Collective Worship Leaders network

May 2026

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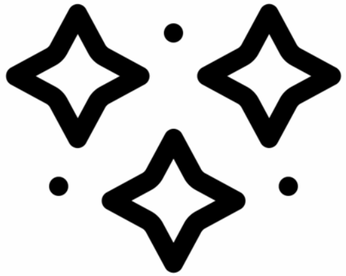
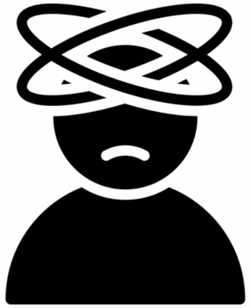
Diocese of Rochester
BOARD OF EDUCATION



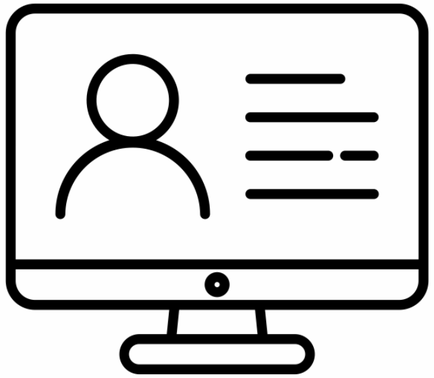
Highlights



Headaches

Horizons

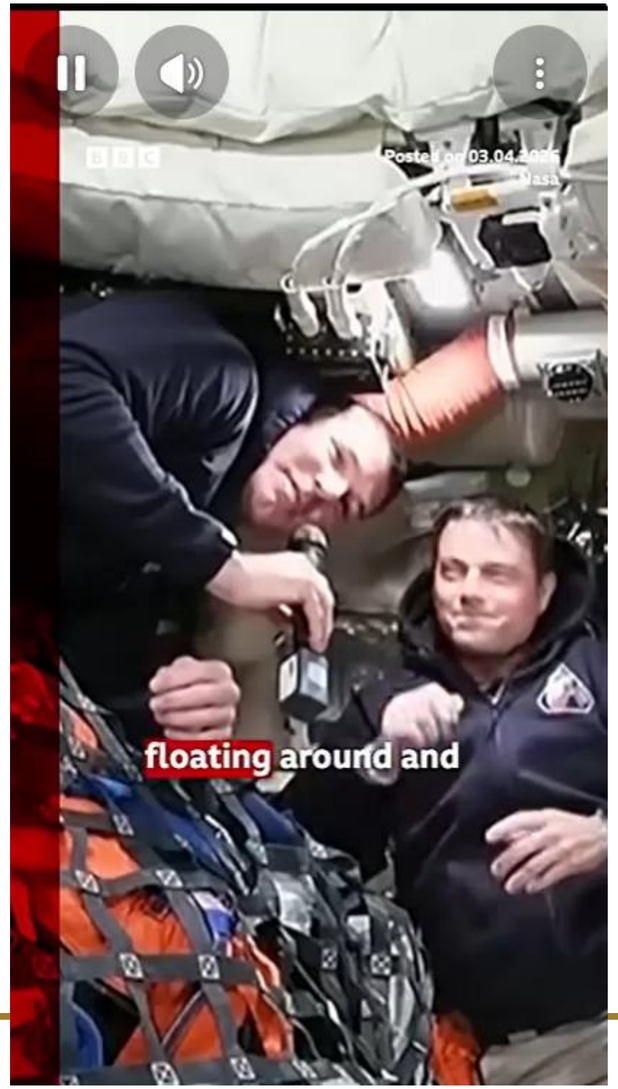
Online training etiquette



→ Cameras turned on
→ Mute your microphone
→ Share comments in the chat if you have something to add

This session will be recorded and available on request, along with slides and resources mentioned sent out afterwards.

Opening Reflection



“You look amazing! You look beautiful!”

“Homosapians is all of us – no matter where you’re from or what you look like, we are all one people.”

Opening Reflection

John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives .Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Let us take a moment ourselves—
to pause,
to breathe,
and to consider:

How can the worship we lead bring peace, purpose, and life to those who gather?

Aim for the session

- Reflecting on SIAMS findings on collective worship.
- Developing our monitoring to a focus on flourishing. (Impact on people)
- Explore how to enable adults to flourish in worship.
- Monitoring worship through a new lens.
- Collective Worship resources.

