

"I am writing to ask for your help to support Messy Church in its ongoing mission to reach children and families.

Over the years since it started in a single Anglican parish there has been huge growth in Messy Church. Today over 3,500 churches across the country embrace Messy Church's creative and Christ-centred approach to sharing the Good News. Over half of all Messy Churches are part of the Church of England.

Messy Church has become increasingly well-known and it's clear that Messy Churches are making a big difference to lives and communities. What is apparently far less well known is that Bible Reading Fellowship is the charity that resources and enables Messy Church, and that they are in need of funding support to continue taking this vital missional work forward.

Over the past eleven years BRF has invested just over £2.25 million in the growth and development of Messy Church. This has been made possible mainly through the remarkable generosity of a very small number of charitable trusts and private individuals. However, these sources of funding have largely now come to an end. They need to secure around £280,000 each year to fund the ongoing and further development of all that they do for Messy Church.

Seven out of ten Messy Churches would struggle to do Messy Church without BRF's input, and over 81% appreciate being part of the network, but just 3% are giving financially to support it.

For the last four years they have worked hard to encourage Messy Churches registered with them to support the work. However, this has not met with much success to date. Some churches have given generously, but the vast majority have not given at all. Some even think that work with Messy Church is funded through the sales of Messy Church publications – if only this were the case! In fact, these sales make only a very modest contribution to the overall budget.

You may ask: What does BRF's Messy Church team, led by Founder Lucy Moore, do? Speaking, training, creating new resources, helping Messy Churches get started, providing solutions to the challenges Messy Churches face, providing a resource-rich website, and managing the team of 150 regional coordinators who provide local support to Messy Church leaders, to name just a few aspects of their work. However, most important of all, the team is continually providing exciting new ways to keep welcoming all ages into Messy Church, helping everyone who comes to get to know and follow Jesus, and providing a lively, supportive community to inspire Messy Churches across the whole network to keep on reaching new families in their local communities.

They urgently need help to build a more sustainable funding base to underpin this work going forward. In this context I want to support their request for your help in two ways:

1. As a Church that runs Messy Church, could you support them as part of your outward giving so that they can continue to resource them and others wanting to start Messy Church?
2. Could you suggest any particular individuals or other possible sources of funding that they might approach specifically for support for BRF's work with Messy Church?

I'm so grateful for all that you do and hope you might be able to support this ministry.

With best wishes

+Richard"

Rt. Rev. Richard Jackson  
Bishop of Lewes