

World Faiths Today Series

Exploring
the **Parish Church**



Teachers' Handbook

World Faiths Today Series

Exploring the Parish Church

Leslie J. Francis, Tania ap Siôn, and
Diane Drayson

Illustrated by Phillip Vernon



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In the World Faiths Today Series, Rees and Sara learn about the major world faiths in their own country. The seven stories in the series are:

- Exploring Islam
- Exploring Judaism
- Exploring the Parish Church
- Exploring the Orthodox Church
- Exploring Hinduism
- Exploring Buddhism
- Exploring Sikhism



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Exploring the Parish Church

The story

Rees and Sara have two Christian school friends called Bethan and Tomos who introduce them to key beliefs and practices of the Anglican Church. Bethan and Tomos' mother, Mrs Davies, serves as an Anglican priest. The children explore the parish church and learn about what happens when Bethan and Tomos receive communion for the first time. They celebrate the festival of Christmas and learn about the significance of the midnight mass. Rees and Sara meet a key source of authority in Christianity in the form of the Bible, and they learn about the Old Testament and the New Testament. They investigate Christian approaches to development education by studying the activity of Christian Aid, and by exploring fairtrade products. They learn about the close sacramental connection between the material world and the spiritual world in Christian teaching by celebrating harvest festival, where they connect the fruits of the earth, the work of human hands, and the sharing in communion.

The basics

In the middle ages Wales and England were part of the Catholic Church owing allegiance to the Pope in Rome. As part of the Catholic system, the whole country was divided into parishes served by a parish church. Everyone was assumed to belong to their parish church and to have rights and responsibilities in respect of the ministry provided there. At the Reformation the Church of England replaced the Catholic Church as the official and 'established' religion in England and Wales and took over responsibility for the parish churches. The Church of England remains the established religion in England, but was disestablished in Wales in 1920 and renamed the Church in Wales. The Church in Wales is now part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, the family of Churches derived from the Church of England.

The Anglican Church sees itself as a broad and inclusive Church which is both Catholic and Reformed. It is Catholic in the sense of holding to some beliefs and practices shaped by the Catholic tradition before the Protestant Reformation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is Reformed in the sense of holding to some beliefs and practices introduced by the Protestant Reformation. During the early nineteenth century these two strands in Anglicanism were re-emphasised and sharpened by the Tractarian Movement (Catholic) and by the Evangelical Movement (Reformed). Individual parish churches are still shaped by those divergent traditions. Bethan and Tomos attend a parish church shaped by the Catholic tradition.

Anglicans believe in:

- the three-fold revelation of God as Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- the three-fold authority of scripture, tradition, and reason;
- the three-fold ministry of deacons, priests, and bishops.

In their religious practices Anglicans place importance on two main sacraments (outward signs of God's presence):

- the sacrament of baptism marks the beginning of the Christian life. Anglicans practise infant baptism. The outward sign is water.
- the sacrament of communion sustains the Christian life. The outward signs are bread and wine.

Chapter I Visiting the parish church

Parish church

Everywhere in Wales and England has a local parish church. The land is divided up in this way. Some of these parish churches date back to medieval times. Many were built in new areas in the nineteenth century to reflect movements in the population. In the same period some of the old medieval churches were replaced and re-modelled. New parish churches continued to be built during the twentieth century to serve new residential developments. When a parish church is closed (or declared redundant) the area once served by that church is taken over by a neighbouring parish church. The parish church attended by Bethan and Tomos was built in the second half of the nineteenth century in the neo-Gothic style to imitate medieval church architecture.

Ministry

The Anglican Church believes in the three-fold ministry of deacons, priests, and bishops. Clergy generally serve as a deacon for one year before they are ordained as priests. As deacons they cannot preside at communion, they cannot pronounce forgiveness (absolution) of sins, and they cannot proclaim God's blessing. Some dioceses promote the permanent diaconate for people who wish to serve the whole of their ministry as deacons.

Priests can take responsibility for local parishes as vicars, as rectors, or as priests-in-charge. They are appointed and licensed for their work by the Bishop of the Diocese in which they serve. Within the Church in Wales there are six Diocesan Bishops (the Dioceses of Bangor, Llandaff, Monmouth, St Asaph, St Davids, and Swansea and Brecon). Bishops will have served as priests first (often for many years). Consecration to episcopacy (being made bishop) enables them to administer two additional sacraments: confirmation (when those who have been baptised as infants reaffirm their promises) and ordination (the making of deacons and the ordination of priests).

Women in ministry

For many years in the Anglican Church only men could be recognised in ordained ministry. The decision to ordain women is now taken independently by the different Provinces of the Anglican Church. The Church in Wales first agreed to ordain women as deacons in 1980 and the Church of England first ordained women as deacons in 1987. Women were first ordained as priests by the Church of England in 1994 and by the Church in Wales in 1997. The

issue of consecrating women as bishops continues to be debated in Wales and England. Women have been consecrated as bishops in other Provinces of the Anglican Communion, including New Zealand and the United States of America, although these women bishops are not allowed to exercise their episcopal ministry in Provinces which have not agreed to consecrate women as bishops.

Clerical dress

Anglican clergy (deacons, priests and bishops) like Catholic priests and many Free Church ministers choose to wear the white clerical collar as the distinctive badge of their ministry. Traditionally this clerical collar has been worn with a black shirt, but now a wide range of coloured shirts are also acceptable. Bishops can choose purple shirts to signify their special office. The long black cassock is worn on more formal occasions, although it has become less and less common to see Anglican clergy walking about their parish dressed in a cassock.

When presiding at the communion service, Mrs Davies chooses to wear a chasuble. This very distinctive vestment, only worn by priests for the communion service, is shared by Catholic priests and demonstrates that Mrs Davies' church has been influenced (to some extent) by the Tractarian Movement. Under the chasuble she wears a long white vestment known as an alb and a narrow scarf known as a stole. The stole and chasuble come in four main colours, signifying different seasons in the Church's year. Green is the basic colour worn most often. White is used at major festivals like Christmas and Easter as a sign of celebration. Purple is worn during Advent and Lent as a sign of penitence. Red is worn on festivals of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost) or to celebrate martyrs.

Communion service

The communion service stands at the heart of Anglican worship. The communion service represents the 'Last Supper' that Jesus held with his disciples before his crucifixion and death. At that Last Supper, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke the bread and shared it among his disciples. He said, 'This is my body'. Then Jesus took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it among his disciples. He said, 'This is my blood'.

Receiving communion

Traditionally in the Anglican Church, people were baptised as babies and then confirmed when they were old enough to reaffirm their baptismal promises for themselves. Traditionally only those who had

been confirmed were invited to receive communion. Increasingly young people are now invited to receive communion before confirmation but after a period of special preparation. The precise age for admission to communion before confirmation varies from one parish to another.

In the present study Bethan and Tomos are receiving communion for the first time. Rees and Sara come to share in their special day. Like other people (adults as well as children) who have not been confirmed nor undertaken the special preparation, Rees and Sara do not receive communion; but they do receive

a special blessing when the priest places her hand on their heads.

Assistants

In this service Mrs Davies is assisted by four robed people. The Crucifer leads the procession by carrying the cross. Two Acolytes follow carrying candles. The Acolytes support Mrs Davies at various points of the service. The Reader preaches the sermon and assists in administration of communion. Readers are lay people who have been trained and licensed to preach. Their badge of office in the service is the blue scarf.