Collective Worship Monitoring → Flourishing

Moving from checking to meaningful evaluation

IQ3

How is daily collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

Collective Worship Monitoring → Flourishing

What inspection data tells us - strengths

- Collective worship is the **heartbeat of the school**, central to its identity
- At its best, it is **life-giving**, rooting and shaping the school's purpose
- Strong worship is grounded in **scripture and Christian tradition**
- **Intentional planning and quality resourcing** are key to effectiveness
- **Partnership with the local church** strengthens purpose and impact
- **Pupil leadership** enhances worship when rooted in a clear understanding of context
- Worship contributes significantly to **spiritual flourishing across the community**

Does worship give life to the community?

Collective Worship Monitoring → Flourishing

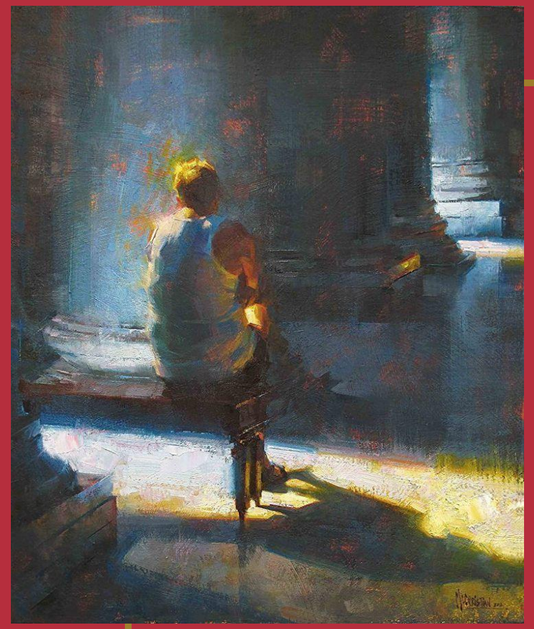
What inspection data tells us - DPs

- Schools need a **coherent understanding** of spirituality in order to curate a space for spiritual flourishing.
- The most influential factor in limiting spiritual growth is an **understanding of spirituality**.
- While Anglican traditions, Bible stories and pupil leadership are contributors to flourishing, schools need a **greater understanding** of what spiritual flourishing means in their context.

What is spiritual flourishing?

- Space to reflect, question, and grow
- Experience of **peace, awe, wonder, connection**
- Shaping how we **live well together**
- Pupils AND adults
- Not an “add-on”—part of daily life
- Relate to YOUR context

A context-informed vision should provide answers to many questions around approaches to worship.



Adults flourishing spiritually

- Being present
- Expert, informed leadership of worship rooted in the school's context
- Accompaniment on a journey
- School as the locus for spiritual formation
- Intentional, but unenforced and unobtrusive spiritual feeding

