

<b>TITLE OF UNIT</b> <b>Stories and celebrations:</b> <b>What matters to Christians at Christmas and Easter?</b>
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<b>YEAR GROUP FS2</b>
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**ABOUT THIS UNIT:**

This unit of work is intended to enable pupils to explore the importance of key festivals in the Christian calendar. During the unit, pupils will have the opportunity to find out about the fundamental meanings of stories and celebrations for Christians. It will provide a focus of the key beliefs and they will have the opportunity to discuss their own experiences (if any) of celebrations with family at Christmastime, Easter and also celebrations from Islamic family life. They will talk about the traditions that they follow each year and will realise that they are an important feature of their family lives, whether they are Christians or members of a different faith. The idea that Christians believe Jesus was God's gift to the world will be explored.

**Estimated time for this unit (in hours)** 8-10 hours of teaching time

**Where this unit fits in:**

This unit will help teachers to implement the Tower Hamlets Agreed Syllabus for RE by providing an introduction to these key festivals, before entering KS1. It will enrich the pupils' learning by allowing opportunities for 'hands on' experiences and drawing upon the Early Learning Goals as the foundation for the development of the RE curriculum in later Key Stages.

**Issues of continuity and progression** – Since Christmas and Easter are key festivals that will be explored across the key stages, it is important to acknowledge that pupils will listen to versions of the Christmas and Easter stories during each year group. The challenge is to provide teaching and learning opportunities that build on previous knowledge or experiences rather than merely have pupils and teachers repeat work. This unit enables pupils to make progress particularly by making a contribution to all six areas of learning of the Early Learning Goals, but in particular:

- Creative development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Communication, language and literacy

**KEY STRANDS ADDRESSED BY THIS UNIT**

- knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources }
- knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles } AT1
- *skill of asking and responding to questions of identity and experience* }AT2

**ATTITUDES FOCUS**

- **Self-awareness;** Pupils have the opportunity to feel confident about their own beliefs and identity, sharing them with others
- **Respect for all:** Pupils have opportunities for being ready to value difference between their own and other people's views
- **Open-mindedness:** Pupils will have opportunities to learn and gain new understanding about Christians and also from others

<p><b>Prior learning</b> It is helpful if pupils have: Learned about some aspects about Christianity Learned about special festivals for believers</p> <p>Discussed Christmas &amp; Easter as festivals that are important for Christians</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b> In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to: <b>Christianity:</b> God, Jesus, Bible, Christian, Place of Worship, Church <b>Christmas:</b> Festival, nativity, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, angel, shepherds, saviour, gold, frankincense, myrrh, precious, Gift from God, Nazareth, Bethlehem, stable, The 3 Wise Men <b>Easter:</b> Tomb, cross, new life, heaven, resurrection, The Last Supper, Egg, Spring, Followers</p>	<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p><b>Texts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Range of different versions of the Christmas Story</li> <li>◆ Developing Primary RE: Special Times, Home and Family, Christmas (RE Today, ed. Joyce Mackley)</li> <li>◆ Lion Story Teller Bible</li> <li>◆ Bibles and story books depicting the Christmas &amp; Easter story.</li> <li>◆ Christmas: Ref. Matt. 1. 18-25 &amp; Luke 1. 26-38 and 2. 1-7</li> <li>◆ Easter: extracts from Luke chapters 22-24.</li> <li>◆ Pictures, posters and tapes.</li> <li>◆ Items of baby clothes, bedding and toys</li> <li>◆ Cards and gifts</li> <li>◆ Nativity clothes for the role-play area</li> <li>◆ BBC Big Book Christianity – Gifts Key Stage 1</li> <li>◆ Pictures of the Christingle celebration</li> <li>◆ The Children’s Society resources</li> <li>◆ Pictures &amp; posters of the Easter Story</li> <li>◆ Different crosses</li> <li>◆ The Easter Story Big Book – Anita Ganeri</li> </ul> <p><b>Web</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.request.org.uk/infants/Festivals">www.request.org.uk/infants/Festivals</a>  <a href="http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk">www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk</a> is the Welsh Virtual Teacher Centre. It contains some good materials for teaching Easter and Christmas to this age group.  <a href="http://www.reonline.org.uk">www.reonline.org.uk</a>  <a href="http://ngfl.northumberland.gov.uk/christmas/nativity/nativity.html">http://ngfl.northumberland.gov.uk/christmas/nativity/nativity.html</a>  <a href="http://www.godlyplay.org.uk">www.godlyplay.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>DVD / Video / visual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Festivals 2 DVD Child’s Eye Media</li> <li>◆ Channel 4 Animated Bible Stories</li> <li>◆ BBC Sherston: Faiths &amp; Celebrations CD Rom</li> <li>◆ Godly Play activities : Jerome W Berryman, The Complete Guide to Godly Play</li> <li>◆ BBC Pathways of Belief : Christianity: Easter</li> <li>◆ The Miracle maker DVD / Video</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contributions to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils</b> The unit enables pupils to develop: Spiritually by reflecting on symbols of light and artefacts used in Christianity Socially by finding out about the activities carried out by Christian families when they celebrate Christmas and Easter</p>		

## EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit:

Nearly all pupils will be able to fulfil some of the relevant Stepping Stones/Early Learning Goals and be able to:

- Name and say what happens at the festival of when Jesus was born
- Name and say what happens at the festival when Jesus died and came back to life
- Name three things that a Christian family might do at Christmas
- Talk about own experiences of Christmas & Easter and the things they do with their own families
- Tell someone about my own celebrations and someone else's celebrations
- Talk about the Christmas story and how some of the characters may have felt
- Talk about a special gift and know that Jesus was given gifts when He was born
- Talk about some of the signs of new life at Spring time
- Talk about what Christians do at Eastertime
- Talk about what happens at Christmas
- Talk about what happens at Easter
- Talk about the idea that Christians believe Jesus is God's gift to the world & that this is why they give gifts at Christmas
- Identify Christmas and Easter as Christian festivals for themselves.
- Talk about own feelings linked to being happy and sad and discuss how the characters felt during the Christmas and Easter stories

Most pupils will be able to:

Some pupils might be able to work at Level 1 and :

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

Provide for the pupils to show what they learned by...illustrating what Christians do at Christmas and Easter  
Success criteria...

- ◆ I can draw my favourite part of the Christmas or Easter story
- ◆ I can draw the saddest and happiest parts of Christmas or Easter story
- ◆ I can talk about some of the things Christians do with their families at Christmas and Easter
- ◆ I can remember and tell someone three things that happened to Mary and Joseph in the story of Christmas
- ◆ I can say what makes me happy or sad
- ◆ I can talk about 3 symbols used at Eastertime

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	TEACHING AND LEARNING	LEARNING OUTCOMES Pupils	POINTS TO NOTE
<p><b>What do Christians remember about the Christmas Story?</b></p> <p><b>Which characters were involved in the Christmas story?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there were many characters involved in the story who all had their part to play</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sharing the Christmas story</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Storytelling skills, using video or pictures, and making the story significant through the attention you give it are important here.</li> <li>▪ Count &amp; order the different characters in the story</li> <li>▪ Read the story &amp; children to perform a set action when that name is mentioned</li> <li>▪ Share the story &amp; act out the suggested feelings of the character eg frightened faces, shocked faces, happy, surprised, tearful, excited, joyous, proud, thrilled etc</li> <li>▪ Listen to the part of the story when Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem to pay their taxes. Talk about how they got there. How did the donkey feel travelling all that way?</li> <li>▪ Read the story when Mary and Joseph went knocking on the innkeepers' door when there wasn't any room. How did the Innkeeper feel when Mary was cold and tired, ready to have her baby?</li> <li>▪ How did the shepherds feel when Gabriel appeared and told them to visit the new-born king? Show these expressions through role-play.</li> </ul> <p><b>Use some creative activities linked to these characters:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set up the role-play area as a stable for the children to re-enact the Christmas story</li> </ul>	<p>I can talk about some of the events during the Christmas story</p> <p>I can say how some of the characters felt</p>	<p>Literacy: Sequence pictures to tell the Christmas story</p> <p>Write words and phrases</p> <p>Create some instructions: how should mum look after a new baby? In a stable??!!</p> <p>SEAL: use the language of emotion to explore the story with the children.</p>

