

## 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*. (To support pupil understanding of the Christian belief in God as Trinity here, why not light a single candle which has three wicks, lighting them in turn as each 'person' is acknowledged?)

Question: What is the longest journey you have ever made? How did you make the journey? Has anyone ever had to make a long journey on their own?

"Many centuries ago, a man made a long journey from everything he knew, including his family and friends, to a new place where he wouldn't know anything, or anybody.

The man was called Jacob and he was not very brave but he was a man of faith so he did know God, and God knew him. God wanted Jacob to know that he would be with him on this long journey into the unknown; so God gave him a dream. It was a dream that showed the longest journey anyone can make; from the planet earth, into space, and then beyond space to heaven. The dream showed angels, God's very important messengers, going up and down this ladder; and this was God saying I will be with you on your long journey. That dream promise from God gave Jacob reassurance that he would not journey on his own, and it was also a hint that God would guide him in the right direction, to the right place, and to the right people who could become a new family for him."

## Engagement

2) Question: What is the longest journey any human being has ever made?

Answer: To the Moon

In 2019, we remembered how 50 years ago three men made a very dangerous and lonely journey from Earth to the Moon. Show pictures of the Apollo Mission and play 'Spirit in the Sky' (one of the tracks played by the Apollo crew) [see links on PPoint slides]

**Mission Objective:** The primary objective of Apollo 11 was to complete a national goal set by President John F. Kennedy on May 25, 1961: perform a crewed lunar landing and return to Earth.

**Crew:**

Neil Armstrong, Commander

Edwin E. Aldrin Jr., Lunar Module Pilot

Michael Collins, Command Module Pilot

**Duration:** Eight days, three hours, 18 min, 35 seconds

**Distance:** 953,054 miles

**Lunar Location:** Sea of Tranquillity

3) The first moon landing occurred on July 20, 1969, on the Apollo 11 mission. The crew of Apollo 11 were Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin. Armstrong and Aldrin walked on the lunar surface while Collins remained in orbit around the moon.

When Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the moon, he said, "That's one small step for (a) man; one giant leap for mankind." Those men were also men of faith and they believed that God journeyed with them.

4) Astronaut Buzz Aldrin performed a holy communion service for himself using a kit provided by his church. Minutes after the lunar module touched down on the Sea of Tranquility on the Moon, Aldrin radioed back to Earth, "I'd like to take this opportunity to ask every person listening in, wherever and wherever they may be, to pause for a moment and contemplate the events of the past few hours and to give thanks in his or her own way." (watch BBC video clip: 1:53 – 3:55, on PPoint). Then, Aldrin — an elder at the Webster Presbyterian Church in Webster, Texas — switched off the radio, opened small plastic containers of bread and wine and read privately from the Gospel of John. Aldrin silently read from John 15:5, which he penned on a 3-by-5-inch notecard: "As Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in Him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me."

Who would have been frightened going up in the Apollo Rocket and go off to the moon? If we are on a journey that is long and where we don't know where we will end up, if we remember that God goes with us then we do not journey on our own, and we can seek his help and guidance by talking and listening to him through prayer.

### Response

5) The most important journey we will ever make is the journey of our lives, as we move from being at school to leaving home, deciding what we are going to do with our lives and then going and doing it.

Question: Do you know what you might want to do with your life; maybe even be an astronaut and go to Mars!

### Sending

Prayer: invite the school community, if they would like to, to take time to reflect on God's presence with us through his Spirit. Pray that God may journey with us.

Follow school's sending out routines – blessing, blowing out the candle, music etc.