

RHYTHM OF LIFE

PRIMARY SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP SERIES



Prayer, Reflection and Worship

Love

Generosity

Community

Rest and Play

WHAT IS A RHYTHM OF LIFE?

Christians believe that they should live their lives following the example of Jesus – becoming more like him in what they do, say, think and feel. Remembering that they are in the presence of God wherever they are or whatever they are doing, Christians believe that they can become kinder, more honest, trustworthy and generous people. They welcome God to guide them in their attitudes and behaviours every day.

The Rhythm of Life is a framework that the Diocese of York are using to help everyone explore what it means to grow and flourish, be it at school, in church or at home. The six rhythms or 'habits' suggest ideas for actions and activities that people can choose to commit to doing. The rhythms are based on things that Jesus did in his own life and said that his friends and disciples should do too. This collective worship series explores this Rhythm of Life and what we can learn from Christian belief and practice.

Particular thanks to Olivia Seymour, Sue Teal, Cate Turner and Dawn Ward for their contributions to this resource.



Jesus says "I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness."
John 10.10

RHYTHM OF LIFE

A structure for our Collective Worship

GATHER

A distinctive atmosphere and a clearly visible focus point are important. We want to create a feeling of expectation as people gather together. Collective worship should be invitational and inclusive. We gather together and greet each other. We all come to play a part in this community. There is a feeling of expectation as we gather together.

Think about...

- How is the room arranged?
- How do we greet one another?
- Do we have a focal point? An image, some items on a collective worship table (where appropriate), the lighting of a candle?

ENGAGE

This may be the main part in an act of worship. In a Church school or as a Christian visitor invited in to any type of school, it is likely to focus on engaging with Bible story and/or Christian teaching. We engage with the big things and the little things in life. We encounter Jesus and the stories of the Bible. We are exploring together what we might learn from this.

Think about...

- How will you share the message? From the Bible? God's people in history? God's people today?
- What strategies will you use?
- Will you use your own experience or current events? Will you link it to the school's vision and/or values?
- Are the questions I want to ask going to provoke thoughtful responses?
- How will I manage different responses from pupils effectively?
- Is the content appropriately respectful of the diversity of faiths and backgrounds present?

RESPOND

For every pupil and adult present, some response should be possible. This is a time set aside for deep thought and for each to respond in an appropriate way.

We respond to what we have heard and seen. We respond together and as individuals. We are given the opportunity to worship God and / or reflect on our own lives.

Think about...

- Will you spend time thinking or reflecting? There may be an invitation to listen or engage with a prayer in an invitational way.
- Will you do something practical as a response? How?

SEND

The ending of the act of collective worship should be full of purpose, as people are sent out to be different and to 'do' differently.

We are sent out and invited to love and serve one another and to make a difference in the world.

Think about...

- How will people be sent out of collective worship?
- Will there be special words?
- What will everyone 'take away'?
- What about our focal point? Will items be packed away? A candle extinguished? Music played or an image displayed?

RHYTHM OF LIFE

Our five collective worship themes

PRAYER, REFLECTION
AND WORSHIP



The first collective worship in our series will explore why and how Christians pray and reflect. We will have opportunity to explore together where and how we take time to pause and think in our lives.

LOVE



The second collective worship in our series will explore what Christians believe about God's love. We will have opportunity to think about how we show love to others and how we welcome people in our school and community.

GENEROSITY



The third collective worship in our series will explore what Christians believe about generosity. We will have the opportunity to think about God's generosity and the things we are thankful for and how we can be generous to others. We will think about what we can do to help make life a bit easier for someone else.

COMMUNITY



The fourth collective worship in our series will explore what Christians believe about community. We will have the opportunity to think about what it means to belong to communities, and how we can help others.

REST AND
PLAY



The fifth collective worship in our series will explore why and how Christians rest. We will have opportunity to explore together what rest means, how we rest and how it can bring new energy to our lives.





