

# SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIANS

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

MARCH – APRIL 2023

### FEATURING ARTICLE

#### Meet Ollie and Oscar, the Messy Church Kiwi's

Published by Jocelyn Czerwonka on 13 July, 2019

Why Messy Church Kiwi's you might ask?

I've had times when I have despaired about our ability to nurture children and families in the Christian faith. It's not just me, there have been many books written, many seminars and workshops held, many discussions, much prayer and anguish! Some things work, some don't. But what is unquestionable is the dedication, desire and faithful commitment of many who want to see our faith passed on.

Ollie the Messy Church Kiwi joined us for our overseas travel to the Messy Church International Conference in the United Kingdom and is a constant reminder to me that with God's help and the dedication of faithful Christians, anything is possible. On our return, his brother 'Oscar' popped up in Wellington and asked to be a Messy Church ambassador too.

Did you know that only 5% of kiwi chicks survive in the wild? Our most common kiwi species, the brown kiwi is declining by about 2-3% per year. Kiwi conservation experts believe that without ongoing support the brown kiwi will be extinct in the wild within 2 generations.

As a response kiwi hatchery's and creches have been set up in some parts of New Zealand. Kiwi eggs are rescued from the wild and brought to the hatchery's where they are incubated and hatched. The young kiwi chicks are then nurtured and cared for until they reach a certain weight and are strong enough to survive in the wild.





It can be a 'messy' business as one of our young people discovered when she volunteered at the Rainbow Springs Kiwi Hatchery as part of her "Care of Creation" module for the Faith Project. Squashing worms for food and cleaning up kiwi poo were all part of the job. While Messy Church may not be so extreme in its 'mess', the mere mention of the words 'messy church' have some people squirming in their seats.

After visiting a Kiwi Creche in Hawkes Bay with a group of young people a couple of years ago, we learned just how tough and messy it is to save our endangered birds. Rangers and volunteers monitor the tracking devices attached to the male kiwis (the dad's that sit on the eggs) and respond to the alarms when the kiwi eggs are close to hatching. These hardy kiwi volunteers will set off any time of the day and night, scaling steep hills, pushing through bush and wild blackberry in order to collect the eggs at the appropriate time and carefully transport them to the nearest hatchery. Their hard work and dedication is paying off. The National Kiwi Hatchery at Rainbow Springs have now hatched over 1800 kiwis and most have been successfully returned to the wild. That is a wonderful success story. Thanks to the care and dedication of these wonderful Kiwi conservationists our national bird may survive.

Likewise, it is the hard work and dedication of many faithful Christians involved in ministry to children, youth and families in many ways, that have seen us continue to pass on the gospel. Sometimes we need to think outside the square, outside of our comfort zones and be prepared for the scratches and bruises of finding our way through the unmapped path ahead to find successful ways to develop the 'creches and hatchery's' to successfully nurture others in faith. It can be messy, it can be tough, it can be very different to what we have known before, but praise God that we have people prepared to tough it out, to get messy, to try something new and go the extra mile to grow new congregations to plant Messy Churches, and to pass on the taonga (treasure) of the Gospel of Christ.

From the research (Playfully Serious) we know that Messy Church works! New disciples are being formed, lay leadership is growing and the seeds of the Gospel are being planted and nurtured.

So, from time to time you will see Ollie and Oscar, the Messy Church Kiwis pop up around the country, on our website and on Facebook. May they be a reminder to us all that the work of serving Christ is what we are called to do, despite the messy-ness and challenges we may face.



Then Jesus  
declared,  
"I am the bread  
of life.  
Whoever comes to  
me will never go  
hungry,  
and whoever  
believes in me  
will never be  
thirsty."

John 6:35

PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY

# ZOOM CONNECT

**Thursday  
March 9th,  
7:30-9:00**

Join us for a time of  
networking and sharing  
together, with a special focus  
on resources and ideas for  
Lent, Holy Week and Easter



## Whānau Friendly



Our dream is for the local church to be a place where all generations are present: thriving, encouraging one another and growing in faith, together. It is our prayer that the Whānau Friendly Process will help.

For more information:

[CLICK HERE](#)

**FOR ALL OUR RESOURCES,  
VISIT:**

### RESOURCE HUB

[www.mandi383.wixsite.com/spcm](http://www.mandi383.wixsite.com/spcm)

### ONLINE LIBRARY

[www.librarycat.org/lib/SPCM-Library](http://www.librarycat.org/lib/SPCM-Library)



# ANCHORED



2023

**WATCH THIS SPACE...**

*Dates and venue  
to be confirmed*



**What Messy Church IS  
and ISN'T**

[Click here to read more](#)

**Start a Messy Church**

For more information, contact Mandi Geustyn  
[mandi@southernpresbyterians.nz](mailto:mandi@southernpresbyterians.nz)

**Church... but not as you know it.**



**PCANZ CHILDREN AND YOUTH LEADERS'  
SAFETY WARRANT OF FITNESS**

All leaders who work with children and young people must go through the PCANZ Safety Warrant of Fitness (WOF) once every three years.

Time for a refresher course?  
[www.safetywof.org.nz](http://www.safetywof.org.nz)

Or contact Brad or Mandi:  
[brad@southernpresbyterians.nz](mailto:brad@southernpresbyterians.nz)  
[mandi@southernpresbyterians.nz](mailto:mandi@southernpresbyterians.nz)



## INVERCARGILL

17TH JUNE

VENUE : ROSEDALE BIBLE CHAPEL  
CNR BOURKE ST & EXMOUTH ST,  
INVERCARGILL 9810

TIME: 9AM-4PM

COST: \$95

**REGISTRATIONS OPEN SOON**



## DUNEDIN

20TH JUNE

VENUE : MOSGIEL PRESBYTERIAN  
11 CHURCH STREET, MOSGIEL 9024

TIME: 9AM-4PM

COST: \$95

**REGISTRATIONS OPEN SOON**

