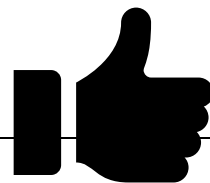




5. Gospel



Age range: Primary

Theme: We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. This term, we are focussing on creativity, and the content of an exhibition being hosted in Surrey this term: **Threads Through the Cross**, the work of textile artist Jacqui Parkinson. We are mindful that relatively few schools will be visiting the exhibition, so are bringing it right into your collective worship in a variety of different ways. Whilst it might seem strange to be focussing on the salvation story at this point in the school year, we hope that the endpoint of Advent and Christmas will be more meaningful having understood the journey to the Cross. We will also be linking to many 'Autumn term' themes that are a natural part of school life as children settle in to a new term, getting familiar with routines, school values and key events. **This week, we begin looking at the Threads Through the Cross exhibition panels, and each week, we will have a similar section, a short time of 'gazing': no discussion initially, just looking and thinking. Then there will be some questions to think/talk about, and then an opportunity to talk and discuss before picking up on the key word linked with the panel – which is what will link into the life of your school. The panel for this week is based on the 'good news' for all people, represented by the very diverse visitors who came to see Jesus.**



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Each week, there will be a single word that will draw our focus to one particular aspect of either the textile panel or the story linked with it. You should easily be able to link the word to your school's values, but there will also be some suggestions included in the reflective questions as part of each week's materials. This week, we will think about the word **Gospel**: what this means to the Christian community, and how your school might be 'good news' for all. You will need to reference your school's vision and values here, as this is where the articulation sits of how your community is 'good news'.

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. There are slides to go with today's script, but you could quite easily use some of this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- As always, you can find out more about Jacqui's work here: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/> There is also a video of her being interviewed by BBC NW News at Liverpool Cathedral, when all three of her exhibitions visited in January 2025: <https://www.jacqui-textile.com/bible/>
- **In this resource, we include a final slide showing a similar piece of art from a different global tradition, giving pupils opportunities to both appreciate diversity within Christianity, and to see how Christians across the world reimagine this story showing Jesus 'like them' (which of course may mean like some pupils within our school communities). You may wish to use this slide outside of collective worship, enriching your RE provision.**
- **You will need to....populate this resource with examples from your school community of how it makes a difference to the families / wider community it serves**
- You can also find some positive news articles to follow up during the week here: <https://www.positive.news/>
- **There are also some ideas for reflective activities to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.**
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Friendship is good news! Another challenge for this week, to make new friends and play with different people. Talk towards the end of the week about how this might have changed your school community a little – and maybe been good news.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Use the new greeting for this term.



Leader: We are a creative community. As we gather together today....

ALL: May our thinking, talking and wondering help us to grow.

Here are BSL actions for some of the words:

Leader's words:

Creative: <https://www.signdictionary.co.uk/view/creative?q=creative#title>

Community: (we use the word 'gathering' as it's a simpler sign!) <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gathering>

Gather: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/gather> (1st video), or use the same sign we use for community as they approximate to the same thing!

Response:



Think: <https://www.brightbsl.co.uk/signs/think>

Talk: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/talk> (1st video)

Wonder: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/wonder> (1st video)

Grow: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/grow> (2nd video)

Engaging:



• Slide 2: Threads Through the Cross

Shortly, we will be looking at more of Jacqui's panels. But first, something to think and talk about together.

• Slide 3: Good news!!

We don't often see headlines that are good news, but today, we're going to be thinking about 'good news' as an idea.

What might be some 'good news' headlines?.... for **our world?**.....for **our environment?**....for **our community/families?**.... *[talk together & share ideas]*

We'll come back to the theme of 'good news' in a short while, but now let's look at Jacqui's artwork for this week.

• Slide 4: This week's panel

Spend a while just gazing at the panel. Relax, and focus on calm breathing.

Let your eyes take in (look at) every detail..... *[leave silence for a short while]*

Now I'm going to use some questions to help us...for now, we're not going to tell each other our answers. *[select from the questions below, or use all, depending on the time / pupils you have]*

....Which parts do you especially like?

....Which story do you think this is?

....Who are the people in this panel?

....What do you think they are looking at?

....How are the people feeling?

....Are there any words to read?

Now spend a few minutes talking about the things you were thinking about....and pick out the words 'Glory to God in the heavenly heights; peace to all men and women on earth who please him.' and 'We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' to confirm what children might already have said.

....Can you find the birds?I wonder why you think Jacqui chose an owl to appear on the wise men panel?.... *[for time purposes, we choose to focus on the owl in the wise men panel, but if children ask about the goose, this is what Jacqui said about it: 'The white goose represents light – there's lots of light on this dark night. And geese can be noisy when alarmed – imagine how they would have reacted to a host of angels!']*

• Slide 5: This week's panels – Do not be afraid and Follow the star

This is what Jacqui called these panels, and they represent some of the very unusual visitors that Jesus received, whose stories we often celebrate at Christmas time: shepherds and wise men.

