**Messy Church – March 2022**

**Lent**

The activities are:

1. Walk to Jerusalem – Mark chapter 9, verses 33 to 37 (also in Matthew, chapter 18, verses 1 to 5, and Luke, chapter 9, verses 46 to 48)
	1. Sandals
	2. Stamp picture – feet
	3. Food - Jelly baby scene
2. Palm Sunday – Mark, chapter 11, verses 1 to 11 (also in Matthew, chapter 21, verses 1 to 11, Luke, chapter 19, verses 28 to 40, and John, chapter 12, verses 12 to 19)
	1. Spinners – Jesus on a donkey (to be finished in the celebration)
	2. Palm Crosses
	3. Food – marshmallow donkeys
3. The Last Supper – Mark, chapter 14, verses 22 to 26 and John, chapter 12, verses 1 to 16 (the Mark story is also in Matthew, chapter 26, verses 26 to 30, and Luke, chapter 22, verses 14 to 20, the John story is only in John)
	1. Foot washing – cut out footprints (to be used in the celebration)
	2. Play doh figures

**Stories and Activities**

**1 Walking to Jerusalem – Mark chapter 9, verses 33 to 37** (also in Matthew, chapter 18, verses 1 – 5, and Luke, chapter 9, verses 46 – 48)

Jesus and his friends were walking from Galilee, in the north of Palestine, to Jerusalem, in the south. It took several days, and they stopped at various places on the way. This story starts with them arriving at Capernaum, where they were going to stay for the night, and Jesus asking what they had been arguing about as they walked. They were embarrassed, because they had been arguing about who was the most important of the twelve of them. They didn’t want to tell Jesus that they had been arguing about their own importance, but Jesus knew.

He sat down, and made them all pay attention. He told them that the most important person would make sure that everyone else was looked after before himself, and would be quite happy to be last in any queue. Then he found a child in the house, and told his friends that children were very important to him. (In those days, children were not considered important at all!), and that whoever welcomed a child, welcomed both Jesus and his father God.

1. **sandals**

**You will need:** sturdy card, string, scissors

Draw round your shoe onto the card – one for each foot. Work out where your big toe will go, and make a hole in the card between where your big toe and the toe next to it will fit. Make two more holes in the card: one where the inside of your foot starts to get fatter for your heel, and one on the outside, level with the one on the inside. Repeat in reverse for the other foot. Check to see that you have got it right before you make the holes – your feet might not be quite the same width or length!

Thread two pieces of string through the toe hole, and tie them together underneath the sole. Thread the other ends through the other holes – making sure that you have enough length to go across your foot. You can either tie a knot in each end under the sole, or you can tie the strings ether under the sole, so that you don’t pull the knots through the hole and wreck your sandal.

If you are not used to wearing toe-post sandals, you may need to practice before you can walk easily in them!

1. **Stamp picture**

**You will need:** a piece of slightly absorbent paper – sugar paper is excellent – a footprint stamp (this could be made from a potato) and some paint

Make a picture to show the footprints of Jesus and his friends going to Jerusalem. You could do each person’s footprints in a different colour – remember that there were 12 friends of Jesus, and Jesus himself!

1. **Food**

**You will need:** a paper plate, squirty icing, and some Jelly Babies. If you can get different sizes of Jelly Babies, that would be good, but you don’t have to do this

Use the squirty icing to stick the Jelly Babies to the plate, to make an edible picture of Jesus and his friends walking to Jerusalem. The friends would perhaps have walking in small groups, like you and your friends walking across a play ground.

**Talk about:** what is importance? Who is important? Jesus’ standards are not the same as the standards of our society. Think about the differences.

**2 Palm Sunday – Mark, chapter 11, verses 1 to 11** (also in Matthew, chapter 21, verses 1 to 11, Luke, chapter 19, verses 28 to 40, and John, chapter 12, verses 12 to 19)

As they got close to Jerusalem, close enough to see it, and know that they would be there that day, Jesus sent two of his friends to the nearest village. He told them that they would find a young donkey tied by a doorway. They should untie the donkey, and bring it to Jesus. If anyone asked them why they were taking the donkey, they should say “The Master needs it, and will send it back.”

