

**KEY FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH YEAR**

**CHRIST THE KING**(Also referred to as Stir –up Sunday.) The Sunday before the start of Advent. It marks the end of the church year.

**ADVENT**The four Sundays in Advent before Christmas day. Advent is a time of preparation and waiting for Jesus’ coming.  
  
*Mark each week in the season of Advent by lighting candles on an Advent wreath or crown. During the act of Collective Worship select a value (which can be linked to the Common Worship Collect for the appropriate Sunday), light the 5th candle which should be white on the last day of term.  
  
Week in Advent Associated Colour Values Biblical Theme  
1st Sunday in Advent Purple The Advent Hope The People of God  
2nd Sunday in Advent Purple Peace The importance of the Old Testament Prophets  
3rd Sunday in Advent Pink Love The Message of John the Baptist  
4th Sunday in Advent Purple Joy Mary the Mother of Our Lord  
Christmas Day White ‘Emmanuel’ The birth of Christ*[*Christingle*](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/fundraising-and-appeals/christingle)  *Item: Orange Red ribbon around the centre 4 cocktail sticks Sweets/fruit Candle in the centre  
Symbolism: The World Christ’s blood 4 seasons4 corners of the world The fruit of the earth Jesus the light of the World*

*Advent calendar for all ages WAITING FOR GOD:  
Follow this link* [*http://www.rootsontheweb.com/roots-sample-advent.html*](http://www.rootsontheweb.com/roots-sample-advent.html) *to download a pdf of the Advent calendar in colour or black and white, plus more of our free introductory material.The Advent Calendar 2010 helps to remind us of some of the many words, images and names given to Jesus in Scripture. A mixture of active, prayerful and practical suggestions to help us prepare to celebrate Christmas.*

*Advent Wreath  
Guide to making a wreath.* [*Click here*](http://formingfaith.com/doc/Advent_Wreath_Guide_2010.pdf)*.*

*Advent Posters  
If you are looking for colourful, visual posters to stimulate thought and discussion during Advent, these four scenes by the* [*Chinese artist He Qi*](https://www.pressdispensary.co.uk/releases/c992755.html) *are worth considering.*

*Advent on Proost – animations and cut out nativity available here* [*http://proost.co.uk/search/node/advent*](http://proost.co.uk/search/node/advent)

*including Si Smith’s* [*cutout and make nativity characters*](http://proost.co.uk/25-advent-flatpack-models) *and advent calendar and comic.*[*Wait*](http://proost.co.uk/wait)*- Vaux’s simple but powerful movie and liturgy on waiting in advent.*[*Silent night*](http://proost.co.uk/silent-night) *– a movie that’s ideal for pretty much any Christmas service   
  
There are lots of liturgies and songs on the advent theme elsewhere in the books and audio sections…  
If you subscribe of course you can access the content in the downloads area as part of your subscription. if not you can buy the individual items*

**CHRISTMAS**The celebration of Jesus Christ’s birth.  
[*Jesse Tree*](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=children.content&cmid=556) *This Jesse Tree activity is designed to help families prepare for Christmas and the celebration of Jesus’ birth. It traces the spiritual family tree of Jesus Christ in the retelling many of the Bible stories that led up to Jesus’ birth. Read how to set up your own Jesse Tree at home this Advent. Click here to go to the Jesse Tree home page on the Bath and Wells Diocese website* [*http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/children/the-jesse-tree-2011/*](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/children/the-jesse-tree-2011/)

[*Paperless Christmas is back!*](http://www.paperlesschristmas.org.uk/) *(live action episodes retelling the Christmas story with a modern twist) This will go down really well with older children.*

[*Chrismons*](http://www.ezartsncrafts.com/)*are homemade Christmas decorations which use Christian symbols. This site offers ideas of how to make them to add alongside the usual tree decorations.*

**EPIPHANY**January 6th. The season which follows Christmas celebrating the visitation of the Magi (The Wise Men).  
  
*As with gladness, men of old did the guiding star behold…….  
Some years ago the Archbishop of Canterbury found himself mired in controversy for suggesting that the three wise men might well have been a myth or part of legend. Very little is known about them; they are often referred to as ‘Kings’; artists have pictured them riding on camels across the desert following the clear and bright star. They are the images often found on cards. They have over the centuries been given names Melchior, Casper and Balthazar (though not until the 6th century AD) but even then the evidence is very splendorous.  
What we do know is that the account of their arrival at the birthplace of Christ is rich in theological meaning. The old carols make the connection between their exotic gifts and the nature of Christ Himself; his kingship, worthy of all worship, and his impending sacrifice. Like many ancient tales mythological or otherwise-this is full of enduring significance.  
Most of all, these exotic visitors-whoever they were and whenever they came from-remind us that Jesus Christ was born for the salvation of all people.  
So, most gracious God may we  
Evermore be led to thee*

[**EDUCATION SUNDAY**](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/64495/Churches_Together_in/Working_Together/Education/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday.aspx)

[Education Sunday](http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/64495/Churches_Together_in/Working_Together/Education/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday.aspx) is a national day of prayer and celebration for everyone involved in the world of  
education. For more than 100 years there has been an annual recognition of Education Sunday in England and Wales (traditionally on the ninth Sunday before Easter).  
  
