



Zimkids News - May 2010

When Messy Church went to Zim...

In April 2010 a team from Morden Baptist Church joined the Zimkids team to run a "Messy Church". One of the team, Dave Forward, describes their experiences.

Imagine planning an event for 150 people including a cooked meal on a Saturday and 300 turn up! Imagine also that about 60 of them turn up the previous day and just before you are about to suggest they go away and come back tomorrow someone tells you that they have walked 15 kilometres to get there and that they are all hungry! All in a days work for the Zimkids team but somewhat of a shock to us, a team of five volunteers from Morden who are used to much more organisation and control!

Our church has been a key sponsor and supporter of Zimkids since its foundation. The church has also been successfully running a monthly event in Morden since September 2007 called Messy Church. The concept of Messy Church is to organise activities, stories, singing and most importantly lots of mess for local children aged 5-10 and their families.

Following a variety of prompts we felt we should try and export Messy Church in Morden to Zimbabwe! The congregation of Morden Baptist Church supported our fundraising which enabled us to buy and ship all the resources we needed to Zimbabwe. The team comprised Charis, Linda, Pete, Maureen and myself.

Our first event we organised was at Highlands Presbyterian Church in Harare and involved training leaders in the morning and using them to help run a Messy Church in the afternoon.

We were thrilled that representatives of ten different churches came to the morning training session and subsequently participated so enthusiastically with the families and children in the messiness of the afternoon activities.



The afternoon activities included painted footprints, a giant mural, string painting, friendship bracelets, prayer flowers and games with parachutes, bandages and donkey tails – all themed to the story of the Good Samaritan.

Following a stay in Harare we travelled to Mutoko and immediately fell in love with the area and the people. The welcome committee of 60 at the church a day before our planned event was a shock but we all felt we had to do something for them then so, after a quick round up of some food and reorganisation of our programme, we ran a mini-Messy Church for them. They came back the following day to the main Messy Church day and more people kept coming until we had about 300 joining in with the training, worship, games and crafts! We, and the Zimkids team, were amazed both at the fantastic attendance and at their insatiable enthusiasm for all the organised activities. We had a great day and met many lovely people including Pastor Walazi and his wife Esnat and some of those who have been supported by the work of Zimkids.

The rest of our time was spent supporting the Zimkids team with their work.

Our main memories and thoughts:

- Zimbabwe is a beautiful but needy country;
- Zimkids is definitely addressing a real need; and
- Puff is a superb project leader and the Zimkids team are fantastic and all totally committed to what they do.

We were privileged to see them at work and to share the concept of Messy Church with them. Some more fund-raising to do now and then we will be back!



Want to visit and volunteer in Zimbabwe?
Contact Peter Leech at info@zimkids.org for more information about this exciting opportunity.

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