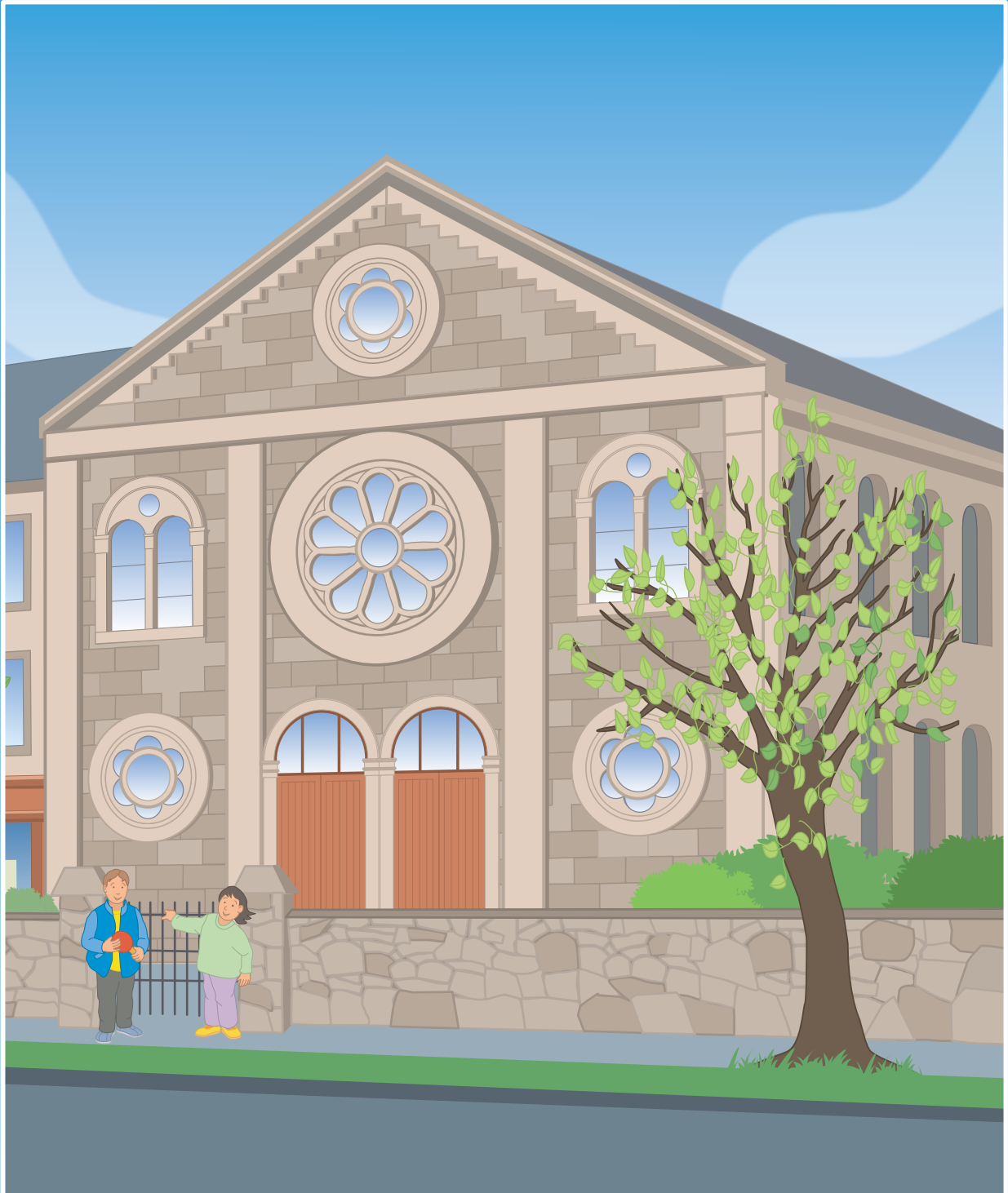


Exploring Christian Special Places

The Big Chapel



Teachers' Handbook

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The Big Chapel

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Leslie J Francis, Diane Drayson and Tania ap Siôn
with illustrations by Phillip Vernon



Bear Lands Publishing

Second edition (online) 2020 by Bear Lands Publishing,
The St Mary's Centre, Llys Onnen, Abergwyngregyn,
Gwynedd, LL33 0LD, Wales.

