

# MENU

# BIBLE REFERENCES

1

The Christian church is the community of believers created by the Holy Spirit

There are many references in the Bible which symbolise the relationship between God and his church. Because of the abstract nature of these references, they have not been included at this band level.

The story of Pentecost Acts 2:1–13

The early church gathers together Acts 2:42–47

People in the early church share their possessions Acts 4:32–37

Many believed when the disciples preached about Jesus Acts 8:9–12

Phillip tells about Jesus Acts 8:26–40

Serve others 1 Peter 4:10,11

Christians living in harmony Philippians 2:1–5  
Ephesians 4:2–6

2

God has gathered his people together throughout history

The early church gathers together Acts 2:42–47

People in the early church share their possessions Acts 4:32–37

The first Christians shared Jesus' special meal 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

## Paul

Paul's conversion Acts 9:1–9

Paul preaches about Jesus Acts 9:19b–22

Paul in trouble Acts 9:23–25

Paul and Barnabas Acts 15:38–40

## Peter

Peter heals a lame man Acts 3:1–10

Peter performs miracles Acts 5:12–16

Peter is led out of prison Acts 12:1–17

## Timothy

Timothy's family Acts 16:1–3  
2 Timothy 1:5

Accompanied Paul on his journeys 1 Corinthians 4:17

Led the church at Ephesus 1 Timothy 1:3

## Other people in the early church

Lydia Acts 16:13–15

Dorcas (Tabitha) Acts 9:36–42

Priscilla and Aquila Acts 18:2–4, 24–26  
1 Corinthians 16:19

Paul and Barnabas disagree Acts 15:38,39

Euodia and Syntyche Philippians 4:2

## The church today

Celebrates the meal that Jesus gave his disciples Matthew 26:17–30

Baptises in response to Jesus' command Matthew 28:16–21

3

Lutherans in Australia work together in ministry and mission

## KEY BIBLE VERSES TO HEAR AND REMEMBER

*You belong to God's family.*

Ephesians 2:19 (NCV)

*All of you are God's children because of your faith in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 3:26 (CEV)

*All the Lord's followers often met together.*

Acts 2:44 (CEV)

## MENU

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

1

The Christian church is the  
community of believers created  
by the Holy Spirit

**FAMILIES** Brainstorm and list/illustrate things that happen in families, eg families help each other, families do things together, people in families sometimes disagree.

You will use these ideas to develop a comparison between human families and the church family. (1a)

**BIRTHDAYS** Students share experiences or photographs of their birthday celebrations. Identify the significance of a birthday, eg remembering the day your life began, remembering the day you became part of your family.

Use this as an introduction to the story of Pentecost. (1a)

**ON THE WEEKEND** Students illustrate places they went to on the weekend. Discuss these and the reasons for going. Identify the benefits of going to places together and being with others. If going to church is not mentioned, the teacher adds this and talks about his/her attendance at church. (1a,1b)

**IMPORTANT BUILDINGS** Students identify important community buildings and the functions of these buildings, eg hall, post office, library. Include church buildings and discuss why these are important places in the community. (1b,1c)

**CHURCH PHOTOS** The teacher brings a photo of her/his church building and invites students to do the same. (Be sensitive to students who do not attend any church.) Use these to identify features of churches, eg most church buildings are large, have many windows, display a cross. (1b)

**DRAW A CHURCH** Ask students to draw a church. If some students have never seen a church building, provide opportunity for them to work with someone who has. Use these

drawings to assess what students already know about the church and to build on this knowledge. (1b)

**PHOTOGRAPHS** The teacher shows photographs of his/her family, including members of the extended family whom she/he may not see very often. Tell short stories about the family members, including information about the different things they do in the family.

Help students recognise that families are made up of people who are different from each other and have different roles.

Students could bring their own photographs to share, or draw pictures of members of their family. (1a)

## 2

### God has gathered his people together throughout history

**ANCESTORS** The teacher shows a photograph of some of his/her ancestors and explains that these family members lived a long time ago.

Discuss the way people lived in the 'olden days'. This activity will be developed as you introduce stories of people in the first church family. (2a)

**A BOX** Use a cardboard box and extra cardboard to make a 'church' with a roof that can be lifted off.

Inside the box store a collection of Bible story books about people from the New Testament church.

Discuss what students already know about churches. Tell students that in the stories you will share they will hear about some of the people from the first church. (2a)

## 3

### Lutherans in Australia work together in ministry and mission

**SIGNS** Show or draw illustrations of everyday signs, eg stop signs, McDonald's arches. Discuss the purpose of signs in the community and what they tell people.

