



### Introduction to Christian worship – teachers' notes

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#### Overview:

Discover why, where and how Christians worship with this KS2 lesson, designed to last for one hour. Using Westminster Abbey as a case study, it explores different ways Christians can show how important God is to them as well as the distinction between liturgical and non-liturgical worship.

SLIDE 3: Introduce the learning objective and success criteria

- To be able to explain what worship is
- To be able to say why people worship God
- To be able to talk about different kinds of Christian worship
- To be able to explain why people may go to worship in Westminster Abbey

SLIDE 4: Activity: Think of something that is really important to you. It could be a sport or activity you do, a place you visit, a special person etc.

How do you show how important that thing is to you? Share your answers with someone else.

Take examples from the class. Use football as a key one: How can people show how important football is to them?

Watch games, buy a season ticket, wear kit, collect football cards, buy memorabilia etc.

Draw out the point that all these things that we do demonstrate how much these things are WORTH to us.

SLIDE 5: Ask pupils for ideas of what worship means. They will probably give you examples of different kinds of worship e.g. praise, prayer, singing, going to church etc. This helps to focus their mind that it is something religious.

The word Worship means "To Show how much something is WORTH to you". It comes from an Old English word Weorþscipe, or Worth-Ship

SLIDE 6: Ask pupils to think of ways they might mark something special, like a birthday. Draw out answers such as wearing best clothes or decorating the house for a party.

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# Westminster Abbey

## Learning



All these things are ways that we show how important something is. For Christians, showing how important God is to them can be done in similar ways.

SLIDE 7: The next four slides talk about some of the different ways that Christians can show how important God is to them.

Sometimes they worship in beautiful churches, built using the most special materials. This is a picture of Westminster Abbey from the outside, and the inside.

Westminster Abbey which is an Anglican church in London. Worship has happened here for over 1,000 years, following the same pattern and form for much of that time.

The church is over 750 years old and today is used as the place for coronations and many other important acts of worship. But ordinary worship services are held every day: Monday-Saturday – 7.30am Morning Prayer, 8.00am Holy Communion, 12.30pm Holy Communion, 5.00pm Evensong; Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion, 10.00am Mattins, 11.15am Sung Eucharist, 3.00pm Evensong, 6.00pm Holy Communion.

SLIDE 8: Talk about objects made from precious materials.

Churches like Westminster Abbey are full of gold and silver objects to demonstrate how much God is worth. Only the finest things should be used as an expression of how important God is. These are two chalices which are used at Westminster Abbey. During a Holy Communion they are filled with wine to represent the blood of Jesus.

SLIDE 9: When it was decided that a new stained-glass window, dedicated to celebrating the reign of Queen Elizabeth II would be commissioned, Westminster Abbey decided to ask a famous artist to design it. David Hockney, pictured here in front of the window, is one of the world's greatest living artists. His work has sold for the highest amount of any living artist (\$90.3 million). It was designed by Hockney using an iPad and depicts the countryside the Queen loved so much.

Some of the most important works of art by the greatest artists throughout history are religious acts of worship. You could show pictures such as Leonardo di Vinci's *Last Supper*, or Michelangelo's paintings from the Sistine Chapel.

SLIDE 10: Many churches have choirs made up of talented singers to lead the ordinary people (congregation) in singing hymns and songs. Westminster Abbey Choir is made up of men and boys. Click on the link to watch a short film which explains more (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWclMPIPrdg>)

Have any of you ever sung in a choir? Did you enjoy it?

In the picture you can see the choir wearing special clothes: a red cassock, a white surplice, and the boys also have a white ruff around their necks. This helps them hold their head up and project their voices.

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# Westminster Abbey

## Learning



Special clothes remind them that they are singing worship to God. At Westminster Abbey, the choir sings seven services a week, including Evensong, and a Sung Eucharist (Holy Communion) on Sundays. The boys also go to school close by so that they can be ready to sing each day.

SLIDE 11: Christians often meet together to worship God. This is called a 'service' and the people who gather are called the Congregation.

Ask pupils to share any times they may have been to a church service. They may have been to a wedding or baptism service even if they are not regular worshippers.

SLIDE 12: This picture shows worship at Westminster Abbey which is an Anglican church in London. Worship has happened here for over 1,000 years, following the same pattern and form for much of that time.

Hymns are often older songs which can be long enough to allow processions of to move around the church. The organ is an instrument found in many churches. It has hundreds of pipes through which air is blown, played using a keyboard.

Why do you think some people might like to worship in this way?

Bring out ideas such as:

- feeling of community, or 'togetherness',
- continuity of the past,
- creating a special atmosphere
- appealing to the senses
- familiar words bring comfort and free up the mind to focus on God.

The set words, or Liturgy, used today can trace their origins right back to Jesus himself. Prayers said at Holy Communion quote Jesus's words in the Gospels.

Liturgical worship in the Anglican church often includes the following elements: Welcome, Bible Readings introduced with specific words, Confession of Sins, and Absolution (forgiveness), expression of faith (Creed), Lord's Prayer, blessing before departure.

SLIDE 13: Many Christians prefer to have a more informal kind of worship and do not use liturgy and have no set structure. They may well include similar elements to those found in liturgical worship such as a Welcome, Bible Readings, Confession of Sins etc, but the words will vary and these elements may not be included at all. Quaker Christians have no set words at all, and often sit in silence during their meetings, waiting for the Holy Spirit to inspire someone to speak.

Can you think of reasons why some Christians may prefer non-Liturgical worship?

- Spontaneous and free
- Allows more people to take part

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# Westminster Abbey

## Learning



- Allows more flexibility e.g. to respond to events in the news

SLIDE 14: Watch this short film about Worship at Westminster Abbey:

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rw5H10N54k>)

Discuss how worship could also be quiet and contemplative. This video helps to understand the way in which worship at Westminster Abbey can be about quiet contemplation or much more physical and spontaneous.

SLIDE 15: Suggested activities depending on the ability range of your pupils. The introduction to worship at Westminster Abbey could be filmed as if to be used the Abbey website, or in a virtual lesson.