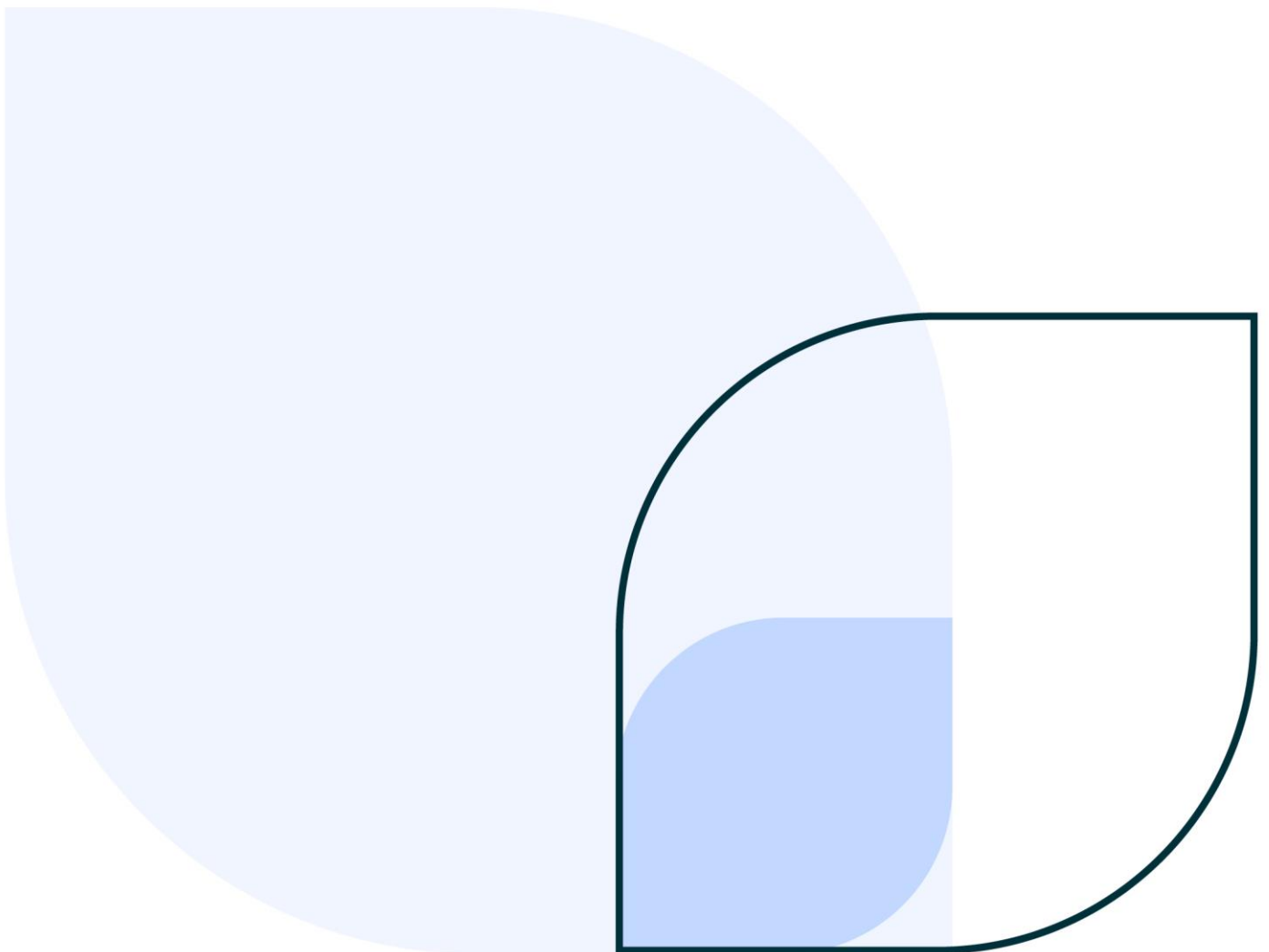


Collective Worship

Primary School Resources: Together is Better!





Key Concept / Message

Slide 1

Today, we gather to reflect on the International Day of Tolerance, which is dedicated to fostering understanding, respect, and acceptance of our diverse world. The ‘tolerance’ referred to here goes beyond simply "putting up" with others who are different from us. It means embracing the richness of human diversity and recognising that our differences—whether in culture, belief, language, or lifestyle—add depth and vitality to our world.

In a world where conflict and division can easily arise from misunderstanding or fear, tolerance becomes a powerful tool for peace. As we celebrate this day, we are reminded that each of us has a role to play in creating a world where everyone feels respected and valued, regardless of our differences. Tolerance doesn't mean agreeing with everything or abandoning our own beliefs; it means learning to live together with mutual respect, kindness, and empathy.

