

**MODEL UNIT  
BAND B  
LEVEL 1**

# A LOCAL CHURCH

**LIFE CONCEPT: GOD GATHERS PEOPLE INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

YEAR: .....SUGGESTED DURATION: 5 weeks (135 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 investigate the Christian church as a community of believers
- 1b identify the structures and roles within a local church community
- 1c examine the benefits of belonging to a local Christian church

### 2. GOD HAS GATHERED HIS PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

- 2a become familiar with the life and work of Martin Luther
- 2b explore the impact Luther's work had on the Christian church

### 3. LUTHERANS IN AUSTRALIA WORK TOGETHER IN MINISTRY AND MISSION

- 3a identify ways Lutherans in Australia carry out their mission and ministry
- 3b investigate the work of an organisation of the Lutheran church in Australia

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

### ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

- Make a directory of people who work for a local Christian church and of people who worked in the early Christian church community. (1a,1b)
- List activities which take place in a local Christian church community and compare them with those of the early church community. (1a,1b,3a,3b)
- Illustrate their understanding of a local Christian church. (1a,1b,1c,3a,3b)

### ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- ⇒ work sample
- ⇒ work sample, observation
- ⇒ work sample

## UNIT SUMMARY

Students research a local Christian church (congregation): its physical aspects, the people working for it, and the activities which take place in it. They compare this with the physical aspects of the church in New Testament times and the role of people and the activities which took place in it.

## UNIT NOTES

In this unit students investigate a local Christian church (congregation). All students can look at a supporting congregation of the school, or students who are members of local Christian churches can look at their churches and share information. If the whole class is investigating one congregation, organise a visit to the church and interviews with people who work for and are members of the church. The pastor will be a valuable resource, as will a collection of church bulletins.

Information about the Christian church will be recorded on a class chart throughout the unit.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. GROUPS I BELONG TO

Students work in pairs to list groups they belong to. The teacher may suggest groups, such as sporting groups, dance groups, art, music or drama groups. Students complete Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) B1/1.

Optional activities include:

- Each student makes a poster which explains or advertises one of these groups.
- As a class, list the groups and the number of students who belong to the groups. Construct a graph to display the results.

These activities do not have to take place during Christian Studies time.

## DEVELOPMENT

### 2. WHAT I KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

A local church community is another group some people belong to. Write the word 'church' on the board. Students write or draw what they know about 'church'. Students share their responses with the class. Record these responses on a class chart. Use this chart throughout the unit when there is anything to add or clarify.

Show students 1 Peter 2:9:

*'But you are God's chosen and special people ... God has brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Now you must tell about all the wonderful things he has done.'* (CEV).

Identify what this passage says about the church. Add new insights to the class list, eg God's chosen people, people telling others about the wonderful things God has done.

Tell students that this big group of God's chosen people are called *Christians* because

they all believe in Jesus *Christ*. They are found all over the world. Christians come together in smaller groups and form local churches.

### 3. MEETING PLACES

Students investigate a supporting congregation of the school, or their own local Christian church. Students who research a church which is not affiliated with the school, will need a copy of TRS B1/2 to complete as a homework task.

#### Where local Christians meet

Students use TRS B1/2 to investigate the physical aspects of the church building. Arrange for a member of the congregation to give students a 'guided tour' of the building.

Students discuss and compare their research with each other. Students choose either to make a model of the church and name the various features, or to make a 'flap' book which illustrates and explains the different physical features of the church.

#### Where Christians in the New Testament met

Students read Acts 2:46,47 to identify where the first Christians met. Students choose from the following activities:

- Use resources such as a Bible encyclopedia to find pictures or plans of what Herod's temple or homes in biblical times would have looked like. Draw a plan or make a model of the temple.
- Begin a wall mural which illustrates the places where the first Christians met. Students add to the mural as they research the activities which took place in the first Christian church.

#### Why Christians have a meeting place

Ask students to reflect on why a church community has a building. Record responses on the class chart. Identify the similarities and differences between the worship buildings in the New Testament with those of today.

Assist students to see that the church building is meant to honour God and to show the community that God is important to Christians. It provides a place where Christians can come together and worship God in a special way.

### 4. PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH

#### What people do in local churches

Students use TRS B1/3 to research the role of people in a local church community.

Organise a visit from some of the people from a supporting congregation of the school or other local churches to talk about their work. Include paid and unpaid workers. Students could work in small groups and each group could interview one person.

An optional activity could involve organising a visit from a pastor. Ask the pastor to show a personal diary which indicates the variety of tasks a pastor is involved in.

Students share their information with the group. Teacher focuses on the final question on TRS B1/3 which looks at the motivation for working for the church, eg because they want to share God's love with others, because they want to learn more about Jesus.

Students use their research notes to compile a class directory of people who work for a local Christian church, or they write descriptions of the church members' activities, roles, and motivation on large cut-out figures.

Add to the class chart information about the roles of people in a local Christian church.

### What people did in New Testament churches

Tell students the Bible says that after Jesus went back to heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit to help people believe in Jesus and to form the Christian church. The Bible also says that the Holy Spirit made the members of the church kind and loving people who helped others.

Students investigate the roles of people in the first church, such as:

- Lydia Acts 16:14,15
- Stephen and other deacons Acts 6:1-7
- Dorcas Acts 9:36-42
- Paul and Barnabas Acts 13:1-5
- Luke Colossians 4:14
- Peter and John Acts 3:1-10.

