



Living Well

in God's world

A schools resource

Includes 4 Collective Worship ideas



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Living Well in God's World

This resource provides a challenge that will help you think about Christian living and the environment. This resource is for schools and seeks to link in with some of the overriding themes used in Understanding Christianity.

Unless otherwise stated, the readings have been taken from The Lion Storyteller Bible by Bob Hartman and Krisztine Kállai Nagy and from the Open the Book resources.

The resource can be used however you like, but offers 4 weeks of activity. For each week, you will find:

- An idea for Collective worship that includes:
 - An introduction and overview
 - A Bible story
 - A prayer for the week
 - Song suggestions
 - 3 challenges to choose from
- Discussion questions that you may like to use in the classroom.

We would love to hear your stories and experiences of using this resource. Please share your stories with your School Effectiveness Adviser or Go Team Adviser in word or through sending them an email.

Please share your pictures with us on Twitter (@GoTeamAdvisers and @bathwells) and/or Instagram (goteamadvisers).

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Tony, Cheryl and Andy – your Go Team Advisers

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What a wonderful world!

Week 1

Bible Reading: Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 – The Creation Story

Christians believe that God created our amazing world and it was good. Use these ideas for Collective Worship as an opportunity to celebrate creation, appreciating all that God has made and giving thanks for our incredible world, full of diversity and beauty.

Our world

Here are some exciting facts about our world...

Show the children some images to help them appreciate the magnitude of our amazing world.

At its centre, the distance around the planet is almost 25,000 miles.

There are around 1,324,000 animal species on the planet and 426,000 other species including plants, bacteria and fungi. In fact it is estimated that there are 12,250,000 species still to be discovered.

There are 195 countries spread over 7 continents. In Africa the Sahara Desert measures over 3.5 million miles (square), more than 16 times the size of France. Meanwhile in South America the Amazon is over 3 million miles (square), which is bigger than the country of India. The Amazon, and other tropical rainforests, are thought to contain up to 90 per cent of all plant species.

The highest point on the planet, the peak of Mount Everest, is a staggering 8,850 metres above sea level. While the deepest point, situated in the Pacific Ocean, is 10,994 metres below sea level. What a wonderful world!

Bible story

Re-tell the Creation Story from Genesis 1 using a suitable children's Bible or video resource.

We recommend 'The Lion Storyteller Bible' and their first story called 'In the Beginning'. A Script is included in appendix 1.

Prayer

Father God, thank you for creating our wonderful world. Help us to notice and appreciate our beautiful world. Help us to take care of it. Amen.

Song suggestions

This is God's World – Paul Field and Ralph Chambers – words in Appendix 5 –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_9_8A-HmNM

Everywhere Around Me – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Od_qFJ2g50

Our God is a Great Big God – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwrBjwGuB00>

Challenges to choose from

1. Go for a walk somewhere new and thank God for the things you see on it.
2. Take time to look at the moon and stars tonight. If you or your parents/carers have a smartphone, you may like to download a star gazing app e.g. Star Walk 2 (Free on Google Play) and Live Sky (Free on the App Store) to learn more about space.
3. Take a look at a project that looks after animals for example your local RSPCA centre, RSPB site, Somerset Wildlife Trust or any other project locally. You could even look at a project in another country and consider how you may support them.

Classroom discussion questions

1. What do you like in God's creation?
2. How well do you think that we take care of God's world?
3. When the earth gets spoilt, do you think that God is happy or sad?
4. How do you think that we could take better care of God's Creation?

We make mistakes and mess up God's wonderful world

Week 2

Bible Reading: Genesis 3 – The Fall

Humans have a tendency to go their own way and do their own thing, rather than keep their place in relation to the creator. The story of Genesis 3 describes The Fall, a separation between God and humans, between humans and each other and between humans and the environment. As we reflect on this, how can we change our lifestyles and our habits and attitudes towards travel, as a way of beginning to restore our relationship with the environment?

What's the issue?

Every year over 70 million overseas visits are made by UK residents. There are approximately 37.5 million vehicles on our roads, which makes it possible for us to travel more independently, especially shorter journeys. So whether it's a holiday to Spain, or just a quick trip to the shops, travelling has never been so easy.

The problem with many modes of transport is that they create a lot of pollution, which in turn damages the environment. In fact the way we choose to travel, especially by car and plane, has one of the biggest impacts on global warming.

Bible story

Re-tell the Creation Story from Genesis 3 using a suitable children's Bible or video resource.

We recommend 'The Lion Storyteller Bible' and their second story called 'A Sad Day'. A Script is included in appendix 2.

Prayer for the week

Father God, we are sorry for the mistakes we have made and the part we have played, however small it may seem, in messing up your wonderful world. Help us to think more carefully about the ways in which we travel. Amen.

Song suggestions

This is God's World – Paul Field and Ralph Chambers – words in Appendix 5 –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_9_8A-HmNM

He's got the whole world in his hands – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDBJNQiugnM>

Challenges to choose from

1. Take one of your journeys in a different way this week. If you normally get driven to school, why not consider asking your parents to park some distance away, so you can walk, cycle or scoot the final part together instead.
2. Take a look at the news or search on the internet for information on places where people are having to flee their homes. Take a moment to pray for those countries and people. Is there a local refugee charity you could support?
3. Look up what a 'Carbon Footprint' is -
http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_6720000/newsid_6720600/6720673.stm
Calculate your carbon footprint using: <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/questionnaire>

Classroom discussion questions

1. How does the environment get damaged by the ways we travel?
2. How does it feel to think about how we are harming Creation? How do you think it makes God feel?
3. What kind of pollution bothers you most on a day-to-day basis?
4. Do you think your household ever make unnecessary journeys? Can you think of any you have made recently?

God sent Jesus in human form

Week 3

Bible Reading: John 1: 1-18 - Incarnation

The New Testament shows us that Jesus is the answer, allowing humans to be at one with God again. People had got things wrong over and over again, but God's solution is to get closer to us, not abandon us. Jesus became God in flesh and came to live among us. God demonstrated his overwhelming generosity to us in Jesus. When there's a problem, God chooses to be right in the middle of it with us. As we reflect on John's words about God becoming flesh, how can we respond? How does this affect our attitudes towards energy and water consumption?

What's the issue?

An average household uses 136,000 litres of water every year, that's equivalent to 4.5 bath tubs every single day! Meanwhile, in comparison to many other countries, most households in the UK use 25 per cent more electricity. Did you know turning appliances off standby saves around £30 a year? That would be enough to power a light bulb for 600 hours.

Bible story

Share John 1 using a suitable children's Bible or video resource.

We recommend the paraphrase version in appendix 3.

Prayer for the week

Father God, thank you for sending Jesus to live among us. Thank you for the many things we have that make our living conditions comfortable. Help us to remember to care for our world and only use electricity and water when it is needed. Amen.

Song suggestions

This is God's World – Paul Field and Ralph Chambers – words in Appendix 5 –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_9_8A-HmNM

Wonderful Lord, wonderful God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qZWK8ZE2Pk>

When I think about the cross – Out of the Ark Music, Songs for Every Easter

Challenges to choose from

1. Don't run the tap while you're brushing your teeth.
2. Try to remember to turn the lights off when you leave a room and only turn them on, if necessary.
3. It's not just lights that waste electricity, turn off the TV, computer, video games and other electrical stuff when you're not using them. Don't leave appliances on standby and remember not to leave appliances on charge unnecessarily.

Classroom discussion questions

1. What appliance or electrical item do you think uses the most energy in your home?
2. What appliances or electronic items do you leave on all the time?
3. Do we have any things that use energy that we really don't need?
4. How can we reduce the amount of energy consumed by appliances and electronics?

Jesus showed us how to live

Week 4

Bible Reading: Luke 10: 25-37 – The Good Samaritan

Jesus modelled a totally different way of living. Jesus was radical as he walked on earth. He showed us how to stand up for what is right, even when that is inconvenient to us. As we reflect on the story of the Good Samaritan, how can we act responsibly and fairly when caring for our world?

What's the issue?

Climate change is having a massive effect on the environment. Rising temperatures are affecting wildlife and their habitats especially. For example because the ice in the Antarctic is melting the population of Adelie penguins has reduced by 90 per cent in some areas. As a result of the melting ice caps, sea levels are expected to rise by 26 - 82 cm by the end of the century. Meanwhile many other species will be forced to move north, while others, such as polar bears could face extinction.

Meanwhile, in warmer climates, many tropical rainforests are being effected by environmental destruction, and it is those rainforests which support more than half the plant and animal species worldwide. The Amazon alone produces 20 per cent of the world's oxygen because of all its trees. It is estimated that 18 million acres of forests are lost every year, which is equal to the size of 20 football pitches being lost every minute.

Bible story

Re-tell the story of The Good Samaritan using a suitable children's Bible or video resource.

We recommend 'The Lion Storyteller Bible' and the story called 'The Kind Stranger'. A Script is included in appendix 4.

Prayer for the week

Father God, thank you for the story of the Good Samaritan. We are sorry for the times when we make decisions to keep going instead of stopping and doing the right thing. Help us to take time to stop and see what is happening to your world and decide what we can do to make things better: for us, for our neighbours across the whole world and for the planet which you gave us to care for. Amen.

Song suggestions

This is God's World – Paul Field and Ralph Chambers (words in appendix 5)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_9_8A-HmNM

Creator God – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GM4IVZuljEI>

Challenges to choose from

1. Does your school have an eco-council/green council? Are you involved or could you support them in some way over the coming weeks. If your school doesn't have one, could you ask your teachers about setting one up?
2. How clean and tidy is your community? The next time you are out and about with your parents or carers, try to safely pick up 5 pieces of litter each and dispose of it in the most eco-friendly way – be careful, you may need to wear gloves to be hygienic.
3. Christians believe that God made the world, that God cares for the world and that God wants us to care for it too. Can you make a Green-Cross Code for your School? It could contain a list of what you believe about God and what you can do to show your care for God's creation.

Classroom discussion questions

1. Talk about a time when you were treated unfairly, either in a large or small way. How did you respond? What happened?
2. Talk about a time when you were busy doing something that felt important to you and it stopped you taking the time to do something you thought you perhaps could have done.
3. What do you think is the most unfair thing about our world?
4. What are ways we can show justice and fairness in our home, school, work, church and beyond?

Appendix 1 – In the beginning

At first, there wasn't anything at all. Nothing! So God set to work. But he didn't use his hands, or a special machine. He spoke, that's all. He said, 'I'd like some light.' And there was light. Brighter than a summer morning or a thousand Christmas candles.

God spoke again. He said, 'Sky. I'd like some sky. And some water underneath.' And, sure enough, there it was. The bright blue sky. With the dark blue heavens above it. And the blue-green sea below. 'Earth.' That's what God said next, hard and firm, as if he really meant it. And the blue-green waters parted, and there was dry land underneath. Great patches of it, dirt black and brown. Here and there, all over the world.

'We need some colour,' God whispered, as if he were thinking out loud. And, quivering with excitement, green growing things crept right up out of the dark earth, then burst into blossom-red, orange and blue! Pine trees and palm trees. Rose bushes and blackberry bushes. Tulips and chrysanthemums. God shouted next.

'Day-shining sun!'

'Night-shining moon!'

'Bright shining stars!'

And there they were, for morning and evening, summer and winter-time and heat and light!

After that, God called to the sky, as if he were expecting some kind of an answer. 'Come forth, flying things!' he called. And through the clouds they came. Flying high and flying low. Flying large and flying small. Eagles and insects. Hummingbirds and hawks. Then God called to the sea. 'Come forth, splashing things!' And they came to him, too, leaping right up through the waves. Sailfish and swordfish. Dolphins and trout. Great grinning hump-backed whales. Finally, God called to the earth. 'Come forth, walking things, crawling things, running, hopping, climbing things!'

And sure enough, they came. Up from burrows. Down from trees. Out of the high grass, and across the open plains.

Now everything was ready. Good and ready. So God spoke again.

'Man and woman' It was as if he were calling the names of his very best friends. And out of the dust came Adam and Eve. To enjoy all that God had made. To take care of it for him. And to talk with him. 'This is the way things ought to be. This is very good!' said God.

Appendix 2 – A sad day

'Welcome to my world!' God said to Adam. 'It's good isn't it?'

'Welcome to my garden!' God said to Eve. 'This is the most beautiful place of all. And I want it to be your home. Take care of the animals for me. Take care of the plants. And eat whatever you like.

There are plenty of trees to pick from.' Adam and Eve didn't know what to say. They looked at the garden. They looked at each other. And then they smiled the world's first smile.

Life was going to be perfect here. Just perfect.

'There's just one more thing.' God said. 'Do you see that tree over there? The one in the middle of the garden? Well, the fruit on that tree is not good for you. If you eat it, you will make me very unhappy. And you will have to leave this beautiful place.'

Adam and Eve looked at each other again. With so many trees to choose from, that hardly seemed to be a problem. And for a long time, they were content with soft juicy pears, sweet thick-skinned oranges, and round ripe melons.

Then, one day, the serpent came to visit.

'Tell me,' the serpent said to Eve, 'which trees are you allowed to eat from?'

'Every tree!' Eve smiled. 'Except the one in the middle of the garden.'
'Oh?' said the crafty serpent. 'And why is that?'
'Because it would make God unhappy,' Eve answered. 'And we would have to leave this beautiful place.'
'Ridiculous!' laughed the serpent. 'God does not want you to eat that fruit because he knows it would make you as clever as him. You know all about being good. But God has told you nothing about what it means to be bad. Eat the fruit, and you will know all about that, too!'
Eve thought that the fruit looked delicious. She had sometimes wondered what it tasted like. And it wasn't really fair of God to keep things from them. So she picked a piece. And took a bite. And gave Adam a taste as well. And, right away, they discovered what it meant to do something bad. Their stomachs churned with guilt. Their faces turned red with shame.
Instead of running to meet God when he next visited the garden, they ran away to hide.
'I know what you have done.' God called out sadly
'Now you will have to leave this beautiful place.'
'Goodbye.' God said to Adam. 'From now on, you will have to scratch at the earth for the food you eat.'
'Goodbye.' God said to Eve. 'Your life will be hard, too.'
'And when your lives end,' God said finally 'you will go back to the ground from which you came.'
Adam and Eve looked at each other. Then they walked sadly out of the garden.
They had learned what it means to be bad. And they had changed God's good world for ever.

Appendix 3 – John 1

God had an idea. It was not a new idea; he had always had this idea. Right from when he created the world. It was his own special idea. It was in his heart, it was a part of him.
This was God's idea: to go and be with the people he had created on earth. It would be like sending light into a dark place. It would have to be a special light - after all, it would be God on earth, God with people.

God's idea was a good one. It was an idea full of love. By sending himself to be with people, he would be giving new life to the earth. New life to all people. A new special kind of God-life.

But how would God do that? God had already appeared to people over hundreds of years in many different ways. In a burning bush. As a great wind. As a still quiet voice whispering in your ear. Even as hand writing on a wall. But this was to be different. This was to be God living on Earth. This was a big idea.

God's big idea needed something special: special but small. A baby. That's how God would show himself to people. A baby. But not any baby - this would be God's son. Created by his spirit. Born of God. And those who saw the baby, and loved him, they would see God. They would know that God was with them. They would know that God loved them.

For many years, God told people about his idea. He told his prophets and his - priests and the kings and the ordinary people. He told them that one day he would send his special person to be with them. He gave them lots of clues, like you do when there is an exciting surprise ahead. The people wrote them all down, but they didn't really understand them. And after a while they got tired of waiting and wondered if perhaps God had forgotten about his good idea.

And then, when it was just the right time, the perfect moment, God spoke to a man called John. Soon, very soon, I will send a special person into the world. Get everyone ready! He will be like a light for the world. Not the kind of light that comes from a lamp or a torch, but the kind of light that shines out of bright, happy faces. An inside light. A special light!

And so God reached out to human beings. He sent himself to live an ordinary life with an ordinary family. His own son - a little boy. Sent to the world that God himself had made. The same spirit of creation that had hung the stars in the sky and made the mountains high and the rivers wet - that spirit was made into a little baby. A little boy. Born to an ordinary mum and an ordinary dad. But also the son of God.

Appendix 4 – The Kind Stranger

Jesus was teaching one day when a man in the crowd asked him a question:

‘Can you tell me, Jesus, what I have to do to live forever?’

Jesus smiled and answered: ‘Love God and love your neighbour as much as you love yourself.’ The man, hoping to trick Jesus, asked: ‘But who is my neighbour? Is he just the fellow who lives next door?’ Jesus said: ‘Let me tell you a story and I think you will understand.’

Once upon a time, there was a man - a man like anyone of us - who was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho. Now as you all know, that is a very dangerous road. It's twisty and it's steep, and there's no end of places for robbers and thieves to hide.

Well, the robbers were waiting that day. And they grabbed the man. And they beat him. And they took his money and left him to die.

In a little while, another man came walking down that road - a priest, on his way home from worshipping God at the Temple. He saw the dying man, and what do you think he did?

Somebody shouted from the crowd: ‘He helped him!’ Another shouted: ‘He saved him!’ No! He did not. He took one look at that poor, beaten man, then crossed to the other side of the road and walked away.

Soon another man passed by. He served God at the Temple too. So what do you think this man did when he saw the wounded traveller? Someone shouted: ‘He ran for help!’ Another shouted: ‘He raised the alarm!’ No! He did not. Just like the priest, he crossed to the other side of the road and left that poor man to die.

Don't worry. For there was one more man who passed by that day. And he was a Samaritan.

Someone shouted: ‘A Samaritan? They're different from us!’ Another shouted: ‘We hate Samaritans!’ A third added: ‘And they hate us!’ So I've heard, said Jesus, but when this Samaritan saw the man, he did not walk away. No. He bandaged his wounds. He loaded him on his donkey. He took him to a nearby inn. And he paid for that man to stay there until he was well.

Jesus looked at the man who had asked him the question. ‘So tell me, which of these men was a neighbour to the man who had been robbed?’

‘The third one. The Samaritan.’ The man answered.

‘That's right.’ Jesus smiled. ‘Because my neighbour is anyone who needs my help. Now you go and

help your neighbour too.'

Appendix 5

This Is God's World

(Paul Field, Ralph Chambers)

Don't know much about the ozone layer
Rain forests seem miles away
But each of us can be player
Fight to save the world God has made
This is God's world, this is God's world
And you're a member of the human race
This is God's world, this is God's world
Let's try to make it a better place

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