Adults flourishing spiritually

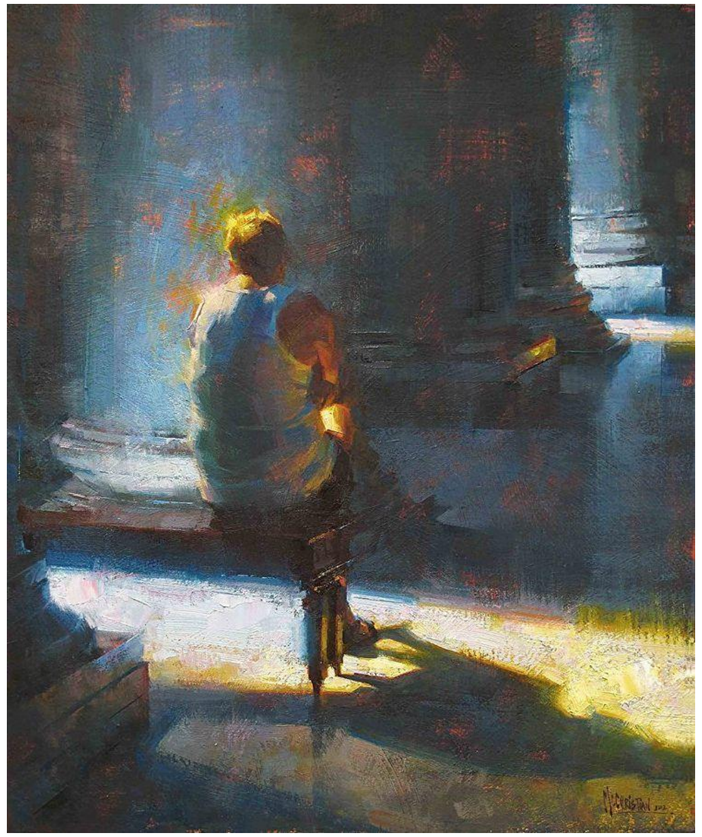
Andea's story

Andrea — Mustard Seed *Growing disciples in places where life is tough*

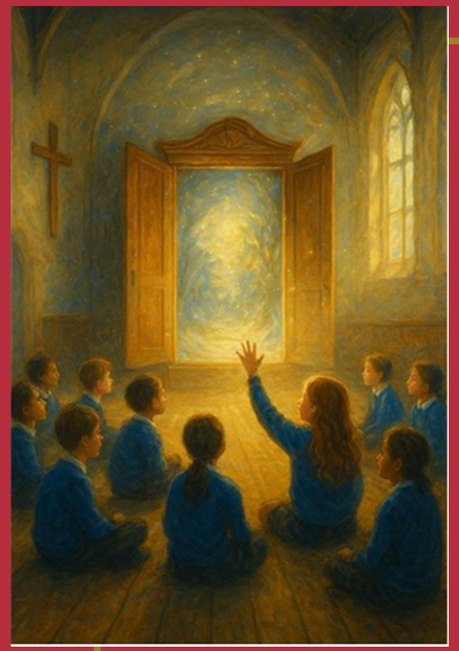
- After leading a reasonably chaotic life, I eventually settled and qualified as a teacher in 2010 and went to work in a Church of England Primary School in 2014.
- This was the beginning of my relationship with God. My headteacher was the daughter of a retired vicar and she made faith come alive for both the pupils and particularly myself.
- As my relationship with The Lord became deeper I embarked on confirmation classes with my pupils and we were confirmed together in October 2019.
- Whilst I was teaching in the school I didn't attend Sunday services as I worshipped daily at school; however in November 2023 I became unwell and unable to work, so I decided to take early retirement.
- At first I was too unwell to think about my worship but as my health improved, I realised that there was something missing from my life...my love of God. I visited many local churches but the moment I walked through the doors of Holy Trinity in North Ormesby, my local church, I knew where I was meant to be.

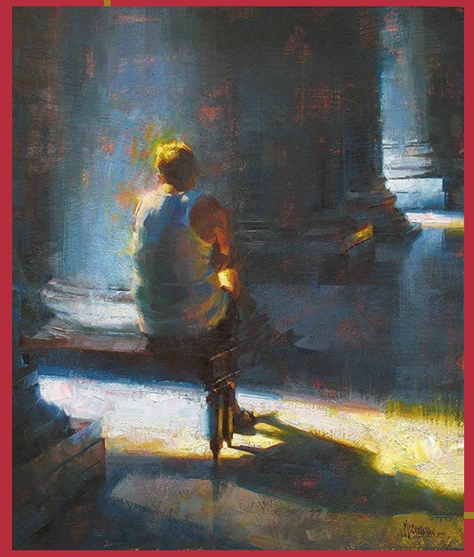
Is there space for…

- Spiritual (& personal) growth?
- Transformation?
- Connection?
- Reflection?
- Purposeful action?



Reverence by Jennifer McChristian





Adults flourishing spiritually

- What engages pupils will often **engage adults too**
- Collective worship should **build a sense of community**
- Provide **different ways to engage** at different “thresholds”
- **Silence and reflection** can be powerful elements
- Worship should not feel like **another task for leaders**
- It should **flow naturally from the school’s vision and values**

This is really about moving beyond ‘Did worship happen?’ to ‘What was the experience and impact of worship?

	Observations and impact	Impact
Gather *How were people welcomed?* *Did this create a sense of belonging and community?*	When we think about Gather, we are asking: Did people feel welcomed and included?Was there a sense of calm, belonging, and community? Did the environment help pupils and adults become present and ready to engage? This could include things like music, pupil leadership, the atmosphere, inclusive language, or how people entered the space.	
Engage *How were Christian teachings explored?* *Was the message **relevant and meaningful in today’s context**?*	In Engage, we are focusing on the heart of the worship. How were Christian teachings explored? Was the message meaningful and relevant to pupils’ real lives? Did it connect with current experiences, challenges, relationships, or big questions? We are not just asking whether a Bible story was mentioned, but whether people were genuinely helped to think deeply.	
Respond *What opportunities were there for reflection, prayer, or stillness?* *Could individuals respond in different ways with integrity?*	The Respond section is really important because worship should create space, not pressure. We are asking: Were there opportunities for stillness, reflection, prayer, or personal response? Could people engage authentically in different ways? Was there freedom for quiet reflection, active participation, or simply listening? This helps us think about dignity, inclusion, and spiritual safety for everyone.	
Sending *How were pupils and adults encouraged to live out the message?* *Did this link to **real life and relationships**?*	Finally, Sending asks: How were pupils and adults encouraged to live out the message? Did worship connect to daily life, relationships, values, or actions? The key question here is: ‘What difference might this make after worship ends?’ Because collective worship should not just be a moment — it should shape culture, attitudes, and community life.	