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First published 2003 by the Welsh National Centre for Religious Education,
University of Wales, Bangor,
Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2PX,
Wales.

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PREFACE

The first edition of the Exploring Christian Special Places series had its origin in the Welsh language and bilingual classroom materials 2001/2002 commissioning programme of the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC). This new 2020 edition has been updated and made freely accessible in electronic format by Bear Lands Publishing at the St Mary's Centre, Wales.

We are grateful to the Welsh Government for permission to create the revised online edition of the Exploring Christian Special Places series, and also for the enthusiasm of the School of Education and Human Development at Bangor University in their support of the project. We hope that the Exploring Christian Special Places series is able to continue to inspire teachers and learners across Wales in new ways in the Curriculum for Wales 2022, as they explore their own *cynefin* through religious education / religion, values and ethics.

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October 2020

Exploring Christian Special Places series

Wales and the Christian tradition

The history of Wales has been heavily shaped by the Christian tradition. The landscape of towns, valleys, and villages has been moulded by the familiar solid design of chapels and churches. The very names of these buildings speak of biblical lands (Bethel or Seion) and of Celtic saints (St David or St Illtyd).

Children growing up in Wales today cannot understand the world in which they are living without exploring these Christian special places and without unravelling the tradition which gave them meaning and which continues to bring them to life in the twenty-first century. The Exploring Christian Special Places series has been designed to unlock the doors of these buildings and to welcome 3- to 7- year-old learners to step inside their ancient story. The series has been constructed around two young learners, Aled and Siân, who explore six different Christian special places located in Wales. We are invited to join them in their adventure.

Religious education / religion, values and ethics

The Exploring Christian Special Places series has been designed to support teaching and learning in religious education / religion, values and ethics in community schools, church voluntary controlled schools, and church voluntary aided schools.

Community schools and church voluntary controlled schools follow the Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education authorised by the Local Education Authority SACRE. Church voluntary aided schools follow the religious education syllabus which fulfils the intention of their founding trust deed. Generally this is the syllabus commended by the diocese or province. Teachers are advised to be familiar with the syllabus which their own school is obliged to follow.

The Exploring Christian Special Places series may be used by teachers to make a distinctive contribution to the exploration of learners' *cynefin* and to stimulate natural connections with other disciplines within the Humanities in the Curriculum for Wales 2022.

Community schools

A significant aim of religious education in community schools (and consequently in church voluntary controlled schools) is not to induct pupils into any specific religious faith or tradition, but rather to teach pupils about those traditions and, generally, to enable pupils to experience what those traditions mean to individuals who shape their lives as faithful practising adherents.

The Exploring Christian Special Places series has been designed to be used in this way in community schools and in church voluntary controlled schools. Learners are invited to join Aled and Siân as they go into six different churches or chapels. Learners are invited to join Aled and Siân as they hear scripture read, as they

witness liturgy performed, as they observe Christians pray and sing praise to their God, and as they discover the Christian commitment to service. All this learners need to know if they are to understand why the landscape of towns, valleys, and villages throughout Wales has been so moulded by the familiar solid design of chapels and churches, and why these Christian special places have taken on their distinctive shape and characteristics.

Church schools

Religious education in church voluntary aided schools takes into account the religious background of the learners and also the religious intention of those who founded the school. In church voluntary aided schools the Exploring Christian Special Places series can sometimes be used in ways which nurture faith as well as observe those who practise faith.

