

KS1 units of study

Unit 1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians? [Incarnation]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Recognise that stories of Jesus' life come from the Gospels
- Give a clear, simple account of the story of Jesus' birth and why Jesus is important for Christians

Understand the impact:

- Give examples of ways in which Christians use the story of the Nativity to guide their beliefs and actions at Christmas

Make connections:

- Think, talk and ask questions about Christmas for people who are Christians and for people who are not
- Decide what they personally have to be thankful for, giving a reason for their ideas.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

Introduce this unit by looking for signs that Christmas is coming – signs of winter, decorations, adverts. Ask pupils why they think Christmas is important for Christians.

- Tell some familiar stories about a character who appears to be someone he/she is not (e.g. *Beauty and the Beast*). Look at a picture of baby Jesus from Christian tradition. What can pupils tell about him from the picture? Most Christians believe he was very special – not an ordinary baby but God on Earth! Note that the word 'incarnation' means 'God in the flesh'. Christmas celebrates the Incarnation.
- Talk about getting a bedroom ready for a new baby. What would families do to prepare? Imagine the new baby is 'God come to Earth' – what kind of room do the pupils expect would be suitable for this baby? Who might come and visit?
- Tell the story of the Nativity from the Gospel of Luke, chapters 1 and 2. You could use a Christmas story trail (e.g. Experience Christmas from Jumping Fish). Set up some stations: Gabriel visits Mary; journey to Bethlehem; Jesus born and placed in manger; angels appear to shepherds; shepherds visit Mary. Pupils hear the story at each station then go back to their places and draw pictures/write sentences to retell the story.
- Talk about Jesus' birth in the outhouse/stable – what were conditions like, and who visited? Luke's story talks about Jesus' birth being 'good news'. Talk about who it might be good news for and why, and why Christmas is important for Christians.
- Look at a selection of Christmas cards: which ones have got a clear link to the story in Luke? Ask pupils to explain the links. Either visit a church to find out what will be happening around Christmas, or get a local Christian leader to bring photos. Find out about the colours the vicar/priest might wear; what other signs will there be about Jesus' birthday and that this is important to Christians?
- Introduce the word 'advent', when Christians prepare for Jesus' arrival. Find out about some Advent traditions (e.g. Advent wreath, candle, calendar; making a crib scene, etc.)
- Make connections with the kinds of decorations people put up for birthdays with those put up by Christians for Jesus' birthday. What decorations would connect with the story in Luke? Which ones are not connected to the Bible, but to other secular (non-religious) Christmas traditions?
- People give gifts and they also say 'thank you' at Christmas. Ask pupils to create the 'thank you' prayers of all the characters in the Nativity story in Luke. Think about all the people pupils would like to thank at Christmas time. Ask pupils to create some of their own 'thank you' statements and give them out.

[NB: This unit focuses on Luke's Gospel, so that if your school does Christmas in each year group, the other class(es) could use Matthew's account (chapters 1 and 2), including the wise men and gifts, Christmas carols linking to giving and Incarnation, ways in which people help and support others at Christmas.]

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Unit 1.4 What is the ‘good news’ Christians say Jesus brings? [Gospel]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Tell stories from the Bible and recognise a link with the concept of ‘Gospel’ or ‘good news’
- Give clear, simple accounts of what Bible texts (such as the story of Matthew the tax collector) mean to Christians
- Recognise that Jesus gives instructions to people about how to behave

Understand the impact:

- Give at least two examples of ways in which Christians follow the teachings studied about forgiveness and peace, and bringing good news to the friendless
- Give at least two examples of how Christians put these beliefs into practice in the Church community and their own lives (for example: charity, confession)

Make connections:

