**Messy Church – May 2022**

**David the King**

The activities are:

1. Death of Saul and Jonathan – 1 Samuel chapter 31, verses 1 to 13, 2 Samuel chapter 1 and chapter 2 verses 1 to 11
   1. Crown (in the celebration)
2. Conquering Jerusalem – 2 Samuel, chapter 5, verses 1 to 16
   1. Make a waterfall (in the celebration)
3. David and the Ark of the Covenant – 2 Samuel, chapter 6
   1. Card Ark of the Covenant
   2. Edible Ark of the Covenant
4. David and Mephibosheth – 2 Samuel chapter 4, verse 4; chapter 9, chapter 16 verses 1 to 4, chapter 19 verses 24 to 30, 2 Samuel chapter 21 verse 7
   1. Friendship bracelet

**Stories and Activities**

**1 Death of Saul and Jonathan – 1 Samuel chapter 31, verses 1 to 13, 2 Samuel chapter 1 and chapter 2 verses 1 to 11**

In these chapters there are two versions of Saul’s death. The first is at the end of the first book of Samuel, which says that after Jonathan and two of his brothers were killed in battle with the Philistines, and Saul was badly wounded, he asked his armour bearer to kill him so that the Philistines wouldn’t. The man was too scared to kill him, so Saul killed himself, and then the Philistines found the bodies, and nailed their bodies to the wall of one of their cities. The people of Jabesh, one of the towns of the Israelites, rescued the bodies and buried them properly.

The second story is at the beginning of the second book of Samuel. Chapter 30 of the first book of Samuel had told the story of David fighting a different battle from the one Saul was involved in in chapter 31, and the beginning of the second book of Samuel picks up the story from David’s side. A man comes to him and says that Saul and Jonathan have died in battle, and David asks how he knows. He says that he was there, at the battle, and that Saul had asked him to kill him, Saul, so he had done so, and he had brought Saul’s crown and bracelet to David. David was really sorry about Saul and Jonathan, and all the other Israelites who had died in the battle, but he was really angry that the man had killed the anointed King, and he had the man killed.

In chapter 2 of the second book of Samuel, David becomes king of the tribe of Judah, but some of the other tribes don’t want David as King, and Ishbosheth, the only surviving son of King Saul, becomes king over these. David’s capital city was Hebron, and he lived there for seven years. Ishbosheth’s capital city was somewhere else, but after two years, he was murdered. David was angry about that, as well, and had the men who had killed Ishbosheth killed.

Years later, David collected the bones of Saul and his sons from Jabesh, and the bones of other members of the family, and had them buried in their family tomb, with Saul’s father, Kish.

1. **Crown (to make in the celebration)**

**You will need:** a length of card or stiff paper long enough to go round your head – if necessary, stick or staple two lengths together, glue, staples and stapler, scissors, stick on jewels or sweet wrappers to make the jewels, tin foil if you would like a shiny crown

Join the ends of the card or paper so that it fits round your head (if you are using staples, make sure the sharp ends are on the outside). Decorate the crown with stick on jewels or sweet wrappers. If you want your crown to be shiny, cover it with tin foil before you stick the jewels on!

**Talk about:** taking responsibility, learning to deal with our anger at other people.

**2 Conquering Jerusalem, 2 Samuel, chapter 5, verses 1 to 16**

After Ishbosheth was killed, the tribes whose king he had been came to David and asked him to be their king as well as Judah’s. David decided that the kingdom needed a new capital – perhaps because Hebron was in Judah, and he wanted a capital that didn’t belong to any of the tribes. He chose Jerusalem, but it was not an Israelite city, so he had to take it away from its inhabitants.

The Jebusites, who lived there, thought that their city could not be conquered, because it was built at the top of a hill, with walls all around, and very steep sides. There was just one spot which perhaps could be a weakness. David challenged his men to use that way in. Jerusalem’s one weakness was that there was no natural water source at the top of the hill, so the Jebusites had dug a tunnel down to a spring below the valley. This meant that they could get water, even with enemies all around the walls. However, there must have been a natural outlet for the spring, before the tunnel was dug. The bible does not say whether David’s men went up the tunnel into the city and attacked it like that, or whether they simply stopped the Jebusites from getting water until they surrendered the city. However it was, David ended up taking Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and the city became his capital.

**a. waterfall (to make in the celebration)**

**You will need:** a piece of blue paper (or painted blue in advance), a piece of paper to stick the waterfall to, glue, scissors

Cut the blue piece of paper into strips. Run the blade of the scissors down each strip to make it curl, and then stick one end of it to the base piece. When you have finished, hold the base piece up, so that the curled strips fall down, like a waterfall.