Learners in Roman Catholic voluntary aided schools may be invited to join Aled and Siân as they enter St Mary's church and share with Aled and Siân the prayers which they say as they kneel before the statue of Our Lady. Learners in Church in Wales voluntary aided schools may be invited to join Aled and Siân as they prepare for a Christmas celebration in their parish church and share fully in the Christian celebration of the holy nativity.

Aled and Siân's visits

In their exploration of Christian special places Aled and Siân visit six very different churches or chapels in Wales. Some are in the heart of rural Wales, while others are in the busy town centres. They visit a Roman Catholic church, a Presbyterian Church of Wales church, a Baptist chapel, the Big Chapel in the town centre, and two very different Church in Wales churches.

These visits give Aled and Siân the opportunity to learn about the shape and the history of the different buildings. In the Presbyterian church they see the tall pulpit and the place of prestige given to the open Bible. In the Catholic church they see the high altar and the place of prestige given to the holy sacrament. In the Anglican church they hear the church bells and listen to the organ. In the Baptist church they hear the congregation sing hymns of praise and listen to the minister leading prayers.

On each of their six visits Aled and Siân find something very different happening in the churches and chapels. These events give them the opportunity to learn about what Christians do in these special places and how what they do reflects Christian beliefs.

On three of their visits Aled and Siân learn about the shape of the Christian year and about three of the major festivals which Christians celebrate. They visit a Church in Wales church in mid-December and take part in the Christmas Crib service. They learn about Christians' belief in the birth of Jesus. They visit a Presbyterian Church of Wales church in the spring and take part in the Easter Family service. They learn

about Christians' beliefs in the resurrection of Jesus. They visit a Baptist chapel in the autumn and bring gifts to the Harvest Thanksgiving. They learn about Christians' beliefs in God the creator.

On two of their visits Aled and Siân learn about special services that mark stages in the Christian life. They visit a Roman Catholic church when their baby cousin Nia is baptised. They learn about the Christian sacrament of baptism. They visit a Church in Wales church when Siân is a bridesmaid and Aled is an usher. They learn about the Christian sacrament of marriage.

On their sixth visit Aled and Siân discover the Big Chapel in the town centre and there they find a large building which is used by all the local denominations to serve the needs of the community. Aled and Siân go back on the Monday evening to find Father Gwyn Jones from the Catholic church running a youth club. On Tuesday midday they find Pastor Gareth ap Gwynedd from the chapel serving a lunch club for the elderly. On Wednesday night they find Captain Elfed Williams from the Salvation Army cooking soup for the night shelter. On Thursday afternoon they find Canon Eleri Thomas from the Church in Wales reading to children in the after school club. On Friday morning they find the Reverend Sali Evans from the chapel selling cakes at a sale of work. They learn that the churches and chapels are committed to a gospel of service as well as to the praise of God.

The story book resources

There are six story book titles in the Exploring Christian Special Places series.

- In *Christmas Crib Service* Aled and Siân visit a Church in Wales church in mid-December and take part in a special Christmas service.
- In *Easter Family Service* Aled and Siân visit a Presbyterian Church of Wales service in the spring and take part in a special Easter service.
- In *Harvest Thanksgiving* Aled and Siân visit a Baptist chapel in the autumn and bring gifts to the Harvest Thanksgiving.
- In *Wedding Service* Aled and Siân visit a Church in Wales church when Aled is an usher and Siân is a bridesmaid.
- In *Baptism Service* Aled and Siân visit a Roman Catholic Church when their baby cousin Nia is baptised.
- In *The Big Chapel* they discover a large chapel which is used by all the local denominations to serve the needs of the community.

Each story book title is presented in two different electronic formats:

- a .pdf story book with text;
- a .pdf story book with pictures only.

Teachers are free to re-present the material in a variety of ways. For example, they may wish to create interactive PowerPoints which are individually shaped to their own specific purposes and contexts.

The teachers' handbook

This teachers' handbook has been designed to contextualise the story book resources within the broader Exploring Christian Special Places series, and to provide background information and activity ideas for the story book.

