



Messy Vintage

Helpful tips for running a Messy Vintage event

What happens at a Messy Vintage event?

A typical Messy Vintage session lasts one and a half to two hours and involves:

- hands-on creative activities to explore a Bible story
- a short celebration with story, song and prayer, lasting 15–20 minutes
- refreshments.

Download the Messy Vintage leaflet at thegiftofyears.org.uk/messy-vintage.

To help you plan your session(s), there are twelve worksheets, created by our National Coordinator, Katie Norman, at thegiftofyears.org.uk/resources/messy-vintage-sessions. We suggest using these, especially at the beginning. She takes you through the theme for that session, the Bible reference, the craft activity, ideas for the celebration (including songs) and there is even a photo of the completed craft activity!

Messy Vintage in a community or in a church venue

Preparation ahead of the day

Collecting your team

It is a good idea for the appointed organiser to recruit a small team to pray and help provide the overall organisation that will bring the event together. From that core team, further volunteers can then be recruited to help at the sessions. Messy Vintage sessions provide a lovely volunteering opportunity, and those helping inevitably get as much out of the session as those participating. The number of volunteers required will depend on the number of participants you can comfortably have in your chosen venue, but a good number to work with is a team of five to ten people. The key priority is to have volunteers who are good listeners with a heart for older people. Do consider including young people.

The small organising team can take on the following planning tasks:

- Decide on the overall theme for the session (or series of sessions) and timings.
- Consider how the event will be funded.
- Prepare the publicity and promotion for the event.
- Purchase craft materials and props (see website links below).
- Decide if transport is to be offered to and from the venue. If so, who is responsible and how will this be organised?
- Check that procedures are in place for holding and sharing personal data as required under GDPR. For help with this, please refer to your organisation's or denomination's guidance.
- Consider whether you want the participants to sign up beforehand so that you have some idea of numbers – but also allow people to sign up on the day.
- Check the Public Liability Insurance and fire safety policy for the venue.
- Ensure you have carried out an appropriate risk assessment for the event.
- Check the relevant safeguarding policy and whether any training is required.
- Confirm the organisation's policy on DBS checks for volunteers.
- Consider how to capture valuable feedback from the session to help next time. Could you make a simple feedback sheet?
- Decide what you want to do about taking photographs, as permission will be required.

On the day

Specific volunteer roles

It is easier if everyone knows their various tasks beforehand. For example:

- Preparing the room, tables, chairs and signage, including clear signs to the toilets
- Registering and welcoming on the door



- Helping participants with the craft activities
- Leading the celebration
- Providing music for the celebration – live or recorded
- Providing and serving the refreshments
- Helping to set up and clear the venue afterwards
- ... and any more you may need!

Registering

- All those attending need to register. It's a good idea for everyone to wear a name badge, with the name they want to be known by on it (never assume what someone wants to be called).
- Give Messy Vintage volunteers a different colour badge so they are easier to spot if anyone has queries or concerns.
- Provide a way to collect specific information so that you can make it an enjoyable and not an anxious time for the participant. (Remember to check your organisation's or denomination's GDPR guidance.) For example, if someone has difficulties with hearing, sight or mobility, it might be helpful to have a dedicated volunteer sit with them, or let their carer stay too.

TIP: Have familiar music (of the relevant era) playing in the background to create a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Craft activity

This is at the core of the session, so you want it to run smoothly and be FUN. You will find that this is the best time for conversations to flow naturally too. It is always best to try out the activity at least once before the day, so all your craft volunteers feel comfortable with it – and you can see if you have forgotten a crucial item or if anything needs tweaking.

Some things to consider:

- Decide whether you want to keep to the one craft suggested on the Messy Vintage worksheet you are using, so everyone is making the same thing. Alternatively, you could have a couple of different craft activities available, so people have a choice and can go to whichever they feel comfortable making. This will mean you are catering for different levels of dexterity and cognitive ability.

