

## GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

At Stanion Church of England Primary School we have been responding to our SIAMS development point linked to increasing an awareness of Christianity as a global, multi-cultural world faith, to support children in their understanding of Christianity in diverse cultures and communities. This project was inspired, in the first place, by five planned acts of collective worship. This in turn led to a creative response across the school, with a display that will continue to add depth and reflection within collective worship.

Over a five week period, we shared five individual acts of collective worship, with an opportunity for the children to respond after each worship. The images shared within each of the Bible stories challenged the more stereotypical images that children and adults are used to seeing.

Responses included:

"I don't know why, but I felt quite challenged when I saw pictures of Jesus looking different to how I normally think of Him. It made me think more deeply about Jesus and how he is for all of us."

"I felt excited to see the different pictures!"

"The pictures show me that Jesus is there for all people."

After sharing each of the acts of worship, the children were asked to respond with a drawing of Jesus inspired by the artists that we had looked at together. This also allowed time to reflect and talk about the ways that they had challenged their earlier thinking. These sketches were then referred to on the project afternoon, as the children were asked to create one image of Jesus that felt meaningful and powerful to them. The children and adults also shared a deeper understanding of ways in which their own cultural backgrounds could be reflected within the images. They responded to the work of a range of artists by creating their own image, challenging their earlier stereotypical drawings with pictures that showed depth and understanding.



As Amanda de Choisy has shared, "I particularly enjoyed the images of Jesus created by the older children; their paintings have encouraged me to open my mind and think more expansively about my faith."

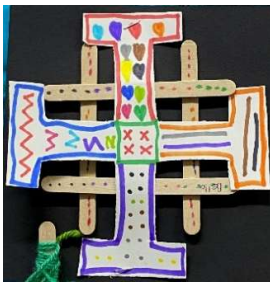
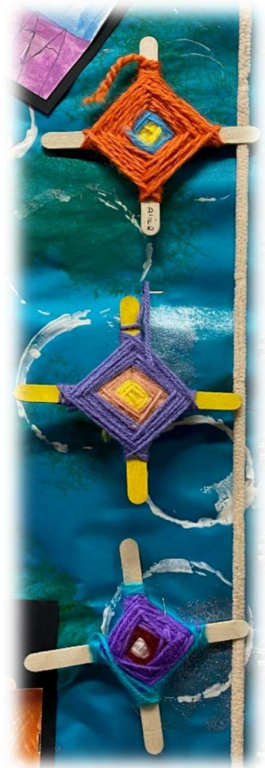


We also learnt about the importance of the cross as the central symbol of Christianity. We looked at different representations of the cross in countries around the world, and created some of our own.

*"I enjoyed learning about the God's Eye cross from Mexico. It was very peaceful winding the wool for this cross, and I like how the centre looks like God's eye, watching over us and protecting us."*

We learnt about the Jerusalem Cross and the way in which it symbolises the spread of the Christian faith from its origins in Jerusalem to the four corners of the world. The central cross can be seen to symbolise Jesus, with the four smaller crosses representing the four gospels.

*"We all enjoyed learning about the Jerusalem cross and we were inspired to create some of our own. It was interesting to have small crosses with the big cross."*



The children also learnt about the Salvadoran crosses that are so important within this part of the world. They talked about ways that we can represent our daily lives within these crosses, sharing love and hope for the future. We hope to continue to find out more about the symbol of the cross and how it is represented across the globe. As well as the symbol of the cross, we also shared the importance of the fish symbol. Our younger children took inspiration from this symbol to create pictures, collage and prayers. Amanda de Choisy, Chair of Governors, shared her thoughts on this set of activities:

*"Once again our children have been treated to a wonderful afternoon of thought-provoking activities, focussing on Christianity as a Global Faith. In Reception, the children contemplated how Christians have used the symbol of the Fish throughout history to identify their beliefs and values. The children enjoyed decorating their fish whilst thinking of how they care for loved ones; also weaving recycled materials through another fish, thinking of how they could care for the planet."*



The resulting display shares work from across the school, and we hope that this display will continue to inspire our Collective Worship within school in so many ways.



Wayne Jones has shared his thoughts on this project:

“Our children, staff and governors thoroughly enjoyed this Global Christianity project and all have gained a deeper understanding. The children value the experiences offered to them and the work they have produced is simply outstanding. Sandy Ettridge has produced a beautiful display that showcases all the wonderful work. I would like to thank Sandy and our Ethos Team for planning and delivering such an inspirational project to enable our children to have a deeper understanding of Christianity across the world.”



The project proved to be very impactful for all groups of children:

*“Growing up and going to church from a young age I have been used to talking about stereotypes of Jesus. At my church we have shared a range of images and I have really valued looking at a wider range of images at school to confirm the importance of this.”*

*“The pictures really connected me to the Bible in a way that I hadn’t before.”*

*“It has felt really special to see Jesus in so many different ways.”*

*The crosses were a good reminder that the cross can look different too. It shows that God can guide you through life and watch over you.”*

We have all enjoyed sharing the display, learning from the work that we have all completed over the past term. We will continue to be inspired by this project, within Collective Worship and beyond.

Sandy Ettridge November 2025