Background information

Information is provided about the *context* of the narrative by sketching some details about the denomination of the church or chapel being visited and about the special service or events being witnessed. This will help teachers to talk about the narrative and illustrations in an informed way and to answer learners' questions. Then, attention is given to the *content* of the learners' story books by highlighting detail in each of the pages which can become the basis for further exploration and discussion.

A set of *keywords* provide further information about many of the ideas raised in the story books through text or through illustrations. We believe that young learners enjoy learning and playing with new words. As they visit churches and learn about the Christian tradition their vocabulary is extended.

Where relevant, some examples are provided of the religious content which Aled and Siân would meet on their visits to special Christian places and special Christian events. For example, this may be a *Bible reading* which is often used at a service, a *hymn* which is often sung at a service, or an extract from an *order of service*.

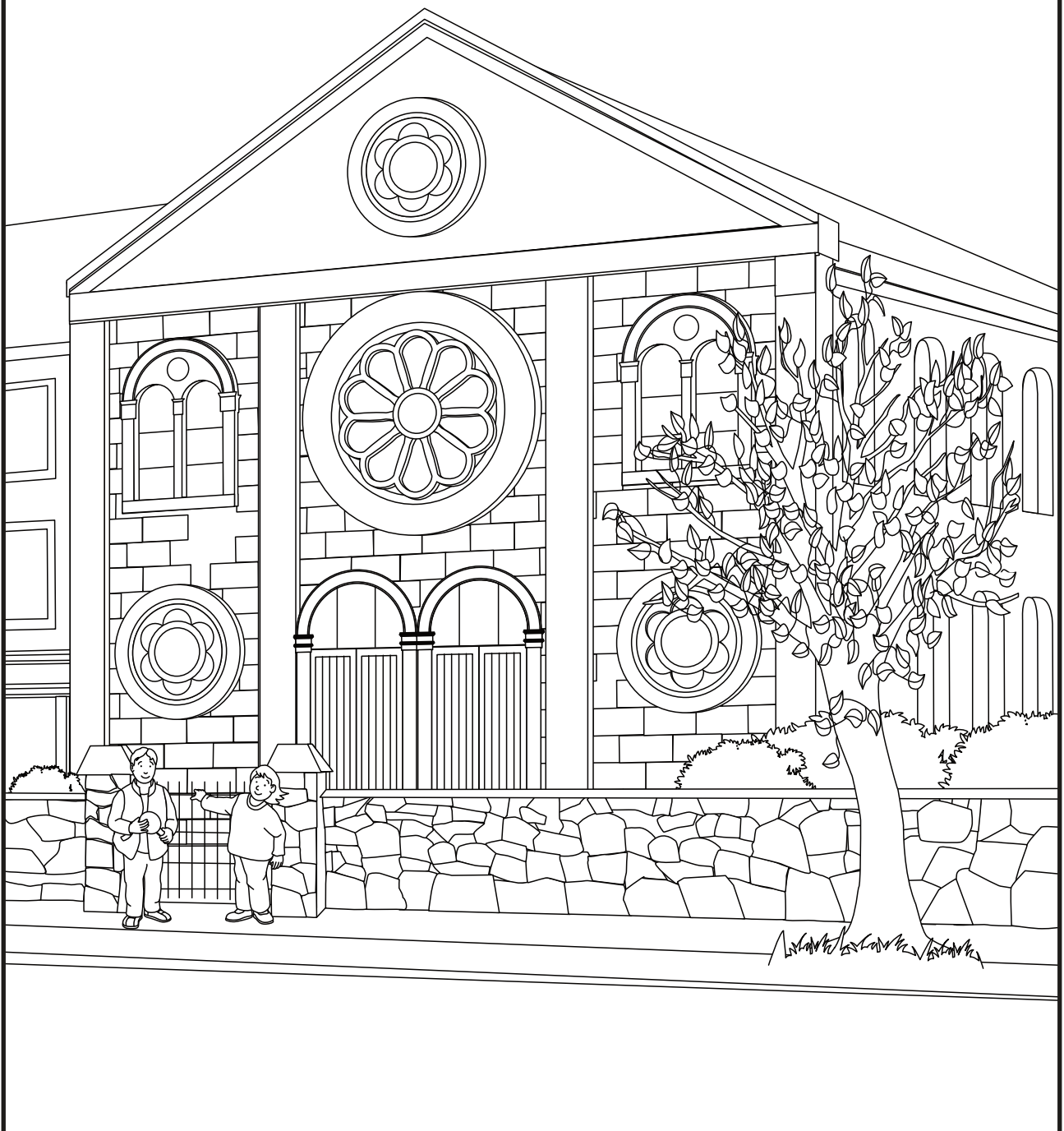
The section on *further ideas* suggests a range of ways in which the themes of the learners' books can be further explored through activities, through visits, and through project work.

