 1 baptism each in this time period

Discipleship journey for team: *Had leading Messy Church...*

	Yes	Yes, but this is an area we want to develop further	Not this year	Did not answer
Equipped us, as leaders, to share our faith with people who are not Christians?	1	2	1	2
Included intentional discussions about discipleship in planning meetings?	2		2	2
Encouraged us to be in contact with attendees outside of the main gatherings?	1		3	2
Been a safe place for leaders to have questions and doubts?	2	1	1	2
Been a space where leaders grow in their faith?	1	1	2	2

The template for diocesan staff to conduct their own baseline survey evaluation and compare findings with the data above is now available on [Recently completed research \(churcharmy.org.uk\)](https://www.churcharmy.org.uk/research). It is called 'Our Messy Church Survey'.

Church Army's Research Unit
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