



Jessica Bullett is the Children and Families Worker at **Grangewood Methodist Church in Nottingham**. She met her husband, Michael, while interning with Christian Aid and has been at Grangewood for four and a half years. She's convinced of the value of **HOLY HABITS**, across the generations.



THE STORY begins...

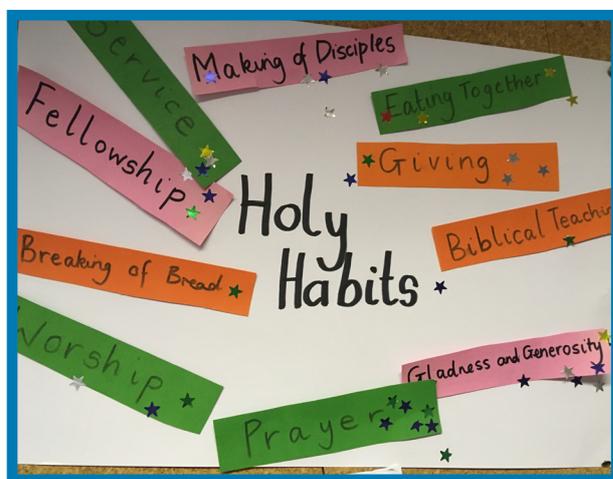
'I first heard about Holy Habits at a Methodist lay conference where I was leading worship: one of our senior church leaders, Roger Walton, spoke about it in one of his talks. It really stood out for me as I felt it offered something I'd been missing.

'In my teens I had started attending a conservative charismatic church, while continuing to be involved with the Methodist Church. I was quite shocked that my new church was teaching young people that we should be reading our Bibles and praying every day. It was a completely alien idea to me, and one I'd not heard of as a young person growing up in the Methodist Church. I spent a few years in that church and, although it eventually pushed me away from my faith, I do feel God used those years for good because I did develop the habits of reading the Bible daily and writing in my prayer journal, and as a 16-year-old I had a very close (though rather closed-minded) relationship with God.

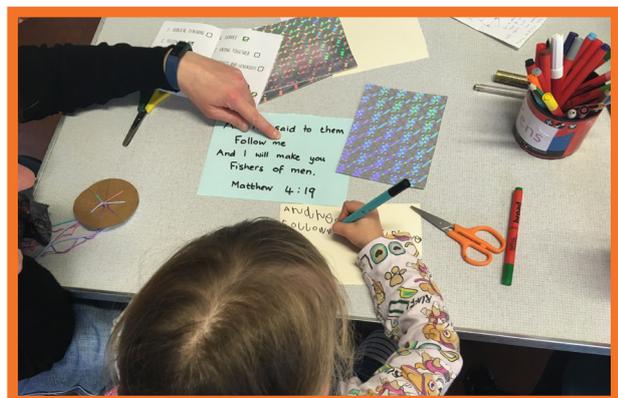
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'Even today, for me, it's that personal relationship with God that draws us to act, to serve, to give and be generous, all those things.

'We need to strike the right balance, but I do think it's important to teach holy habits to children while they're young, so that they learn the importance of these habits early on and learn from a young age that there's more to being a Christian than going to church on a Sunday: being a Christian isn't just about your personal relationship with Jesus but how that relationship affects the people and the world around us.'



Holy Habits at Grangewood Methodist Church



Even young children can get involved in Holy Habits

Jessica has used Holy Habits in a range of different church settings: in café-style worship, in a Messy Church session and in her house group for 20s-40s.

'The great thing about Holy Habits,' she says, 'is that you can work with them on different levels: they can all be done to a certain degree, so if you're five years old you can still worship, pray, receive biblical teaching, be generous and more, but the way a five-year-old engages with these habits might look very different to how a 40-year-old engages, and that in turn might be very different for an 80-year-old.'

And people have responded more thoughtfully than she had anticipated:

'At Messy Church I led a prayer activity on the ten habits. We had a big list of them at the front and I asked families to get into ten groups. Each group chose a different habit and they talked about whether they were already doing it or how they could do more.

'We then invited them to come up and put a star sticker next to the habits they wanted God to help them with.

'While I was planning this activity, I wondered if most people would just put their sticker next to 'eating together', but as each child and adult came up it was clear they'd been thinking carefully about their choice, and a whole range of habits were chosen. It was really great how well people could connect with it.'

As a church leader, Jessica has found Holy Habits to be easy and accessible to use, however challenging some of the material.

'It's having something to put in front of people to say:

"Here's somethings that we as Christians can actively be doing to grow our faith and, more than that, something we can use to bless our

community and even the wider world." It's wrong to think of Christianity as if it's a list of rules we have to follow, but actually people do want structure and Holy Habits is a great way of providing a structure that will help them to grow in their faith and go deeper in their faith. It's vital to keep spiritually filled and I really believe Holy Habits can help with that.' **HH**

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We hope you've enjoyed this HOLY HABITS story!



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© Jessica Bullett

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'It's having something to put in front of people to say: "Here's something that we as Christians can actively be doing to grow our faith and, more than that, something we can use to bless our community and even the wider world." It's wrong to think of Christianity as if it's a list of rules we have to follow, but actually people do want structure and Holy Habits is a great way of providing a structure that will help them to grow in their faith and go deeper in their faith.' **HH**

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