

Meeting young worshippers

Meet Chloe: a Roman Catholic Christian

Chloe is 9 and lives with her parents and older brothers in Hereford. The family are Roman Catholic Christians.

What does worship mean to you and your family?

The gospel stories are very important to me and I like to think about how the disciples worshipped and followed Jesus. One of the most important times in the **Mass** in church (we go every Sunday) is the reading of the **Gospel**. We must listen very carefully to the story. When I am not **servicing on the altar** during mass, I like going out to the Children's Liturgy. I enjoy playing instruments when we sing the **Gloria**. I worship at home, when I say my prayers. My Dad always reminds me to say my prayers every night. There is a prayer I learned a long time ago that I say every night, and I say the **Our Father** and the **Hail Mary**. When I say my prayers in my bedroom I like to look at a statue of **Mary** and **Jesus** that I got for my **First Holy Communion**. I like to polish the statue.



How does worship make you feel?

I am an **altar server** and it is a special job. It gives me a swirly feeling inside – nervous but proud. I have to wear a special robe. I carry a candle in the procession. When I am older, I will carry the cross. I am in front of all the congregation helping Father Nicholas to prepare the **bread and wine** for the mass. The bread and wine is important because in the Gospel story, on the night before Jesus died, he took bread and broke it and said 'Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body which is given up for you.' That is how Father blesses the bread and then I have to **ring the bell** to show that it is a very special moment, when everyone is praying. I have to put the bell down again very carefully. Then Father blesses the wine and I ring the bell again. As altar servers, we are first to receive communion, then the congregation.

If you could pick one special item/symbol/object to represent worship for you, what would it be and why?

I would probably say a candle, because when I pray – at school and at church – when I am carrying the candle as an altar server, instead of closing my eyes I look at the candle really really deeply and I can see Jesus. I remember that Jesus is the light of the world and that is not going to change.

Where for you is your most 'spiritual' place?

I would say in the church on the altar, close to the **tabernacle** (where the bread and wine is held) because it is the closest place I can ever be to Jesus and God. We believe Jesus is really there in the bread and wine. When I go to the side after my communion I can pray quietly near all the lovely candles.

Meet Rebekah and Sam: Anglicans (Church of England)

Sam (8) and Rebekah (10) live in Leicestershire with their mum and dad. They are members of Holy Trinity Church, which is an Anglican church.

What does worship mean to you and how does it make you feel?

Rebekah: Our church is in a big room with chairs for hundreds of people. There's a stage at the front, for the music groups who lead the worship. Sometimes my mum plays the clarinet. The church also has lots of little rooms for different children's groups. Every Sunday we worship all together for the first part of the service: we sing songs and there's time for the children, something interesting about the Bible. Once a month, we all have Holy Communion together. Our whole family goes to share bread and wine. I take the bread, but not the wine because it's alcoholic, and I'm a bit young. That's when I think about other people who need us to pray for them, perhaps when they are in trouble. My one word to describe church is 'exciting!'

Sam: I think about the story of Jesus, when he broke the bread and shared the wine with his disciples. He said that the bread stands for his body and the wine stands for his blood. What I like about our church is our Explorers group, for 7-10s, we make things a lot. Our leaders are really funny and we often do drama. One of our ministers, Bill, did a talk about the stained-glass window one Sunday. It shows why our church is called 'Holy Trinity Church', because it shows that God is three in one: God the father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. When it is time to pray in church, I really like looking at the stained-glass windows. My one word to describe church would be 'Fun.'



Sam: 'I chose this cross because I think it's really good (it comes from Rwanda, in Africa). Someone has used a little twig to make the cross, and it's detailed. It's really good because Jesus hung on a wooden cross in the Easter story and this is Jesus, made out of wood.'

If you could pick one object to represent worship for you, what would it be and why?

Rebekah: 'I chose this cross because it has got a Bible verse on it that I like. "Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." The words from the Bible make it extra special.'



Where for you is your most 'spiritual' place?

Rebekah: Our Explorers group from church went on a weekend away together. We stayed in a chapel that has been converted to have dormitories. It was really fun. I like it that we learn the Bible in Explorers and at home. I love lots of Bible stories. We went to Wicksteed Park, and swimming, and we had fireworks. We had a great laugh. We had 'time for God' as well, and made 'thanksgiving flags'. I liked the 'God time' when we heard the story of a boy who gave up his lunch, for Jesus to feed the crowd. Our leader Jill had lots of stuff for us to use to make clay fish. It shows that Jesus can help people with anything.

Sam: My favourite part was making up verses to a song to sing of things to thank God for. My friend Jacob made up a verse thanking God for nature and someone else made up a verse about thanking God for tomato ketchup.

Meet Rachel: a Pentecostal Christian

Rachel is 10 and lives with her mum, dad and two 'annoying' brothers in Coulsdon, outer London. They are Pentecostal Christians.

What does worship mean to you and your family?

My family and I like going to **church** together to **worship** God. I like talking to God and singing, sharing with my friends at church and talking to them.

I also go to Kings Club, which is like Sunday school. It is a special time during the service for children to go out and learn more about God in a fun way. We often play games and one of my favourites is learning the memory verse from the **Bible**.

Worship is about listening as well. In Kings Club we sit on mats on the floor and listen to what God is saying to us individually and we write it down. God told me once that 'though things may be rough, you will get through it'. I was very shocked and excited to hear God speak to me. It encouraged me more and made me realise that God does listen to my prayers and will help me. It makes me want to go on with him.

Sometimes in the service adults will share what God has told them with everyone, or they will **speak in tongues**. I like hearing people speak in tongues in the worship, but I can't do that yet, it's a language which God gives them to praise him.

If you could pick one special item/ symbol/ object to represent worship for you – what would it be and why?

I think the **bread and wine** are very special. I like taking **communion**, it makes me feel part of God's family and important to him. My mum and dad have communion every week, but I only have it when it is a family service and everybody in our church gets together and talks about God.

In our church it is lovely, there are lots of different people from all over the world and I feel we are all part of a big family. It feels very good to share the bread and wine with them all—it's like having a big family party.



How does worship make you feel?

I think worship is fun! Worshipping and **praising** God makes me feel very happy and joyful. It makes me feel that I am special.

At our church we have a band and some singers who help us to worship with singing. **The best part of the worship for me is being able to move my hands and feet, clap and dance to the music.** The music has a good beat and some people wave banners and dance. Sometimes the words to a song touch me. I like the slow songs too because they make me think hard about God.



Where for you is your most 'spiritual' place?

For me church is the most spiritual place. I know I can talk to God at home but I find it easier to talk and listen to him at church. Listening to others share what God has done for them and how he has healed and helped people encourages me.