Groups of students choose one of these people (or groups) and read the Bible passage to find out about the people's activities. Use each group's information to compile a class directory of people who worked in the early church, describing and illustrating their work.

Discuss the reasons the people did this work and what motivated them. Compare this with the motivation of the workers in a local church.

Help the students to see that the good news of Jesus' love for all people was the motivation for the work in the first church and is the same motivation for Christians now.

## 5. ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH

### What happens in local churches

Students interview people who are members of a supporting Christian church of their school (consider using school staff or school parents who attend the church) to identify

- activities which take place in the church

- the benefits of belonging to the church.

Students record the information on TRS B1/4. Church bulletins, the mission statement of their local church, or possibly the church home page on the Internet could be useful resources.

Add information about activities of the church to the class chart.

Assist students to be aware of the following:

When Christians come together

- they honour God
- they hear about Jesus' love for all people
- they believe God brings them into his family through baptism
- they receive the Lord's supper
- they share faith
- they encourage and help each other
- they witness to the whole community.

### What happened in New Testament churches

Students read the following Bible passages to discover what sort of activities took place in the Christian church in New Testament times:

- teaching and preaching Romans 12:6-8; 1 Timothy 4:8-11,13
- baptism Acts 2:38, 39
- holy communion Acts 2:42
- helping and encouraging Acts 2:44-47.

Illustrate or role-play these activities showing the contrast and similarities between the church in the past and in the present.

Students look again at TRS B1/1: *Groups I belong to*. As a class answer the various questions on the TRS in relation to the church, eg *Where does it meet? What activities take place? How does someone become a member? Why do people want to belong?* Students identify and discuss: How is belonging to the church different from belonging to any other group?

## RESPONSE

### 6. WHAT IS A LOCAL CHURCH?

Students present information they have gathered about a local Christian church as:

- a brochure which tells about it; or
- a home page for the Internet; or
- a new logo.

Students can share this information with the school community and/or the local community. Students' brochures or information from their home page can be photocopied and distributed to houses in the local area.

## YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> to organise a visit to a local church and an interview with the pastor and other members of the congregation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> poster paper, materials to make a model of a church building, paper for a mural</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bibles, illustrated Bibles, Bible handbook or Bible encyclopedia, illustrations or plans of Herod's temple</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Photocopies of TRS B1/1, B1/2, B1/3, B1/4 for the students</li></ul> |
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## INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

**ENGLISH:** *Everyday Texts:* Question peers and others to gain information. Plan written and spoken texts to achieve their purpose. Speak audibly, pronounce clearly, order ideas. Summarise key events and ideas from literature.

**ARTS:** *Creating, Making, Presenting:* Work with others on a project such as a mural or model.

**SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT:** *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Decide on and ask questions to get information from peers and adults. Record observations. Select, compare, categorise relevant information. Interpret and make graphs, models, collages and charts. Listen and respond to oral histories, stories and presentations. Express personal views on information. *Time, Continuity, Change:* Develop a sense of heritage. Roles for people in the community. Models, maps and plans of immediate surroundings.

**MATHEMATICS:** *Space:* Plan, describe and use arrangements in practical settings. Plan and execute arrangements to specifications.

from the National Statements and Profiles

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## 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' understandings about the Christian church?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards the benefits of belonging to a church community?

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?

# GROUPS I BELONG TO

What is the group called?	Where does it meet?	What activities take place?	How does someone become a member?	Why do people want to belong?





1. What is the full name of the church?

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2. Find and copy the information on the dedication stone or plaque or do a crayon rubbing of the plaque on a separate sheet of paper.

3. List the different sections of the church buildings, eg office, vestry, kitchen, hall.

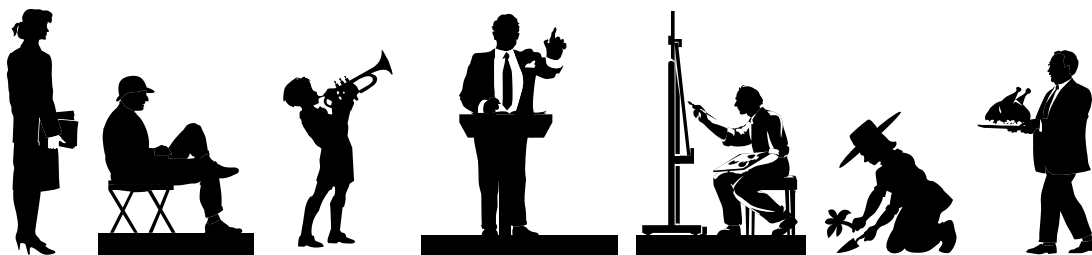
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4. Draw the outside of the church building including as much detail as possible.

5. (On another paper) Draw a plan of the inside of the church building, labelling all the features.



## PEOPLE WHO WORK IN A CHURCH

1. Make a list of people who work for a local church, eg pastor, groundsperson, craft-group organiser.

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY DO

2. Choose one of these workers and ask them to share the reasons they work for the church. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

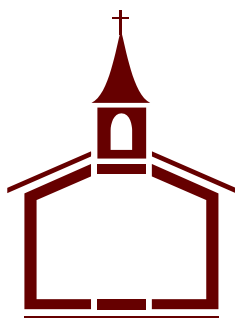
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3. What do you think is the most important reason why these people work for the church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# What happens in the church?

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name of person interviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the church \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do people become members of the church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why are you a member of this church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kinds of activities take place in this church?

What happens?	When?

5. Which of these activities are you involved with? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you think is the most important activity which takes place in this church? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_