

Year Group 4	Worldview: Christian
Strand:	Community and Identity
Key Question:	How and why has Christian practice changed over time?
Focus of study:	Early Church was Jewish and as more non-Jews were added adaptations happened; Christians believe God still speaks.
Background information for teachers:	
<p><b>A brief summary of Church history</b></p> <p><b>1. Early Church</b></p> <p>The Christian church began in Jerusalem at Pentecost when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to boldly share the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection and hope of a restored relationship with God. At first it was considered to be a branch or sect of Judaism, with most believers coming from a Jewish background. The apostles tended to go first to the synagogues when they went to new towns. There was early conflict between those who believed Christians had to follow Jewish laws and customs, and those who thought that they did not.</p> <p>St Paul was one of the main leaders in the early church and he believed that the good news of Jesus was for all people and not just the Jews. This belief led Paul to set up Christian churches throughout the Roman empire, including Europe. The early church suffered much persecution but instead of slowing the growth of the church, as people saw Christians willing to die for their faith, they were persuaded that it must be true and became Christians themselves causing huge growth in the number of believers.</p> <p>Constantine the Great, became Roman emperor in AD 306 and was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity. He played a pivotal role in elevating the status of Christianity in Rome, decriminalizing Christian practice and ceasing Christian persecution. During his rule a group of Bishops met in Nicaea and put together the Nicene Creed which is a statement of the core beliefs of Christianity. It was also during this time that the books of the Bible were assembled into one collection.</p> <p><b>2. Spreading of the Church across the known world</b></p> <p>Followers of Jesus took Christianity to Africa, Asia and Europe, including Britain. Roman merchants brought Christianity to Britain by sharing stories with locals about Jesus and his disciples. By the fourth century, Christianity had gained a strong following in Britain but pagan beliefs still lingered. Much of the conflict between the Celtic peoples and the Vikings had a religious basis and the new Celtic Christianity fought the 'Old Religions'. This was the pinnacle of Celtic Christianity and many of the early monasteries were founded during this period. Lindisfarne, Iona and St David's are among the best known from this period, and Saints such as Cuthbert, Aiden and Columba. Saint Patrick, who is now the patron saint of Ireland, was born into a Christian Romano-British family in the late fourth or early fifth century. At the age of 16, his home was raided, and he was sold into slavery in Ireland. After several years he escaped and returned to Britain, but he soon had a dream in which he heard the 'voice of the Irish' begging him to return to Ireland to convert its people to Christianity. Patrick's mission to Ireland was hugely successful and Ireland became a stronghold of Christianity.</p> <p>In 597 Saint Augustine came to Anglo-Saxon Canterbury. He was sent by Pope Gregory the Great to re-establish Christianity in England and was accompanied by around 40 monks. Catholic Christianity became more prominent than the native form of Celtic Christianity during this period, though the West of the country (Wales and Cornwall in particular) retained elements of Celtic Christianity. He became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.</p> <p><b>3. Medieval Church</b></p> <p>Christianity and the Catholic Church played a major role in Europe during the Middle Ages. The local church was the centre of town life. People attended weekly ceremonies. They were baptised, married, confirmed, and buried at the church. The church confirmed kings on their throne giving them the divine right to rule. Throughout the Middle Ages the church was a significant force in the arts and culture as well as in education and religion. Religion was interweaved into everything in life and was very powerful during this time. During this period power was centred on the clergy and in the Western Church as Latin was the</p>	

predominant language and so needed translating for most people. Personal interpretation was not encouraged, and when translations into English (and other European languages began) there was much controversy. This is the period when the great cathedrals of Europe were built, monasteries flourished and became wealthy, and the church was the centre of learning. The universities of Europe were mostly founded by the church, and endowed with money from rich, mostly religious, patrons. In many countries, laws were passed requiring attendance at weekly services. Church and state were closely bound together in most countries of Europe.

**4. The Reformation**

The Protestant Reformation was a religious reform movement that swept through Europe in the 1500s. It resulted in the creation of a branch of Christianity called Protestantism and was led by German monk and teacher Martin Luther. He was angry by the corruption of the church and questioned the teachings especially the practice of buying or earning forgiveness, believing instead that salvation is a gift God gives to those who have faith. He created a list of 95 points where he disagreed with the Church and nailed it to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. People began to listen to Martin Luther and word spread about his opinions. They believed what he said and began to follow his teachings. He was excommunicated from the Catholic Church and had to go into hiding. During this time he had worked hard to translate the Bible into German so more people could read it on their own. Martin Luther created the five ‘Solos’ showing five key beliefs to live by:

- Soli Deo Gloria - Glory of God alone
- Sola Scriptura - Scripture alone
- Solus Christus - Christ alone
- Sola Gratia - Grace alone
- Sola Fide - Faith alone

**5. Missionary Church**

As Christianity flourished in Europe, Christians came to believe that their religion should be taught to people in other lands. Beginning in the 16th century and continuing into the 21st, Christian missionaries brought their faith to parts of Africa, Asia, and North and South America. These efforts helped make Christianity the most widespread religion in the world.

**6. Modern Church**

The modern church is made up of several movements and doctrinal groups e.g. Anglicans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Independent churches, Methodists, New Churches etc. There are hundreds of different translations and versions of the Bible, with working continuing to ensure that everyone has access to read the Bible in their own language. Individuals in many church traditions are encouraged to read and interpret the scriptures for themselves, rather than relying on the mediation of the priesthood. Although there are differences in style and worship across the denominations there are growing numbers of churches working together to share the gospel with all.

