

**MODEL UNIT  
BAND C  
LEVEL 1**

# TIME TREK INTO THE CHURCH'S HISTORY

**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 Bible's descriptions of the Christian church

**1b** explore similarities and differences in local Christian denominations

**1c** explore how God's word and the sacraments are central to the life of Christian congregations

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

**2a** investigate important events and people in the development and history of Christian denominations

**2b** investigate the history of the Lutheran church in Australia

**2c** explore what has been constant and what has changed in the Christian church

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

**3a** investigate ways the Lutheran Church of Australia carries out its mission and ministry in the world

**3b** investigate the work of an organisation of the Lutheran Church of Australia in the world

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

### ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Role-play what it meant to belong to the Christian church in Bible times. (1a)

Describe the importance of the word and sacraments in the Christian church at different times in history. (1c)

Record important people and events in the Christian church at different times in history. (2a)

List what has changed and what has remained the same in the Christian church through history. (2c)

### ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ observation

⇒ travel log

⇒ travel log

⇒ travel log, TRS C1/7

## UNIT SUMMARY

Students investigate the Christian church at different times in history: in the early years, at the time of the Reformation and today. Students will also predict what the church of the future might be like. Students use the concept of time travel and keep a travel log to record the features of the church at different times in history.

## UNIT NOTES

In this unit the students time travel through history to look at several important periods in the history of the Christian church.

A film about time travel is used to introduce the unit. The introductory activity could be integrated with English and need not be a part of the Christian Studies session. Students could design their own time travel machines as a technology or art activity.

The research of life in the Middle Ages can be integrated with Society and Environment. It can be as brief or as detailed as time and resources allow.

Students keep a travel log during the unit, recording what they learn about the Christian church at different times in history. Allow time regularly for students to reflect on their learning. See Teachers Resource Sheet (TRS) C1/1.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. TIME TRAVEL THROUGH HISTORY

View a film or excerpts from a film about time travel such as *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* or *Back to the Future*. Discuss with students:

- In what ways would time travel help us learn about important people and events in history?
- If you were to travel to different times in the Christian church's history, what do you think you might find out?
- Do you think the church is the same today as it was when it first began? Why or why not?

Explain that the students are about to embark on some time travel to investigate what it was like to belong to the church at different times in history. Distribute TRS C1/1

## DEVELOPMENT

### 2. DESTINATION: FIRST CENTURY AD — THE MIDDLE EAST

Students travel back in time to the early years of the Christian church. They use Bible encyclopedias and handbooks to investigate life in those times.

Provide a range of non-fiction texts for students to use to investigate life in the time of the early Christian church. *Mission Extraordinary: The First Christians in Action* by John Drane and

the *Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible* are excellent resources. If possible, view a video based on Acts (see Recommended Resources Menu).

Introduce the book of Acts as the eyewitness record of information about the early Christian church. As students read, they are to keep a travel log. They record information about what it was like to belong to the first church.

Students read the passages in Acts listed on TRS C1/2 and use the questions on the TRS to guide their travel log entry about what it was like to belong to the first Christian church.

Stories examined:

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Pentecost                | Acts 2:1–47           |
| • Opposition               | Acts 4:5–20           |
| • Communities              | Acts 4:32–37          |
| • Stephen                  | Acts 6:1–15; 7:54–8:2 |
| • Dorcas                   | Acts 9:36–42          |
| • Peter and Cornelius      | Acts 10:1–48          |
| • The church at Antioch    | Acts 11:19–26         |
| • Persecution              | Acts 12:1–19          |
| • Lydia                    | Acts 16:11–15         |
| • Paul preaches the gospel | Acts 20:7–12          |
| • Paul is shipwrecked      | Acts 27:1 – 28:31     |

Students work in groups to prepare a role-play that shows what it was like to belong to the early Christian church.

As a class discuss the role-plays and compile a class list of features of belonging to the church at this time. Students can add any further information in their travel logs.