This shifts the focus from simply evaluating worship as an event to considering whether worship is helping people spiritually flourish.

Flourishing Focus Evaluation:

1. Presence & Engagement (Authenticity)

*To what extent were pupils and adults **truly present and engaged**? Did people appear to **want to be there**? What evidence supports this? How inclusive was the language and approach for all backgrounds and beliefs?*

Here we are looking for authenticity. Were pupils and adults truly present and engaged? Did people appear willing rather than merely compliant? Was the language and approach inclusive and invitational? We are trying to notice genuine engagement rather than performance or passive attendance.

2. Invitation & Participation

How were pupils and adults invited (not required) to engage? What opportunities were there for meaningful participation? Were staff actively and authentically involved?

This is intentionally framed around invitation rather than requirement. We want to ask: How were people invited into worship? Were there meaningful opportunities to participate? Were staff modelling authentic engagement too? Sometimes the strongest worship moments happen when adults participate sincerely alongside pupils.

3. Spiritual Flourishing (Pupils AND Adults)

How did this act of worship provide opportunities for:

- *stillness, reflection, prayer?*
- *exploring big questions about life, meaning, and belief*
- *experiencing awe, wonder, joy, or peace?*

For pupils:
How did it support their spiritual development?

For adults (staff and wider community):

- *Did it offer space for reflection and personal growth?*
- *Did it support their sense of purpose, wellbeing, or connection?*
- *Are adults being spiritually nourished, not just facilitating?*

This section broadens the lens. Collective worship is not only for pupils — adults matter too. We are asking whether worship creates opportunities for: stillness, reflection, prayer, awe and wonder, joy, peace, and engagement with deeper questions about meaning and belief. For pupils, we consider spiritual development. For adults, we consider nourishment, encouragement, wellbeing, and connection. This is about recognising worship as part of a flourishing school culture, not simply a timetable slot.

4. Impact (The Key Shift)

What evidence is there that worship:

- *shaped thinking, attitudes, or b*
- *inspired action or reflection bey*
- *contributes to living well togeth*

What might "ripple out" from this worship into scho

This may be the most important section. Instead of asking: 'Did worship go well?' we ask: 'What impact is worship having?' For example: Is it shaping attitudes or behaviour? Is it influencing relationships? Is it inspiring reflection or action beyond the moment? Is it contributing to the way the community lives together? We are looking for the ripple effect of worship across school life.

This helps leaders think strategically and reflectively about collective worship over time.

Christian Vision & Coherence

*How clearly did worship reflect and **flow from the school's Christian vision**?*
*How does this act of worship contribute to a **coherent culture of spiritual flourishing**?*

This section asks: How clearly does worship flow from the school's Christian vision? Is worship reinforcing the values and identity the school says it holds? The aim is coherence. Worship should not feel disconnected from school life — it should reinforce and embody the school's vision in a lived and visible way.

Pupil & Adult Voice

What do pupils say about worship? Does this match observations?
What do staff say?
Are a range of voices involved in evaluating worship?

This emphasises listening. What do pupils actually say about worship? What do staff say? Do their experiences match what leaders observe? It is also important to hear a range of voices: different ages, backgrounds, levels of engagement, and perspectives. This helps ensure worship remains meaningful, inclusive, and responsive.