<p><b>Why is the Christingle important for some Christians?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What a 'Christingle' is and learn about the symbols which make up a Christingle</li> </ul>	<p><b>Christingle: what's that? Who uses that?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Show a Christingle and talk about the symbols that are used. <i>The orange represents the world; the red tape represents the blood of Christ; the candle represents the light of Christ to light our hearts with love; the fruit symbolises food that God provides for people</i></li> <li>▪ Discuss with the children that special services are held in church to celebrate the Christingle festival. Explain that this is a special service for all ages, especially children. This takes place in church on Christmas Eve. Talk about what happens in this service. eg part of the service is in darkness and children are given a Christingle which is lit. Carols are then sung by everyone.</li> <li>▪ Make a large class Christingle using papier mache to cover a beach ball. Add the sticks of fruit, the silver foil, red tape &amp; candle.</li> <li>▪ In the creative area, make Christingles using dough, collage, or even lego.</li> <li>▪ Using Colour Magic on the computer, draw a Christingle, selecting different tools and techniques</li> </ul>	<p>I can say what some of the symbols of a Christingle mean for Christians.</p>	<p>Speaking &amp; Listening links</p> <p>Instructions: the literacy link could be to making instructions that can be followed.</p> <p>ICT Link Paint Programme e.g. Colour Magic</p>
<p><b>How do we celebrate good times?</b></p>	<p>To describe what we do to celebrate good times</p> <p>That gifts don't have cost anything to be special</p>	<p><b>Celebrating with gifts that are valuable but free.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Circle Time, discuss children's experiences of celebration. Ask questions such as, 'What do you like about birthdays?' 'What does your family do on birthdays?' 'Are there any other special days in your family?' 'How do birthdays make you feel?'</li> <li>▪ Write down, draw or tell an adult everything they associate with birthdays.</li> <li>▪ Plan a birthday celebration for someone special. Ask children to think of someone very special in their lives and plan an event that would make that person happy.</li> </ul>	<p>I can tell someone how my family celebrate my birthday or another special day in our home I can think of a gift that I would give to someone, that doesn't cost anything. I can talk about special gifts that cost nothing.</p>	<p>In a plural class, the celebrations discussed could include birthdays, but also other celebrations that matter in the children's families.</p>