The final section on *resources* suggests some materials, tools, and artefacts which will make teaching about Aled and Siân's visit to each Christian special place particularly memorable and enjoyable.

Activities

Each story book is supported by seven activities. In addition to their clear emphasis on religious education, some activities are cross-curricular. There are also opportunities for working in groups as well as individually.

THE BIG CHAPEL



Background information

Context

Siân and Aled explore the Big Chapel in the town centre. They find that this has become an ecumenical centre in which many of the local churches work together. Because it is right in the town centre the different denominations use this chapel in their ministry of service to the community.

Christian service

While the worship of God and the conduct of services is central to the life of churches and chapels, it would be a mistake to allow learners to imagine that this is *all* that churches and chapels do. The worship of God goes hand in hand with service to the community. In this book Siân and Aled find the Big Chapel involved in running a youth club for young people, a lunch club for the elderly, a night shelter for the homeless, an after-school club for children like them, and a sale of work to raise money for Christian Aid.

Ecumenism

In Wales there are many different denominations which all have their own different characteristics. The ecumenical instrument Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales) helps these different denominations to work together. In this book different denominations have come together to use the Big Chapel in their service to the community. Here Siân and Aled find representatives from the Roman Catholic Church (Father Gwyn Jones), from the Welsh Independent Chapel (Pastor Gareth ap Gwynedd), from the Salvation Army (Captain Elfed Williams), from the Church in Wales (Canon Eleri Thomas), and from the Methodist Church (the Reverend Sali Evans).

Content

Aled and Siân are introduced to the following ideas in this order. Each idea can stimulate discussion and further exploration.

- page 4* big chapel door, busy town centre street, church foyer.
- page 5* youth club, young people.
- page 6* table tennis, clock at about 7.00pm, Father Gwyn Jones, Roman Catholic Church.
- page 7* lunch club, the elderly, clock after 12.00 noon.
- page 8* lunch table, the Pastor Gareth ap Gwynedd, Welsh Independents.
- page 9* night shelter, the homeless, clock at nearly 7.00pm.
- page 10* the kitchen, Captain Elfed Williams, Salvation Army.
- page 11* after-school club, children, clock after 4.00pm.

- page 12* the reading corner, Canon Eleri Thomas, Church in Wales.
- page 13* sale of work, Christian Aid, clock at about 10.00am.
- page 14* cake stall, the Reverend Sali Evans, Methodist Church.
- page 15* Sunday morning, people come back to the Big Chapel, hymn singing and worship.