**Talk about:** how important water is to life. What would happen if we didn’t have enough water to drink, or to grow our food?

**3 David and the Ark of the Covenant – 2 Samuel, chapter 6**

The Ark of the Covenant was a beautiful box, made of wood and covered inside and out with gold. It had been made in the desert, in the days of Moses, before the people of Israel came to live in Palestine. Inside the box were the stone tablets that had the 10 commandments cut on them. All the time they had wandered around in the desert, they had carried the box with them. When they stopped in any place for a while, they had a special tent for the box to be stored in, and looked after. This tent was where the people met God, and worshipped him.

Once the people of Israel started to settle down in towns and villages, the Ark of the Covenant stayed in their centre of worship. For many years, this was Shiloh, where Samuel grew up. All the time Samuel was growing up, the people of Israel were fighting with the Philistines, who were the other nation who lived in Palestine. On one occasion, when the Israelites lost a battle, they decided to take the Ark of the Covenant to the next battle with them. Unfortunately, they lost that battle as well, and the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant.

For the next seven months, the Ark of the Covenant was passed around between the Philistine cities. Everywhere it went, people were ill. In the end, the Philistines decided to send the Ark back to the Israelites. They sent it back with gifts of gold, in a new cart, pulled by two oxen. The oxen went straight to an Israelite town, where it was welcomed, and put into the care of a man called Abinadab.

When David settled in Jerusalem as his capital, he wanted the Ark of the Covenant to be there as well, so that people would come there to worship God. He went with lots of important people to Aminadab’s house, with a new cart, and the procession started. Suddenly, one of the oxen pulling the cart tripped, and the cart started to tip. One of the Aminadab’s sons, escorting the cart, tried to stop the Ark of the Covenant falling off, and was killed. David was very upset, and all the other people too. They stopped the procession, and the Ark was left at the house of a man called Obed Edom for three months.

Then they tried again. With a sacrifice to God made before they started out, and a procession, with trumpets, the Ark of the Covenant was taken to Jerusalem. King David was dancing in the procession, not in his formal royal clothes, but in ordinary clothes. One of his wives, the daughter of Saul, saw him dancing, and was disgusted with his behaviour in front of all the people. She told him off, and he said it didn’t matter what she thought, he was honouring God.

The Ark of the Covenant was put in its special tent, set up in Jerusalem, beside the king’s palace.

**a. Card Ark of the Covenant**

**You will need:** the net of the box, printed on thick paper (there is a net sent with this booklet, or it is on the website), and the cherubs as well (these you can draw, or copy from the picture of the Ark of the Covenant – again, sent with the booklet or on the website). Scissors, glue, two small garden canes, or drinking straws, or several cocktail sticks glued together to make two canes, yellow crayons, pencils or felt tip pens to colour the box gold. You may find the picture of the Ark helpful, to see how the finished box may have looked. Make the cherubs with tabs so that you can stick them to the lid of the box.

A picture containing text

Description automatically generatedColour the box and the cherubs before you cut them out – it won’t matter if you colour over the lines. Cut it out on the heavy lines, and fold it on the lighter lines. Fold the box up, and glue the tabs at the sides to stick the box together. Before you glue the top down, put the garden canes along the length of the box, just below the lid, to make the carrying poles. (If you are using cocktail sticks to make the carrying poles, stick them together with a little Sellotape, and put them in under the lid. Cut out the cherubs, including the tabs, and fold the tabs over. Glue the tabs to stick the cherubs to the lid of the box. (It is easier to do this before you stick the lid down.) Stick the lid down to finish the box.

**b. Edible Ark of the Covenant**

**You will need:** ice cream wafers, a knife (it doesn’t need to be sharp), squirty icing, cocktail sticks to make the carrying poles, a paper plate and jelly babies

Cut ice cream wafers down to make your box (you need six sides), and stick it together with squirty icing. Cut another wafer into the shape of two cherubs, and stick these onto the lid of the box with more squirty icing. Push a cocktail stick into each top corner of the box. Stand the box on a plate, with a jelly baby person at the outside end of each carrying pole. If you have enough jelly babies, you could make a procession of people around the Ark.

**Talk about:** looking after special things – being really careful not to spoil or break them, helping other people to look after things they value

**4 David and Mephibosheth – 2 Samuel chapter 4, verse 4; chapter 9, chapter 16 verses 1 to 4, chapter 19 verses 24 to 30**

The story of David and Mephibosheth is told in little episodes across the second book of Samuel. In chapter 4, verse 4, it is explained that Mephibosheth was a child when his father, Jonathan, was killed, and that his nurse dropped him and damaged his feet or legs, so that he couldn’t walk well.

