



July

To the Beach

So the summer holidays are almost here. I wonder how you feel about 5 or 6 weeks of no school runs or packed lunches to prepare and quality time with the kids! I remember as a young mum really looking forward to having no fixed routine and just time...but not sure how long my optimism lasted. At least living at the seaside we could go off to the beach for the day.

Today I thought we should end our Messy Church year (our **100th Messy Church** gathering!!) with a seaside story about two builders, one wise and one foolish who built their houses on very different foundations.

Jesus tells this story to help those listening to him understand that being a disciple of his, listening to his teachings and acting on them, will give us firm foundations on which to live our lives. That doesn't mean there won't be rain, it may pour!!! There will even be howling winds, thunder and lightning but nothing will wash those foundations away.

I wonder how the weather is around you as the summer holidays begin? My weather is looking thundery.....there is the potential for floods!!!! I may lose a tile or two! Some of you may know that my husband left me suddenly four years ago and I am now feeling strong enough to get a divorce. It is scary. My 37 year old son-in-law, Lee, who I love dearly, is really ill, again. This is scarier! I enjoy the sunshine of the good days when Lee has no pain, or I am able to separate myself from thoughts of what might have been if I was still with my husband. This is the weather I am living in now and I cannot change it.

I have been a disciple, a follower of Jesus, for 53 years!!!! It was easy as a child - I believed and accepted all of it. I am grateful for parents who saw that I was taught about Jesus. I was brought up in a (chaotic!!) household where we lived strictly to the teachings of Jesus as my parents understood them at that time. I grew and continued to learn and live a life choosing to be his disciple. Looking back on my life, I have faced many storms...little ones and big ones that I thought would knock my house down. But my foundations are set in stone - NOT because of me but because of the grace of God and my mum and dad who gave me a good start. But I did have to make choices along the way and still do, every day. I want my house to stand firm and I want to open its doors and welcome others in, particularly those who want shelter from their storms. So I continue to listen and learn by talking to God constantly, reading the Bible or other helpful literature, and being part of the community at St. Mark's. The storms may rage about me and some days cause me to be grumpy and to doubt, but other days the sun shines and I am glad of the foundations my house is built on. *Liz*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday **August 5th** and **19th** at 4pm **Summer Picnics** at St. Mark's Church
Bring a picnic tea and we will provide drinks and a bouncy castle.



Saturday **September 15th**. Come and be part of the first official **Messy Runaround**. This is a great day out for all the family in London visiting landmarks and sites all around the Circle Line. You will have a list of places to aim for and need to take a photo at each place to prove you have been there. The event starts and finishes at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, London SW1X 9BZ and will include a family celebration and refreshments. For all other details and to book your places please see

<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/messyrunaround#q1>

September 11th Next Messy Church: More information check out St Mark's website stmarkschurch.me.uk or email Liz at liz.townsend3@btinternet.com