

MODEL UNIT
BAND A
LEVEL 2

THE CHURCH

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

YEAR: SUGGESTED DURATION: 4 weeks (100 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS THE COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS CREATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

1a explore the Christian understanding that people who believe in Jesus are in God's family, the church

1b identify churches in the local community

1c become familiar with the activities of a local church

2. GOD HAS GATHERED HIS PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

2a explore Bible stories of people in the early Christian church

3. LUTHERANS IN AUSTRALIA WORK TOGETHER IN MINISTRY AND MISSION

3a investigate the ministry and mission of the Lutheran Church of Australia

3b investigate the ministry and mission of a Lutheran school

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Illustrate features of a church building. (1b)

Illustrate people who could belong in God's family. (1a)

Illustrate or dramatise activities of people in the early church. (2a)

Illustrate activities of Christians today. (1c,3a)

Plan and present what they have learnt in this unit. (1a,1c,2a)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES



work sample



questioning by teacher; illustration for mural



work samples or dramatisation



work sample



model, play, artwork or computer work

UNIT SUMMARY

The teacher arranges a visit to a local church building. Students complete a mural showing the church building and its people. Students participate in stories about the early church in the New Testament and then identify things that happen in a local church today. Students plan a presentation to show what they have learnt in this unit.

UNIT NOTES

Not all students in your class will have had the experience of attending church. Take care not to make students who lack knowledge of church practice feel uncomfortable. At the same time provide opportunity for students who attend church to share their experiences.

A First Look: The Church by Lois Rock develops these concepts further and could be used to extend or summarise the unit.

WORDS TO KNOW

church church building Christian

INTRODUCTION

1. A CHURCH BUILDING

In order to assess what the students already know, ask students to draw a church building. This could be their own church, the church associated with the school, or the school worship centre. Their drawing could show either the outside or the inside of the building.

Once the drawings are complete, come together and discuss things students have included.

Using the students' ideas, the teacher makes a drawing of a church building, using crayon on large paper. You will be adding to this over the next sessions.

2. A CHURCH VISIT

Arrange a visit to at least one church building. This will most likely be the church associated with the school. If you have students from other denominations in your class, it may be possible to visit other churches as well. Take a camera to photograph the church, as well as the service areas of the church, eg creche, kitchen, hall, rooms for meetings or Sunday school, car park. You will refer to these later in the unit.

If it is not possible to visit a church, use posters, pictures or photographs of church buildings.

After the visit add more detail to your drawing of a church building. You will need to introduce some of the terminology relating to church buildings, eg pews, altar, font, stained glass, but this is not the focus of this unit. (*God gathers Christians to worship* him looks at these aids in more detail.)

3. THE CHURCH IS PEOPLE

Tell students that although you now have a drawing of a church building you have not drawn the most important part of the church. Students suggest what this might be. Summarise in words like the following:

The most important part of the church is the people. The Bible says that the real church is all the people who believe in Jesus. The people who believe in Jesus have a special name. They are called 'Christians'.

There are Christians living in all parts of the world. They worship God in many different languages, they have many different kinds of church buildings, but all Christians believe in Jesus.

Use pictures or posters which show Christians from Australia and around the world. These could be found in church magazines, the LCA mission calendar, non-fiction books (see Recommended Resources Menu).

Students use crayons to make their own drawings of people in the Christian family to place inside and around your large drawing of a church. As students work, use questions to assess their understanding that the church is made up of people. Paint over this whole picture with diluted paint to give a crayon-resist effect. Together with students, decide on appropriate captions to describe the picture and revise what has been learnt so far.

DEVELOPMENT

4. THE FIRST CHURCH

The story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13, 38–47)

Whether you are telling this story for the first time or revisiting it, place the emphasis on Pentecost as being the time when the Holy Spirit helped many people believe in Jesus and when the church began.

Help students identify the first Christians as real people. You can do this by drawing simple figures or using cut-out pictures from old resource material and introducing them briefly, eg *Here's Rufus, he's a potter and makes clay pots. Here's Julia, she has three children and they all became Christians on that day.* Alternatively, use simple puppets. As you introduce each one, add a refrain: *He/she was part of the first church.*

Write a list of Bible names on the board (see Romans 16 or 2 Timothy 4). Students choose

one of these names and 'become' that person. They make a name tag and choose an identity for themselves, eg an old man, a child. (Students keep these name tags to wear in the storytelling sessions that follow.)