RHYTHM OF LIFE



Collective Worship Week 1 – Prayer, Reflection and Worship

The story of The Lord's Prayer

GATHER

Each week we encourage you to:

- **Set up a worship table / focal point** at the front of the hall or classroom. You might like to include a liturgical cloth and place a Bible, cross and candle to light on the table. For this week's collective worship you might like to put pictures of: a speech bubble, an ear, a thought bubble, a stop sign.
- **Say opening words or responses.** If the school has set responses or opening words they use for collective worship say them together or you could use the following if appropriate:

We take out the Bible
– and think about God the Father
We take out the cross
– and think about God's Son, Jesus
We light the candle
– and think about God, the Holy Spirit

You could, where appropriate, use [this video](#) for pupils to listen to as part of collective worship or as they enter and leave.

ENGAGE

You could ask pupils to look at images and guess what today's collective worship might be about. You could ask pupils what activities they have engaged in so far today. Eaten breakfast, walked to school, chatted with a teacher, chatted with friends.

You could ask pupils if they have 'paused' or 'stopped' since they got up this morning. Ask pupils to consider whether they have paused since the moment they got up this morning (you might want to model this by allowing a time for stopping to think about the question). In a busy day we can often end up moving from one activity to another, without ever stopping to think.

Explain that today we are going to learn about prayer and reflection. Christians believe that they can talk to God at any time and in any place. This act of talking to God is called 'praying'. Many Christians pause to pray taking time out of a busy day.

Read Matthew 6.5-13.

Overview of the story for the collective worship lead

Christians believe that prayer allows them to talk directly with God and praying to God is like having a conversation with a friend. It is a two way process, sometimes talking and sometimes listening – there are no rules about how or when. Sometimes in our conversations, we can get selfish and make it all about us. Jesus' friends, the disciples, asked Jesus how to pray and Jesus helps his friends to get the most out of their conversations with God by giving them a model prayer – often called the Lord's Prayer. Christians around the world today still use the Lord's Prayer to help them pray. The Lord's Prayer is made up of seven prayers; three focusing on God and four thinking about our concerns and needs as people. It starts and ends with the reminder that God is in control of everything but still loves people like the perfect parent. The middle lines help people to think about how they can live



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Collective Worship Week 1 – Prayer, Reflection and Worship

The story of The Lord's Prayer

ENGAGE

their lives as light-bringing people. This means following God's ways, saying sorry when they mess up and forgiving others when they hurt them. The prayer recognises that this is not always easy but God's Spirit can help people if they trust him in everything, every day.

RESPOND

You could ask some I wonder questions:

- I wonder what prayer is?
- I wonder why somebody might pray?
- I wonder who might pray?
- I wonder where someone might pray?
- I wonder how someone might pray?

You could use these questions to explore:

- Different ways Christians pray such as silently, alone, with others, using an item (a candle or some prayer beads).
- Why Christians pray and use the themes in the Lord's Prayer to talk about praying for ourselves, others, the world.
- Why Christians believe it is important to 'pause' or 'stop' to pray.

You could ask pupils to pause and think about how we can make some space in the school day for quiet and reflection. Consider where in our school we have quiet spaces that we can go to pause, think and reflect or pray. How can we use this time to help us think about ourselves, others, the world around us and God?

You could finish by saying the Lords Prayer and say that pupils are invited to listen to the words. You could do this by showing one of these two videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgNOs2xmCuM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lNr-nOEmyE>

If the school has a reflection space you could liaise with the school to set up one of these activities in the space for pupils to visit during the week: [Calm Jars](#) and [Be Still](#).

Depending on your relationship with the school you could explore working with the school to plan a reflection morning or day for pupils using guidance from Prayer Spaces in Schools.