- Ensure that everyone has a craft item they have made, or helped to make, to take home with them. Encourage them to use this as a reminder of the session and as a talking point for relatives and friends visiting them.
- If you are unsure of the number of volunteers required, always err on the side of too many so that you can quickly respond to the need for extra help. If volunteers aren't rushing around handing out glue sticks, there is more time to chat with participants and listen to their stories.

TIP: If there is space in your venue, consider placing the tables in a horseshoe shape. This reduces the worry of where to sit and helps the flow of conversation and volunteers around the activities.

Celebration

Some groups integrate the craft within the worship; others do the craft activity and then conclude with a short service. How this is run will depend very much on your participants and what your volunteers feel comfortable and familiar with running. If you are using Messy Vintage worksheets, you can use the songs suggested.

TIP: Listen out for key phrases used in people's reactions to the theme; these can be incorporated into short prayers composed there and then by the organiser.

Refreshments

Never underestimate the importance of tea for older people, so do leave time for this to be a relaxed and friendly ending to your session.

- Ensure that there are enough volunteers to get around quickly with the refreshments.
- Consider whether you need to clear away the craft activity if you are using the same tables, or whether tea can be laid out elsewhere on tables, with napkins, flowers, etc. It's good to add little touches to make the tea feel like a special occasion.

TIP: If you have willing bakers, over-cater. This means you won't run out of food, and you can send people home with a 'goodie bag'. Include gluten-free choices.



Messy Vintage in care homes

Messy Vintage in a care home setting is a celebration using all the senses, and is arranged so that staff, residents and volunteers can participate in it together. Rather than having a separate tea, the session can often be timed to end with grace before a set meal in the home or light refreshments.

Although much will be the same as running a Messy Vintage session in a community or a church setting, there are inevitably other things to consider, the main one being that you have been invited into the care home, so you will always need to be aware of their procedures and policies. Also, the older people attending may well be more physically frail, their dexterity will be poorer and many may be living with dementia.

Specific things to think about

- It may take time to build up trust before a care Home Manager and/or the Activity Coordinator agrees to start Messy Vintage sessions. Alternatively, it may be a natural extension to existing worship sessions and visiting your church provides in that care home.
- If possible, be flexible and run the session at a time convenient to the care home's daily routine. You may need to start with tea and biscuits rather than close.
- Ensure you know your organisation's and the care home's requirements for DBS checks and volunteers having safeguarding training.
- It may be helpful to draw up a simple agreement to clarify what you will be doing, what you won't be doing (especially around personal care) and what you expect and need from the care home to make it a comfortable session for everyone.
- The care home staff will need to be fully engaged with you to enable residents to join your session. The care home's paid carers will need to be available to provide any personal care needs, for example taking participants to the toilet during your visit.
- At the end of each session, it can be helpful to have a simple feedback form to share with the care home to highlight any concerns – and, of course, what went well.

- Craft activity resources need to be taken into the care home. The Activity Coordinator may well be able to help by letting you use some of theirs.
- If possible, ensure you have a regular group of volunteers to help, so that they get to know the residents and staff and the routine of the care home.

TIP: Always explain to a new care home that Messy Vintage is creative worship, not simply a craft activity, as others can provide that. So often they are delighted to have worship offered in this fun and inclusive way.

Resources

Visit thegiftofyears.org.uk/messy-vintage.

There are several websites you can use to order resources, as well as local craft shops or craft sections in garden centres.

- Infinite Home: inf.co.uk
- Hobbycraft: hobbycraft.co.uk
- CPO: cpo.org.uk (they also have Messy Church merchandise)
- Baker Ross: bakerross.co.uk (get a 15% discount with BRF15 voucher code)
- Messy Vintage on Pinterest: pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/messy-vintage

Remember: To get started, download the session plans at thegiftofyears.org.uk/resources/messy-vintage-sessions. You might also want to try some of the ideas in the Messy Church magazine *Get Messy!* messychurch.org.uk/resource/get-messy

Need more help?

For advice or to share your own experiences, please email Katie Norman, Messy Vintage National Coordinator: thegiftofyears@brf.org.uk.