Take students outside to look at the school sign. Identify features of the sign, eg large print, the symbol, the name 'Lutheran'.

The teacher could photograph the sign or students make their own illustration of it. Discuss the words on the sign, what these mean and what they are telling people about the school. (3a,3b)

**OUR SCHOOL** Students talk about their school, eg what they like about it, their favourite

place in the school, things they like doing at school.

Older students could consider questions like: *Why did our school start? Why do students come to this school and not to a different school in the town/suburb?*

If the school has a long history, students could look at early photographs of the school, or invite speakers to talk about what it was like when they were students at the school. (3a,3b)

**THE UNIFORM** Look at articles of clothing in the school uniform, especially those items that have the school name or logo on them. Discuss why they are used in the uniform. What does the logo mean? What does it tell people when they see someone dressed in this uniform? (3a,3b)

**LOGO** Collect and discuss the logos of stores and companies. What is a logo? When is it used? Why is it used?

Show students the logo of the LIFE Curriculum and ask what this logo makes them think of and what it might be saying.

Show students the logo of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Students suggest what they think the symbolism means. (3a)

**WEB** Begin a web by placing a picture of a church in the centre of a large piece of paper. Ask students what they think of when they see a church. From students' suggestions develop areas for further investigation and add these to

the web, eg telling others about Jesus, caring for people, teaching children.

Throughout the unit continue adding information and pictures about what you discover about the church. (1c,3a)

# MENU

# DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

1

The Christian church is the community of believers created by the Holy Spirit

## PENTECOST: THE CHURCH

**BEGINS** Tell or review the story of Pentecost. The focus of this story at this time is that the church began at Pentecost. It is sometimes called the birthday of the church.

Investigate what the church is and what it does. (1a)

## PEOPLE WHO JOINED GOD'S

**FAMILY** Pentecost was the day that people who joined the church became part of God's family. Investigate who these people were.

- Introduce the leaders of the church. Select stories about them from the Bible References Menu.
- Use suggestions from Faith Statement 2 'Bible stories' to tell stories about people who were in the church family.
- Make simple puppets from clothes pegs, or figures cut out from old resource material. Introduce them as members of the first church, eg *Here's Rufus, he's a potter; here's Julia, she has three children.* Using Acts 2:42–47 as a reference, the teacher makes up stories about people in God's family. Students use puppets to make up their own stories. (1a,2a)

**MY FAMILY: A CHURCH FAMILY** Use students' suggestions of things that happen in families (see Introductory Activities Menu). Categorise these under headings that compare family life with things that happen in the church, eg

- 'People celebrate special times in the family' and 'People celebrate special times in church';
- 'People in the family help one another' and 'People in the church help one another';
- 'People in a family come together in a family' and 'People in God's family come together in a church building'.

Each section that you study could be recorded as a big book or on a series of posters.

The book *A First Look: The Church* by Lois Rock is based on this approach and can be used with older students in this band. (1a)

**GOD'S FAMILY** The church is made up of people who believe in Jesus and belong to God's family. The name for these people is 'Christians'.

Share non-fiction books, posters or videos that show Christians from all over the world. (1a)

**PEOPLE** Students suggest what they think is the most important part of the church.

Tell students that people are the most important part of the church.

As you teach this unit, model appropriate language that distinguishes the church building from the people who make up the church.

Draw the outline of a church building. Students fill the building with pictures of people, using magazine pictures or their own illustrations. (1a)

**THE CREED** Older students in this band can study a simplified version of the creed to identify what Christians believe. The book *Hear My Words* has an appropriate translation of the creed. (1a)

**A SPECIAL MEAL** Students tell about experiences of having a special meal with their family or friends. Christians share a special meal when they have holy communion. In holy communion Jesus gives his love to Christians in a special way.

Show students vessels and bread used in communion and, with the permission of the pastor, arrange for students to taste the bread. (1a,1c)

**A CHURCH VISIT** Organise a visit to one (or more) local church. On your visit note the features of the church (eg altar, cross), as well as the service facilities (eg car park, kitchen, hall, creche).

Take a camera with you and take photographs to use as the basis for a display, and as starting points to learn more about the ministry and service that happens within a church community. (1b,1c)

**A PLAY CHURCH** Set aside a corner of the classroom as a play church. Include seats,

dress-up clothes, simple Bible story books, and tapes of Christian songs that children know.