<p><b>What is special about Christmas for Christians?</b></p>	<p>To know that Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birthday</p> <p>The meaning of 'precious' &amp; what makes something special</p> <p>What makes a gift special? Different ideas about this.</p> <p>Why people give gifts at Christmas</p> <p>What Christians do at Christmas, family celebrations, going to Church</p>	<p><b>Christmas as a birthday celebration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recap the last lesson: how do we celebrate a birthday?</li> <li>▪ Talk about Christmas being a special event to celebrate Jesus' birthday &amp; discuss how we may celebrate His birthday.</li> <li>▪ Provide a selection of attractively wrapped presents. Can the children guess what's inside? What would they like to be inside? Discuss precious or special gifts. What makes a gift special or precious? Ask children to talk in groups about their own 'best present ever' and explain why it was special to them.</li> <li>▪ Drama activity: in pairs, take turns at acting out the scene of giving, receiving and opening a gift. Discuss the different feelings that the children experience. You might ask some children to model being thankful, and others to show the opposite of this!</li> <li>▪ Think about gifts may cost nothing but can make people happy.</li> <li>▪ Children to choose a gift that doesn't cost anything and write a sentence about why they have chosen it.</li> <li>▪ Read or tell the story of the Wise men, the shepherds and the gifts they brought to Jesus. Talk about the children's experiences of giving gifts to babies when they are born. What types of presents do we give to babies? How do they differ to presents given to Jesus in the stable?</li> <li>▪ Ask the children to choose a gift that they think a Christian would take to Jesus. Draw the present and write a sentence about why they have chosen it.</li> <li>▪ Talk about celebrations with their own families at Christmas and in the winter.</li> <li>▪ Design a plate of their favourite celebration lunch using collage materials. Talk about who does and who doesn't celebrate Christmas.</li> </ul>	<p>I can recognise that Christmas is a kind of Birthday celebration.</p> <p>I can identify that it is Christians who worship Jesus and who celebrate Christmas</p> <p>I can recall the outline of the Christmas story.</p>	<p>Note that where many Muslim pupils are present, it is good to acknowledge that Jesus is a Prophet of Islam (called Isa in the Qur'an).</p> <p>Sensitive teaching will be clear about what Muslims believe and what Christians think, neither minimising differences nor exacerbating them.</p>
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<p><b>What is special about the Easter story for Christians?</b></p>	<p>About some of the things that happened during Easter</p> <p>That hot crossed buns and Easter eggs are symbols of Easter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Listen to some stories about the Easter story. Teachers might tell the story of Palm Sunday, a healing story, the story of the last supper, and of the crucifixion and resurrection.</li> <li>▪ Watch the Easter Story from Channel 4's 'Animated Bible Stories'</li> <li>▪ Hear or if appropriate sing some Easter songs and talk about them.</li> <li>▪ Think about the words of an Easter song</li> <li>▪ Learn about hot cross buns and why they are traditional for Good Friday.</li> <li>▪ Decorate an egg, bonnet or tie</li> </ul>	<p>I can re-tell some of the things that happened in the Easter story</p> <p>I can respond sensitively to the feelings of people in the story (AT2)</p>	<p>It's important to think carefully about how to tell the crucifixion story to this age group. It's a sad story, and some children may have their own experiences of death in the family.</p>
<p><b>Why is the cross an important symbol for Christians?</b></p>	<p>That Easter time is special for Christians and that it's a time to think about new life</p> <p>About some of the ways that Christians celebrate Easter</p>	<p><b>New life at Easter: what does it mean?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss what is meant by 'new life' and the importance of the concept to Christians.</li> <li>▪ Collage or paint 'new life' pictures.</li> <li>▪ Reflect on the Easter story and talk about why it is a sad and happy time for Christians. Good Friday is a sad day when Christians remember how Jesus died. They celebrate the belief that He came back to life on Easter Sunday.</li> <li>▪ Discuss special celebrations for Christians at home, at church. E.g. cards and gifts, eggs, palm crosses, decorated eggs, Easter gardens, special food</li> <li>▪ Decorate and collage an egg, using a symbol of new life.</li> <li>▪ Make and talk about an Easter basket, card or gift.</li> <li>▪ Make an Easter mobile illustrating sad and happy times</li> <li>▪ Make an Easter garden as a class. Children to suggest what they would like to include within it.</li> </ul>	<p>I can talk about something that makes me happy</p> <p>I can talk about something that makes me sad</p>	
<p><b>What have you learned about what matters to Christians at Christmas and Easter?</b></p>	<p>To understand the most important things about Christmas and Easter for Christians</p>	<p><b>Activities that show what has been learned</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I can choose 3 artefacts (or pictures) that I think matter most to Christians from a table of 6 and say why I chose them (examples could include: candle, Santa, Christingle, present, Christmas tree, elf, Easter egg, advent calendar)</li> <li>▪ I can talk about and draw what is the most important thing in my life</li> <li>▪ I can talk about thoughts and feelings I have when I am celebrating a special day and say why this day is special to me and my family</li> </ul>	<p>I can say what I have learned about important things in Christian life</p>	<p>Set up a table of the artefacts for children to choose and talk about.</p>