Use either the cut-out people or the puppets to tell the stories that follow. Alternatively, take on the role of storyteller, using dramatic storytelling techniques to assist you.

A. Christians met together

Students put on their name tags and get ready to meet a person from the first church. Use Script A on Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) A2/1a. Students complete the suggested activity.

B. Christians learnt together

Students put on their name tags and the teacher tells the story, Script B on TRS A2/1a. Students complete the suggested activity.

C. Christians cared for and helped each other

Students put on their name tags and the teacher tells the story, Script C on TRS A2/1b. Students complete the suggested activity.

5. THE CHURCH TODAY

Christians met together, learnt together and cared for each other in the first church. Christians do the same today.

Use the following headings to give a 'snapshot' of times when Christians meet together. If you took photographs earlier in the unit you will be able to use some of them now. You may decide to discuss briefly each of the following sections, or spend time developing one in more detail. The book *My Big Family at Church* (see Recommended Resources Menu) is a useful resource.

A. Christians meet together

Students share experiences of things they enjoy doing together with their family. Christians believe they are part of God's family, and they like to do things together too.

Select from the following suggestions to identify what Christians do when they meet together:

- Christians worship. Show pictures of Christian worship, eg singing, at prayer, listening to a sermon.
- Christians share special food. Talk about the time when Jesus shared a special meal with his disciples (Matthew 26:17–30). Explain that Christians still share this

special food to help them remember how much Jesus loves them.

If possible show students the communion vessels and bread from the church.

- Christians meet together at other times. Share examples from your own experience of fellowship with other Christians, eg shared meals, outings, meetings.

B. Christians learn together

On Sundays the pastor helps people learn about God. The pastor reads from the Bible and explains what the Bible is saying.

Many churches have a special time for children to learn about God too.

Invite a Sunday school teacher or children's ministry leader to talk to your class. He/she may be able to lead them in an activity or give them all a special invitation to come along to one of the sessions.

C. Christians care for and help each other

The teacher will need to research examples of Christians showing care in the local congregation. Invite members of the congregation to talk to students about ways they show care for one another.

To review what students have learnt about Christians today, follow the instructions on TRS A2/1b for illustrating a church building and the activities of the people who make up the church.

RESPONSE

6. CONCLUSION

Form groups and ask each group to plan a presentation which shows what they have learnt about the church.

To assist students and encourage variety in their presentations, you could

- provide boxes and other junk materials for students who wish to make a model of a church;
- provide props, eg tapes of Christian songs, Bibles, dress-up clothes for students who would like to make up a play;
- provide art materials for students who wish to illustrate/paint/collage to share what they have learnt;
- if students are able to use a computer independently, arrange for access to a drawing program or word processing.

Each group must share their presentation with the class. A group assessment sheet is

provided on TRS A2/2.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> large strong paper, crayons and paint<input type="checkbox"/> arrangements made to visit a local church; optional: camera to take photographs on the church visit<input type="checkbox"/> pictures of Christians and churches from countries around the world<input type="checkbox"/> cut-out pictures or puppets to represent Christians in the early church | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> light cardboard for name tags<input type="checkbox"/> arrangements for representatives of the Sunday school/children's ministry or welfare agency of the congregation to visit your class<input type="checkbox"/> materials for the response activities<input type="checkbox"/> optional: photocopies of TRS A2/2 for assessment of students' presentation. |
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INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

ENGLISH: *Everyday Texts:* Speak audibly, pronounce clearly, order ideas.

SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT: *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Listen and respond to oral stories. *Time, Continuity and Change:* Hear stories about different times. *Culture:* Identify customs, traditions and practices of familiar groups.

ARTS: *Drama:* Explore imaginary situations through dramatic action and role-playing; cooperatively develop, rehearse and present their drama. *Media:* Create a final product by participating with others in production. *Visual Arts:* Work with others on projects; show works to others.

from the National Statements and Profiles

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' experience of attending a church?