- Think, talk and ask questions about whether Jesus’ ‘good news’ is only good news for Christians, or if there are things for anyone to learn about how to live, giving a good reason for their ideas.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- Ask pupils to come up with a list of 12 people (or professions) to change the world: who would they choose and why? The New Testament describes the 12 people Jesus chose – they were not necessarily the kinds of people pupils might expect. Read, dramatise and illustrate the following story about one of Jesus’ ‘world-changers’, Matthew the tax collector (Matthew 9:9–13). Tax collectors were reviled by the Jewish people because they worked for the occupying Roman forces. Explore how and why Matthew’s life was changed by his encounter with Jesus, ‘friend of the friendless’. (Compare with story of Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1–10; Matthew becomes one of Jesus’ 12 disciples.) These accounts are part of the ‘Gospel’ of Jesus, meaning ‘good news’. What was the ‘good news’ that Jesus brought?
- Forgiveness: Luke 6:37–38. Jesus teaches his followers that God forgives them, but they need to forgive others too. Talk about who needs forgiveness and how people might feel if they are forgiven. Pupils can talk about real life examples if appropriate. Talk about why forgiveness from God is good news for Christians and why forgiveness from people is important for all of us. What happens if someone does not forgive, compared with if they do?
- Peace: In John 14:27 Jesus promises his followers peace. Talk about things that stop us having peace (e.g. worry, illness, conflict, fear). Talk about and try out some ways in which people get peace (music, laughter, being quiet, exercise, saying sorry and being forgiven, a hug). How do Christians receive peace from Jesus? If they believe Jesus loves them and forgives them, how does that bring them peace? How is that ‘good news’ for Christians?
- Explore some ways in which Christians try to bring Jesus’ ‘good news’ to others. For example, just like Jesus was ‘friend to the friendless’, Christians try to help people in need, e.g. local food bank; working with homeless people – look at Trinity Church, Cheltenham (trinitycheltenham.com) or St George’s Crypt, Leeds (www.stgeorgescrypt.org.uk).
- Find out how Christians say sorry to God, and receive forgiveness. Sometimes they say sorry in public (see some examples here: bit.ly/2ISR2Vo), sometimes in private (remember the ‘saying “sorry”’ prayers in Unit 1.1). Sometimes Christians say confession to a priest or vicar. Talk to a Christian to ask about why they say sorry, and what difference it makes to them, believing that God forgives them. Build on earlier learning about forgiveness as part of Jesus’ ‘good news’ for Christians.
- Ask pupils to investigate a church building and find out how it helps Christians remember the ways in which Jesus’ life and teaching offers them ‘good news’: where can Christians find friendship, peace and forgiveness in this place? E.g. how is prayer encouraged? (E.g. candles.); does it feel peaceful? Are there groups who promote friendship in this church? (Note that this leads well into Unit 1.8, which talks about what makes some places sacred to believers.)
- Explore the idea that offering friendship to others (especially the friendless), finding ways of being at peace and bringing peace, such as through forgiveness – these are all good things for people, not only Christians. Note that Christians believe they receive these things especially (but not exclusively) through Jesus.

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Unit 1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians? [Salvation]

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Recognise that Incarnation and Salvation are part of a 'big story' of the Bible
- Tell stories of Holy Week and Easter from the Bible and recognise a link with the idea of Salvation (Jesus rescuing people)

Understand the impact:

- Give at least three examples of how Christians show their beliefs about Jesus' death and resurrection in church worship at Easter

Make connections:

- Think, talk and ask questions about whether the story of Easter only has something to say to Christians, or if it has anything to say to pupils about sadness, hope or heaven, exploring different ideas and giving a good reason for their ideas.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- If you are doing this unit in the Spring Term (although this is not compulsory timing), you might introduce it by looking around for examples of the new life that comes in the spring. The story for Christians leads to the idea of new life.
- Introduce the story of Holy Week. (Note that pupils should understand that this story takes place about 33 years after the events of the Nativity, even though pupils have only celebrated Christmas a few weeks ago.)
- Set up an Easter labyrinth or outdoor trail for pupils, including 1) The entry into Jerusalem e.g. John 12:12–15; 2) Jesus' betrayal and arrest at the Mount of Olives e.g. Luke 22:47–53; 3) Jesus dies on the cross e.g. Luke 23:26–56; 4) The empty tomb e.g. Luke 24:1–12; 5) Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene and the disciples: John 20:11–23. At each stop on the labyrinth, pupils should hear part of the story and have a chance to discuss and reflect on it, expressing their thoughts, feelings and questions. Make the labyrinth as sensory as possible: for example, have palm leaves to feel (and wave) for the entry into Jerusalem, and vinegar to smell for the crucifixion. Use a variety of active strategies to get pupils to become familiar with the story (e.g. simple role play, freeze-framing, simple diary entries for different characters, story-boarding, putting images in chronological order, retelling events to each other).
- Talk about the emotions of Jesus' followers during the week. Match the emotions to different characters at different times (e.g. being angry, sad, excited, worried, scared, surprised, happy, puzzled, overjoyed, etc.) Note the big change from Friday (sad) to Sunday (puzzled and overjoyed).
- Connect the idea of eggs, new life and the belief in Jesus' resurrection. Look at decorated Easter eggs – make some model eggs and decorate with scenes from Easter Sunday. Talk about the Christian belief that Jesus rises from death (resurrection) on the Sunday after his death, and how this shows Christians that Jesus has opened up a way for them to have a new life after they die – a life with God in heaven. This is part of the idea of 'salvation' – for Christians, Jesus offers to save them from death. Talk about why this is important for Christians – talk about the hope Christians have that heaven is a place without pain or suffering – a place of joy.
- Find out about how churches celebrate different parts of Holy Week, e.g. Palm Sunday crosses; Good Friday (church services, hot cross buns, Stations of the Cross); Easter Sunday (joyful songs, decorating crosses in church, giving and eating eggs). Connect these practices with the events in the story. Make up some simple actions that help them to remember the story – and that could be used in Christian celebrations.
- Ask pupils why people find it helpful to believe that there is life in heaven after death. Make a link with the idea that, for Christians, Jesus brings good news (see Unit 1.4). Give pupils time to reflect on the way the story changes from sadness to happiness, or from darkness to light. Give them a chance to paint some dark marks on a page, perhaps listening to some quiet music, then to paint some bright colours, with joyous music accompanying. Ask them to talk about what it might feel like when something good happens after something sad.

