**Messy Church**
**Feb. 6th**

Hi everyone,

Today we thought about Lent. The word 'Lent' means 'lengthen' and that is what will be happening! Spring will come and the days will get lighter and seem longer. But like Advent leading up to Christmas, it is also symbolises light coming into the darkness, displacing it, symbolic of Jesus coming to be the Light of the World.

During Advent we anticipate a birth, during Lent a death. But death cannot happen without a birth. The world could not be rescued by Jesus the Christ, without both his birth and his death.

The cloth which hangs from the pulpit, the cloths covering the bread and wine at a communion service, and the stole Des will wear will all be purple. Purple is the colour of royalty - a king is coming, a king has come.  But purple is also the colour of penitence.

Penitence?! Now there's a religious word. It means: "the action of feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong"  which is why we talked today about clearing stuff out, making room, making more room for God in your life. Sometime people give up tangible things like food, TV or alcohol for example. Sometimes people choose instead to consciously and intentionally bless people during Lent. Maybe it is hoped that the giving up or the taking up will become habits if done for 40 days! But it is to make us more mindful of Jesus and who he was and is.

It also echoes the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness with God his Father preparing for his earthly ministry, and where he was tempted to give it all up. But we know that he hangs on in and comes out of this experience ready to face his work and ultimately, his death.

Towards the end of Lent is Holy week which begins on Palm Sunday (March 25th). This is a special time in church life, with more reflection on the final days of Jesus on earth. You can find the story of these last days in the Gospel of Mark, from chapter 11.

During this Lenten season there are some other special days and next month on March 6th we celebrate one of these with Messy Mothers!

*Liz*