SEND



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Collective Worship Week 2 - Love

The story of the pearl of great price – sharing God's love

GATHER

Each week we encourage you to:

- **Set up a worship table / focal point** at the front of the hall or classroom. You might like to include a liturgical cloth and place a Bible, cross and candle to light on the table. For this week's collective worship you might like to put: a heart for the theme love, a treasure chest, a pearl, a trowel.
- **Say opening words or responses.** If the school has set responses or opening words they use for collective worship say them together or you could use the following if appropriate:

We take out the Bible
– and think about God the Father
We take out the cross
– and think about God's Son, Jesus
We light the candle
– and think about God, the Holy Spirit

ENGAGE

You could ask pupils what is the best gift they have ever received. You could ask them if they have ever found treasure. I have some very special treasures, a stone found on the beach with a hole right through the middle, and my medals from my charity runs. None of my treasures are worth very much, but they are special to me. Other people have treasures too, like special programmes from football matches or photos of and cards from people they love. Explain that today we are going to hear about story about a very special gift. In fact it is priceless. It is beautiful and delicate. (You could have a pearl and hold it up).

Read the story of the pearl of great price, Matthew 13.45-46. You could use [this video](#) to tell the story.

Overview of the story for the collective worship lead

Jesus was called 'Rabbi' by some people. The word Rabbi means 'teacher'. Jesus taught people about lots of different areas of life and Jesus used stories to teach people about and help people understand God. Jesus often answered questions with a story, many of which the gospel writers wrote down – stories that contained truths about God and how he wants us to live. These stories are called parables. Christians believe that the best treasure is being friends with God and knowing his love in their lives. This treasure is even more important than anything they can buy or make. Jesus also said that if we give away what we have, God will give back to us a full measure. The way to keep what we have, is to give it away! Christians believe that if they keep God's love to themselves they will lose it, because God's love is meant to be shared.



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Collective Worship Week 2 - Love

The story of the pearl of great price – sharing God's love

RESPOND

You could ask some I wonder questions:

- I wonder what part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder what part of the story was the most important?
- I wonder why Jesus told this story?
- I wonder what we can learn from this story?
- I wonder what this story teaches us about love?

You could display this verse and ask pupils what they think it means that 'you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely talking about it' (1 John 3.18). You could explore how love is more than just words. It is expressed in actions and care. Can pupils give examples?

SEND

You could ask pupils to pause and think about the ways they can show love to others this week. You could ask pupils to think about how we welcome people in our school and include everyone in what we are doing. Listen really carefully to others when they are sad, lonely or frightened, and help them get the help they need. Be kind and share well with everyone, especially when it's hard because people have been unkind.

You could encourage pupils to write their ideas on a heart post it note to display, or ask some volunteers to do this.

You could finish with a prayer, inviting the pupils to listen to the words:

Dear God,
Thank you for love.
Thank you for how good it is to have people who love us, and people whom we can love.
Thank you that your heart is full of love for us and for all those we love.
Help us to show love to others with our words and actions.
Amen.



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Collective Worship Week 3 - Generosity

The story of the generous widow - sharing what we have

GATHER

Each week we encourage you to:

- **Set up a worship table / focal point** at the front of the hall or classroom. You might like to include a liturgical cloth and place a Bible, cross and candle to light on the table. For this week's collective worship you might like to put: a small loaf of bread, a bottle of water, some seeds and flowers, a school book, a pot with a few coins in.
- **Say opening words or responses.** If the school has set responses or opening words they use for collective worship say them together or you could use the following if appropriate:

We take out the Bible

– and think about God the Father

We take out the cross

– and think about God's Son, Jesus

We light the candle

– and think about God, the Holy Spirit

ENGAGE

You could ask pupils to look at their right hand to think about five things that they are thankful for every day. Some ideas may be directed to the items you have placed on the worship table. They may be around family, friends, and their school. Explain how we all are thankful for different things. Think about how we can share the things we are thankful for with others and how we can look after the things we have. Explain that today we are going to hear about a person who had very little but was eager to share everything she had.

Read the story of the generous widow Luke 21.1-4.

Overview of the story for collective worship lead

In the Bible, Jesus explains to his disciples the importance, not just of what we do and are seen to do, but the reason why we do something – what is in our mind and our heart when we choose to do something is as important as what we do. He compares the acts of the “teachers of the law” (the Scribes or Jewish Leaders) with the act of a poor widow. A widow is a lady whose husband has died. In Jesus' time, widows were often poor because they did not have their husbands to protect them anymore and bring money home to live on. Jesus noticed the poor widow. He saw that she knew and loved God and that she trusted God to meet her needs, in every area of her life. This meant she was free to be generous and give her two copper coins away.



