



A LIFE OF SERVICE: *RESURRECTION OF DORCAS*

Collective Worship
Spring Term 2021

These teacher notes and the accompanying presentation are designed to support you in exploring the concept of Christian service with pupils. This act of collective worship focuses on the story of Dorcas in the New Testament. This act of collective worship could be done live, with each teacher delivering from their own classroom, or it could be recorded by the head teacher or senior leader and shared with each class or bubble remotely.

Collective worship in school should be **inspiring, inclusive and invitational**. Adults leading worship should feel free to adapt these materials so that they are comfortable and they are well-matched to your own context. For guidance on collective worship see:

http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/images/document_library/UDR02852.pdf

Pre-Collective Worship Task: Have a short session where pupils each make something for somebody else e.g. from paper, craft materials, electronically, etc. How does it feel to give somebody something which shows you see them and you care about them?

Worship Table: You will need a green cloth on your altar table to show we are once again in 'ordinary time' in the liturgical calendar: green for growing!

You will also need 3 candles to light to represent the 3 persons of the Trinity.

Preparation and Resources: You will need the 3 candles and the PowerPoint presentation.

The Main Content:

Welcome

Show slide 2. Light each of the 3 candles as you say the welcome.

We gather together in the name of:

- *God the Father, who loves all*
- *Jesus the Son, who showed Christians how to live a life of service*
- *The Holy Spirit, who shows believers those who most need help*

Alternatively, you may want to start with a Christian blessing from the Church of England such as:

*May God give to you and to all those you love
his comfort and his peace,
his light and his joy,
in this world and the next
Amen*

or

*The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you,
the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace.
Amen*

You can also use something simple such as:

*We gather together to meet as our school family
We all come together as important parts of our school community
We gather to meet together with God*

Today we are continuing our focus on serving others. We will learn about a woman who was so good at serving others that when she died the people of her city were

*so distressed they asked one of the apostles to pray for her to come back to life!
They simply couldn't live without her!*

Learning

Show slide 3 and explain that today we are going to learn about the story of Dorcas, one of the early Christians. She used her talent of being able to sew and make clothes to serve the community around her. Her kindness was a practical way of showing she loved God and other people.

Use the poem below and the images on the slides to tell the story of Dorcas, also known as Tabitha, from the New Testament.

The Story of Dorcas by John Ferris

*There was a certain disciple in the town of Joppa, [Show Slide 4]
Whose reputation was pure and behaviour proper,
Never told a white lie, never uttered a whopper,
In doing good deeds, nothing could stop her.*

*Her name was Tabitha, translated Dorcas,
In extolling her virtue, her friends were quite raucous,
Her life was pervaded with charitable deeds,
She was always prepared, to fill various needs.*

*In modern times, some might call her dork,
(It's not the done thing to relish good work),
Those same people would say, She's a do-gooder jerk,
She should look out for herself, and enjoy every perk.*

*Even then there were critics, but nothing could faze her,
Back in those times, she was like Mother Theresa,
She was doing God's work, that's all that mattered,
Her works remembered, their memories scattered.*

*Dorcas got ill, then died before time,
She was still a young woman, just into her prime,
In the helping of others, she brought great relief,
Her sudden demise brought whole-hearted grief.*

*But Simon was near, whose surname was Peter,
His purpose in God was one day to meet her,
To show God's great love and His mercy and might,
Word came to Peter of the good woman's plight.*

*He came from Lydda which was not far away,
The people of Joppa didn't know what to say,
They'd cleaned up the body and started to mourn,
Their faces were long and they looked quite forlorn.*

*They showed him tunics and garments she'd made, [show slide 5]
And told him their feelings, how they felt dismayed,
That Dorcas had died who seemed the Lord's best,
Why take her now to so early a rest?*

*Peter went in, but sent mourners out, [show slide 6]
He wanted to pray in the absence of doubt,
He spoke just two words, Tabitha, arise. ,
Then presented her live; all were surprised.*

*The word of the deed spread far and wide,
So many had seen, it could not be denied,
Many that day came to trust in the Lord,
Their doubts overcome by the power of His Word.*

This poem can be found [here](#).

Show slide 7. There is a verse in the Bible that says people should not despise (make fun of, be dismissive of) the small things. Dorcas used her tiny needle and it had a big impact on her community!

Reflecting

Show slide 8. Dorcas made such a difference to the lives of the people she blessed with clothes. Her kindness was shown through her skills and her creativity. Courageous advocacy doesn't have to be complicated. There are simple ways to show you care about someone or a cause. Don't forget, you have talents too! Perhaps you can sing or dance, write lovely poems or prayers, draw beautiful pictures that make people smile, speak a different language, bake cakes, take care of plants and animals. There are so many things you could be good at and you could use your talents and your skills, just like Dorcas did.

Invite pupils to take a moment to think about what their talents and skills are and read the short prayer on the slide.

Responding

Show slide 9. Did you know that Jesus told his disciples that whenever they did anything good or kind to help someone else, it was just like they were helping Jesus himself? Read the verse from Matthew 25:40.

Invite pupils to hold their hands out in front of them, palms up, and gaze upon them as you say the following:

These hands can do great things
These hands can be used to serve the King
These hands can make someone smile
And take away their sadness for a while
These hands can love and serve and create
These hands can take away hate
These hands are mine and I can choose
To do a kind thing for you
To use my hands like Dorcas
So, the world is kind for all of us.

Alternatively, you may wish to end with an Anglican liturgical prayer:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ. Amen.

*Go in the peace of Christ. **Thanks be to God.***

We go into the world to walk in God's light, to rejoice in God's love and to reflect God's glory. Amen

Post-Collective Worship Task:

Invite pupils to draw around their own hands and write or draw inside all the skills and talents they have that can be used to serve others.

Send home some talk homework for families: *Today we have been thinking about Dorcas and how loved she was by her community simply because she used her talent to make clothes for them all. What can we donate this week that will make life easier for somebody else?*