

CHURCHES PROJECT: PUPILS' EXTENSION WORK AND PERSONAL SEARCH

1. What is the difference between a "church" and a "church building"?
2. Describe how each church community will worship, baptise, celebrate communion, teach the Bible. Does a minister or member lead? How do the church members share in the service?
3. Describe each of the main features within each church building (altar/communion table; pulpit/platform/lectern; font/baptistery; musical instruments; seating arrangements; banners/stained glass windows/ statues; confessional).
4. Try to answer these questions about each:
Is it plain or decorated? Fixed or movable? Why do you think this is?
What is it used for? When?
5. The position in the church building can reflect the importance of the thing that it is used for to the Christians who meet there (e.g. an altar in the middle of the front shows that communion/mass is most important. A pulpit to the side shows that teaching from the Bible is important, but slightly less important than communion/mass).
6. Seats in rows facing the front can suggest the congregation watch and respond to what is in front. Seats in a circle suggest the congregation listen to and respond to each other.
7. What can you learn from where each feature is put?
8. Has something been moved? Why? (e.g. some fonts have been moved from the door at the back to the front).
9. How did each building make you feel? Was there an "atmosphere" – a sense of peace and stillness, or of being comfortable and "homely"? How important do you think this is to the people who meet there? How do Christians who meet there show respect for God? What makes a building special? Do you have a "special" place?
10. How does a new member/Christian "join" the church? What happens to mark this? (e.g. christening, confirmation and first communion; believer's baptism and received into membership). These are times of joyful celebration – Why? (e.g. forgiveness, "knowing" Christ etc)
11. What are the rights and responsibilities of belonging to a local church? What do you think are the good and bad things about being a church member? Why do they do it? How is this like belonging to a family? Relate this to your' own experiences of community and family.
12. Christians go to church, for example, for comfort and encouragement, for help and to give thanks to God. Who do you turn to for comfort and encouragement? Who do you give thanks to? What For? How? Who do you go to when they need help?
13. Christians try to listen to what is said in the Bible. In what ways might this be helpful to Christians? Is there someone or something to whom you try to listen?
14. Describe the different ways that the church is involved in the community. What difference do you feel the church makes to people who live nearby?