

The reason for Understanding Christianity

To support pupils in developing their understanding of Christianity, as a contribution to their understanding of the world and their own experience within it.

Aims of Understanding Christianity

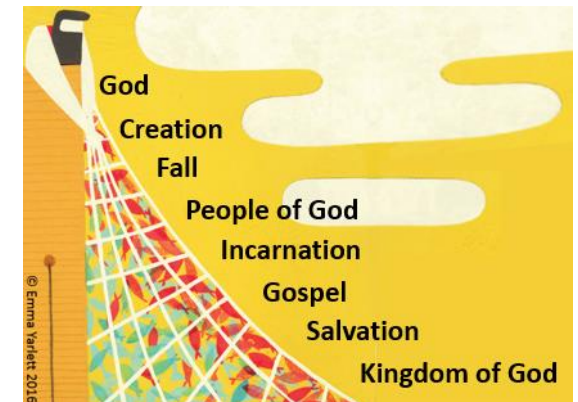
To enable pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith, by exploring core theological concepts

To enable pupils to develop knowledge and skills in making sense of biblical texts and understanding their impact in the lives of Christians

To develop pupils' abilities to connect, critically reflect upon, evaluate and apply their learning to their own growing understanding of Christianity, of religion and belief more widely, of themselves, the world and human experience.

What is being taught?

Understanding Christianity resources have selected and explore these eight concepts because they offer a coherent series of ideas that underpin Christian belief and practice. The 'big story' gives a context into which teachers and pupils can place the concepts as they encounter them in RE throughout the school.



When are the concepts taught and what do they mean?

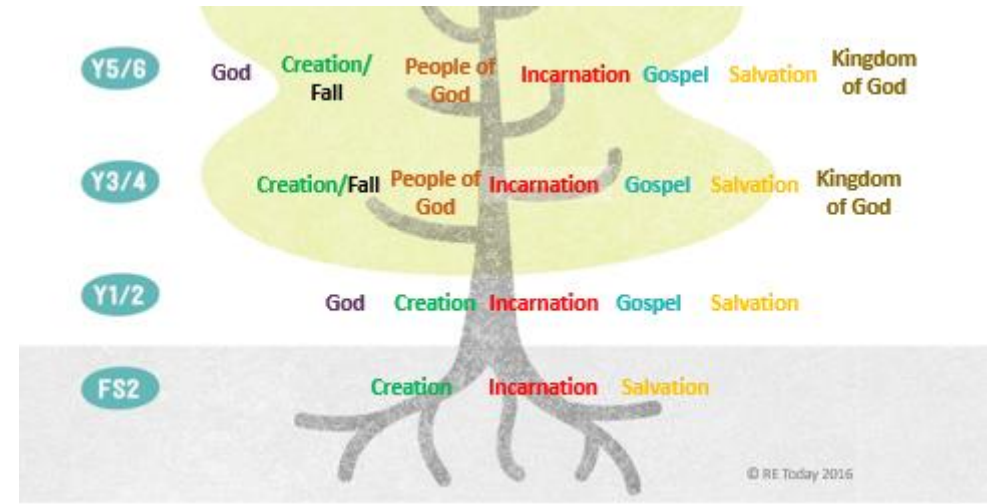
Pupils encounter concepts several times as part of a spiral curriculum – each encounter uses different key questions, texts and approaches. Understanding is reinforced and deepened through these on-going encounters

These concepts represent one way to make sense of Christian belief and practice. The brief version above is necessarily simplified, and there are other ways of understanding Christian teaching. Many Christians might prefer not to relegate the position of Jesus to being a mere 'solution' to the

problem of sin, and argue that Jesus' incarnation represents the boundless love of the Creator seeking the best for human beings, regardless of the cost. The resources indicate some areas of disagreement and diversity.

Through these concepts, pupils encounter a range of biblical texts, placed within a wider theological context. They consider the nature of God and what it means for Christians to be in relationship with the Creator. They explore Christian understanding of the relationship between God and his people in the Old Testament, and make sense of messianic expectations and Christian belief in their fulfilment in Jesus.

Pupils explore the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, within this wider historical and theological context. They consider the present and future aspects of the Kingdom of God. Pupils examine the impact of these beliefs and their outworking



in the lives of Christians, through (for example) celebrations, festivals, rituals, creative and spiritual expression, actions and activism, expressions of love and compassion, calls for justice and ethical responses.

These are the concepts of God covered in the Understanding Christianity.

God	Fundamental to Christian belief is the existence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Creation	Christians believe the universe and human life are God's good creation. Humans are made in the image of God.
Fall	Humans have a tendency to go their own way rather than keep their place in relation to their creator. This attitude is called sin, and Genesis 3 gives an account of this rebellion, popularly called 'the Fall'. This describes a catastrophic separation between God and humans, between humans and each other, and between humans and the environment. This idea that humans are 'fallen' and in need of rescue (or salvation) sets out the root cause of many problems for humanity.
People of God	The Old Testament tells the story of God's plan to reverse the impact of the Fall, to save humanity. It involves choosing a people who will model a restored relationship with God, who will attract all other people back to God. The Bible narrative includes the ups and downs of this plan, including the message of the prophets who tried to persuade people to stick with God. The plan appears to end in failure with the people of God exiled, and then returning, awaiting a 'messiah' – a rescuer.