### 3. DESTINATION: 1500'S, THE MIDDLE AGES — EUROPE

In their time travel through history students travel on to the time of the Reformation. Students research what it was like to live in the Middle Ages. Students could study pictures or view videos about life in 1000–1500.

Dates, key people and key words for students' investigation of church life during this period of history are given on TRS C1/3 as research starting points. General and CD-ROM (*Encarta*) encyclopedias have excellent information. See Recommended Resources Menu for other texts.

As a class, read a text about Martin Luther, such as *Martin Luther Hero of the Reformation* from the Heroes of Faith series and record information about the events of the Reformation.

Students individually investigate the Reformation, using TRS C1/3 and the key words suggested. Students record in their travel logs what it was like to belong to the

Christian church at the time of the Reformation.

Students work in groups to share their information and discuss as a class:

- What did belonging to the church at that time involve?
- How would you have responded to the reformers' teaching if you had been a Christian at the time?

Tell students that the Christian church already existed as the Eastern and Western churches. Now the Protestant denominations formed within the Western church as a result of protests against the teachings and activities of the Western Catholic church.

Discuss with students:

- What do you think might be the outcome of such divisions?
- What do periods in the church's history like this teach people about the Christian church?

Christians believe God works through the church in spite of the human failings of its members.

Students record their findings in their travel logs.

### **OPTIONAL DESTINATION**

Depending on time and resources available, students could investigate another time in the Christian church's history, such as the persecution by the Romans, the crusades, or the development of the Lutheran church in Australia.

### **4. DESTINATION: TODAY — AUSTRALIA**

In their time travel through history students travel on to the present. Provide students with TRS C1/4 and introduce the investigation of the church today. Discuss available resources: print and other.

Invite members of the local Christian congregations to form a panel for students to interview, using the questions on TRS C1/4. (Parents who belong to local Christian congregations may be ideal panel members.) Students record what it means to belong to the Christian church today.

Alternatively, gather congregational bulletins to investigate the activities of the local Christian communities.

Students record information in their travel logs.

Discuss as a class:

- What do you think is the greatest challenge for the Christian church today?

### **5. DESTINATION: THE FUTURE — PLANET EARTH**

In their time trek students designate a particular future date to time travel to and research, eg 2020AD, 3000AD. Students work in groups to brainstorm a list of things they believe will affect the future, eg technology, growing population of poor people, environmental problems.

Discuss with students how they think the church could respond to these issues. See TRS C1/5.

Students record in their travel log what they think the church of the future will be like. They may use drawings as well as written comments to describe their church of the future.

## **RESPONSE**

### **6. DEBRIEFING**

When students have completed their time trek research and returned to home base, they begin the debriefing process.

Students work in groups. Assign a time period to each group. Each group prepares a display and a brief oral presentation/role-play about their period of time.

In the displays students show or illustrate things and activities that might have been characteristic of the church at that time, eg in the early church the Christians shared possessions and cared for the poor. For the Reformation time students could create relics and a mock copy of Luther's 95 theses.

As the final entry in their travel logs, students use TRS C1/6 to reflect on what they have learnt. In particular, they reflect on what has remained constant and what has changed in the church's history.

Students can share and discuss their responses with the class.

## YOU WILL NEED

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> video about time-travel adventures, such as <i>Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventures</i> or <i>Back to the Future</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> non-fiction texts (encyclopedias, CD-ROMs, such as <i>Encarta</i>) with information about the history of the church and living in different times in history, such as the Middle Ages</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> videos (if available) about the book of Acts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> appropriate 'time trek' music and sound effects to play as background while students are doing research</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

---

## INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

**ENGLISH:** *Literature:* Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Find and cite elements of a text to support a point of view. *Everyday Texts:* Consider needs of audience when speaking. Develop discussion and problem-solving skills. Use strategies for gathering, recording and reporting data. Report findings in speech and writing.

**ARTS:** *Drama:* Improvise and experiment in structured drama. Shape own drama – select and link scenes.

**SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT:** *Investigation, Communication, Participation:* Formulate questions, reflect on knowledge and understanding. Identify information sources. Gather, organise and interpret information using diagrams. Identify similar data. Draw conclusions. Identify, analyse and clarify values. Consider audience in presentation. Cooperation skills. *Culture:* Investigate the role, importance of religions, beliefs and values.