Keywords

<i>after-school club</i>	A group run after school, generally for children of primary school age.
<i>Canon</i>	In both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church in Wales senior clergy are sometimes given the title of Canon. In the Church in Wales both men and women can be ordained priest and made Canon.
<i>Captain</i>	Salvation Army Officers are identified by their rank, based on the model of those involved in military service. Both men and women can serve as officers in the Salvation Army.
<i>chapel foyer</i>	The entrance to the chapel where the people meet.
<i>Christian Aid</i>	An ecumenical Christian charity concerned with development education and the relief of world poverty.
<i>Church in Wales</i>	Part of the world-wide Anglican communion under the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury.
<i>Cytûn</i>	The ecumenical instrument, Churches Together in Wales, which helps the different denominations to work together.
<i>carved choir stalls</i>	The seats for the choir are often richly decorated with carving.
<i>denomination</i>	The Christian tradition has given rise to a number of different denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, and the Baptist Church.
<i>ecumenism</i>	Ecumenism happens when the different Christian denominations work together.
<i>Father</i>	Roman Catholic priests are often addressed as Father, a sign of respect. Often the priest will wear a white clerical collar on a black shirt. Only men can become Roman Catholic priests.
<i>lunch club</i>	A club arranged for the elderly.
<i>Methodist Church</i>	Two traditions of Methodism live side by side in Wales.
<i>night shelter</i>	Food and sometimes accommodation are provided for the homeless.
<i>Pastor</i>	Ministers from the chapel are often addressed as pastor, in recognition of their pastoral work of concern for people. Both men and women can serve as pastors in most of the chapels.

<i>Roman Catholic Church</i>	The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the Pope in Rome.
<i>sale of work</i>	A way of raising funds for charities.
<i>Salvation Army</i>	Founded by William Booth in 1865, organised on a military model with a 'General' at its head. The Salvation Army is noted for its commitment to social activities and for its military style brass bands and banners.
<i>Reverend</i>	Clergy from all denominations are entitled to the title Reverend. By convention clergy are introduced as the 'Reverend Sali Evans' (when the Christian name is used), but as Mrs Evans (when the Christian name is not used).
<i>Welsh Independents</i>	A federation of chapels which emphasises the independence of the local congregation.
<i>youth club</i>	A group for young people which meets in the early evening, often arranged for children of secondary school age.

Bible reading

Often the following passage from Matthew's Gospel, chapter 25, is cited to support the Christian ministry of service to the community.

 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Further ideas

- Visit an activity arranged by a local church to serve the community or arrange a visit from someone who works there. Find out about activities arranged for the benefit of the community or for people in need in other places. Compare these activities with those organised in the Big Chapel.
- Imagine you are the caretaker of the Big Chapel. Write out a plan for your week, including the activities run each day and the equipment you need to get ready in preparation for each activity.
- Make a display of pictures of people of all ages to remember that churches

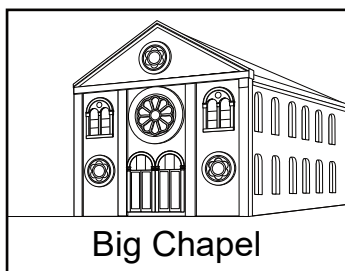
and chapels provide support for all. Every child could paint a figure for the display board. Add a heading such as 'Join me at the Big Chapel'.

- Use *Lego* or other construction materials to make a model of the Big Chapel. Some children can build the chapel while others can organise figurines and furniture to portray the activity for one day.
- If you have a lunch club or night shelter operating near you, cook a large batch of soup to take along.
- Role play visiting the Big Chapel. One child can pretend to be a worker at the Big Chapel and one or more children can pretend to be visitors explaining their need (for example, somewhere to play after school, company, a meal). The worker tells how the Big Chapel can help. Take turns with as many children as wish to take part.

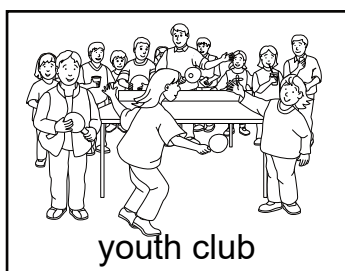
Resources

- pictures of churches and chapels in your area
- information leaflets about what is happening in local churches
- table tennis balls (youth club)
- knives and forks (lunch club)
- large cooking pot (homeless)
- computer (after-school club)
- information and posters from Christian Aid or Oxfam (sale of work)
- pictures of Salvation Army at work

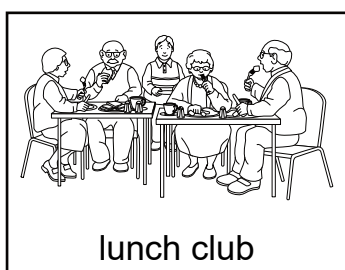
Match me



Siân and Aled see elderly people eating lunch together.