*Branscombe Primary School wrote these lovely prayers for the CCYP Cathedral Celebration Service. They could be used as part of an Education Sunday Service.  
  
Lord God, Let us give thanks today for all those people who have chosen to care for and work with children.  
For teachers, tutors and lecturers, we give thanks Lord and pray that they continue to be encouraged and respected in their role.  
  
For caretakers, administrators, teaching assistants, meal time supervisors and all those who help to make our schools run smoothly we give thanks. Help us to appreciate their dedication and work. Thank you for our school governors. Give them the strength to make wise choices to move our schools forward.  
We offer our thanks Lord to all those who work in education within the church. To Sunday school teachers, Youth group leaders and preachers. Help them to continue to inspire us to grow in your love and faith.  
We pray especially today for everyone working in the Diocese of Exeter; Bishops Michael, John and Bob, the clergy and those working in the Children and Young People’s team. May they continue to spread your good word throughout our schools.  
  
We thank you Lord for our parents, carers and grandparents and all those who give us support, encouragement, and love. Give them the strength to lead us by your word and example in the path of righteousness.  
  
Today Lord, we pray for peace throughout the world, and an end to suffering. We pray, particularly, for the victims in Haiti who have lost children and loved ones in the recent devastation. Comfort them and grant them the strength to continue.  
We share with you today our Branscombe Waves  
  
Dear Lord God,  
Help us to be kind caring and loving. To be honest, be hard workers and do our best, To be friendly, have fun and play well together and to be respectful.  
Praise and bless all those people here today who play such a big part in our lives and help us to be grateful for all their efforts. We ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.*

**CANDLEMAS**February 2nd. Traditionally this date marks the end of the Epiphany. Candles used in church are ‘blessed on this day’. The feast commemorates the presentation of Christ in the Temple.  
  
**SHROVE TUESDAY**The day before Lent begins, known as Pancake Day. Traditionally people went to church to be ‘shriven’ i.e. to confess their sins and be forgiven.  
  
**ASH WEDNESDAY**This marks the beginning of Lent. Traditionally ash is used from the previous years Palm Crosses to mark a cross on the forehead as a sign of repentance.  
  
**LENT**A 40 day period from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday (excluding Sundays). The 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting and praying in the desert. Lent is a time of preparation for Easter. Lent includes Mothering Sunday which is half way through the season.  
  
*Redemptorist Press has a* [*full colour Lenten Activity Map for children*](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk/product_details.php?item_id=1405) *– just 50p a copy!*

*The Lent area of* [*Going for Growth*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/index.php/growth_through_the_year/lent/) *has a whole range of ideas and websites for you to visit.*

*Carolyn C Brown’s excellent* [*Worshipping with Children blog*](http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/p/lectionary-index.html) *has ideas for including children in worship throughout Lent, Holy Week and Easter.*

***HOLY WEEK***The week leading up to Easter this includes (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday).  
  
*Here is a selection of resources available to support a collective worship focusing on Good Friday:  
  
Poem  
What makes this day good?  
If you have ever believed that love inevitably leads to betrayal  
this day says it doesn’t.  
If you have ever believed that some people are unlovable, irredeemable  
this day says they aren’t.  
If you have ever believed that there is a limit to forgiveness  
this day says there isn’t.  
If you have ever believed you aren’t worth saving  
this day says you are.  
If you have ever believed that you don’t deserve freedom  
this day says you do.  
If you have ever believed that fear, anger, hate and despair will always win  
this day says they won’t.  
And this day is good for you.  
Anon  
  
Meditations by* [*Anthony Wilson*](http://anthonywilsonpoetry.com/) *Meditation 1  
Fully human,  
fully God  
What did it cost  
To share a feast  
And wash the feet of friends  
Knowing  
One would betray you  
With a kiss  
Under darkness  
Knowing  
Another would deny  
He even knew you  
Knowing  
You would take the place  
Of a murderer  
Knowing that your chosen path would end  
On a borrowed cross  
Between two criminals  
Outside a city wall  
In a place called The Skull  
  
Meditation 2  
Fully human,  
fully God  
What did it cost  
To become a pawn  
In a political game  
The Son of God  
As bargaining chip  
The fear of vested interests  
Exposed by your riddling silence  
Enemies of enemies  
Becoming friends  
In secret deals  
In handshakes  
Hands washed clean  
In public  
Stained forever  
With your blood  
The king  
They refused to recognise  
The blameless one  
The lamb*