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' attitudes towards the church?

How did I respond to the range of students' knowledge about the history of the Christian church?

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?

## TIME TREK

**You will be going on an imaginary voyage through time and space. As you travel, try to understand what people are actually doing and thinking at each point in history.**

**You will be keeping a travel log in which you record your observations of the church in different periods of time.**

**You may also record your thoughts, ideas and feelings about what you are doing and learning.**

**The following starting points may help you:**

- **Today I learnt that . . .**
- **I was really surprised that . . .**
- **What worries me is . . .**
- **I want to find out more about. . .**
- **One question I would like answered is . . .**
- **I agree/disagree with . . .**
- **The big challenge is to . . .**

**Here is a sample travel log entry:**

*DATE: AD 65*

*PLACE: Jerusalem*

*I was really amazed at what I found out today. I can not believe that the first Christians travelled so much to tell others about Jesus. They were very brave going to places they had never visited before. I still don't understand why they did it. Where did they get such courage? I would be too scared.*

*Jackie and I will keep researching tomorrow and hopefully find out more interesting information. We would like some help finding resources.*

***Louise***

# TIME TREK

## DESTINATION: FIRST CENTURY AD — THE MIDDLE EAST

To find out about the Christian church, we have to go back to the source,  
where it all began.

The book of Acts takes us there.






The book of Acts is full of amazing stories of the very beginnings of the church. It tells of the experiences of people as they spread the good news about Jesus. It tells about challenges and opposition and travelling to foreign countries.

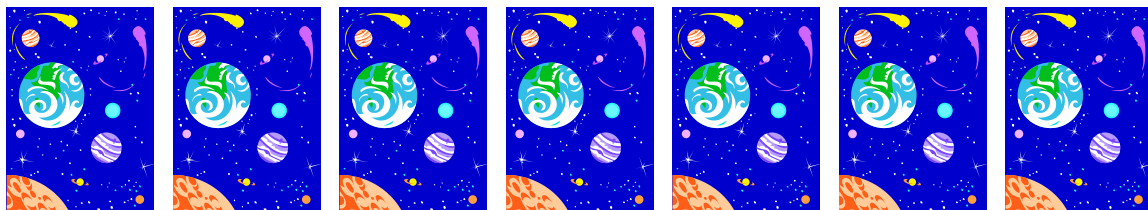
Read the following sections of Acts and tick them off as you complete them.

After you have read each section, you may make entries in your time travel log.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 2:1–47     | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 4:5–20       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 4:32–37    | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 6:1–15       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7:54 – 8:2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9:36–42      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 10:1–48    | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 11:19–26     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 12:1–19    | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 16:11–15     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 20:7–12    | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 27:1 – 28:31 |

Use the following questions to guide your travel log entries:

-  What do you think was the mission of the early Christian church?
-  Who were important people in the early Christian church?
-  How important was God's word?
-  What importance was given to the sacraments (baptism and holy communion)?
-  What did belonging to the early Christian church involve? (activities/lifestyle)



# TIME TREK

## DESTINATION: 1500'S, THE MIDDLE AGES — EUROPE

**This was an interesting time in Europe,  
as the church was the most rich and powerful organisation in Europe.  
Everything people did in the Middle Ages was influenced by the church.**

**Key words and topics to investigate:**

<b>Middle Ages</b>	<b>indulgences</b>	<b>monks and monasteries</b>	
	<b>cathedrals</b>	<b>Reformation</b>	
<b>Martin Luther</b>	<b>John Calvin</b>	<b>Jan Hus</b>	<b>Huldreich Zwingli</b>