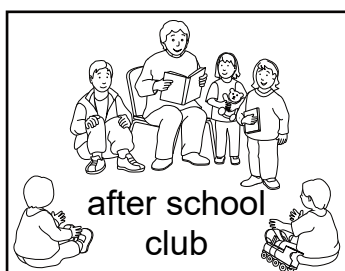
Aled and Siân play games with other children, and hear a story.



Siân and Aled visit here to see how people of all ages are helped.



Aled and Siân buy home made cakes to help Christian Aid.



Siân and Aled play table tennis here with the young people.



Aled and Siân meet homeless people and help give them food.

Complete a poem

Imagine you are Aled and Siân standing at the door of the Big Chapel and then going inside. What do you see? What do you feel? What do you hear?

The Big Chapel

I stand at the door.

The door is _____.

The door is _____.

The door is _____.

I turn the handle.

The handle is _____.

The handle is _____.

The handle is _____.

I walk inside.

I see _____.

I hear _____.

I touch _____.



Write an advertisement

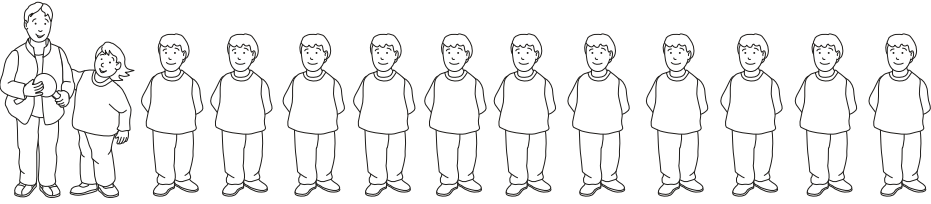




The Big Chapel runs activities for many people. In order for people to take part, they need to know what is happening. Imagine it is your job to write an advertisement to let people know about some of the activities. Choose two activities and think of reasons why people would want to come. Add a picture.

Come to the _____	
You will find _____	

Come to the _____	
You will find _____	

Count the people

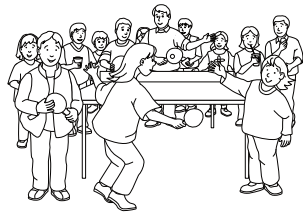
How many people did Siân and Aled meet at the Big Chapel during the week? Look at the story and draw in the people you can see with Aled and Siân. Write the number of people in the last box. (The first one has been done for you.)

Monday - the youth club 	11
Tuesday - the lunch club 	
Wednesday - the night shelter 	
Thursday - the after school club 	
Friday - the sale of work for Christian Aid 	

Who could go?

Siân and Aled saw many activities at the Big Chapel. Who do you know who could go to these if they lived in the same town? Work together to write a list of names for each activity.

the youth club
(young people)



the lunch club
(the elderly)



the after school club
(children)



the sale of work
(anyone)



Make a poster

Make a poster to invite people to come to one of the activities at the Big Chapel.

You could include:

- the day
- the place (the Big Chapel)
- the activity
- who can come
- why people should come
- a picture

Here is one idea.



Make smiley face biscuits

The Big Chapel held a sale of work for Christian Aid. You could hold a cake stall for Christian Aid or for a school charity. Here are some biscuits to decorate for your sale.

You will need

rich tea biscuits
Smarties

coloured icing
dried apricots or glacé cherries

What to do

1. Wash your hands.
2. Spread icing on the biscuits.
3. Place two Smarties on each biscuit as eyes.
4. Cut a strip of dried apricot or cherry and place it for the mouth.
5. Leave the biscuits until the icing sets.

