



Messy Church at home

Sunday 27 June 2021

Shipwrecked!

While the pandemic is ongoing, we are still unable to meet together as a Messy Church, so for the time being, how about trying Messy Church at home? Try the activities, using bits and pieces you might have at home. If you can't find the exact same items, what things could you use instead?

Read: Acts 27 (NIV)

Read the whole of Acts 27 if you can. It's quite a long passage about a journey Paul took by ship, which ended in a shipwreck! Here are some selected bits of the chapter to give you a flavour of what happened along the way.

¹When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea...

...⁹Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement. So Paul warned them, ¹⁰'Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.' ¹¹But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. ¹²Since the harbour was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbour in Crete, facing both south-west and north-west...

...¹⁴Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the 'North-Easter', swept down from the island. ¹⁵The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along...

...¹⁸We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. ¹⁹On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

²¹After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: 'Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. ²²But now I urge you to keep up your courage,

because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. ²³Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴and said, “Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.” ²⁵So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me...

...³⁹When daylight came, they did not recognise the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. ⁴⁰Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. ⁴¹But the ship struck a sand-bar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

⁴²The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³But the centurion wanted to spare Paul’s life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.

⁴⁴The rest were to get there on planks or on other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely.

Activities

Ship in a storm

You will need:

- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Brown paint (you can mix up brown with yellow, blue and red)
- Scissors and glue



On your paper, draw a stormy sea background.

Put some of your brown paint into a flat dish or saucer and place the palm of your hand into the paint. Place a hand print on to the middle of your stormy sea scene. This will be your ship tossed about by the sea. Leave the paint to dry.

After you’ve washed the paint off your hands, cut out some sail shapes from the paper. When the paint is dry, stick your sail

shapes on to the fingers of your handprint to look like the sails on a ship.

As you make your ship in a storm scene, think about the journeys you’ve been on. Have you been on a ship before? What different kinds of transport have you taken to go on journeys? Did anything go wrong along the way? Paul made many journeys; some across land and others across the sea. How do you think Paul felt every time he set off on a new journey?

Shipwreck in a jar

You will need:

- Empty jar (or you could use a bottle with a wide opening)
- A cork
- Cocktail stick or wooden skewer
- Cardboard and paper
- Washing up liquid
- Scissors

First you need to make your ship. Cut a small triangle shape out of your paper to make the sail. Pierce holes near the bottom and the top with the cocktail stick and poke it through to make the mast. Take your cork and stick the end of the cocktail stick into it. (You might need a fork to start the hole off.) If you can't find a cork, you could make a cardboard boat shape with a small piece of blu-tac or plasticine in it and poke your cocktail stick into that instead.

Fill your jar with some water and pop in your boat - it should float on the water. Before you seal the jar, drop a small amount of washing up liquid into the water.

Once sealed, look at your boat on the calm water. Then, create a storm! Make sure the jar is firmly closed and then give it a good shake. What happens to your boat during and after the storm?

While you create your ship in a jar, think about Paul and everyone on the voyage in the story. How do you think they must have felt while the storm was raging? This last 18 months have felt pretty stormy for all of us haven't they? How has this made you feel?

The floor is ocean!

You will need:

- Cushions, blankets, newspaper, chairs, or anything you can find to create safe islands.

This is a variation of the game 'The floor is lava', which you could play outside, or indoors. Set up some obstacles around your playing space to represent islands or planks of wood from the wrecked ship. These are safe spaces which you can stand on; the floor or ground in between is ocean and must not be stepped on or you will sink.

Set a starting point and a finishing point and try to get everyone across from one side of the space to the other. If anyone steps



on the ground, they should dramatically sink into the water!

You could extend the game and time each other to see who can get across the islands in the fastest time.

How do you think Paul and the crew must have felt as their ship started to break apart? Despite the storms and the shipwreck, God kept them safe as he had promised. How does it feel to know that God keeps us safe?

Paul's journeys board game

You will need:

- The board game template below
- Something to use as playing pieces e.g. counters, buttons, coins
- Dice

Print out the template game board at the bottom - or create your own. Play by taking turns to roll the dice and work your way around the board. Make sure you take note of the bonus and penalty squares as you go. The first one to get from the start to the finish is the winner.

You'll spot that the centre of the template game is a map - it shows Paul's journeys across sea and land. God looked after Paul on many journeys through his life - just like he looks after you and me in our lives, wherever we go and through any storms that come our way.

Reflect

Imagine you're one of the crew on that ship. The weather is getting worse and worse. How do you feel? Paul is convinced that God will keep everyone safe. Do you believe him?

Why was Paul so confident? Why do you think he kept his trust in God, even in the middle of the storm?

Think about the storms we experience in life. It feels like everyone has endured a fair few storms over the last 18 months. Think about what it means for us to trust in God through these storms, confident that he will bring us through safely on the other side. Is it easy to do?

Ask God to help you have the faith to trust in him that he will bring you safely through the storms in your life.

Sing

Remember to keep singing Jesus' love is very wonderful!

How about learning a new song? [Listen to My Lighthouse](#) by Rend Collective. The words are below too. Think about what it means for God to bring us safe to shore.

In my wrestling and in my doubts
In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

In the silence, You won't let go
In the questions, Your truth will hold
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You
My Lighthouse, my Lighthouse
I will trust the promise
You will carry me safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore

I won't fear what tomorrow brings
With each morning I'll rise and sing
My God's love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea...

You are my light

My lighthouse, my lighthouse
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You
My lighthouse, my lighthouse
I will trust the promise
You will carry me safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore...

Fire before us, You're the brightest
You will lead us through the storms
Fire before us, You're the brightest
You will lead us through the storms

Fire before us, You're the brightest
You will lead us through the storms
Fire before us, You're the brightest
You will lead us through the storms

My lighthouse, my lighthouse
Shining in the darkness, I will follow You
My lighthouse, my lighthouse
I will trust the promise
You will carry me safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore...
Safe to shore

Pray

Thank God for bringing us safe to shore and that he is our light and peace in troubled seas.

You might also like to say The Lord's Prayer. And perhaps you'd like to finish with Messy Grace - can you remember the actions we do when we say it? Here's a reminder...

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out your hands in front of you)
And the love of God (Put your hands on your heart)
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Hold hands)
Be with us all now and for ever. Amen (Raise hands together on the word 'Amen' and shout loudly!)