So the friends did as Jesus asked, and brought the donkey to him. Because they had no saddle for the donkey, some of Jesus’ friends put their cloaks on the donkey, and others put their cloaks on the road. When other people who were going to Jerusalem saw this little procession, they put their cloaks on the road, or cut palm branches from the trees nearby and put those on the road. Soon the procession was getting quite big, and people started to shout “Hosanna” (which means “Praise God”), and “God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord.” When they got to Jerusalem

**a. Spinners – Jesus on a donkey** (we will finish this in the celebration)

**You will need:** a print out of the picture supplied with this booklet, colouring pencils or crayons, scissors, a little glue, and, depending on the size of your print-out, a cocktail stick or a pencil

Colour in the picture, and cut out the rectangle on the heavy lines (don’t cut down the dotted line!). During the celebration, we will fold the picture down the dotted line and glue it around the pencil (in the middle of the picture) or cocktail stick. If you spin the cocktail stick fast between your hands, it looks as if Jesus is sitting on the donkey!

**b. Palm crosses**

**You will need:** a strip of paper (the length of a piece of A4 paper is fine, and the video supplied with the booklet.

Follow the instructions in the video to make a palm cross. <https://youtu.be/x5dcu-pOIpY>

1. **Food**

**You will need:** a paper plate, squirty icing, large marshmallow sweets, cocktail sticks, a knife to cut the marshmallow (ask an adult to help with this if you find it difficult)

Stick two marshmallow sweets together by the fat ends, using the squirty icing. This makes the donkey’s body. Use four cocktail sticks for legs, placing them carefully to make sure the donkey stands up. Use half another marshmallow, (stand it on the fat end, and cut carefully down from the top to the bottom. One half makes the donkey’s head – stick this in place with squirty icing, and if you like, squirt a face on the donkey.

**Talk about:** celebrating people. Sometimes we have parades – football teams who win trophies, athletes who win medals. Should we cheer them? People who do good things for other people. Should we cheer them?

**3 The Last Supper – Mark, chapter 14, verses 22 to 26 and John, chapter 12, verses 1 to 16** (the Mark story is also in Matthew, chapter 26, verses 26 to 30, and Luke, chapter 22, verses 14 to 20, the John story is only in John)

Later in the week after Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, he and his friends celebrated the Passover feast together. In the course of the evening meal, two different things happened. Matthew, Mark and Luke all talk about the new thing Jesus did during the meal.

Jesus picked up a piece of bread, and said a prayer of thanks to God, and then he broke the bread in pieces and shared it with his friends. Then he picked up a cup with wine in it, and said another prayer of thanks, and passed it round for everyone to have a sip. He said the bread represented his body, which would be broken for all people, and the blood represented his blood, which would be spilt to forgive the sins of everyone. These two things are still remembered today, and Jesus’s words used in the communion service in most churches.

John tells a different story. He tells that Jesus, in the middle of the meal, got up from the table and took off his clothes, so that he was just in his underwear. He wrapped a towel round his waist, and got a bowl of water. Then he started to wash his friends’ feet, drying them with the towel he was wearing. Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet, when he got to Peter, but Jesus told him that if he wouldn’t have his feet washed, he couldn’t be a friend. When Jesus had done everyone’s feet, he put his clothes back on, and asked his friends why he had washed their feet. Then he explained that if he, the teacher, had washed their feet, they could wash each other’s feet; that his teaching was that none of them were more important than any other, and that they should all follow Jesus’ example, of just doing what needed to be done, without worrying about who was important and who wasn’t.

**a. Paper footprints (to be made in the celebration)**

**You will need:** paper, pencil, scissors

Draw round your foot on the paper You could make more than one footprint – use both feet if you have time. Cut out the footprints, and think about feet.

**b. Play doh figures**

**You will need:** play doh in various colours

Make footprints, if you can, or people sitting round a table.