*Meditation 3  
Fully human,  
Fully God  
What did it cost  
to be handed over  
into the hands of men  
for whom  
your death  
was ritual  
sport?  
To be blindfolded  
Spat on  
Mocked  
And flogged  
To endure the jeers  
The banter  
That twisted crown  
The soldiers killing time  
Tossing dice for a piece of cloth  
You hung there  
Abandoned  
Alone  
Giving up your spirit*

*Prayers  
Holy and loving Jesus  
Thank you that you chose the path of rejection,  
Pain and suffering  
So that we could be whole  
And know you as friend.  
We will never know what it cost you  
To die in our place,  
To take our selfishness upon your shoulders  
And cancel it forever.  
We come before you now in reverence, gratitude and worship.  
We thank you, Jesus, for rescuing us on the cross. Amen  
Loving God,  
We thank you again for what Easter shows us about your love.  
We thank you for the amazing example of Jesus  
Demonstrating his humility and compassion  
Not by taking up positions of power  
But by riding into the city on a donkey,  
By washing the feet of his friends,  
By handing himself over to authorities he knew would injure  
And then kill him,  
By giving himself completely to your will.  
Holy God we are awestruck by your expression of selflessness.  
We worship you again, holy, loving and servant King. Amen  
Redeemer God,  
We cannot even imagine the pain you endured on the cross.  
We find it hard even to contemplate your suffering, your isolation  
And the desertion you must have felt.  
We thank you for the work of the cross  
Where you defeated death  
And your cry of triumph there: ‘It is finished!’  
We worship you again for your astonishing sacrifice  
So that we can have life in all its fullness. Amen*

**EASTER SUNDAY**This day the church celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

*Experience Easter*[*www.gloucester.anglican.org/resources/jfish/*](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/resources/jfish/) *This is an imaginative approach to help children experience the Christian festivals through the year using, six easy to assemble, interactive stations set up in different parts of the church.  
Also in the series are: Experience Christmas, Experience Pentecost and Experience Harvest, each priced at £11.00.  
Short of space?  
You could make mini versions of each station or locate them around your school grounds. Alternatively, see if your church could host the experience. Children in small groups could then be guided by a leader from the school around each station. Using a similar format to Pause for Reflection, with which schools are already familiar, the pack gives detailed instructions to enable you to create the stations.  
Also included are careful instructions to help the school group leaders introduce and reflect on each part of the story. An exciting way to share the festival stories with children.*

*Picturing Easter*[*http://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893041*](http://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893041) *Eight works of art reproduced on tear-proof cards for handing around and on a CD-ROM for projection – telling the Easter narrative. Each card is backed with comments, questions, biblical references and suggestions for responding as an individual or a group to the artwork. There is a also a 24-page facilitator’s guide with further suggestions for learning strategies and background material, written by Lat Blaylock and Victoria Ikwuemesi.  
Originally devised for use in secondary schools, like the other packs in this series, Picturing Easter has been welcomed and widely used by those working with groups of all ages. £26.00*

*Easter Pause Day*[*http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=departments.content&cmid=470*](http://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=departments.content&cmid=470) *This is an exciting new initiative from the Schools department of Guildford Diocese Education Centre.  
The overall aim of the Easter Pause Day material is to give schools an opportunity to engage with some high level thinking and reflection on the subject of those who witnessed the events of the first Easter.  
The materials are:  
• divided into the 4 phases – Foundation Stage, Years 1/2, Years 3 /4 and Years 5/6  
• designed to be ‘user friendly’, to be detailed and to enable all staff and not just specialists to deliver high quality teaching, learning and reflection  
• designed to be delivered in one day although they are adaptable as a series of lessons if it is not possible to use them as part of an RE focus day  
  
2 new resources from SMSC online*[*The Lamb:*](http://www.smsc.org.uk/webs/288/documents/TheLamb.pdf) *An RE unit for the Easter Story  
Suitable for Key Stage 2 – actions speak louder than words [ download ]*[*Sounds of Holy Week:*](http://www.smsc.org.uk/webs/288/documents/SoundsofHolyWeek.pdf) *A collective worship suitable for Key Stage 1&2  
Here is a way for the whole school to share in the experiences of Holy Week, including Good Friday. [ download ]  
his day the church celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.

**ROGATION SUNDAY**The 5th Sunday in the Season of Easter. Traditionally a procession or walk takes place around the parish boundaries. In rural areas this may include ‘blessing the fields and crops’.  
  