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Unit 1.6 Who is Muslim and how do they live? [God/Tawhid/ibadah/iman] [double unit]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Recognise the words of the *Shahadah* and that it is very important for Muslims
- Identify some of the key Muslim beliefs about God found in the *Shahadah* and the 99 names of Allah, and give a simple description of what some of them mean
- Give examples of how stories about the Prophet show what Muslims believe about Muhammad

Understand the impact:

- Give examples of how Muslims use the *Shahadah* to show what matters to them
- Give examples of how Muslims use stories about the Prophet to guide their beliefs and actions (e.g. care for creation, fast in Ramadan)
- Give examples of how Muslims put their beliefs about prayer into action

Make connections:

- Think, talk about and ask questions about Muslim beliefs and ways of living
- Talk about what they think is good for Muslims about prayer, respect, celebration and self-control, giving a good reason for their ideas
- Give a good reason for their ideas about whether prayer, respect, celebration and self-control have something to say to them too.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- Introduce the idea that Muslims believe in Allah as the one true God ('Allah' is the word for 'God' in Arabic. In Islam, the central belief that there is only one God is referred to as '**Tawhid**').
- **Iman** means belief, and it is expressed in the words of the *Shahadah* ('There is no God but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of Allah'). Find out about the *Shahadah*, and how this is the most important belief for Muslims. It is part of Muslims' daily prayers, and also part of the Call to Prayer; its words are incorporated into the *adhan*, seen as the best first words for a baby to hear, whispered into their ear soon after birth. Talk about why it is used these ways, and how it shows what is most important to Muslims. To be a Muslim is to submit willingly to God – to allow Allah to guide them through life.
- Muslims believe it is impossible to capture fully what God is like, but they use the mentioned 99 Names for Allah to help them understand Allah better. Explore some of the names and what they mean; look at some of them written in beautiful calligraphy. Ask the pupils to choose one of the names, think about what the name means and how this quality might be seen in their life or the lives of others. Respond to the sentence starters: *One beautiful name found in the Qur'an for Allah is... If I was... I would... If other people were... they would...* Ask the pupils to create some calligraphy around a 'beautiful name' of Allah; ask them to explain why this characteristic of God might be important to a Muslim.
- Remind pupils that the *Shahadah* says Muhammad is God's messenger (many Muslims say 'Peace be upon him' after his name – or write PBUH). Examine the idea that stories of the Prophet are very important in Islam. They say a lot about what the Prophet Muhammad said and did, and these stories often teach Muslims an inspiring lesson. Muslims follow Allah (God), but they learn a lot from the Prophet's example. Give examples of some stories of the Prophet Muhammad e.g. The Prophet cared for all Allah's creation (the story of the tiny ants); Muhammad forbade cruelty to any animal, and cared for animals himself to show others how to do it (the camel); he was considered very wise (Prophet Muhammad and the black stone); Muhammad believed in fairness and justice for all (Bilal the first muezzin was a slave to a cruel master. The Prophet's close companion, Abu Bakr, freed him, and made him the first prayer caller of Islam; see www.natre.org.uk/primary/good-learning-in-re-films). Talk about how these stories might inspire people today.
- Revisit the *Shahadah* – it says Muhammad is God's messenger. Now find out about the message given to Muhammad by exploring the story of the first revelation he received of the Holy Qur'an, widely celebrated on the 'Night of Power'. Find out about how, where, when and why Muslims read the Qur'an, and work out why Muslims treat it as they do (wrapped up, put on a stand, etc.).
- Introduce the idea of the Five Pillars as examples of '**ibadah**', or 'worship'. Reciting the *Shahadah* is one Pillar, Another is prayer, '*salah*'. Look at how Muslims try to pray regularly (five times a day). Find out what they do and say, and why this is so important to Muslims. What difference does it make to how they live every day? (Note that Units L2.9 and U2.8 will go into other Pillars in more depth, so only introduce the others at this point.)
- Reflect on what lessons there might be from how Muslims live: how do they set a good example to others? Consider whether prayer, respect, celebration and self-control are valuable practices and virtues for all people to develop, not only Muslims.