Activities

Mix and match

Cut out the nine boxes on the 'Write a story' worksheet, and then cut each box into three sections: the heading, the information, and the picture. Mix up all the sections and place them in an envelope. Divide pupils into pairs or groups and give each pair or group an envelope. Pupils need to match heading, information, and picture correctly.

Do the task on the 'Write a story' worksheet (the story can easily be adapted to another genre such as a diary entry or newspaper article, if needed).

Visiting a parish church

Visit a parish church and identify the places mentioned in the story. How does it differ from the places in the book and how is it the same?

Communion service

Look carefully at the words said to Tomos and Bethan in the story, when they receive the bread and the wine – 'the body of Christ' and 'the blood of Christ'. This ritual is more than 2,000 years old, going back to the time of Jesus, and it has been re-enacted by generations of Christians ever since. Read the story of the Last Supper from a children's Bible to pupils. Note carefully the words and actions of Jesus. Jesus shared this special meal with his twelve disciples (the first Christians), and today Christians share a similar special meal with one another. They are giving thanks to God for the

gift of Jesus, and when they share this meal they believe that Jesus is present there with them.

Complete the 'Make a communion set' worksheet. Ask them to think carefully about an appropriate slogan to write on a narrow band of gold paper which can be glued around the circumference of the cup and on to the plate. The slogan should help remind people about the meaning of communion for Christians.

Dressed for a purpose

Explore the purpose of uniforms with pupils (for example, school uniform, cubs, football/rugby teams, karate/judo, firefighters, police, army). Usually uniforms show that you belong to a particular group or have a particular job. Often, they also have a practical purpose, for example, a judo suit is hard-wearing to cope with the contact nature of the sport and it is also baggy to allow freedom of movement.

Complete the 'Dress Mrs Davies' worksheet. As a priest she wears different clothes for different occasions. Explore the colours worn for various times in the Church year (see teachers' notes).

Relate Mrs Davies' clothes to the previous exploration of uniforms. Identify the purposes of Mrs Davies' clothes.

Chapter 2 Midnight mass at Christmas

Celebrating Christmas

Christmas has become a major holiday and time of celebration for most people living in Wales and England, not just a festival for Christians. As a consequence many parish churches have adapted the ways in which they keep Christmas to accommodate the celebrations going on all around them.

Traditionally parish churches may have kept the four-week period of Advent as a sombre preparation for Christmas. Throughout Advent there would have been no flowers in church, the dominant colour would have been purple, and no carols would have been sung before midnight mass. Such a period of preparation would have made the splendour of the midnight service even more spectacular.

Even without the sombre preparations of Advent, the first communion service of Christmas (the midnight mass) remains very special in many parish churches. Now that they were old enough to stay up so late, Sara and Rees were really looking forward to taking part in their first midnight service, going to church with their friends Bethan and Tomos.

Bell ringing

Many parish churches were built with towers that could accommodate bells. Some churches have just one or two bells which are rung to let people know that a service is about to happen. Others have a larger set (or ring) of bells. Six bells comprise a good and useful set. Each bell is tuned to a different note and each bell needs its own bell-ringer.

A simple way to use a set of six bells is to ring rounds with a simple progression of notes being rung from high to low in sequence and then repeated. The much more complex tradition popular in Wales and England is known as change ringing when the order keeps changing according to complex patterns. Change ringing requires a lot of skill, practice and concentration.

The broadcast of change ringing across the winter night sky is one of those very special Christmas sounds.

Christmas carols

Christmas carols embrace a wide range of different themes, traditions and moods. The three carols recognised by Rees and Sara are all well known not only in churches, but also in schools and on the radio and television: 'Away in a manger', 'Silent night', and 'Angels from the realms of glory'. The full set of words for these carols can be found in many different books.

Midnight mass

The midnight mass usually begins a little before midnight so that the service is well underway when the midnight hour chimes. The priest presiding at the eucharist will wear a white (or gold) chasuble to signify that this is a major festival within the Church's year. At the service there will be special readings from the Bible to mark the birth of Jesus. Often the Gospel reading is the famous passage from John's Gospel 1:1-14 which begins, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God'.

The collect is the special prayer which sums up the theme for the service. Mrs Davies is using that collect immediately after blessing the Christmas crib.

Christmas story

Inside the parish church Rees and Sara looked at the Christmas story as related by pupils from local schools in huge murals around the walls. This is an excellent way in which to build good links between local schools and the parish church at Christmas time.

The Christian story has its roots in two of the four Gospels included in the New Testament. The Gospel of Mark (which is generally accepted as the oldest of the four Gospels) includes nothing about the birth of Jesus. The two Gospels of Matthew and Luke appear to have added other material to what they learnt from Mark and to have done so from different sources. Both Matthew and Luke include narratives about the birth of Jesus, but these two narratives relate the story from very different perspectives.

Luke sets his story in an atmosphere shaped by the imagery and poetry of the Old Testament. Luke begins by introducing the birth of John the Baptist, who was the forerunner to Jesus. Then Luke introduces the birth of Jesus. According to Luke the Angel Gabriel appeared to the young Mary and told her that the power of the Holy Spirit would overshadow her, that she would conceive and give birth to a boy to be named Jesus. According to Luke, Mary was betrothed to Joseph. Joseph was a descendant of the Great King David and traced his roots to Bethlehem. At that time the land was occupied by the Roman forces and Joseph was forced to travel to Bethlehem, taking Mary with him, to be registered and to be taxed by the Roman officials. In Bethlehem the inns were full, leaving Mary and Joseph to lodge in the stable. It is there in the stable that Jesus was born, and placed in the animals' feeding trough for a bed.

According to Luke the heavenly choir of angels

announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds guarding sheep in the neighbouring fields. The shepherds came to pay homage to the newborn babe.

Matthew sets his story in a different context. It is Matthew who tells of the wise men (magi) who

followed the star to find Jesus' place of birth. Matthew does not count the number of wise men who made the journey, but he does associate them with bringing three gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Activities

Making sense of Christmas cards

Collect together a variety of different Christmas cards (for example, explicitly religious, Father Christmas, snow scenes, animals/birds, carol singers, Christmas trees, historical, etc.). Place pupils into groups and ask them to study the cards carefully. Task:

- What are the different kinds/types of Christmas cards? Place the cards into different piles according to their type.

Christmas cards can be categorised in a number of ways; there is no single right answer. A sign of a good set of categories is when most of the cards have some place within it, because coherent major themes have been identified. Remember that sometimes you have to use a miscellaneous category, but make sure it is not too big.

Christians often send Christmas cards which have a religious theme. Complete the 'Make a pop-up card' worksheet, choosing appropriate illustrations for a Christian market.

The meaning of Christmas

Today, Christmas means different things to different people. Conduct a simple survey to discover what it means to key stage 2 pupils in your school, by finishing ONE of the following sentences.

For me, the most important thing about Christmas is ...

OR

Christmas is not important to me because ...

After completing the survey, devise categories into which the responses to the first question can be placed. These categories can be detailed (such as receiving presents, eating, the birth of Jesus, Christmas parties, etc.) or more general (such as religious/non-religious). Do the same with the second question.

Count the number of responses in each category and display the results in a number of different formats; for example, a numerical table, a bar chart, or a pie chart.