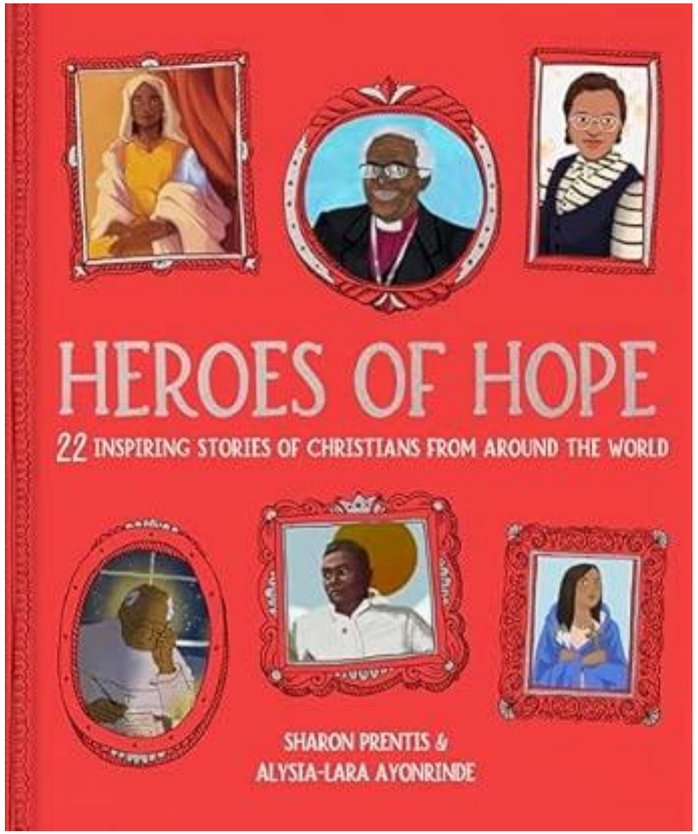
Evaluation for improvement

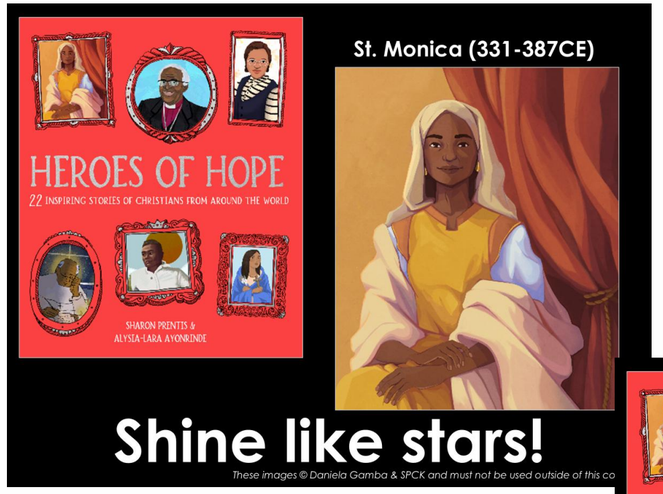
What are the strengths of this act of worship?
What could be developed to deepen spiritual flourishing?
What actions will be taken (and by whom)?

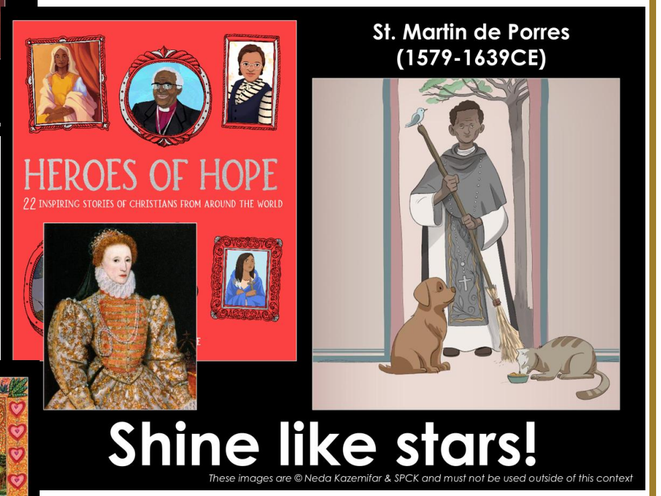
Finally, this section is about development rather than judgement. The purpose of monitoring is not to 'catch people out'. It is to strengthen collective worship and deepen spiritual flourishing. So we ask: What are the strengths? What could be developed further? What practical actions might help? Who will take these forward?

Ryan Parker

https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/collective-worship





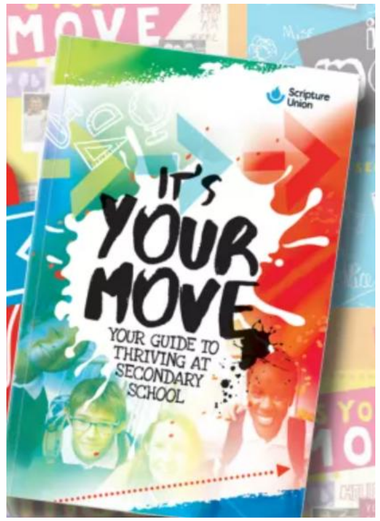


Diocese of Guildford

Transforming Church
Transforming Lives

Leaver’s service resources

https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/document?tags[]=101&tags[]=17&matchalltags=on&search=&sort=title-asc



https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/its-your-move

https://www.rootsontheweb.com/i-am-looking-for/public-copies/primary-school-leavers-service

THANK YOU

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