



## Linked activities for children as they visit a Church or as they reflect after the visit back at school

There are many themes to follow up a visit to a local church. Resources can be found online from for example, Baker Ross Craft or Hobbycraft. Some churches or cathedrals offer activities during the visit whilst others make suggestions for activities afterwards at school

1. **While on the visit** the children take a photograph using iPads of different places in the church. They then choose a strange or unusual piece or angle of the same item. At school they ask others to guess where the photographs were taken.
2. **While on the visit** rubbings on light paper using crayons/pencils can be taken of eg tombstones, brass effigies or wood carvings (permission needs seeking first), stone floors. This may link with science work on different materials.
3. **While on the visit** the children create a video of the building and an interview with a person linked with the church
4. **While on the visit:** the organist/musician plays the organ/piano for children to listen to quietly and explains about the instrument. If instruments are available children can be taught to play a rhythm to accompany the instrument.
5. **While at the church or at school:** Children design their own pilgrim badge using the scallop shell or their own design to show they have visited that particular church. The badges can be out of cardboard with a pin on the back or clay to hang around the neck or a real decorated shell.
6. **While at the church or at school:** children use materials eg boxes, sugar paper, paints, to create their own church building

7. **While at the church or at school:** Use a tile with e.g. Sharpie pens to create an Easter tile using colours from the church windows.



Or create a symmetrical tile which echoes patterns of symmetry in the church.



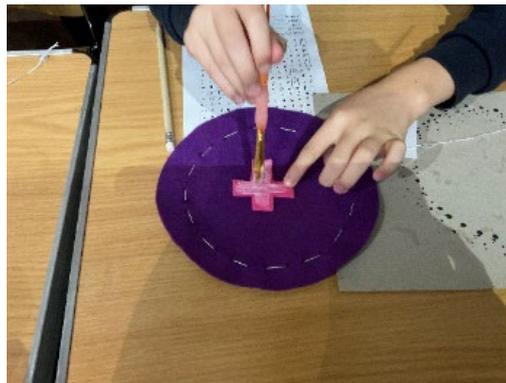
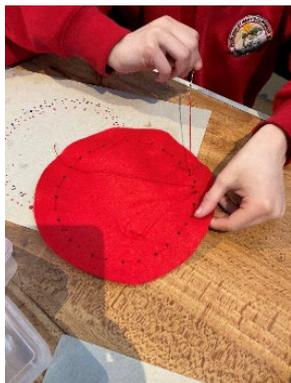
8. **While at the church or at school:** children look closely at the floor patterns in the building and then create a design of their own mosaic for the floor of the church using glue, small squares and a small tile.



9. **While at the church or at school:** children make their own design telling one story from the life of Jesus using acetate for a window set within a paper or light cardboard frame and appropriate pens (Sharpie).



10. **While at the church or at school:** children sew a pilgrim purse for a pilgrim to carry with them on their journey, using circles of felt, needles and silk threads o pull it together.



11. **While at the church or at school:** children role play dressing up as a pilgrim, enter the space as a pilgrim and visit a shrine (if one is accessible). Children think about the past use of the building as a pilgrim and the current use by present day pilgrims. Pilgrimage is a physical journey and a spiritual journey of faith.



**12. While at the church or at school:** children dress up as a monk and learn about how they used eat in silence listening to the Bible as it was read aloud. Some Benedictine rules can be considered.



**13. While at the church or at school:** children use sugar dough to make models of monks (or any part of the church building).



**14. While at the church or at school:** children mix herbs which were used for medicinal purposes learning about medieval monks cures. They can crush some herbs or make their own medicine.



**15. While at the church or at school:** Labyrinths can be created and walked or traced using a finger labyrinth see:

<https://faithinthenorth.org/lords-prayer-labyrinth/>  
[A Prayer Labyrinth - Faith in the North](#)

**16. While at the church or at school:** the music director offers the children the opportunity to learn to sing some chants/songs/hymns used in the church.

**17. While at the church or at school: Follow a Prayer Trail**

**Note:** This activity is faith based and may not be appropriate for all children

**Resources:** Singing bowl, beads to thread, Mosaic (or colourful cross) with squared paper and colourful pens or crayons

### **Station 1: Singing Bowl**

This is a singing bowl it can be played to help us be still and listen for God. In our prayers today we are going to cup our hands like an empty singing bowl. It is a sign that we are ready to receive whatever God may give.

Concentrating on the sound helps us to find a still space...

To free our minds from the busy – ness of the day...

To listen for God's presence in this moment.

#### **Prayer Action:**

Simply hold out your hands and rest quietly in God's presence as this empty bowl sings.

Tap the bowl once on the side of the rim and then sit comfortably listening as the sound fills the space and keep listening until you can no longer hear it.

or

You can also make it ring by stirring up the sound, rubbing the beater steadily around its rim. The sound wells up from the empty bowl and fills the air. Sit or kneel and listen as the sound grows. When you have a good sound stop 'stirring' and enjoy the sound as it slowly fades.

#### **Prayer:**

*Holy Lord,*

*May we keep our hearts and minds open like a singing bowl:*

*May your love strike us and make us sing;*

*May your grace well up and fill our lives.*

*Amen*

## **Station 2: Counting Blessings**

It is easy to forget how much we have to be thankful for in our lives. We may enjoy something every day which someone else longs for, such as:

- A safe place to sleep,
- a roof over our heads,
- enough food to eat.

How often do we really appreciate our family and friends?

Even if you feel sad today or have had a difficult day, try to think of something to be glad about.

### **Praying:**

Sit comfortably and take your time to count all of those good things for which you can say 'Thank you'. As you think of each one, add a bead to your thread until you have a whole string of blessings.

Find somewhere you can tie it – perhaps a book bag or keyring. That way when you next feel sad your beads can remind you of all the goods things that you can be thankful for.

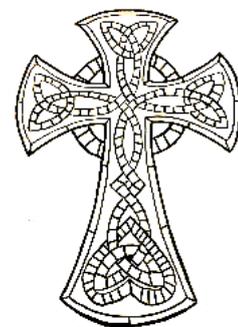
**Prayer:** God of overflowing goodness, We thank you for all these good things. May we continue to see your grace in our lives through the blessings that we receive. Amen

## **Station 3: Mosaic Cross Prayer**

Sometimes, when we try to pray, we don't know where to start.

When our heads are buzzing, and our hearts are full to bursting. It can be hard to boil down what we are feeling. Whatever is on your mind, whatever hopes or fears you have brought with you today:

- God hears you.
- No words are needed.



### **Praying:**

This is a place to gather our prayers, to share with others in the presence of God by creating the mosaic together. Colour in some squares. The first square is for you –

“Here I am Lord!”

God you know my heart and my thoughts.

I thank you for all that I am.

The next square might be for someone you love, or something in the world that needs our prayer.

### **Prayer:**

Loving Lord,

We come before you now,

Not alone but together.

We offer this mosaic of prayer,

We pray for each person who has added to this prayer,

We hold their prayers as well as ours,

In your strong and healing presence.

Amen

More resources for teachers and children can be found by visiting the York Minster website: [Workshops and Guided Tours for schools | York Minster](#)

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