The results from this survey could be used as part of a school assembly/collective worship about the meaning of Christmas for young people today. You could also ask key stage 2 pupils in neighbouring schools to complete the survey and feed back the results to you, if you want a larger number of responses. The survey can be made more complex by adding additional fields such as male/female and Christian/non-Christian.

In the story book, Rees and Sara learnt that for Christians 'the real meaning of Christmas is not to be found in the cards showing holly, robins, and snow-covered inns, but in the birth of Jesus'.

Complete the 'Tell the Christmas story' worksheet about the birth of Jesus and explore its Christian significance.

Festivals across religious traditions

Work on a calendar or book of festivals from all religions. This would need to be a loose-leaf folder, or pages joined together with treasury tags so that pages can be added as needed in chronological order.

Talk about the importance of organising material well so that people can find quickly the information they need. With the pupils, decide on a useful structure for the book, for example, section headings could include stories, how the festival is celebrated today, recipes, and so on.

The sounds of Christmas

What are the musical sounds of Christmas in the story? (church bells and singing carols)

What other sounds do the pupils associate with Christmas? (for example, sleigh bells, wrapping paper opening, silence of snow falling, crackling fire, laughter, etc.)

Find musical instruments or everyday objects that make sounds like these.

Using your chosen sounds, compose, perform and record a piece of music called 'The sounds of Christmas'.

Chapter 3 Using the Bible

What is the Bible?

The Bible is a collection of books which are of particular significance to Christians. Most Bibles have at least two sections. The first section, a collection of 39 books, comprises the Old Testament. All of these books were written before the birth of Jesus, and Christians believe that they point to God's purposes revealed through the birth of Jesus. The second section, a collection of 27 books, comprises the New Testament. All of these books were written during the early years of the Christian Church, and Christians believe that they reveal God's purposes for the world today. Some Bibles also include a third section, published between the Old Testament and the New Testament, known as the Apocrypha.

How is the Bible used?

The Bible is generally seen as a source of authority by Christians, but what is meant by this varies greatly from one person to another. A conservative view maintains that the Bible is the Word of God in quite a literal sense. Some conservative Christians will accept the account of creation related in the opening chapters of Genesis as describing how the world was literally created in six days. As a consequence they reject the scientific theory of evolution. A liberal view maintains that the Bible is inspired by God in special ways, but rejects the notion that the text has to be taken literally. Some liberal Christians will accept the Genesis account of creation as pointing not to how the world was made, but to why God created the world.

Mrs Davies, the priest of St David's Church, appears to be a relatively liberal Anglican. As an Anglican she is committed to three sources of authority: the Bible; the tradition of the church; and human reason. As a liberal she is placing emphasis on how the Bible is used in the liturgy of the church. Her message to Bethan and Tomos written inside their Bibles is very important. She wrote, 'You are a child of God supported by word and sacrament', reminding them that the Bible is to be used alongside the traditions and sacraments of the church.

Using the Bible in Church

When Rees and Sara visit the parish church, they see the gleaming brass eagle on which the Bible is placed. This is known as the lectern. The eagle symbolises how the Word of God is carried through the world.

When Rees and Sara attend a service in the parish church, they see and hear how the Bible is used in Anglican worship. In the Sunday morning communion

service, traditionally three readings are used. The first reading is taken from the Old Testament. The second reading is taken from the New Testament, but not from one of the four Gospels with which the New Testament begins. Both of these passages from the Bible are read by members of the congregation walking up to the lectern from their pews. At the end of each reading, the reader proclaims, 'This is the Word of the Lord', and the people respond, 'Thanks be to God'.

The third reading is treated differently and seems to be more important. This reading always comes from one of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John), the books concerned with the life, the teaching, and the works of Jesus. The Gospel is generally read by the priest. In this parish church, influenced by the Anglican Catholic tradition, the crucifer took the Bible from the lectern and carried it to the centre of the church. Mrs Davies kissed the Bible before reading the Gospel. The two acolytes held their candles high while the Gospel was being read. At the end of the Gospel reading Mrs Davies said, 'This is the Gospel of Christ' and the people responded, 'Praise to Christ our Lord'.

Deciding what to read

The Anglican Church follows a fixed pattern of readings from the Bible set for every service in the year. The pattern of readings is set out in the Lectionary. Although there are several different lectionaries in current use, the dominant one is known as the Revised Common Lectionary which proposes a three year cycle, so the same readings come up every three years. The church Bethan and Tomos attend uses this lectionary which is shared not only with Anglican churches across the world but with other churches as well, including the Catholic Church.

Translating the Bible

The books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew and the books of the New Testament were written in Greek. These books have now been translated into many languages. Moreover, there are a number of different English translations. Some are in an old fashioned form of English like the famous King James Version (also known as the Authorised Version). Many are in very up-to-date forms of English.

Bible Study Groups

On most Tuesday evenings eight or nine people come to Bethan and Tomos' house for a Bible Study Group. Many Christian churches run groups like

this to give people the opportunity to learn more about the text of the Bible and to explore how this text interacts with and influences their lives. They may also allow the text to stimulate a period of silent meditation, open prayer, and praise.

Children's clubs

On most Thursdays after school the children from the church come round to Bethan and Tomos' house

for a club. Many Christian churches run groups like this to give children the opportunity to help prepare for the next Sunday service. They can hear one of the readings used in the service and make posters or models to display in the church. They can prepare songs, drama or dance on the theme of the reading to share in the service.

Activities

Showing that something is special

When something is special to us, we show that it is special by how we treat it. Explore with pupils some of their special things. How do they show that these things are special by how they treat them?

The Bible is a special book for Christians and it has a special place in many Christian services, although this is shown in different ways by different denominations. In Tomos and Bethan's church, they do a number of things which show that the Bible is special to them. Read pages 14-17 of the story book carefully and look at the pictures. How do these Christians show that the Bible is special by how they treat it?

Different types of books

There are many different types of books which have been written for different purposes. Place

pupils in groups and give each group a wide selection of books taken from the school or class library (include a variety of genres and subjects). Ask each group to sort the books physically into different piles which make sense to them. They need to be able to explain how the books have been sorted.

Link this to the Christian Bible. The Bible is a religious book for Christians which teaches them about God and God's relationship with the world. The Bible is made up of different types of books by different authors (for example, law books, 'history' books, poems, letters, and myths). An example of poetry is the Psalms in the Old Testament. Complete the 'Create a Psalm of praise' worksheet. What do you think Psalm 104 teaches Christians about God?

Chapter 4 Christian Aid

A number of organisations and charities have been set up to help improve the lives of others and support the environment. In this chapter Rees and Sara are introduced to Development Education Centres, Christian Aid, Oxfam, and Fairtrade, and they learn how the work of Christian Aid is a practical application of Christian teaching.

Development Education Centres

Development Education Centres are generally independent organisations established to promote understanding about issues like global citizenship and sustainable development. Such Centres are supported by major Development Agencies (non-governmental organisations) like Christian Aid and Oxfam, as well as the Department for International Development (government agency).

Christian Aid

Christian Aid was established in 1945 by churches in the UK and Ireland to respond in a practical way to the needs of those in Europe whose lives had been seriously affected by the Second World War. Today, Christian Aid is involved in a large number of projects which seek to respond to the needs of very poor communities around the world through raising global awareness of the problems and working to help people help themselves.