In Bible times, these visitors were literally worlds apart – not just because of where they had each started their journeys, but also because of the communities they had come from.

Shepherds were considered to be the lowest of the low. They lived and worked on the hills just outside of Bethlehem. They were ordinary men doing an ordinary job.

Can you imagine the story the shepherds would tell to their families and neighbours, of the good news for all people that the angels spoke about?

The wise men, on the other hand, were rich and sophisticated and had followed the new star all the way from lands in the East. They had been studying their astronomical books that told them that a new star would show the way to a new king, so they travelled expecting to find an extraordinary new king, in a fine palace. I wonder if you can imagine what *they* thought when the star led them to the child, Jesus, in such a humble home? As the story tells us, they bowed and worshipped him, and gave him their treasures of....? *[gold, frankincense and myrrh]*



Even though the shepherds and the wise men were so different from each other, the birth of Jesus, God's Son, was good news for them both, and indeed for everyone – it meant peace on earth for all people, and a new type of King, with a new type of Kingdom, as we'll hear in weeks to come. In fact, this good news was so important that the four books in the Bible that contain these stories are called '**Gospels**'- which means 'good news'!

- **Slide 6: Good news!!**

But what might **good news** look like here, for us in our school? And how might our school be good news for those who come here? *[refer to how you make a difference e.g. as learners, making friends etc.]*

We can all be part of the good news story that is our school, by being..... *[reference school values]*

Slide 7: Responding and words for worship

We started today with thinking about good news – the good news that we would like to see in our world, and the good news that the shepherds and the wise men found in Jesus. And we've just thought about good news in our own school community. So let's be quiet and still with our own thoughts now.....

....I wonder what sort of good news might be most important for us here today?....

....or for our world? Maybe 'peace on earth', as the shepherds heard?

....I wonder how we might be good news for others this week?....

Opportunity for reflection / prayer

I'm going to pray now. If this is something that you feel comfortable doing, then find a way to make these words your own and join in with 'Amen' at the end.

Slide 8: A prayer for peace

God of peace

As the angels spoke to the shepherds 'Peace on earth for all people', so we pray this for our troubled world.

May our actions bring peace and good news to others this week.

Slide 9: Amen.

Sending: Slide 10 (NB note different word from last week!)

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: Together, we create a peaceful community!

BSL Together: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/together> (1st video); Peaceful: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/peace>
You already have signs for 'community'

To listen to / sing:

Try some quiet piano music whilst children look at the panel e.g. carol music:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jphc7Vc6TqA>

To sing: [Let our love show](#) (NBD) or [Respect](#) (NBD)



Slide 11: Reflective areas – the secret helping challenge

Think: How might being a friend to someone be good news this week?

Do: Take up the friendship challenge – invite someone different to play with you or join in your game today.

Talk: How did this change our class/school community this week?

Slide 12: Showing the wise men (Magi) from different cultural perspectives

Link to original artwork: <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48399>, which includes some key information.

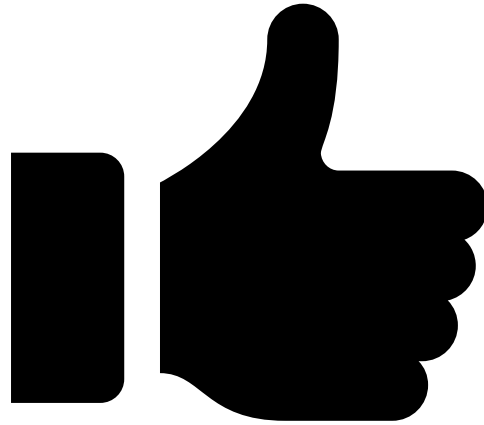


Looking at these two creative interpretations of this part of the story may be something that links with your RE curriculum, reflecting the fact that Christianity is a global religion, encouraging pupils to appreciate the diversity that exists across cultures, traditions and geographical areas. It's important for pupils' wider understanding that they are given opportunities to think about how Christians show Jesus as being 'like them', and that this important story for Christians is imagined in different ways across the world. It also creates an inclusive classroom environment, giving all pupils opportunity to see themselves in the art that they view.

You may wish to consider these questions:

- *What is the same? What is different?*
- *Which culture / tradition does the 2nd piece come from?*
- *Why do we think this?*
- *What questions might we want to / need to ask?*





Good news!.....



How might being a friend to someone be good news this week?



**Take the friendship challenge!
Invite someone different to play with you or join in your game today.**



How did this change our class/school community this week?