In chapter 9, David asks whether there are any of Saul’s family members left alive, so that he might help them, as he had promised God and Jonathan. He is told about Mephibosheth, who at this time does not live in Jerusalem (and has a son of his own). He is asked to come to Jerusalem, and David meets him there, and tells him that he will always be welcome to eat with the king’s family, and that the land that was Saul’s will now belong to him, and not to David. Mephibosheth settles in Jerusalem, with his servant Ziba, and Ziba’s family, who farm his land and look after him.

In chapter 16, one of David’s sons, Absalom, has rebelled against his father, and David and his loyal followers left Jerusalem in fear of what Absalom would do. Ziba, Mephibosheth’s servant, went with David, but told him that Mephibosheth was staying behind because he thought that the Israelites would now make him king instead of David. David gives all Mephibosheth’s possessions to Ziba.

Chapter 19 tells what happens when David goes back to Jerusalem, after Absalom is killed. Mephibosheth comes to meet David before he gets home. He explains that he had asked Ziba to saddle a donkey so that he could go with David, because he couldn’t walk far, but that Ziba had just left to go with David himself. (And he had lied to David, as well!) David said that Mephibosheth and Ziba would share the possessions between them, but Mephibosheth said that Ziba could keep them, for he had everything he needed in David’s safe return.

1. **friendship bracelets**

**(i) plaited bracelet**

**You will need:** lengths of ribbon or heavy embroidery thread, long enough to go round your wrist twice, optionally, 6 or 8 beads

Tie three lengths of ribbon together at one end. Ask someone to hold the knot firmly, or stick it to something firm – but not a surface that will damage! Plait the three lengths together. If you want, and if you have beads, you can thread beads onto the ribbons. When the plait is long enough to go round your wrist, plus another half inch, tie another knot, close to the plait. Use the remaining lengths of ribbon to tie the bracelet round your wrist. (Ask an adult if you can’t do it yourself.)

**(ii) threaded bracelet**

**You will need:** a length of ribbon or heavy embroidery thread, long enough to go round your wrist twice, and enough beads to thread on it to go round your wrist once.

Tie the first bead onto one end of the thread or ribbon, to anchor the end. Thread the rest of the beads onto the thread until the bracelet is long enough to go round your wrist plus another half inch, tie the long end through the last bead. Use the remaining thread to tie the bracelet round your wrist – ask an adult if you cannot do it yourself.

**Talk about:** loyalty – committing yourself to a relationship with someone, supporting them, and them supporting you, through all the aspects of life

**Celebration**

We are now on the last part of the story of David, when he was king. He wouldn’t become king while Saul was still alive because he said that Saul had been anointed as king no matter what else he had done that was wrong. So this part of the story begins with Saul’s death.

You may remember that the Israelites were fighting were fighting the Philistines. Goliath, from our first part of David’s story, was a Philistine.

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

Not all Saul’s battles went well. In this battle Saul and Jonathan died, which left the way open for David to become king. Some people thought that David would be pleased, but he wasn’t. Jonathan was his friend, and Saul had been appointed by God.

**Make a crown**

Once David was crowned, he needed a capital city. Jerusalem was a big city in the southern part of the kingdom. It was built on a hill and had strong walls. But the people who lived there were David’s enemies. They thought that no-one could capture their city and so were rude to David. David discovered that you could get into the city along a tunnel used to bring water in. He led his men through the tunnel and they captured the city.

**Make a waterfall**

One of the first things David did was to bring the Ark of the Covenant into the city. This was the special box that held the 10 commandments, and it was usually kept at the centre of worship. However, the Philistines had got hold of it, but wherever it was in their cities, people died, so they sent it back! David brought it into Jerusalem with a big procession with everyone dancing and singing.

Song Praise him on the trumpet <https://youtu.be/d8yxHMmA65g>

David built a palace in Jerusalem, but God wouldn’t let him build a Temple, that was left for his son, Solomon, to build. As king, David did a lot of things, some of them were good, and some were bad. It’s very hard, when you’re powerful, to resist taking advantage. People will tell you how wonderful you are, and you mustn’t just believe that you can do whatever you want.

However, David did make the kingdom safe and strong, so the Israelites weren’t fighting all the time. Most of the time he listened to God, even if sometimes God had to remind him who was in charge.

Prayer

Dear God, we aren’t kings like David, or queens like Queen Elizabeth, but like David, sometimes we do good things and sometimes we do bad things. Help us to do good things, and when we do do wrong things, help us to know it and to try to put things right.

Amen

Song Our God is a great big God <https://youtu.be/8Hi8jW1qYsw>

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 end 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>