Oxfam

Like Christian Aid, Oxfam was also established to provide a practical response to the needs created as a result of the Second World War. Today, Oxfam works on the premise that every person, wherever that person lives, has certain basic rights. Every person has a right to healthcare, education, a secure livelihood, a safe environment (for example, clean water and accommodation), freedom from discrimination (for example, on the basis of gender, race, and religion), and a voice which is heard.

Fairtrade

The Fairtrade logo is now a familiar label which appears on many different types of food products

such as fruit, vegetables, coffee, and wine as well as non-food products such as cotton and cut flowers. Buying a product carrying the Fairtrade logo is an assurance that the consumer is purchasing a product which conforms to specific basic trading standards which are regularly monitored. Fairtrade labelling first appeared in the Netherlands in 1988.

Christian teaching

A great deal of Christian teaching is concerned with the fundamental issues that inspire development education programmes. The following themes are relevant.

Doctrine of creation Christians generally believe that the world was created by God and that God continues to care for and continues to care about the world. The doctrine of creation is about why the world exists, not about how it exists. Many Christians reject the literal account of creation in six days related by the first book in the Old Testament (Genesis), but accept the view that the world was created by God.

Doctrine of humankind Christians generally believe that men and women were created in the image of God and share in God's concern for the world.

Doctrine of stewardship Christians generally believe that it is their responsibility to be good stewards of God's world and to work with God realising the full potential of the world. According to this doctrine, men and women have a God-given responsibility of conserving and protecting the birds of the air, the fish of the seas, the animals of the land, and all the rich resources of the earth.

Practical application Christian teachings of this nature are clearly seen in the wide range of development initiatives undertaken by Christians throughout the world, including Christian Aid, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), and World Vision, among others.

Activities

Treat others as you would like them to treat you

How do you like to be treated by other people? What do you think is fair treatment and unfair treatment? How do you feel when you are being treated unfairly?

Link this to the passage from the Bible in the story:

Treat others as you would like them to treat you.

If you love only those who love you, What credit is that to you?

Here Jesus was asking people to do a very difficult thing – to treat other people as you would like to be treated even if you might not like them or even know them.

Explore world trade with the pupils. In the story, what is unfair about world trade in many poor countries? What does fairtrade do to improve the situation? What can you do to help people who are not treated fairly in trade?

Complete the 'Make posters' worksheet about fairtrade products. Display the posters

prominently to draw attention to unfairness in the lives of people who are not known personally and to advertise what can be done to help.

Caring for others

Using the internet, learn more about the work of a Christian aid agency (for example, Christian Aid or CAFOD). The following questions will help to focus the activity.

- Does the aid agency have a mission statement which explains what it tries to do?
- Name the projects in which the aid agency is involved.
- In which areas of the world does the aid agency work?
- How can people support the aid agency?

Some pupils could be challenged with a further question.

- Is there anything on the website which points to the aid agency's religious background (Christian)?

Chapter 5 Celebrating harvest

Harvest Thanksgiving

Harvest Thanksgiving Services continue to play an important part in the life of Christian churches in Wales and England, across the denominations, and in towns as well as in villages. Harvest Thanksgiving is not part of the Church's year in the same sense as Christmas and Easter, but these services do proclaim some important things about Christian belief and practice.

Christians generally believe that God created the world and established the pattern of seedtime and harvest. Christians generally believe that the harvest symbolises close collaboration between the processes of nature, the work of men and women, and the continuing activity of God. Christians generally believe that they have responsibility to share the gifts of harvest with all God's people throughout the world. Christians generally want to give thanks to God for the gifts of the harvest and to pray for God's blessing on the continuing fruitfulness of the soil.

Linking harvest with communion

In Saint David's parish church, Mrs Davies is making some clear connections between keeping Harvest Thanksgiving and the regular pattern of Communion Services. These connections reveal important insights into Mrs Davies' Catholic and sacramental theology. In chapter one, we met the opening lines of the prayers Mrs Davies offered when she took the bread and when she poured the wine. These prayers go on to make the clear link between the gifts of God, the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands. Taking the bread, Mrs Davies prays:

Blessed are you Lord God, King of the universe.
By your goodness we have this bread to offer,
fruit of the earth and work of human hands.

Taking the wine, Mrs Davies prays:

Blessed are you Lord God, King of the universe.
By your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

Harvest Project Day

St David's parish church arranged a whole Saturday for children and young people to be able to explore the connection between Harvest Thanksgiving and the communion service by focusing on bread and wine. The project day was designed to illustrate some of the principles of Catholic sacramental theology.

The visit to the local supermarket highlighted the variety of breads available across the world: the long baguette of France, ciabatta bread from Italy, and

naan bread from India. When Christians take bread in the communion service, they are joining with all God's people across the world.

The visit to the farm highlighted the complex processes concealed within a bag of flour. Here is the story of nature, including the seed, the soil, the nutrients, the sun and the rain. Here is the story of human toil, including the people who made the tractor, refined the diesel, harvested the grain, and ground the grain into flour. When Christians take bread in the communion service, they are giving thanks to God for all these processes of nature and for all these human activities.

The experience of baking bread caught Rees and Sara up in the remarkable processes of change that take place. Once the flour was mixed with yeast and with water, the dough began to form and to expand. Once the dough was baked in the oven the bread became firm and the crust crisp.

In the communion service on Sunday Rees and Sara saw the bread which they had made taken by Mrs Davies, the priest. They joined with her in giving thanks to God for fruits of the earth and for the work of human hands. Then in the great prayer of thanksgiving which Mrs Davies offered over the bread and the wine, Rees and Sara heard about another great process of change and transformation. Christians believe that in the communion service the bread and the wine become for them the body and blood of Christ.

Decorating the church for harvest

For Harvest Thanksgiving many churches take a great deal of trouble to decorate the building with signs of the harvest from across the world. In Saint David's church special displays were made around the altar and around the font. The altar is special because that is where the sacrament of communion is celebrated. The font is special because that is where the sacrament of baptism is celebrated. Alongside the apples and pears grown in their back gardens, the congregation at Saint David's had collected and displayed around the altar tins of peaches, grapefruit and pineapples grown in far away places. Alongside the potatoes, carrots, parsnips and leeks grown on their allotments, the congregation of Saint David's had collected and displayed around the font vegetables grown across the world.

For the people in Saint David's church, Harvest Thanksgiving was a time not only to link with people across the world, but also to link with people across the ages. That is why they displayed in the Lady

Chapel (the side chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary) spades, hoes and scythes from bygone days, as well as ploughs and spraying equipment used on farms today.

Sharing God's gifts

Harvest Thanksgiving is also a time when Christians express their concern and care for the hungry

and for the poor across the world. Often the gifts displayed in the church are distributed to a local charity or to deserving individuals in the local community. Often a special collection is taken to support Christian development agencies across the world.

Activities

Our local parish church

Visit your local parish church at Harvest Thanksgiving time and discover how its congregation celebrates Harvest Thanksgiving. Arrange for the parish priest to be present, and beforehand prepare an agreed list of important questions to ask. In what ways are the celebrations similar to and different from the ones described in the story book?

Investigating food

It is easy to take for granted the food we eat, without thinking of its origins. Ask the children to name a favourite or common food product. Discuss how that product is prepared, listing the ingredients under the heading of 'fruit of the earth' and preparation actions under the heading of 'work of human hands'. After doing this for one product as a class, separate into small groups to do the same for other items. You could provide recipes to help, for children who have little cooking experience. Allow each group to present their findings to the whole class.