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Collective Worship Week 3 - Generosity

The story of the pearl of great price – sharing God's love

RESPOND

You could ask some I wonder questions:

- I wonder what you notice about the story?
- I wonder what you think is happening?
- I wonder what you think generosity means? Do you think it is the same for everyone?
- I wonder who you think was the most generous person in the story? Why do you think that?
- I wonder why Jesus told this story? What do you think he wanted his followers to learn from it?
- I wonder who or what enable you to be generous?

SEND

You could ask pupils to pause and think of a time when someone was really generous to them, or when they have been generous towards someone else. What happened? How did it make them feel? How many different ways can they think of to be generous?

You could ask pupils again to look at their hand and think about five things they are thankful for. Ask pupils to now look at their other hand and think about five things they can do to help make life better or a bit easier for someone else.

Pupils could think about:

- What could they do to protect the environment?
- How could they help their family and friends?
- How could they welcome someone new to school?

You could finish with a prayer, inviting the pupils to listen to the words:

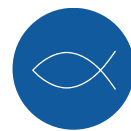
Dear God,
thank you for all that you have generously given to us.
Thank you for families and friends.
Thank you for our bodies, our minds and all that makes us unique.
Inspire us to be generous in sharing what we have willingly and cheerfully.
Amen.

You could play a piece of music as pupils leave:

- Generosity by Jerome Collins
- For the Beauty of the Earth by John Rutter



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Collective Worship Week 4 - Community

The story of the Good Samaritan - being kind to others

GATHER

Each week we encourage you to:

- **Set up a worship table / focal point** at the front of the hall or classroom. You might like to include a liturgical cloth and place a Bible, cross and candle to light on the table. For this week's collective worship you might like to put: a symbol or badge of your school or local community, Cubs/Brownie scarves, football/sports/dance class equipment/scarves/badges, a walking stick, food packages, a model of hands.
- **Say opening words or responses.** If the school has set responses or opening words they use for collective worship say them together or you could use the following if appropriate:

We take out the Bible

– and think about God the Father

We take out the cross

– and think about God's Son, Jesus

We light the candle

– and think about God, the Holy Spirit

ENGAGE

You could ask pupils if they know who their neighbours are? Today we are thinking about communities, that means the groups that we live, work and play in. What communities do they belong to? In some communities, everyone knows everyone else, so when you have exciting news you might find that in no time at all everyone else in that community knows about it too. In other places no one knows anyone else at all. But we can make a real difference to our communities and our neighbours, if we care about them and are ready to help others if they need it. Jesus tells us that our neighbours aren't just the people who live next door or across the street. Our neighbour is anyone who needs our help. To Jesus the whole world is our community.

Read the story of the Good Samaritan Luke 10.29-37, or look at [this video](#).

Overview of the story for the collective worship lead

Jesus often told people how important it was to "love your neighbour as much as you love yourself". In fact he said after loving God it was the most important thing we could do. Then one day someone asked him who their neighbour was. Jesus told this story to help people to realise that our neighbour isn't always the person we might think it is, in fact sometimes it is the opposite. It could be the person we least expect. As the story shows us, the people we might have thought would look after the man, didn't - they pretended they hadn't even seen him. The one who did help was not just a stranger, but someone from a town who were thought of as enemies. The Samaritan stopped, patched him up, helped him to find a safe place and paid for his care. Christians believe God wants us to live together in peace, in loving communities where we look after each other. Christians believe we can be God's hands on earth by keeping our eyes open for ways we can help our communities and the people in them.



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Collective Worship Week 4 - Community

The story of the Good Samaritan - being kind to others

You could ask some I wonder questions:



- I wonder what part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder what part of the story was the most important?
- I wonder why Jesus told this story?
- I wonder what you would have done if you'd seen the man in the story?
- I wonder who is your neighbour?
- I wonder if this story gives you ideas how you might help your neighbours or your community?

Show this verse and ask pupils what they think it means: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25.40). Christians believe this verse teaches us that we don't just help the people we know and like, but anyone who needs help. That might even include people we never meet. It might mean helping to look after the place in which we live too.