How did I respond to the range of students' understanding that 'church' can mean building and people?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

STORIES ABOUT THE FIRST CHURCH

The following scripts are designed to be told to students. Adapt them to meet the needs of your class.

A. CHRISTIANS MET TOGETHER

Shalom! (*explain that this is a greeting from Bible times*).

I am Claudia and I am part of God's church here in Jerusalem. Meet my friends Simeon and Demas. We are off to our church to meet with the other Christians. Would you like to walk with us? We go to our church on most days so that we can be together, but on some days we go to each other's homes. We all believe in Jesus and we are like brothers and sisters in God's family.

There are old and young people who meet together. The children like to play games with each other. The mums talk to one another, Sometimes they talk about their children or the work they have to do, but usually they talk about Jesus.

The dads come when they can, but if they have to work during the day, they can come only at night.

The grandmas and grandpas usually find a warm place to sit and watch what's going on. Often they share stories with the rest of us.

Look, there's Gaius! He's really good at telling stories. Everyone likes listening to him.

And there's Phoebe. She's got four children and she brings them along most days.

And there's Lucius. He's only just started coming to meet with us.

Hello, Lucius! I'm glad you could come. We're here now, so I'm going in. Would you like to come?

ACTIVITY: Use a children's Bible to look at illustrations of the first Christians. Do your own illustration (or painting) of some of the first Christians meeting together.

A BIBLE VERSE TO SHARE:

All the Lord's followers often met together.
(Acts 2:44)

B. CHRISTIANS LEARNT TOGETHER

(*Claudia continues her story.*)

Shalom!

Come with me. Come inside. There's someone I want you to meet.

Look! Over there! Standing at the front of the church. Do you know who that is?

That's Peter. When Jesus was alive, Peter was one of his special friends. He went everywhere with Jesus.

Now Jesus has gone back to heaven. Jesus can't be here to talk to us, so the disciples teach us about him.

There are other disciples too. The one over there is John, and there's Matthew.

But Peter's my favourite. He's so big and strong and got such a loud voice. At first I was afraid of him, but now I'm not because he makes really

good jokes, and he's always wanting to help people.

Last week I fell down those steps, and Peter was the first one to come over to see if I was all right.

Listen, Peter's starting to talk. He's going to tell a story. Oh, good! It's one of my favourites, the one about Jesus stopping a storm.

I do wish I could see Jesus and talk to him, but having people to teach me about him is good too.

ACTIVITY: Students work in pairs or groups. One student is nominated to be the teacher and 'teaches' the others about their favourite Bible story. The 'teacher' may even wish to devise an activity about the story. Provide children's Bibles or Bible story books to assist them.

A BIBLE VERSE TO SHARE:

Teach and instruct one another wisely.
Colossians 3:16 (adapted from GNB)

C. CHRISTIANS CARED FOR AND HELPED EACH OTHER

(Claudia continues her story.)

Shalom!

I came home from the church early. Mum's very busy baking bread, and I have to help with the fire.

When the bread is ready, I'll go with Mum to take it to one of the other Christian families.

Do you remember me talking about the lady who had four children?

Yesterday she was not feeling well, and today she is really sick. She can't get up to take care of her children.

When we heard about it at the church, we wanted to do something to help her. So Mum is baking bread for the family.

[Insert names from students' name tags] X's mum and Y's aunty have gone over to help look after the children.

Z's dad is going over to check on their animals and see what he can do to help.

That's the way it is among people who believe in Jesus, and I'm glad. I like helping people who need help, and I know that if anything went wrong in our family, we would have people to help us.

ACTIVITY: Students keep the identity of their Bible character and work in groups to make up a play about helping somebody in need.

A BIBLE VERSE TO SHARE:

Keep on loving one another as a Christian family. Hebrews 13:1 Based on GNB

A CHURCH TODAY

INSTRUCTIONS

Students create an outside-inside picture of a church today.

They fold a sheet of paper to form double-doors.

With the doors opened, they draw pictures of people involved in various church activities.