The International Day of Tolerance is observed annually on **November 16**, a date chosen to commemorate the adoption of the "Declaration of Principles on Tolerance" by UNESCO in 1995. This declaration was established during a time when the need for tolerance and understanding among diverse cultures became increasingly apparent. In a world characterised by rapid globalisation, migration, and multicultural interactions, the importance of promoting peace and acceptance across differences has never been more crucial.

The day serves as a reminder that tolerance is not merely a passive acceptance of differences but an active engagement in fostering respect, understanding, and coexistence among individuals from various backgrounds. It calls upon us to recognise the value of diversity and confront prejudice, discrimination, and intolerance in all forms. By promoting tolerance, we affirm our commitment to building inclusive communities where everyone can live with dignity and respect—'life in all its fullness' for all (John 10:10).

As we come together to observe this significant day in our collective worship, let us reflect on the importance of tolerance in our lives and its positive impact on our communities. May we be inspired to foster a spirit of acceptance and understanding, ensuring that every person, regardless of their background or beliefs, is valued and respected.

Gathering

Begin with your usual greeting to gather everyone together (familiarity is a helpful part of providing a safe environment in the aftermath of difficult times). As children enter worship, use a reflective piece of your choice.

You may like to start with an opening prayer, such as this one:

Slide 2

Dear God,

Thank you for making our world so special and full of different people.

As we come together today, help us to be kind and open to everyone.

Teach us to show love and understanding and to be patient with each other.

Help us bring peace, respect, and friendship to our community.

In Jesus' name, we pray,

Amen.



Slide 3

Consider posing this question to the children and young people:

I wonder...What would you like to be when you grow up? There is a diagram to help prompt answers relating to job roles.

On the slide is also Jennifer Dukes Lee's **quote** - "In a world where you can be anything, be kind."

You could suggest that no matter what occupation/job they decide to do, it is important to do that role with kindness and tolerance towards others.

You might consider asking pupils to reflect on **one** of the following questions:

What actions can we take as individuals to promote kindness and respect within our community?

How can we learn from the experiences of others to foster a more tolerant environment at school?

How can we support each other in celebrating our differences while finding common ground?

In what ways can acts of kindness create a ripple effect of tolerance in our community?

Bible Passage and Engagement

Slides 4, 5 and 6

Share the text from the New Testament of the Bible:

'Don't be proud at all.

Be completely gentle.

Be patient.

Put up with one another in love.

The Holy Spirit makes you one in every way.

So try your best to remain as one.

Let peace keep you together.'

Ephesians 4:2-3, NIV (New International Readers Version)

The following **'I wonder'** questions (on each slide) can help engagement with the text:

I wonder what it feels like when people work together peacefully.

I wonder how we can bring peace to our school or family.

I wonder what tolerance means and how we can show it to others.



Context for school staff:

The letter to the Ephesians, written by the Apostle Paul during his imprisonment in Rome (around AD 60-62), was intended for multiple early Christian communities, including the church in Ephesus. The letter focuses on the theological foundation of the Christian faith and provides practical advice on how believers should live in response to the gospel. A central theme of Ephesians is unity—unity in Christ, unity within the church, and unity among all believers.

Paul's message in Ephesians calls for tolerance and understanding among diverse groups. During that time, the early Christian church was composed of both Jewish and Gentile believers, who often had deep cultural and religious differences. Paul addresses these divisions, emphasizing that through Christ, the walls that separated them have been broken down. His vision of the church is one where all believers live as one unified body, regardless of their differences. This idea is the heart of tolerance—understanding and accepting differences in others and striving to live together in peace and harmony.

Paul's instruction to "bear with one another in love" clearly directs us to practice tolerance. Tolerance is not merely putting up with others but genuinely seeking unity and peace, even when differences arise. He also urges believers to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace," meaning that tolerance is not a passive attitude but an active pursuit of unity and reconciliation.

On International Day of Tolerance, the message of Ephesians 4:2-3 offers a powerful biblical foundation for reflection. In today's world, intolerance manifests itself in numerous ways—racial, cultural, religious, and even political divisions can drive people apart. Social media can amplify these divisions, creating echo chambers where differing viewpoints are rejected rather than understood. Yet, Paul's message in Ephesians encourages us to seek unity through the active practice of tolerance, guided by humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

The passage reminds us that tolerance is not passive; it requires intentional effort to live in peace with others. It calls us to embrace diversity as an opportunity for growth, not division. As we reflect on this passage during International Day of Tolerance, we are reminded that tolerance is a deeply Christian value, one that reflects Christ's love for all humanity. Just as early Christians were called to embrace unity across cultural divides, so too are Christians called today to work toward a more inclusive world where tolerance and understanding prevail over division and hostility.