Alternatively, make simple puppet-people and a box church for students to use as they make up plays about people and church. (1a,1c)

**PEOPLE WHO HELP** Identify people who help in the church community. Include a range of helpers, eg ushers, musicians, cleaners, coffee servers, people on flower rosters, as well as the pastor or other trained personnel. Invite some of these people into the classroom to talk to your students about what they do and why. Before the visit, have students prepare questions to ask.

Photograph each person and prepare a simple profile about them and their role in the church. Keep these in a special photo album or display area. (1a,1c)

**GETTING TO KNOW YOU** Invite the pastor into your classroom to talk to your students about the work of a pastor, and — just as importantly — to stay and get to know students on an informal basis.

Also invite members of the local congregation. This could be done informally, or as an afternoon program in which students can share with the visitors what they do and visitors can chat with the students.

You may be able to begin a LAP (Learning Assistance Program) or buddy program between students and volunteers from the congregation. (1a,1c)

**ROLE-PLAY** Role-play or dramatise activities that people do as part of the church family. Students work in groups and each group participates in a task, eg to prepare music, bring flowers, make soup to share. (1c)

## 2

### God has gathered his people together throughout history

**BIBLE STORIES** Use the Bible References Menu and select stories of people in the New Testament church. Share these stories in any of the following ways:

- Tell the story as if you were the main character. Use storytelling techniques (use of voice, dramatisation, props) to capture students' attention.
- Manipulate puppets as you tell the stories. Allow students access to these puppets for their own playtime.

- Read books from a 'church box' (see Introductory Activities Menu).
- Students pretend to be a member of the early church and are each given (or choose) a biblical name for themselves. Students make headbands or name tags to wear as you tell the story. (2a)

**BOOKS** After each Bible story that you tell, students make their own simple books to retell the story. This could be a folded A4 sheet with a page for the cover, and an illustration and recount of the story inside. At the end of the unit students use a box to make a model of a church and store their books and any other work sheets inside the 'church'. (2a)

**EARLY CHURCH BUILDINGS** The teacher obtains non-fiction material to help students research what the early church buildings looked like. The first Christians met together in the temple, in synagogues and in people's homes. (2a)

### 3

### Lutherans in Australia work together in ministry and mission

**LUTHERAN** Explain the meaning of the word 'Lutheran' in simple language, eg *People who believe in Jesus belong to different church families. 'Lutheran' is the name of one of these church families.*

Students from different denominations could find out the name of their church family. At this band level emphasise the common factor of believing in Jesus rather than the differences between denominations. (3a)

(Note: The story of Martin Luther is introduced in Band B.)

**VISIT OR SPEAKER** If there is an agency of the church near you, (eg home for the aged, counselling centre, bookshop), arrange to visit this place or for someone from the agency to come and speak to your students. Students prepare questions for the speaker and respond with a letter of thanks. (3a)

**SPECIAL PLACES** Take students for a walk around the school grounds and buildings. On your return ask students why they think the school has an area for worship and places set aside in the classrooms for devotions. Students suggest ways in which these places can be made special places within the school, eg banners, signs of welcome, signs pointing the way. (2b)

**CHRISTIAN STUDIES** Use a time table and identify the times when your class is involved in Christian Studies or worship. Share the reasons why this time is set aside in your school.

Ask students what they do and/or don't enjoy about Christian Studies. Use their suggestions

as you work together to make this subject more meaningful to your students. (2b)

**CARE IN THE SCHOOL** Together with the students identify ways that the school community shows care to the people within it, eg buddy classes, parents helping in the school, students helping each other. Share the students' observations with the school community through a display or the newsletter. (3b)

**PHOTOS OR VIDEO** Give students the task of suggesting what they would include if they were to take photographs of things that make your school a special place to be. Take these photographs (or a video) and display them with appropriate captions. (3b)

## ***GENERAL ACTIVITIES***

**BIBLE VERSE** Students learn an appropriate Bible verse (see page 10).

**SONGS** Students learn songs related to each Faith Statement (see Resources for Music and Devotions in the appendix).

**BIBLE CHARACTER** (a recommended activity for Level 3) Students learn about a specific Bible character. Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) A3/extra contains a story and activities about Timothy, a member of the early church.



