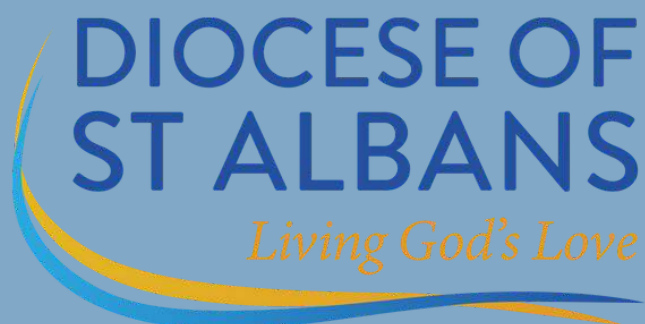


RACIAL JUSTICE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



Key Concept/Message

Many Christians express the belief of God as Trinity. This idea centres around God as one, yet also as three persons: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. The Greek word perichoresis describes the 'divine dance' of these three persons of the Trinity; all value each other and make room for each other in loving relationship in a way which showcases both unity and diversity within the Godhead. These persons are like all the others, like some of the others and like none of the others at one and the same time.



Perichoresis © Faith Dance Art
– FaithDance.org

The book of Genesis (1:27) describes how humans are made in the image and likeness of God. Drawing on the understanding of the Trinity above, many Christians assert how we are therefore created for relationship, unity and diversity. Diversity is something, therefore, which should be recognised and celebrated.

Sadly, too often people choose to not celebrate the ways in which we may be like all others, like some others and like no others. Some choose to treat people unfairly because of difference, often because of the colour of their skin or their background. The relational understanding of the Trinity offers a challenge to racism and other discriminatory thinking and behaviour. The following collective worship plan provides an invitation for the school community to explore this Christian belief and reflect deeply upon the associated themes, particularly the celebration of diversity.

Gathering

Follow the school's normal gathering routines, using words of liturgy which are familiar to students and adults

or

Light a candle and offer the following prayer: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you'. Response: **and also with you.**

Show the two images for the school community to reflect upon. Invite them to ponder the following questions individually or in discussion.



<https://favpng.com>



- What can you see? What do you notice?
- Both of these artworks are trying to show a Christian idea/belief about God. What do you think this might be?

Engagement

Invite some responses from pupils to the questions above.

The Trinity

Explain that both artworks link to a Christian belief of God as Trinity (formed of two words 'tri' and 'unity'). This idea centres around God as one, yet also as three persons: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. The video 'What is the Trinity?' explains this belief well:

<https://request.org.uk/resource/restart/2016/07/22/the-trinity/> (NB: you may wish to acknowledge that many Christians find the Trinity a tricky concept to get their heads around, and many view it as a mystery that cannot fully be comprehended).

Explain that each of the artworks express, in their own way, the Trinity; three separate persons all moving as one. In fact, they are dancing! Hundreds of years ago, some Christians started describing the Trinity as a 'divine dance of love' (using a Greek word perichoresis, where we get the word 'choreography' from). This idea was used to show how each individual person of the Trinity loves and values each other as they move as one, together. Here, each person of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – recognises the others as unique and different in their own way, yet they move and act as one. The idea of the Trinity shows difference and sameness as really important to the Christian belief of who God is.

Humans as made in the 'Image of God'

So what does this mean for many Christians? Well...the first chapter of the Bible describes humans as made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). So:

- If God as Trinity shows a loving relationship in which all are valued...



(three persons who are similar yet different living in loving relationship)

- Then humans have been created to live in loving relationship where all are valued



(people who are similar yet different living in loving relationship)

- And, as the idea of the Trinity shows diversity and difference as part of God, then the diversity of humanity should be recognised and celebrated!

Humanity is extremely diverse, which is a wonderful thing. We are the same in so many ways, and we all have different likes, looks, languages and locations from which we live and were born. Sadly, too often people choose to not celebrate the ways we are different. Some choose to treat people unfairly because of difference; perhaps because of what they believe, where they were born or the colour of their skin. I wonder if this is ok?

Perhaps it is this unfair treatment which led to this artwork being made. Just like the artworks we looked at earlier, this shows the 'dance of love' of the Trinity. (See next page).



<https://vivatdeus.org/library/blog0065/>

- I wonder...what do you think the artist might be trying to show here?
- Why do you think they painted this?
- Why do you think they painted this showing different people?
- What does this image make you think about?
- How does it make you feel?

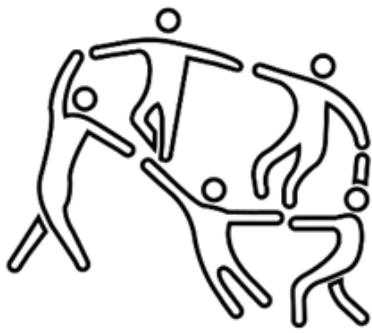
Response

The bible states that 'God is love' (1 John 4:16). Many Christians believe that as humans are made in the image and likeness of God as Trinity, they are also called to live in a way which shows this 'dance of love' in the world. A world where every single person is celebrated, accepted and loved because we are all wonderfully human and all wonderfully different.

So what if we saw the world as a dancefloor...

- **Are all invited to the dancefloor?** Some aren't. Racism, sexism and other forms of unfair treatment mean that some people are prevented from joining the dance.
- **What is a better future?** One where all people can join in the dance of life. A dance where all are invited, all are welcome, where no-one is excluded or forced to watch from the sides

We have the power to help stop racism and other forms of unfair treatment once and for all.



I wonder...

...how can we help build a world where all are treated fairly, regardless of looks or likes?

...how can we show with our words and actions that unfair treatment is wrong? All are welcome to the dance of life

...how can we celebrate both the ways we are all wonderfully human and all wonderfully different?

Ponder these questions as we watch this video of different Christians around the world singing 'Sing Gently':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InULYfJHKI0> (up to 3:20).

During this video, invite the school community to silently offer some prayers to God or listen to what God might wish to say to them.

Send

'We are going to use our prayers and reflections to guide our future steps'. Invite the school community, with a finger, to trace a message on the top of their shoes. The sentence is: 'As I go forward, may I help all join in the dance of love'. Pupils could complete the sentence starter with another reflection or prayer should they wish to.