You may pre-fold the paper, or draw lines as guides for students to fold papers. Alternatively, older students can fold a paper in half, open it out, and fold each edge to the centre fold mark.

GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

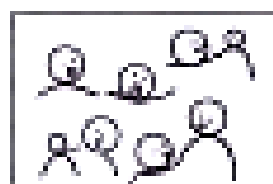
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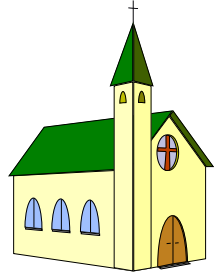


outside

inside



Learning about the church



The members of this group were

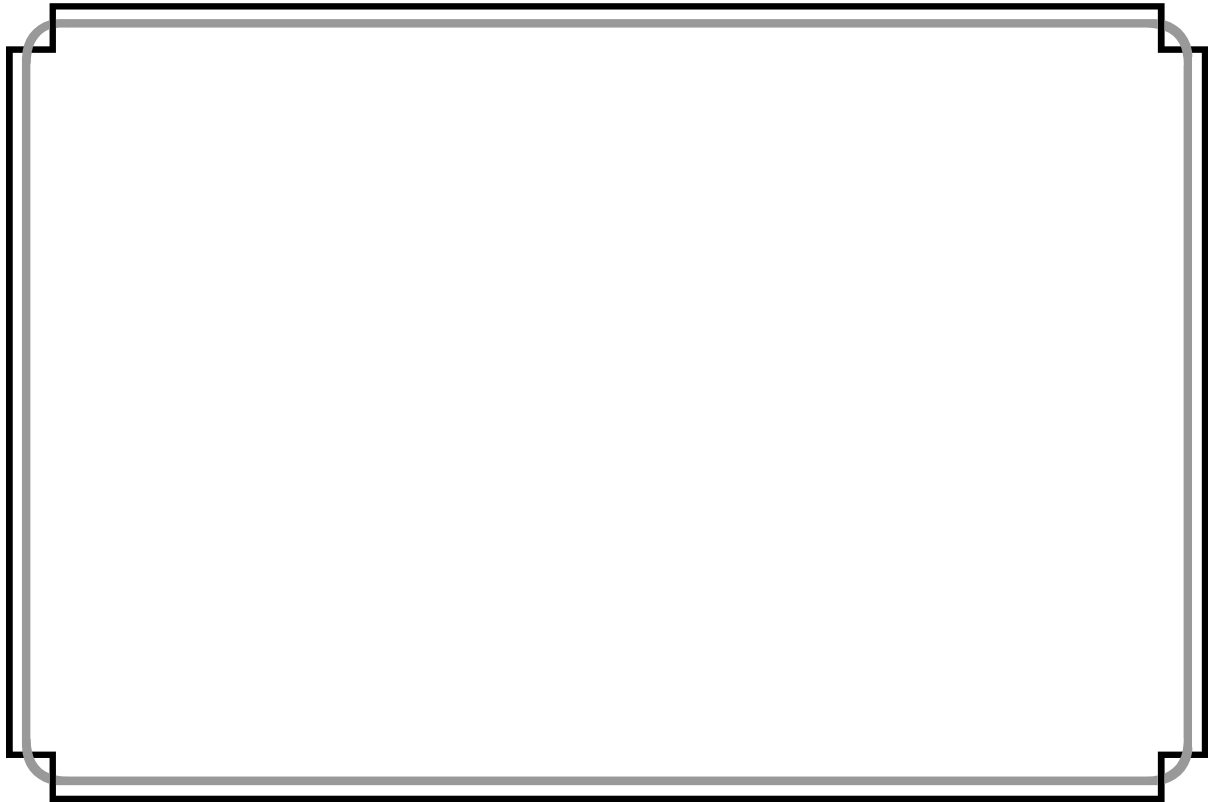
This group shared what they had learnt about the church.
They

- ☐ made up a play
- ☐ made a model and explained what they had made
- ☐ used the computer
- ☐ used art materials
- ☐ made a book
- ☐ _____

Their presentation showed that they had learnt that _____

They worked together

- ☐ by themselves
- ☐ with a little help
- ☐ with some help from the teacher



A note from the teacher

GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH