



# 11. A House for worship

**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 reflecting on the story of Moses and journeying with him as he leads God’s people from Egypt and to the Promised Land. At the beginning of a new school year, it is always good to be back together as a community, and so we are using the story of Moses to help us to reflect on some important ideas from this story about being community together and about God, who looked after them. These stories can be found in the Bible, the Torah and the Qur’an, recognising Moses as a prophet and leader in all three of these Abrahamic traditions: these stories often generate some challenging questions about judgement and justice (especially from older pupils), so in these collective worship resources, we choose to emphasise the positive messages and outcomes e.g. God seeing and responding to the cruel treatment of the people, and being *with* his people. We are very grateful to [FreeBibleImages](https://www.freebibleimages.com/) for the use of their PowerPoint slides and images for many of the assemblies this term – and to our new friend Jacqui Parkinson for allowing us to use her materials in our resources. You can find out more about her work here: [Jacqui Parkinson Textile Artist | Jacqui Parkinson Textile Artist \(jacqui-textile.com\)](https://www.jacqui-textile.com/)



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

This week, the focus is on the importance of the tabernacle as a House of worship for God’s people – and how God chose a humble craftsman to create beautiful things to help the people to worship.

## 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 this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- **Today’s story is another that uses a story frame, this time The House That Jack Built, albeit rather loosely! It tells of the setting up of the Tabernacle, the House of Meeting, where God’s presence would dwell whilst the people were camped.**  
**NB** There are some extra notes about the Tabernacle, under each slide, if you or your class would like to know more, with the occasional extra ‘wondering’ question.
- **Reflective prayer activity:** Provide a beautiful object or image for your reflective area this week, this might be something you have been using as part of your Art curriculum

## Gathering:

**Slides 1&2** Use this two-step gathering words for this term, or your usual greeting if you prefer. Why not invent some actions to make them extra memorable?!



- **Leader:** On the journey of life....
- **Children:** ...we are glad to be together in our school community.
- **Leader:** As we gather together....
- **Children:** ...may we learn from each other and hear from God.

## Engaging:

**YOU COULD USE YOUR OWN IMAGES OR OBJECTS HERE, ESPECIALLY IF THIS FITS IN WITH YOUR ART CURRICULUM**



- **Slide 3: What makes these objects beautiful? Which one is more beautiful, do you think?**  
What do you think they are used for?  
Why do you think someone took the time to make them look like this, when they’re only for drinking from?
- **Slide 4:** We have journeyed now with God’s people through 11 weeks of term, sharing their adventures, their mistakes and their wanderings.
- **Slide 5:** As we heard last week, it took God’s people 40 years of wandering through the desert to finally have sight of the Promised Land – which we **will** hear about next week!  
We heard in our story how everyone lived in tents – and packed up each time that the pillar of cloud of God’s presence moved on.
- **Slide 6:** Earlier in the term, we learned that even today, Jewish people still spend 8 days in makeshift shelters during Sukkot, to keep God’s commandment to ‘Remember’. They call these ‘tabernacles’, which is what the tents in the desert were called. ‘Tabernacle’ means ‘dwelling place’ – the place where



someone lives. Today we're going to find out about a very special tabernacle that was part of the Israelites' camp wherever the pillar of cloud stopped.

- **Slide 7** *There are some extra notes about the Tabernacle, under each slide, if you or your class would like to know more:*
- This is THE Tabernacle – the place where God 'lived' when the people set up camp in the desert. Although the events in the story of Moses took place many thousands of years ago, we know a lot about what this looked like because of the very detailed instructions that God gave to Moses. Our story for today, about the Tabernacle, is another story that follows a pattern, which some of you might know as 'This is the house that Jack built' or even 'I know an old woman who swallowed a fly...' Our story is called '**This is the House that God built.**' We've given the word House a capital letter to show that it's a very important place, as you'll hear. Let's begin – and do join in if you can, because it's a repeating story!
- '**This is the House that God built.**'
- **Slide 8:** This is the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 9:** This is the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 10:** This is the room, the Holy Room, behind the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 11:** This is the Ark that Bezalel made, that lay in the room, the Holy Room, behind the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 12:** These are the treasures of God's provision, that lived in the Ark that Bezalel made, that lay in the room, the Holy Room, behind the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 13:** This is the place where Moses would wait, next to the treasures of God's provision, that lived in the Ark that Bezalel made, that lay in the room, the Holy Room, behind the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 14:** This is the spot where God's presence came down, in the place where Moses would wait, next to the treasures of God's provision, that lived in the Ark that Bezalel made, that lay in the room, the Holy Room, behind the curtain with purple stripes, that hung in the courtyard where [the] people would gather, inside of the House that God built.
- **Slide 15:** But why did God build such a Holy House, where the people would gather and treasures would live....? Let's wonder together....

**Slide 16: Let's be still together and turn our 'wondering' thoughts to our own school community..... [Pause and talk together, as time allows]**

....I wonder why God needed a 'House'?

....I wonder why there were such special objects inside?....

....I wonder what special objects help us to worship or reflect as a school community?....

.....

**Slide 17:** As you heard in the story, the Ark of the Covenant was crafted by a man named Bezalel. God told Moses: '**I have given Bezalel the skill, ability and knowledge to do all kinds of work.**' (Exodus 31:3-4)

It goes on to say that Bezalel was able to design pieces to be made from gold, silver and bronze, to cut jewels and put them in metal, and carve wood. That's quite a craftsman!!

As well as the Ark, Bezalel made a beautiful **golden lampstand**, and two places to bring offerings for God: an **altar** and a **table**.

**I wonder how Bezalel's objects helped the people to worship God?**

**Slide 18:** This is a beautiful piece of tapestry created by textile artist Jacqui Parkinson as part of her series on the Creation story from the Bible. Many people have been to see her exhibition and her tapestries have helped people to



reflect on and wonder about this part of the Bible. Jacqui says that she believes that human beings are made to be creative, just like God the Creator is.

**I wonder how we might use our gifts of creativity to help us to worship or reflect as a school community?** [you may wish to talk about this together and set it in the context of the reflective task this week.]

**Slide 19: Prayer**

Now I'm going to use the words of a prayer to draw our time together today to a close. Make it your own if you would like to, or just be still and quiet with your own thoughts.

**Slide 20: Amen**

**Slide 21: Just before we leave....**

For those of you who are familiar with the Indiana Jones (Indy) films, the Ark of the Covenant that he found in the movie was the same Ark of the Covenant that is mentioned in the Bible, which Bezalel crafted.....

**Sending: Slide 22: Remind children of today's key message – creating beautiful things for collective worship**

**Leader:** As we leave this House and time and go into the day ahead..

**All: May today's words help us to become a stronger community!**



**To listen to / sing:**

[Great big family of God](#) (NBD) [All together as a family](#) (AAOS)



**Reflective activity: Beautiful!**

Put a beautiful object or image in your reflective area.

Children think about what makes it beautiful, or what inspires them about it – and use it to inspire them to think about how their own creativity might help others.

OR:

Create something beautiful to use in collective worship, in your worship space, during the Advent season.



## This is the House that God built

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**Slide 15:** But why did God build such a Holy House, for the people to gather and the treasures to live....?





## ***Beautiful!***



**Our theme this week reminds us that each of us is capable of creating beautiful things & that our gifts and talents can help others.**



**Talk together about creativity – and how we might use our own creativity in school.**



**Look at the beautiful object in your class reflection area. What inspires you about it? What ‘beautiful objects’ might we create to help others, maybe in collective worship?**