<p>Prior learning:</p>	<p>Reception: The things that Christians do that show they belong e.g. baptism.                  Year 1: Christians celebrate important events in the life of Jesus.                  Year 2: Christians go to church to learn about God, they worship together and serve the wider community as part of a church.                  Year 3: Christians mark key life events in different ways around the world.</p>
<p>Building Blocks:</p>	<p>The early church was still very Jewish in origin.                  The church in the Middle Ages read the Bible in Latin and so many people were not able to read it.                  The bible is now available in many languages so people can read it for themselves.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p>	<p>Developing:                  Children will know that the Church has changed over the years since the Early Church.                  Children will be able to talk about features of the Early Church.</p>

	<p>Expected: Children will know how the Church has changed over the years. Children will be able to talk about some of the features of church practices over the years.</p> <p>Excelling: Children will be able to explain why the changes in the Church practice have occurred. Children will be able to talk about features of Church practice in different time periods.</p>
Resources:	<p>Church History for Young Readers by Simonetta Carr. God’s timeline: The Big Book of Church History by Linda Finlayson <a href="https://wycliffe.org.uk/">https://wycliffe.org.uk/</a> <a href="https://www.bmsworldmission.org/">https://www.bmsworldmission.org/</a> <a href="https://churchmissionsociety.org/">https://churchmissionsociety.org/</a></p>
Engagement:	
<p>What is Church? What do we know about Church? Why do Christians go to Church? What do they do in Church? Show children pictures of different churches – what do they all have in common? How are they different? - Create a mind map of everything that we know about Church. What would we like to find out about the Church? E.g. Are there Churches in the Bible? How did the first Church begin? Do Churches today look like the first church?</p>	
Enquire and Explore:	<b>How? Who? What? Why? When? Wonder?</b>
<p>Explain that in this unit of RE we are going to find out what the first church looked like and how the church has changed over the years into church as we see it today. We are going to look at how this has happened gradually over the years.</p> <p>Who were the first Christians? What does the word Christian mean? If the first Christians were Jewish, how were they used to behaving? Revise briefly some of the things that pupils remember about Jewish food laws and customs.</p> <p><b>1.The Early Church</b> What did the early Church look like? Set the scene, Jesus had just ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit had come on the believers at Pentecost. They were filled with boldness and courage to spread the gospel and believers were added daily. Look at Acts 2:42-47 which explains what the first church looks like. How is this different to church today? The early believers continued to meet in the synagogues and to go daily to the Temple in Jerusalem. At this period, Christianity was considered to be a branch of Judaism and many of the early believers were Jewish, keeping Jewish food laws and other Jewish rituals. This had to change as more and more non-Jewish (Gentile) believers were added to the church.</p> <p><b>2. Spreading of the Church over the known world.</b> Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he commissioned his disciples to spread the gospel to all nations. Look at the stories of some of the early missionaries: - St Patrick – bringing the message to Ireland - St Augustine – sent by the pope to England - Celtic saints e.g. Aidan, Cuthbert,</p> <p><b>3.Medieval Church</b> As the church grew in the UK, it became the centre of village life. Churches often provided education, looked after the poor and sick and helped develop arts and culture. Church leaders had great power and often sat on the King’s Council.</p>	

Write a diary for a week in the life of the church or a monk including as many activities as possible.

**4.Reforming Church**

Explore the life of Martin Luther and his 95 thesis. Look at the 5 ‘solos’ that he created and unpack what they mean. Can they create their own thesis of the key beliefs?

**5.Missionary Church**

As Christianity grew in the West, Christians were challenged to share the gospel with those who had not had the opportunity to hear it.

Look at missionary organisations e.g. Wycliff Bible translators, Baptist Missionary Society, Church Missionary Society – what was their aim? What do they do today?

**6.Modern Church**

Over the years different denominations have grown in the UK, each holding the key beliefs of Christianity but with some different secondary beliefs and styles of worship.

Explore some of the different denominations in the UK today – How are they similar? How are they different?

There are hundreds of translations of the Bible today. Look at a passage in the Bible e.g. the Creation story in contrasting versions of the Bible e.g. King James, Living Bible and the Street Bible. Compare the language used and how they can be interpreted.

Evaluate:	
-----------	--

Debate: - Church should look like the early church with all believers having everything in common and no-one being in need. - How has church changed over the years? - Why has church practice changed over the years? - What were the positives and negatives about each stage in Church history? - Who were the key people who have shaped the church into what it looks like today? - Children could complete a timeline of Church history.
--

Reflect and communicate:	
--------------------------	--

Get the pupils to reflect on their own view about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you think Christians should share their message with those outside the church?</li> <li>• What do you think is important for Churches to do in their communities?</li> <li>• What do you think the role of the Church is today?</li> </ul>
--

Assessment opportunities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Create a mind map showing what the Early Church is like.</li> <li>* Create a presentation about one of the Saints or monks who helped spread the gospel message e.g. St Patrick</li> <li>* Write a diary for a week in the life of a medieval church.</li> <li>* Create a poster showing the 5 solos of Martin Luther.</li> <li>* Create a fact file about a mission organisation.</li> <li>* Create a mind map showing similarities and differences between denominations.</li> </ul>
---------------------------	---

Notes	
-------	--