*In many rural communities across the country and here in Devon the Parish Priest will bless the land and crops in the hope of a good harvest. The fifth Sunday after Easter is called Rogation Sunday and the following Monday Tuesday and Wednesday are known as Rogation Days. These three days usually fall in May although the Monday can be as early as 27th April and the Wednesday as late as June 2nd.  
The custom of Beating or boundaries was once found in almost every English parish. Rogation tide is a time when we ask for God’s blessing upon the land and the crops. In some parish communities in both rural and urban areas Christians walk the boundaries of the parish pausing at certain places to pray for the community or the land , to say a prayer and hear a passage from the bible for example ‘Gospel Oak’ in London now a busy suburban area takes the name from this Christian tradition.*

**ASCENSION DAY**The 40th day after Easter it always falls on a Thursday. It marks Jesus’ ascension back into Heaven.  
This Thursday May 13th is Ascension Day and is one of the great feasts in the Christian liturgical calendar, and commemorates the bodily Ascension of Jesus into heaven to take his rightful position sitting at the right hand of God in the glory of the father. Ascension marks the last appearance of Jesus to the disciples after his resurrection at Easter and is 40 days after Easter Day It always falls on a Thursday and marks the end of a short season known as Rogation tide.  
  
*The image of Jesus rising bodily into heaven reflects the ancient opinion that heaven was above the earth. Accounts of the Ascension can be found in the Gospel of Mark Luke and Matthew although the account provided in the Book of Acts is perhaps the most vivid and dramatic in style and content. Ascension Day is associated across Britain with various weather warnings. If the weather is sunny on Ascension Day, the summer will be long and hot; but if it rains then the crops may well rot. In Devon there was an ancient belief that the clouds always formed into the familiar Christian image of a lamb on Ascension Day.*

**PENTECOST**The 50th day after Easter, ten days after the Ascension; Pentecost marks the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. It is the birth of the church.

[*http://www.going4growth.org.uk/growth\_through\_the\_year/pentecost/*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/growth_through_the_year/pentecost/) *•* [*Pentecost All Age Worship from Gloucester Diocese*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/downloads/Gloucester_-_All_Age_Pentecost.pdf) *•* [*Pentecost: Carolyn C Brown*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/downloads/Pentecost_-_Carolyn_C._Brown.doc) *•* [*Pentecost ideas*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/downloads/Pentecost_ideas.doc)[*http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/05/year-day-of-pentecost-june-12-2011.html*](http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/05/year-day-of-pentecost-june-12-2011.html)

[*http://www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/pages/483s.htm#ChristianYear*](http://www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/pages/483s.htm#ChristianYear) *(scroll down to Pentecost)*

*Prayer ideas for and with and about children and young people which could be used at Pentecost:*[*http://www.southwell.anglican.org/children\_firestarter.html*](http://www.southwell.anglican.org/children_firestarter.html) *Carolyn Brown’s Worshiping with Children website:* [*http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/p/lectionary-index.html*](http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/p/lectionary-index.html) *Although it’s aimed more at engaging children with the readings in worship, it’s a good starting point.*

*Another site offers suggestions for storybooks to use each week to develop the readings:* [*http://storypath.wordpress.com/tag/acts/*](http://storypath.wordpress.com/tag/acts/) *Look under the ‘Acts’ tag. MARY HAWES*

**TRINITY**A celebration of the Glorious Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the three persons of the Godhead. A season of teaching.

**HARVEST**

*Maybe you are too caught up with what to do for Harvest Thanksgiving coming up soon? Well, Barnabas in Churches have plenty of ideas on our site already and perhaps something here will help. Go to* [*http://www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/find/all/ideas/1/harvest/*](http://www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/find/all/ideas/1/harvest/)

**Resources for Harvest by Chaplaincy Adviser Cate Edmonds**

[Part 1](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/your_school_downloads/New%20Folder/Harvest%20%20presentation%20section%201.ppt)  
[Part 2 We Plough the Fields and Scatter](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/your_school_downloads/New%20Folder/Harvest%20%20presentation%20Section%202%20We%20plough%20the%20fields%20and%20Scatter.ppt)  
[Part 3 Lord of the Harvest Lord of the Field](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/your_school_downloads/New%20Folder/Harvest%20%20presentation%20section%202a%20Lord%20of%20the%20harvest%20lord%20of%20the%20field.ppt)  
[Part 4 Bible based resources](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/your_school_downloads/New%20Folder/Harvest%20%20presentation%20section%203%20Biblical%20references.ppt)  
[Part 5 Additional Resources](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/your_school_downloads/New%20Folder/Harvest%20%20presentation%20section%204%20additional%20activities%20and%20harvest%20challenge.ppt)

*World Harvest  
Links available on Going for Growth web page*[*www.going4growth.org.uk/growth\_through\_the\_year/harvest/online\_harvest\_resources\_for\_2011/*](http://www.going4growth.org.uk/growth_through_the_year/harvest/online_harvest_resources_for_2011/)