# MENU

# RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

1

The Christian church is the community of believers created by the Holy Spirit

**POSTER** Either as a class or by working individually or in groups, make a poster which summarises who Christians are and what they believe. (1a)

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS** Students suggest ways they think Christians could celebrate the beginning of the church at Pentecost. Provide opportunity for students to carry out appropriate suggestions. (1a)

**MODELS** Students work in groups to make a model of a church building or of your local church complex. Students could use boxes or construction blocks such as Lego or Duplo. A computer drawing program could also be used for this activity.

Older students could include models of church buildings that are used in different parts of the world. (1b)

**PERSONAL INVITATIONS** Arrange for the children's ministry leaders of the supporting congregation to give personal invitations to your students to attend one of their kids club or Sunday school sessions. (1c)

**PARTICIPATION IN WORSHIP** Arrange for your class to participate in Sunday worship at your local congregation. (1c,3a)

**CHURCH BULLETIN** Show students the bulletin or newsletter from your local congregation. Students illustrate/write what they have been learning in Christian Studies to be included in the bulletin. (1c,3a)

2

God has gathered his people together throughout history

**DISPLAYS** Display what has been learnt about characters from the early church by

- making a mural with a backdrop of scenes from Bible times and featuring pictures of the characters;

- making a 'gallery' of framed collage 'photographs' with captions which review the main points of the story.

**PRESENTATION** Students review what they have learnt in this unit and devise ways of presenting this information to another class, or in school worship or assembly. This could include short plays, readers theatre, songs. (2a)

**WHO AM I?** Students make up a series of *Who am I?* questions about characters in the early church. In pairs, students take turns guessing who each character is. (2a)

3

### Lutherans in Australia work together in ministry and mission

**LOGO** After investigating ways in which the church tells about Jesus and shows care for others, students design a logo which symbolises the work of the church. (3a)

**POSTERS** Students design posters to advertise their school. Provide appropriate paper and art materials for a bright presentation. Display these around the school or at community events, eg a local show or shopping centre. (3a,3b)

**FINISH THE SENTENCE** Students complete sentences about their school, eg

'*Good Shepherd* school is special because . . .'  
'Come to *St Paul's* school and . . .'

Students add appropriate illustrations. (3b)

**SCHOOL SONG** Learn the school song and discuss the meaning of the words.

Older students could write their own class or school song. (3b)

**CALENDAR** Some promotional companies will arrange to make a calendar which features the school or your class.

Students design appropriate illustrations and captions for a school calendar. (3b)

**CORRESPONDENCE** Arrange to correspond with students from another Lutheran school. This could be by letter, fax or e-mail. (3b)

**VISIT** If there is another Lutheran school nearby, arrange to visit and spend time in activities with students of the same year level. Try to arrange a worship time together. (3b)

## MENU

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The introduction to LIFE contains suggested general resources for all LIFE concepts. The following resources may be used in a unit about *God gathers people into the Christian church*.

Some of these resources may be out of print.

They are listed because they (or others similar to them) may be found in school libraries.

Preview these and any other resources you intend using to be sure that they are appropriate for your students.

### LITERATURE — NON-FICTION

Alexander P *The Lion First Bible* 1997 Lion Publishing

Alexander P (ed) *The Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible* 1986 Lion Publishing

Butcher G *Paul the First Missionary* 1984 Hodder and Stoughton

Caswell H *Our Big Family at Church* Lutterworth Press

Drane J *Christians* 1994 Lion Publishing

Henderson F *Learning about the Church* 1984 Lion Publishing

Rock L *A First Look: The Church* 1994 Lion Publishing

Rock L *A First Look: The Christian Life* 1996 Lion Publishing

### LITERATURE — FICTION

#### FAMILY

Hughes S *Lucy and Tom's Day* 1960 Gollancz

Loh M *Tucking Mummy In* Ashton Scholastic

#### SCHOOL LIFE

Breinburg P *My Brother Sean* Puffin

Wells R *Timothy Goes to School* Collins Lion

## **MUSIC**

*All Together* series Openbook Publishers

*Sing to Jesus* Lutheran Publishing House 1983  
Adelaide

*God Gives — Songs for Kids 1* Joint Board of  
Christian Education 1982  
(Family of Jesus)

Hawes M *Find out about Christians* 1986  
Scripture Union

A useful book to give starting points about  
people in the early church. Most suitable for  
introductory/year one

Weiss N *Hear My Words* Bible truths for young  
children 1982 Lutheran Publishing House

## **TEACHER RESOURCES**

Put a plastic sleeve in this section of your LIFE binder to keep your own collection of clippings, cartoons, stories, photos, etc which you can use for these units. Add to your collection whenever you come across something that might be useful.