Individually or in pairs, complete the 'Investigate your lunch' worksheet. The investigations could form the basis of a display. Use the technique explained in the 'Make a pop-up card' worksheet. A picture of one product could be drawn on the cut-out part. The vertical sheet could have pictures showing the 'fruit of the earth' while the horizontal sheet could have pictures showing the 'work of human hands'.

Types of bread

One basic food is bread. In the story, Rees and Tomos visited the local supermarket to find out about bread. This is a good example of the ingenuity and creativity involved in 'the work of

human hands'. Although the basic ingredients are the same, the style of bread is different from country to country and nowadays varies depending on the preference of people.

Give the children five minutes in small groups to list all the different types of bread they can think of. Come back together and share the results to make a class list. The children could discuss which of these are personal favourites and why, but remember that this is a discussion where answers display preference rather than right or wrong.

A quick internet search will reveal types of bread that the children may not have identified. If help is needed, suggest search words such as "bread", "types of bread" or "pictures of bread". (Make sure that the children understand the use of double quotation marks in search engines, and the need to scan text for different types of bread, rather than reading every word.) Add these to the class list.

Bake your own bread using the 'Make your own bread' worksheet or a recipe discovered during your search.

Growing food

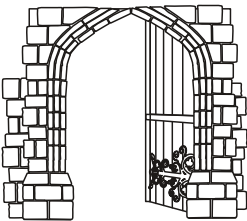
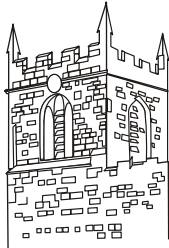
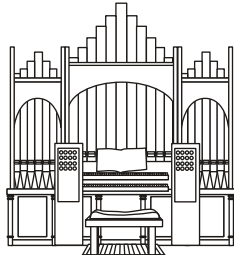
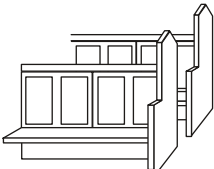

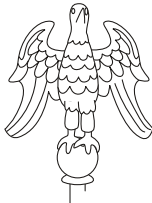
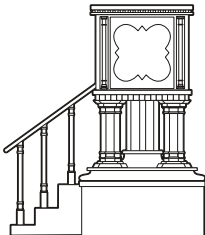


Invite a keen gardener to talk to the class about his or her work growing food in a garden or allotment. After the talk, put the children into groups to work out questions to ask the gardener. If the children are unsure of questions, one suggestion is to think of questions beginning with 'what', 'when', 'where', 'why' and 'how'. You may like to keep in touch with the gardener and develop a display board in one part of the room with month-by-month descriptions of the work being done and the plants growing.

Keywords

acolytes	persons who carry the candles in procession	font	large basin to hold water for baptism
alb	long white robe worn under chasuble	Gospel	the four books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) telling the life, words, and works of Jesus
altar	table at front of church where priest presides at communion	Harvest Thanksgiving	celebration to thank God for the fruits of the earth
baptism	sacrament of Christian initiation using water	hymn	songs used in worship
Bible	collection of books of special significance for Christians	Lady chapel	side room in church with altar dedicated to St Mary, mother of Jesus
 blessing	prayer pronouncing God's goodwill	lectern	special stand from which Bible is read
cassock	distinctive long black robe worn by priests	mass	another name for communion service
chalice	special cup (usually silver) used to hold the communion wine	organ	pipe organs make the distinctive church music
chasuble	toga-like vestment worn by the priest presiding at communion	parish	geographical area served by the Anglican church
Christmas	festival celebrating birth of Jesus	pews	long wooden benches
communion service	bread and wine are offered to God and consumed as the body and blood of Christ	priest	person authorised to preside at communion
clerical collar	<i>distinctive white collar worn by priests</i>	sacrament	an outward sign symbolising God's activity
crucifer	person who carries the cross at the front of processions	surplice	long white robe worn over cassock

Write a story

Imagine you have visited a parish church with a friend who attends there. Write a story about it, giving details of all the places you visited and the things you saw there. The pictures and descriptions below will help you.

<p>porch</p> <p>The porch is a place to wipe dirty feet and quieten down, ready to enter the church for worship.</p> 	<p>bell-tower</p> <p>The bells are rung to call the people to worship. Long bell-ropes are pulled so that the bells, high in the tower, sound out to people all around.</p> 	<p>organ</p> <p>Music is an important part of worship. It may be played on a large pipe organ.</p> 
<p>pews</p> <p>Inside most churches there are long wooden pews for the people to sit on during the service. The pews will have racks in which people can put service books and hymn books.</p> 	<p>processional cross</p> <p>At the start of the service the priest and choir enter in a procession. This is led by the crucifer carrying a tall cross. The cross is displayed during the service.</p> 	<p>lectern</p> <p>The Bible is kept on a special stand. The top of the lectern may be in the shape of an eagle with wings outstretched to carry the word of God to the world.</p> 
<p>pulpit</p> <p>During the service the priest or the reader will teach the congregation about the Christian faith. This is done from high in the pulpit where all can see and hear.</p> 	<p>altar</p> <p>At the front of the church is the altar where the people go to receive communion. On the altar there are candles and a cross.</p> 	<p>aumbry</p> <p>Near the altar is a special place where the blessed sacrament of bread and wine is kept. A light burns above it to symbolise Jesus, the Light of the world.</p> 

Make a communion set

As a sign of respect, and to show the special place that communion holds in the parish church, the chalice and plate used for communion are often made of silver.

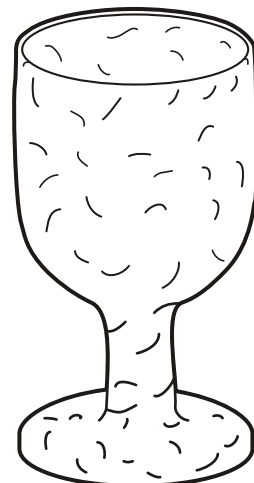
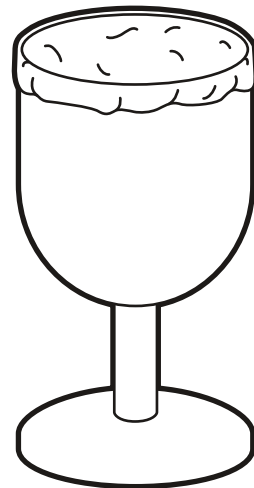
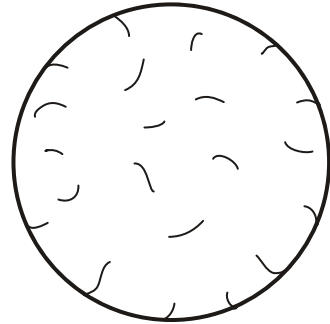
You will need

cardboard plate
foil

plastic drinking or wine cup
scissors

What to do

1. Cut a piece of foil just over twice the size of the plate. Crinkle it slightly by creasing it into a loose ball. Open it up. Fold the foil over the plate so that it is completely covered. (The crinkles will give an antique effect and will match the accidental crinkles on the chalice.)
2. Cut a piece of foil just slightly longer than the cup. Arrange this around the inside of the cup, folding and creasing about 1cm over the top.
3. Cut another piece of foil and arrange it around the outside, folding about 1cm over the top, into the inside. If you are covering a plastic wine cup, heavily crease the foil around the stem. Use a separate pie

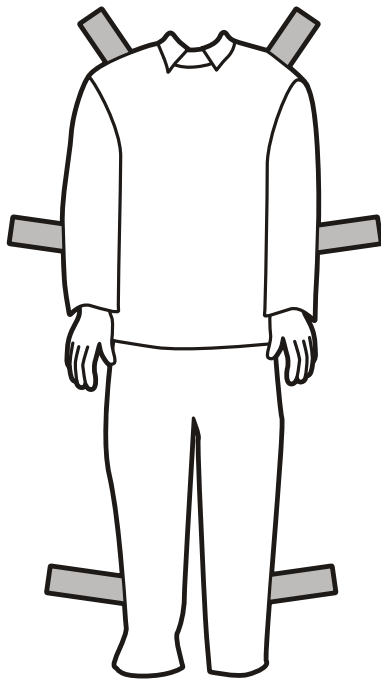


Dress Mrs Davies

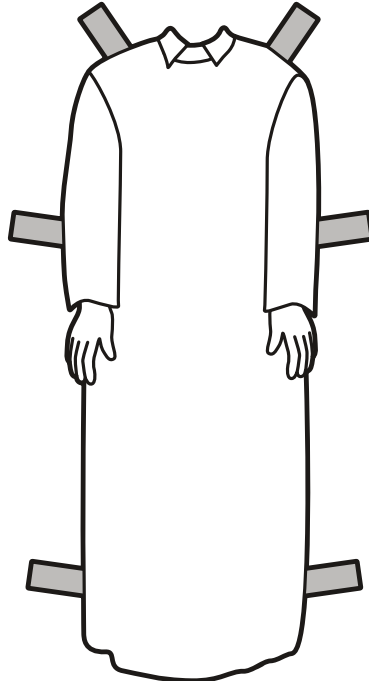
Mrs Davies is a priest in the local parish church. She has special clothes to wear for different parts of her work.

What to do

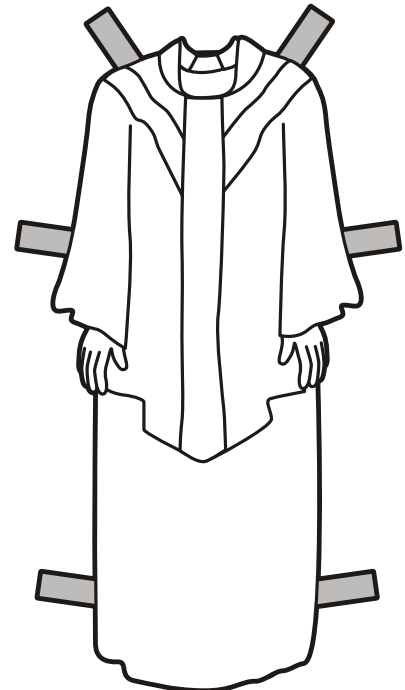
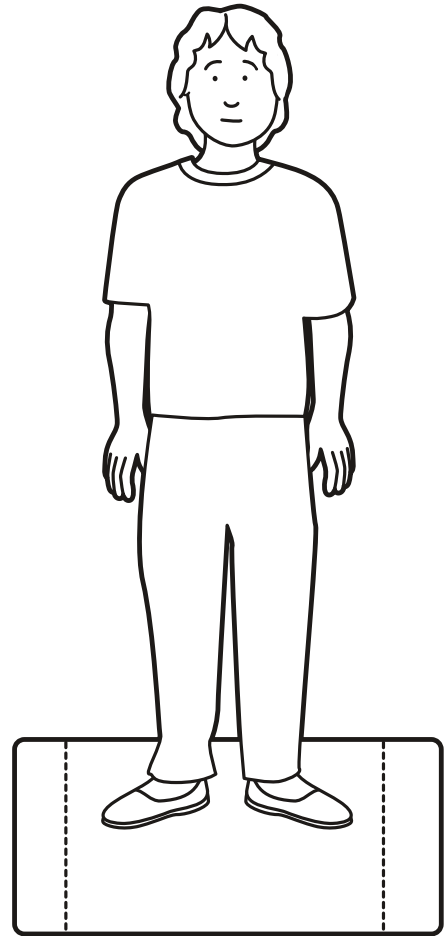
1. Photocopy this page on thin card.
2. Colour Mrs Davies and her clothes.
3. Cut them out.
4. Think of different things that Mrs Davies might need to do and put the correct clothes on her.
Bend the support on the dotted lines to make her stand up.



The special clerical collar shows that Mrs Davies is a priest. She can wear it with a black shirt or a colourful shirt. She wears this for meetings, visiting people, or working around the church.



Mrs Davies wears this black cassock when she needs to conduct a funeral. Sometimes she wears it for walking around town.



When Mrs Davies leads the communion service she wears a golden chasuble over her white alb.

Make a pop-up card

Christmas is the time of year to celebrate the birth of Jesus. At this time people give cards and gifts to family and friends, remembering the gifts given to Jesus by the wise men, and remembering that Jesus is the gift of God to us. Many Christians choose cards with pictures of the first Christmas, to show Jesus' birth and the visits of the shepherds and wise men.

You will need

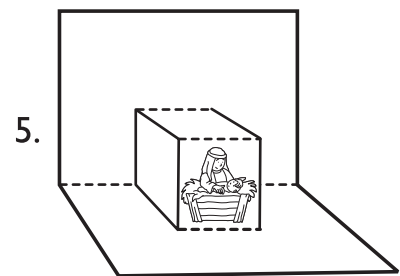
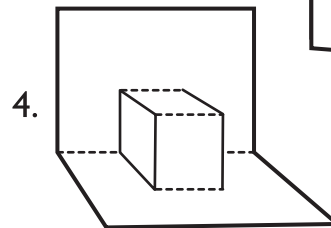
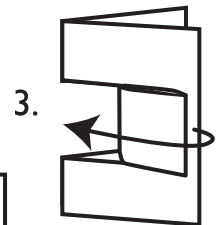
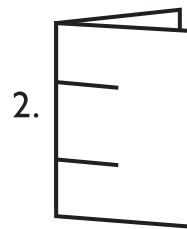
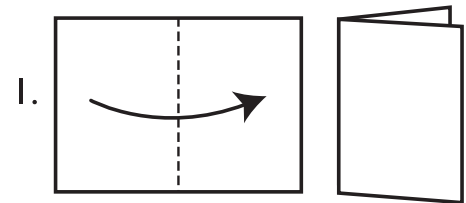
scrap paper
scissors

$\frac{1}{2}$ sheet of A4 card
pencils

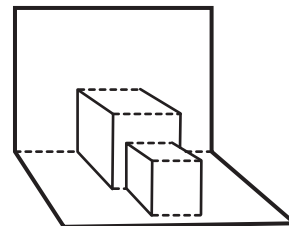
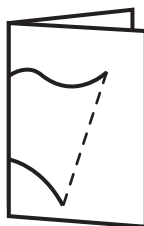
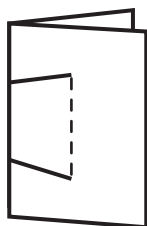
What to do

Practise steps 1-4 on scrap paper before you try it out on card.

1. Fold the card in half.
2. Make two cuts from the fold almost halfway across the sheet. (Make sure you cut from the fold, not from the open ends.)
3. Fold the cut section over to the edge and crease it firmly, then unfold it.
4. Open the card. Keep a valley crease (pointing in) on the outer edges but lift the centre cut part to make a mountain crease (pointing out).
5. Decorate the card. You could draw scenery on the uncut part and Mary, Joseph and Jesus on the pop-up.

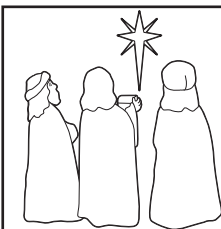
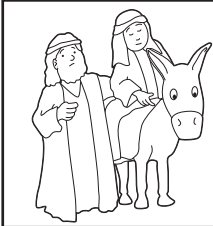


Experiment with different shapes of pop-ups. Make angled curves, or cuts of different shapes, or add a second pop-up by cutting into the front crease.



Tell the Christmas story

Christmas is the time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus. The Christmas story is told in words, pictures and song. Below are six parts of the Christmas story. Retell the events in your own words.



When you have finished, you could cut out the boxes and mix up their order. Give them to a friend to put back in the correct sequence.

Think about the Bible

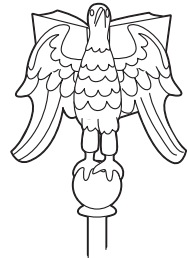
How is the Bible part of daily life for Bethan and Tomos and their family?

In order to give a good answer to this question, you will need to be a detective and look at all the clues in chapter 3 of *Exploring the Parish Church*. Answer the questions below to help you find the clues.

1. Name three places in the Davies home where you would find a Bible.



2. Name three events during the week when the Bible is used.



3. Write what Tomos said about how reading the Bible helps Christians.

4. Write what Mrs Davies said about Christians reading the Bible at home.

5. How does St David's Church show that the Bible is important?

6. After the Bible is read in church, what is said each time?

7. What did Mrs Davies do before reading from the Gospel of Mark?

Now answer the main question on a new sheet of paper. How is the Bible part of daily life for Bethan and Tomos and their family?

Create a psalm of praise

The book of Psalms in the Bible reminds its readers of the greatness of God. Some of the psalms use images from the world around them. Read the beginning of Psalm 104 below. You can find the rest of it in the Bible.

Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, my soul
Lord my God, you are very great,
 clothed in majesty and splendour,
 and enfolded in a robe of light.
You have spread out the heavens like a tent,
 and laid the beams of your dwelling on the waters;
you take the clouds for your chariot,
 riding on the wings of the wind;
you make the winds your messengers,
 flames of fire your servants.

(The Revised English Bible)

Draw the scene that comes to mind when you read this psalm of praise to the greatness of God.

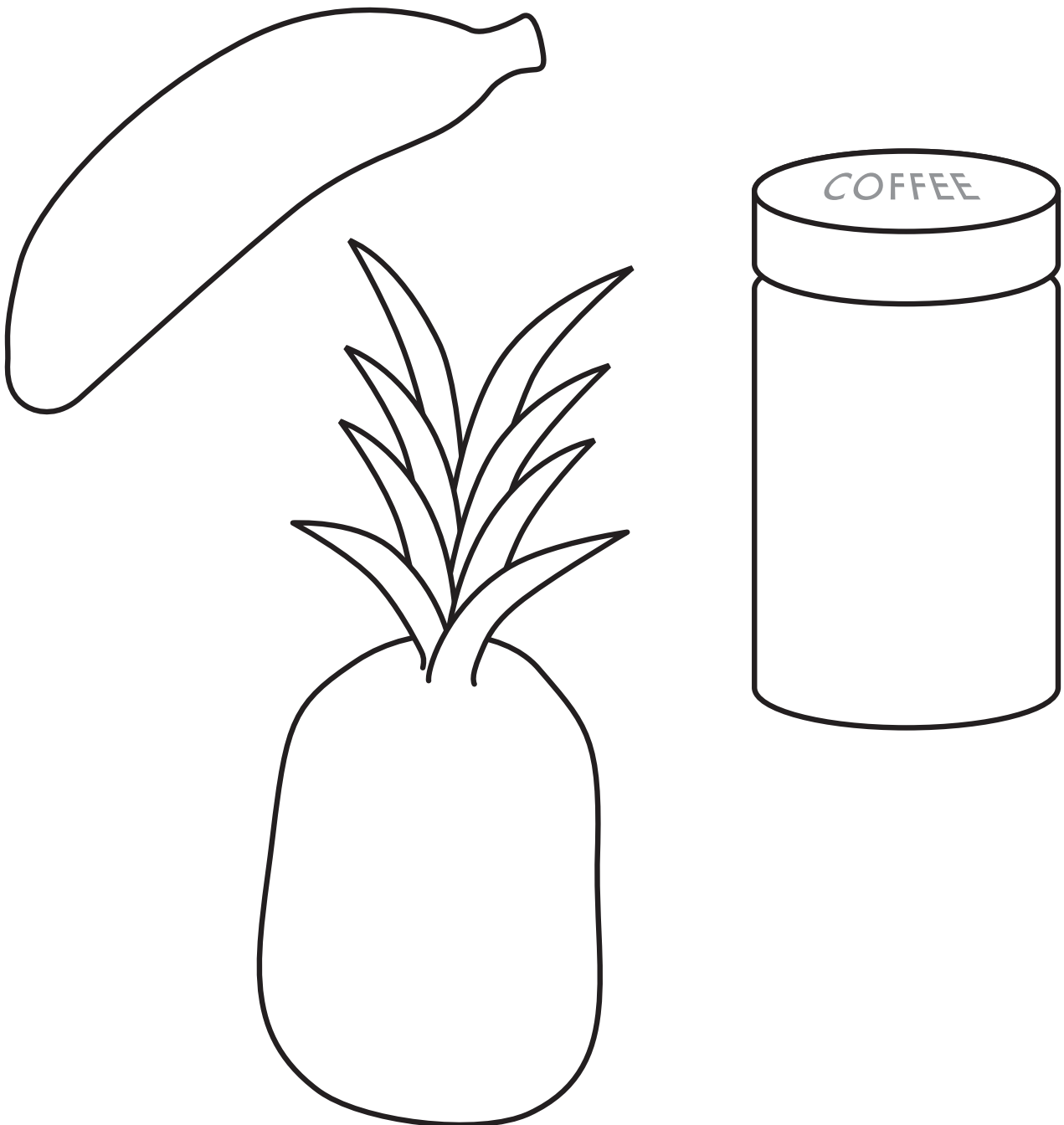


Think of a part of the world that you consider to be beautiful. Choose something natural, rather than made by people. Draw a picture of it and then use your picture to help you write a psalm of praise to God.

Write prayers

There are many people involved in the production of our food. Some of them live in poverty. Although they produce food for us to eat (and sometimes for us to throw away) they may not have enough food to eat themselves.

On the pictures below write prayers that Bethan and Tomos could say. You might write a prayer for Bethan and Tomos thanking God for food, or thanking God for the work of the people involved in preparing our food, or a prayer about the lives of the people who bring this food to you.



Make posters

Work as a group to make posters encouraging people to buy fairtrade products.

I. Research

Find out about the fairtrade products available in your area.

- Look at online supermarket stores and search for fairtrade. (If you work with friends, each of you could check a different local store.)
- Contact local charity shops to see what they sell.
- Compare the prices of fairtrade products with those of normally traded products.
- Compare your findings with those of your friends to see which store has the best selection.

places to research	person to do the work
--------------------	-----------------------

2. Design

Here are some things to consider as you design.

