Messy Church – Saul

Welcome to Messy Church!

Did you know that the Paul of St Paul’s was originally called Saul? We are going to go on a journey with Saul today, meet some of the people that helped him and explore ways the story helps us too!

He travels to 6 places and we are sending you on a trail around Tongham as you follow the events of the story. A new location for each section in our story board – and a new activity for each place to do. Have fun!

1. Church – Saul in Jerusalem
2. Pathway – Road to Damascus
3. Tongham centre – Damascus
4. Church – Jerusalem (again!)
5. Recreation ground – Caesarea
6. Home – Tarsus
7. **Church – setting off from Jerusalem to Damascus**. Read the first part if the story board. As we set off on our journey too, we need to collect some items for the trail ahead. Make sure you have:
* a map,
* your instruction sheet – don’t leave this behind!
* a pen,
* a banana and a cocktail stick.
* (The rocks, pens and glue can stay here as you will be back at the church to do this!)
1. **On the path - the road to Damascus**. Stop part way up the path and read the second part of the story board. Saul was changed by this encounter with Jesus. He stopped wanting to put the disciples into prison and instead wanted to become a disciple! The problem was he looked the same – the changes were on the inside!

To show what that is like – take your banana and your cocktail stick. Insert the stick every 3 cm (or so!) down the banana and wiggle it from side to side. The banana now looks much the same from the outside, apart from a few holes – a bit like Saul who looked much the same apart from not being able to see. But open up the banana and see how it has changed! There is a video of this on the facebook page!

1. **At Tongham centre – Damascus**. Read the third part of the story board. God sent people to help Saul. Firstly, he was helped by Ananias, who became a great friend. Look around Tongham notice boards to find some words that describe Ananias.

Look at the first letter of each word – what kind of friend can we be if we try to be like Ananias?

Write the words here:

1. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (Ananias was \_\_\_\_\_\_ and gave courage to Saul as he helped him know he wasn’t alone)
2. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (Ananias helped Saul to think he could make a fresh start even though he had got things wrong)
3. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ (Ananias showed care and compassion for Saul)
4. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Saul with kindness and respect (Ananias looked after Saul when he was finding things difficult and helped him get through it)
5. **The Church – back to Jerusalem.** Read the fourth part of the story board. Saul headed back to Jerusalem, in fact he escaped in the night in a basket over the city walls, because he was in danger! In Jerusalem he met a new friend, Barnabas, to help him and support him, like Ananias had done in Damascus.

Barnabas was known as an encourager, so we thought it would be great to be an encourager to everyone in the village! At the church you will find rocks, pens and PVA glue. Decorate your rock, add some encouraging words and when it is dry, cover it with PVA glue (It runs a bit so dab it on especially carefully). Then add it to the Covid snake and let’s see how long it gets!

1. **The recreation ground – Caesarea.** Read the fifth part of the story board. Saul needed to calm down – he was very excited - but a bit too much! He was upsetting everyone around him!! He was sent to the coast to calm down.

In the recreation ground you can walk or run around the field as a way to calm down and let your thoughts settle. If you want to be more active, why not try my challenge!

* How many star jumps can you do?!
1. **Home – Tarsus.** Read the final part of the story board. Saul headed home to do some reflecting and praying. When you get home, you can make up our lava lamp for our prayers and use it to help you reflect.

You will need:

* A small drinks bottle (or another bottle) with a lid
* Water and food colouring (optional but it does make it more effective)
* Oil

Fill the bottle half way with water and add a few drops of food colouring. Then fill to near the top with oil. Put the lid on tightly! Now you can tip it up and down and watch how it bubbles, makes waves, and separates into layers. Video on our facebook page.

As you do so you can use it for our prayers today.

1. Pray for all those making decisions that they won’t be confused but will be wise about what we should do
2. Pray for all of us trying to do our best in difficult situations that we will have friends around us giving us courage, encouraging us and supporting us through it
3. Pray that when you feel worried, you will know God close, sending you the right people to help, as he did for Saul
4. Pray that God will show you what he wants you to do too

**You can find some videos, including the story on the facebook page. Hope you have enjoyed our trail!** <https://www.facebook.com/messychurchstpaulstongham>