**Talk about:** doing the things that need to be done, not worrying about whether you are too important to do things.

**Celebration**

Although Easter is still nearly a month away, we’re going to look at what happened in the week leading up to Good Friday. A lot happened in this week. We’ve looked at one thing, when Jesus cleared out the Temple, not that long ago. We’re going to look at some of the other things today.

We often think that the disciples must have been really good, if they were with Jesus so much of the time, but when we read the Bible we find out that they were ordinary people for their day, just like we are today. Sometimes they were very good, and showed that they knew what Jesus was about, and sometimes they showed that they didn’t really have a clue.

We’ll sing first, the song we sang last time. It will remind us of David, and that God is God of us, too.

Song **My God’s the king of the giants -** <https://youtu.be/Smv-mAtgoOM>

In Jesus’ day, unless you were rich, you walked everywhere. If you made the sandals earlier, you might want to put them on and think about walking. Do you walk quickly, or do you walk slowly? Jesus was walking to Jerusalem with his disciples, and the group got a bit spread out on the road, and Jesus thought he heard a heated discussion. Later he asked the disciples what they were talking about. They were a bit embarrassed, and told him they’d been trying to decide which of them was most important. What a silly thing to do, but people often like to think that they are more important than other people.

Jesus asked them if they could do what he was going to do. They didn’t realise that he was talking about the crucifixion, so they said they could. Jesus told them that they didn’t understand, but some of them would die like he was going to.

Do you ever think you’re important?

Song We have a king who rides a donkey <https://youtu.be/gSbEEwik2hs>

This song was all about Palm Sunday. Jesus and his disciples came in to Jerusalem. But instead of walking, Jesus sent some of his disciples to get a donkey, and he rode the donkey into Jerusalem. It seems funny, but there was a story in the Old Testament, which was the Scriptures that the Jews had, that said that the king for the Jews would come riding on a donkey. In Jesus’ day, lots of people were hoping for a new king to come to get rid of the Romans who ruled the country, but weren’t Jews. So a lot of people would know about a king on a donkey. Lots of them knew about Jesus, too, so when they saw him they thought “here’s our king” and they cheered and waved, and waved Palm branches too. This was on the Sunday at the beginning of the week. There was soon a big procession following Jesus into Jerusalem. The authorities were very annoyed.

Let’s stick the spinner together. When you spin it, it looks like Jesus is sitting on the donkey. The donkey wouldn’t have had a saddle, so some of the disciples put their coats over it to make it more comfortable.

Later in the week, on the day we now call Maundy Thursday, Jesus and his disciples had a meal together. It was a special meal, the Passover meal, which was very important. Are you still wearing your sandals? Just imagine you’ve been wearing them while you walked along a dry, dusty road. What would your feet be like?

Let’s draw round our feet and cut out foot shapes.

When the disciples arrived, Jesus did something odd. He got a bowl of water and a towel and washed the disciples’ feet. It wasn’t that foot washing was odd, it was that Jesus did it himself, and didn’t get someone else to do it. Do you remember the earlier story about being important? Jesus said that to be important you had to serve other people, and when Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet, he said that if Peter wouldn’t let him, then he couldn’t be a disciple.

It was at this meal, the Last Supper, that Jesus gave his disciples Bread and Wine in a way we remember when we have Holy Communion in Church. Jesus said that he was going to die, but that his death would clear away the wrong things people did.

Prayer

Dear God. Thank you that you showed us that we have to help others, and that you came to help us. We want to remember everything you did for us and try to live up to your standard,

Amen

Song Meekness and majesty <https://youtu.be/g1OZKzXNTRM>

Enjoy our celebration.

Then have tea or a treat if it isn’t tea time!

If you send me pictures of anything you do, I will share them on the Church Facebook page (if you want to send pictures that you don’t want shared, just tell me. I’ll only share the one’s you’re happy to share.)

Harlington Messy Church Team

We’ll have a Zoom meeting open for those who can’t come to the church. Our part of Zoom will go on YouTube during the celebration, but we won’t put pictures from your end on. Contact me if you want the link for Zoom. Look out for the broadcast on the Harlington Methodist Church YouTube Channel. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTMWR_QCxujkh1zHjTFcoJw/videos>