**Research using all the reference sources you can find.**

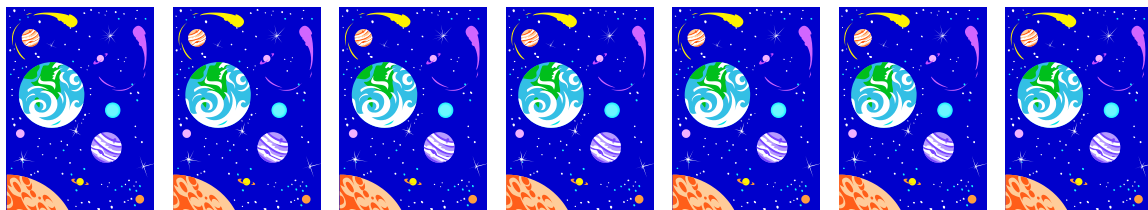
**Discover what the church was like at that time in history.**

**Imagine what it was like to be a Christian at that time in history.**

**Make daily entries in your travel log.**

**Use these questions to guide your entries:**

-  **Describe what the church was like at that time.**
-  **What appears to have been the mission of the church at that time?**
-  **Who were important people in the Christian church?**
-  **How important was God's word?**
-  **What importance was given to the sacraments (baptism and holy communion)?**
-  **What did belonging to the church involve? (activities/ lifestyle)**



# TIME TREK







## DESTINATION: TODAY — AUSTRALIA

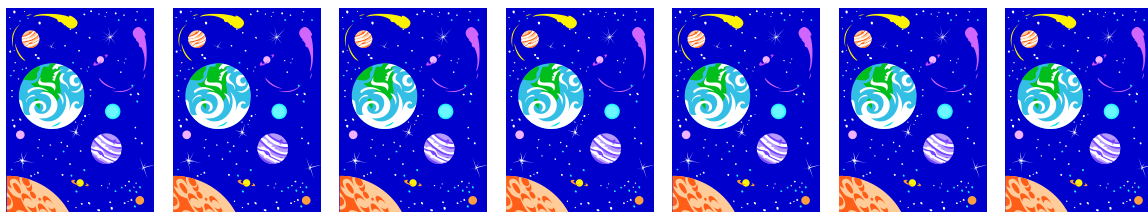
**This is an interesting time in the Christian church's history.  
The Christian church has little direct influence on governments' decisions  
and the way in which the majority of people live their lives.  
Most Christian churches are facing declining attendance and involvement.**

**As you research the Christian church today, consider the range of resources available to you, such as:**

**people who belong to local Christian congregations  
the Internet (most Christian churches have a home page)  
newsletters or bulletins available from local congregations  
ministers of local Christian congregations**

**Use the following questions to guide your investigation:**

-  **What does it mean to belong to the Christian church today?**
-  **What does belonging to the Christian church involve?**
-  **Who are important people in the Christian church?**
-  **How important is God's word?**
-  **What importance is given to the sacraments (baptism and holy communion)?**
-  **What do you think is the mission of the Christian church today?**





# TIME TREK








## DESTINATION: THE FUTURE — PLANET EARTH

**In your group brainstorm a list of issues that concern us today and will affect the future, eg technology, environmental problems, growing population of poor.**

**In your group discuss how you think the church could respond to these issues.**

**Think about the Christian church of the future and imagine that you could time travel to visit it. Write a report and include drawings of what it could be like to belong to the Christian church in the future.**

**Use the following to guide your entries:**

-  **Describe what it will mean to belong to this church.**
-  **What will the mission of the church be?**
-  **What will belonging to the church involve?**
-  **Who will be important people in the Christian church?**
-  **How important is God's word?**
-  **What importance is given to the sacraments (baptism and holy communion)?**
-  **What will be its greatest challenges?**



# TIME TREK

## FINAL ENTRY IN TRAVEL LOG

For your final travel log entry reflect on what you have learnt about the Christian church during the unit by responding to the following questions:

**1. What aspects of belonging to the church have changed through history?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**2. What aspects of belonging to the church have remained the same through history?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**3. Has the research changed your views about the Christian church in any way? Describe how.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**4. What is the most important thing you have learnt about the Christian church?**

.....

.....

.....

**5. What do you think should be a priority for the church as it considers the future?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**6. Any other comments you have about the unit.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