Response

Slide 7

Embracing Tolerance: Building a Harmonious Community

Read Ephesians 4:3: "The Holy Spirit makes you one in every way. So try your best to remain as one. Let peace keep you together."

You can explain briefly that in the Bible, Paul talks about how the Holy Spirit brings believers together, making them one in Christ, even though they are all different (one body, many parts).



To symbolise how we are all united, despite our differences, you might like to create a Unity Tree as a school community. Please see the detailed instructions below.

Instructions:

Create a large tree on a bulletin board or whiteboard.

Give each pupil a leaf cutout and ask them to decorate it with something that represents them—whether it's a favourite hobby, food, or a value they hold dear.

As they add their leaves to the tree, they emphasise that although each leaf is different, together, they make a strong and beautiful tree. This reflects the key Christian concept that 'The Holy Spirit makes [believers] one in every way' (Ephesians 4:3).

Reflection Prompts: Encourage pupils to reflect on one of the following prompts:

1. How can I help make my community kinder?
2. What can I do to understand others better, especially when things are hard?
3. How can I help make people feel welcome?
4. How can I stay positive and help, even when things feel tricky?
5. What can I do to be more patient with others, even when it's difficult?

Slide 8

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for making each of us special.

Help us to remember that, just like the leaves on a tree, we are all important parts of Your family.

Help us to live in peace and unity, and to show love and kindness to everyone.

Amen.

Slide 9

Finish with a song or hymn on the theme of peace, unity and understanding, such as 'Let there be love shared among us' ([Let there be love shared among us - YouTube](#))



Spiritual Development: Exploring Faith and Growing Spiritually at Home and School

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Experiences to Help Us Encounter:

1. **Celebrating Differences Booklet: Activity:** Each student creates a page that shows something unique about them—this could be a story, poem, or drawing. **Questions to Think About:**
 - What makes you special, and how can it help you be kind to others?
 - What talent or skill do you have that helps everyone get along?
 - How do you show who you are and help others feel welcome?
 - How does being you make our class a better place?
2. **Using the EXAMEN Prayer to Help Us Be More Inclusive: Activity:** Use these five steps to pray for a kinder world:
 1. Thank God for the unique gifts everyone brings.
 2. Help me listen and understand others.
 3. Help me be kind, even when I disagree.
 4. Help me be a peacemaker and bring people together.
 5. Let me show love and tolerance in everything I do. Amen.

Activities to Develop Habits of Tolerance:

1. **Tolerance Tree: Activity:** Write one way you can show tolerance on a leaf-shaped paper and add it to a big paper tree in the classroom. **Teacher's Tips:**
 - Talk about what tolerance actually means.
 - Have pupils share ways they show tolerance in school or at home.
 - Keep adding leaves to the tree and see how it grows as we all practice kindness.
2. **Discussion on Tolerance Quotes: Activity:** Read quotes about tolerance from famous people and talk about them. **Teacher's Tips:**
 - Choose quotes from well-known people like Nelson Mandela or Maya Angelou.
 - **Nelson Mandela:**
"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they



can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

- **Maya Angelou:**
“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter their colour.”
- **Mahatma Gandhi:**
“Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilisation.”
- **Helen Keller:**
“Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.”
- **Shirley Chisholm:**
“If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”
- **Malala Yousafzai:**
“We realise the importance of our voices only when we are silenced.”

- In small groups, discuss what the quotes mean and how they apply to our school.
- Create posters with the quotes to share with others.

3. **Speech Competition: Activity:** Pupils write and deliver speeches on why tolerance is important. **Teacher’s Tips:**

- Encourage pupils to write about real-life examples where tolerance helped.
- Help pupils practice their speeches and present them to the class.
- Give feedback on their delivery and messages about tolerance.

4. **Tolerance Art Installation: Activity:** Create a piece of art together that shows tolerance and unity. **Teacher’s Tips:**

- Discuss ideas about what symbols represent tolerance.
- Work together to create a painting, sculpture, or display.
- Show the art in the school to remind everyone about tolerance.

5. **Tolerance Walk: Activity:** Take a walk around your community to find places that show diversity and unity. **Teacher’s Tips:**

- Look for places like places of worship or community centres that show how we can live together peacefully.
- After the walk, talk about what you saw and how the community shows tolerance.
- ⇨ Create a map of the walk and highlight what you learned.



Collective Worship – Our approach

Invitational

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

Inclusive

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is ‘what Christians believe’, saying things like:

‘I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?’

‘The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...’

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

Inspiring

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?