- Audience: are you designing it for people your age or for the adults in your life?
- Size: do you want a large poster or a small leaflet for your fridge or car to remind your family each time you go shopping?
- Clear design: make sure you have only a few words and make them large enough to be read from a distance.
- Eye-catching colours: choose colours that will make the poster noticed.

Audience: _____ **Size:** _____

Design ideas

3. Distribute

Display your posters for maximum effect.

Make your own bread

In *Exploring the Parish Church*, Rees and Tomos made bread for the communion service to symbolise the fruits of the earth and the work of human hands.

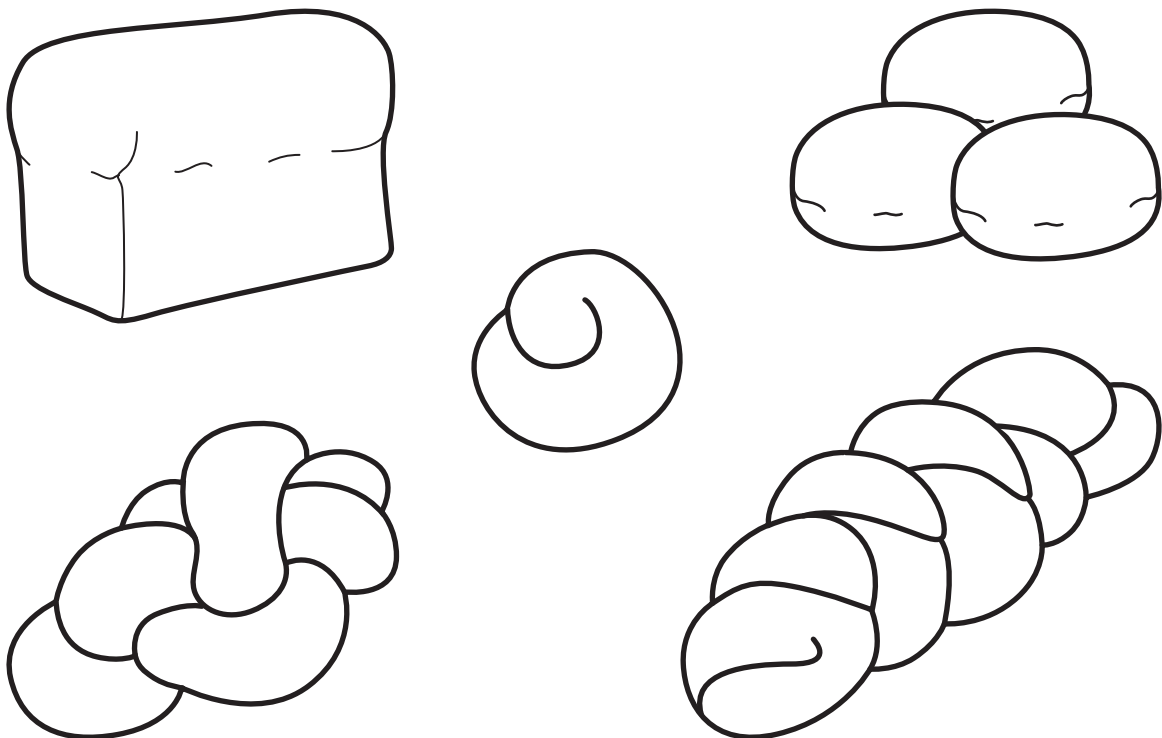
You will need

650g strong white bread flour
1 teaspoon sugar
1 sachet dry yeast

2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
400ml warm water

What to do

1. Wash your hands.
2. Mix together the flour, salt, sugar, yeast and oil.
3. Prepare warm water by mixing together one third boiling water and two-thirds cold water. Add this to the flour mixture and mix to a soft dough.
4. Knead the dough for 10 minutes on a clean, floured surface.
5. Divide the dough into 50-75g balls and shape into rolls. Place these on greased baking trays. (Alternatively, use the dough to make two loaves, placing it in 450g bread tins.)
6. Cover the rolls and leave them in a warm place for about 30 minutes until they have doubled in size.
7. Place the trays in the middle of a pre-heated oven at 230°C (450°F or gas mark 8). Bake for 15 minutes for rolls or 30-35 minutes for loaves.
8. Remove the bread from the oven and cool it on a wire rack.



Investigate your lunch

The food we eat is a mixture of 'fruits of the earth' (the gift of God) and 'work of human hands'. With some friends, investigate a typical lunch to see this mixture. (Continue on another page if you need to.)

1. Write down all the food in your chosen packed lunch or school dinner.
2. Write every ingredient in it that you can identify.
3. Write the original 'fruit of the earth' from which it came (for example, butter comes from milk).
4. Identify the 'work of human hands' involved in preparing it.

My lunch



Ingredients	fruit of the earth	work of human hands
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Create a dance

Create a dance about one special food you enjoy. The dance should show the steps involved in growing the basic ingredients and combining them to produce the food.

1. Choose the food

Think of something basic like bread or something special like chocolate. Choose food that has several steps involved so that your dance will be interesting.

The food we choose: _____

2. Identify the steps involved in producing it

Think of all the people and steps involved in producing this food. This might include planting crops, feeding and milking cows, mixing ingredients and so on.

The steps involved:

3. Select music

Listen to different music to find a piece that best fits your idea of the work involved.

4. Experiment with ways to show these steps

Try out different movements, with individuals or groups, to show these steps in food production. Choose who will portray each part.

My dictionary

You will meet many new words in *Exploring the Parish Church*. Keep a record of them, along with their meanings.

<i>cassock</i>	long black garment worn by the priest and choristers
<i>crucifer</i>	robed chorister who carries the cross at the head of the procession during a service
<i>surplice</i>	three-quarter length full white garment worn over the cassock by priests and choristers

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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Find out about your class and fairtrade

1. Design a questionnaire

Rees and Tomos' class used a pencil and paper questionnaire at the supermarket. You can use a computer questionnaire to find out about the use of fairtrade products in your class or in several classes.

First you need to design simple questions. Here are some suggestions. Change these to suit your needs and add your own questions. (Your choice of questions will need to fit in with what you want to find out in step 3.)

- Name (or give each child a number if you want it to be confidential)
- Sex (male or female)
- Class
- Do you use fairtrade products?
- Which fairtrade products have you tried?
- Have you tasted fairtrade chocolate?
- Will you look for fairtrade products in future?



2. Construct a data base

Choose a computer programme that allows you to construct a data base. Set up the fields with your chosen questions. Invite children to come one at a time to each fill in a record.

3. Use the data base

When the data base is complete you can use it to find out information. Think of things you would like to know, and construct searches. Here are some examples.

- How many pupils use fairtrade products? What fraction is this of the total in the data base?
- Have more boys or more girls tasted fairtrade chocolate?
- Are there more people in Red Class or Blue Class who will look for fairtrade products in future?

I would like to find out this information

World Faiths Today

teachers' handbook

The teachers' handbook is part of the *World Faiths Today Series*, which includes seven story books for 8- to 11-year-old learners. In the series, both learners and teachers are invited to join two children called Rees and Sara who are learning more about their friends from religious traditions:

- Anglican Church
- Buddhism
- Eastern Orthodox Church
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

The teachers' handbook provides:

- In-depth background information about the seven religious traditions
- Classroom activities
- Photocopiable worksheets
- Keywords



Bear Lands Publishing