**There is a safeguarding element to this area. Pupils should never be encouraged to go into others' houses alone particularly if they do not know them. They should always let their parents/carers know where they are and check that they are happy that they are safe.*

You could ask pupils to pause and think who in their communities might need help? What might that help look like?

What could they do as a whole school?

What could they do themselves? How could they offer to help someone who is struggling? Pupils could be given the opportunity to share their ideas.

You could finish with a prayer, inviting the pupils to listen to the words:

Dear God,
thank you for our communities, for all those around us.
Thank you for everyone we share our school, town/village and world with.
Thank you for everyone who helps others and does God's work on earth.
Show us how to be your hands in our communities
by finding ways to help others so that together we will grow in love and friendship.
Amen.

RESPOND

SEND



RHYTHM OF LIFE



Collective Worship Week 5 - Rest and Play

The story of the God's creation and Jesus' life on earth -
the importance of rest and how we can do this through play

GATHER

Each week we encourage you to:

- **Set up a worship table / focal point** at the front of the hall or classroom. You might like to include a liturgical cloth and place a Bible, cross and candle to light on the table. For this week's collective worship you might like to put: a favourite toy for bedtime, a blanket or cushion, a toy you use outside, a book of the story you enjoy most.
- **Say opening words or responses.** If the school has set responses or opening words they use for collective worship say them together or you could use the following if appropriate:

We take out the Bible
– and think about God the Father
We take out the cross
– and think about God's Son, Jesus
We light the candle
– and think about God, the Holy Spirit

You could ask pupils what they think of when they hear the word 'rest'. Ask pupils to give examples of different ways we can rest. This could lead into play as a means of resting their mind. Ask pupils about their favourite ways to rest and play.

Readings and overview of the stories for the collective worship lead

I wonder what the Bible says about rest?

You could read or display some of these verses/ passages to share with pupils:

Read Genesis 2.1-2 and Hebrews 4:9-10. Christians believe Sunday is a special day of rest. The creation story shows God working very hard for six days to make our world. All this was very tiring and so God used the seventh day to rest. That can mean physical rest like sitting still, having a nap or going to bed but it also means a chance to reflect on all he has achieved. God says that this day should be called the Sabbath and be a day of rest – for Christians this can mean going to church to worship and giving thanks to God for all he has done for them. Christians also believe this means doing something different from what they do in the other days of the week.

Read Mark 4.38. Christians believe God's son, Jesus, also teaches us about rest – this shows Jesus needing physical rest as a real person just like us! God sent his son, Jesus, to live with ordinary people and when we see Jesus sleeping on the boat we see a man who is tired, just as we get tired.

Read Matthew 11.28-30 - Jesus also promises us a special rest of a wonderful and different kind. Christians believe this is a kind of rest we can have which will last for the whole of our lives through our belief in Jesus and God the Father.

ENGAGE



RHYTHM OF LIFE



Collective Worship Week 5 - Rest and Play

The story of the God's creation and Jesus' life on earth -
the importance of rest and how we can do this through play

RESPOND

You could ask some I wonder questions:

- I wonder what part of the stories you liked best?
- I wonder what can we learn from the bible about rest?
- You could explore further what rest means - Does it mean going to bed? Does it mean keeping still? How do they do it? Why do they do it? Is it good for their body? Is it good for their mind? How can they rest and not keep still? This can lead into play as a means of resting their mind.

SEND

You could ask pupils to pause and think about how they will rest this week. You could suggest that they talk to their friends and their family about the importance of rest and how our bodies need it if we are to have the energy to do the things we need to. You could also suggest that they explain the different ways they can rest and that playing is important as it rests and enriches our minds – this might be playing with toys, sport, music, dance, gardening, hobbies as well as spending time with families and friends.

You could finish with a prayer and invite pupils to listen to these words:

Dear God,
thank you for rest and for play.
Thank you for how good it is to be able to rest and to play
as it helps recharge our minds and bodies.
Help us to show others how rest and play can enrich them.
Amen.