Unit 1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers?

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Recognise that there are special places where people go to worship, and talk about what people do there
- Identify at least three objects used in worship in two religions and give a simple account of how they are used and something about what they mean
- Identify a belief about worship and a belief about God, connecting these beliefs simply to a place of worship

Understand the impact:

- Give examples of stories, objects, symbols and actions used in churches, mosques and/or synagogues which show what people believe
- Give simple examples of how people worship at a church, mosque or synagogue
- Talk about why some people like to belong to a sacred building or a community

Make connections:

- Think, talk and ask good questions about what happens in a church, synagogue or mosque, saying what they think about these questions, giving good reasons for their ideas
- Talk about what makes some places special to people, and what the difference is between religious and non-religious special places.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

Throughout this unit, make connections with pupils' prior learning from earlier in the year: how do places of worship connect with Christian and Muslims/Jewish beliefs and practices studied? E.g. key stories of Jesus are shown in a church, including clear links to Easter; the mosque is used as a place of prayer, and often contains calligraphy; many Jewish symbols are seen in synagogues and in the home.

- Talk about how the words 'sacred' and 'holy' are used; what makes some places and things special, sacred or holy; consider what things and places are special to pupils and their families, and why. Do they have any things that are holy and sacred?
- Look at photos of different holy buildings and objects found inside them: can pupils work out which objects might go inside which building, and talk about what the objects are for? Match photos to buildings, and some keywords.
- Talk about why it is important to show respect for other people's precious or sacred belongings (e.g. the importance of having clean hands; treating objects in certain ways, or dressing in certain ways).
- Explore the main features of places of worship in Christianity and at least one other religion, ideally by visiting some places of worship. While visiting, ask questions, handle artefacts, take photos, listen to a story, sing a song; explore the unusual things they see, do some drawings of details and collect some keywords.
- Find out how the place of worship is used and talk to some Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people about how and why it is important in their lives. Look carefully at objects found and used in a sacred building, drawing them carefully and adding labels, lists and captions. Talk about different objects with other learners.
- Notice some similarities and differences between places of worship and how they are used, talking about why people go there: to be friendly, to be thoughtful, to find peace, to feel close to God.
- Explore the meanings of signs, symbols, artefacts and actions and how they help in worship e.g. **church:** altar, cross, crucifix, font, lectern, candles and the symbol of light; plus specific features from different denominations as appropriate: vestments and colours, icons, Stations of the Cross, baptismal pool, pulpit; **synagogue:** ark, *Ner Tamid*, Torah scroll, *tzitzit* (tassels), *tefillin*, *tallit* (prayer shawl) and *kippah* (skullcap), *chanukiah*, *bimah*; **mosque/masjid:** *wudu*, calligraphy, prayer mat, prayer beads, *minbar*, *mihrab*, *muezzin*.
- Explore how religious believers sometimes use music to help them in worship e.g. Christians and Jewish people sing Psalms, hymns and prayers. These may be traditional or contemporary, with varied instruments and voices. Music can be used to praise God, thank God, say 'sorry' and to prepare for prayer. Muslims do not use music so freely, but still use the human voice for the Prayer Call and to recite the Qur'an in beautiful ways.
- Listen to some songs, prayers or recitations that are used in a holy building, and talk about whether these songs are about peace, friendliness, looking for God, thanking God or thinking about God. How do the songs make people feel? Emotions of worship include feeling excited, calm, peaceful, secure, hopeful.
- Use the idea of community: a group of people, who look after each other and do things together. Are holy buildings for God or for a community or both? Talk about other community buildings, and what makes religious buildings different from, say, a library or school.