<p>Incarnation</p>	<p>The New Testament presents Jesus as the answer: the Messiah and Saviour, who will repair the effects of sin and the Fall and offer a way for humans to be at one with God again. Incarnation means that Jesus is God in the flesh, and that, in Jesus, God came to live amongst humans.</p>
<p>Gospel</p>	<p>Christians believe Jesus' incarnation is 'good news' for all people. ('Gospel' means 'good news'.) His life, teaching and ministry embody what it is like to be one of the People of God, what it means to live in relationship with God. Jesus' example and teaching emphasise loving one's neighbour – particularly the weak and vulnerable – as part of loving God.</p>
<p>Salvation</p>	<p>Jesus' death and resurrection effect the rescue or salvation of humans. He opens the way back to God. Christians believe that through Jesus, sin is dealt with, forgiveness offered, and the relationship between God and humans is restored.</p>
<p>Kingdom of God</p>	<p>This does not mean that no one sins any more! The Bible talks in terms of God's 'Kingdom' having begun in human hearts through Jesus. The idea of the 'Kingdom of God' reflects God's ideal for human life in the world – a vision of life lived in the way God intended for human beings. Christians look forward to a time when God's rule is fulfilled at some future point, in a restored, transformed heaven and earth. Meanwhile, they seek to live this attractive life as in God's Kingdom, following Jesus' example, inspired and empowered by God's Spirit.</p>

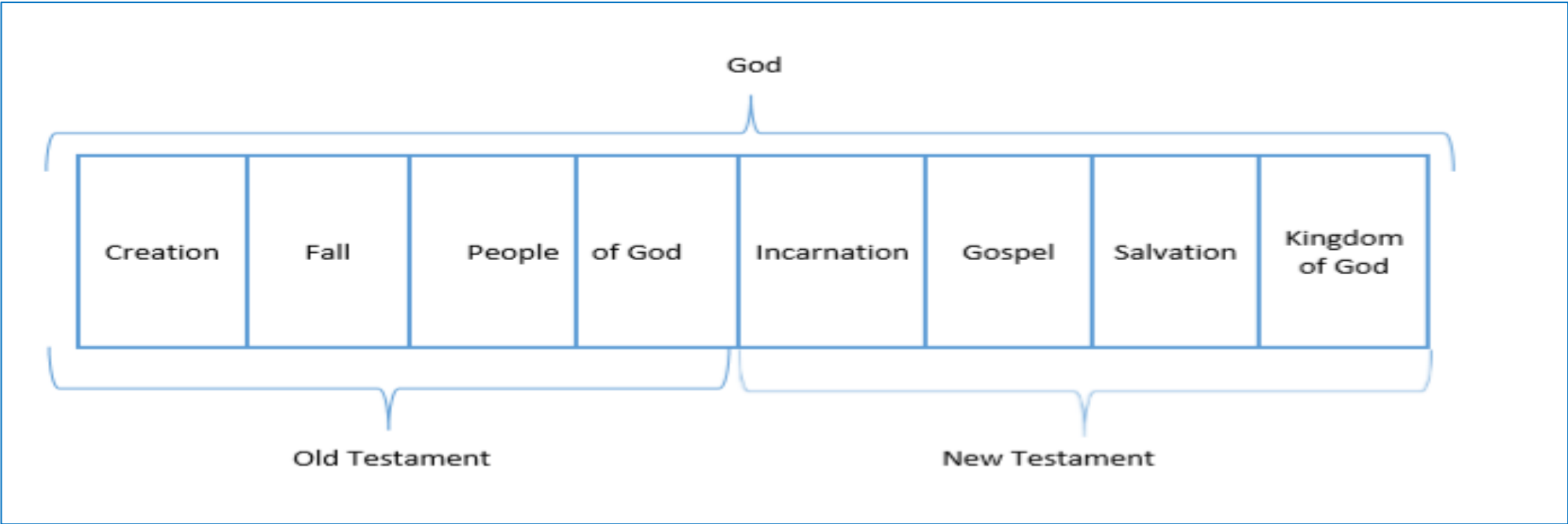
The Frieze and the concept of the 'big story'?

The frieze illustrates seven of the eight core concepts that are explored throughout the Understanding Christianity materials. Effectively, this presents a view of the 'big story' of the Bible – an artist's response to the approach used in the Understanding Christianity materials.

The Big Frieze is designed to give teachers the opportunity to make pupils aware of the wider context of each concept, unit and text studied in the Understanding Christianity materials. Reminding pupils regularly of where a particular text occurs within the 'big story', by pointing it out on the Frieze, helps to build up a coherent understanding of the core concepts and the relationship between them.

The artwork illustrates these concepts, from Creation to Kingdom of God, presenting a Christian view of the Bible as more than a collection of different texts – one which has an overarching coherence and story.





Story of Adam and Eve –
Adam is the heavenly spirit.
Eve is the human soul.

Panel – I – Creation –
The beginning

Tape- crime
committed against
God –sin

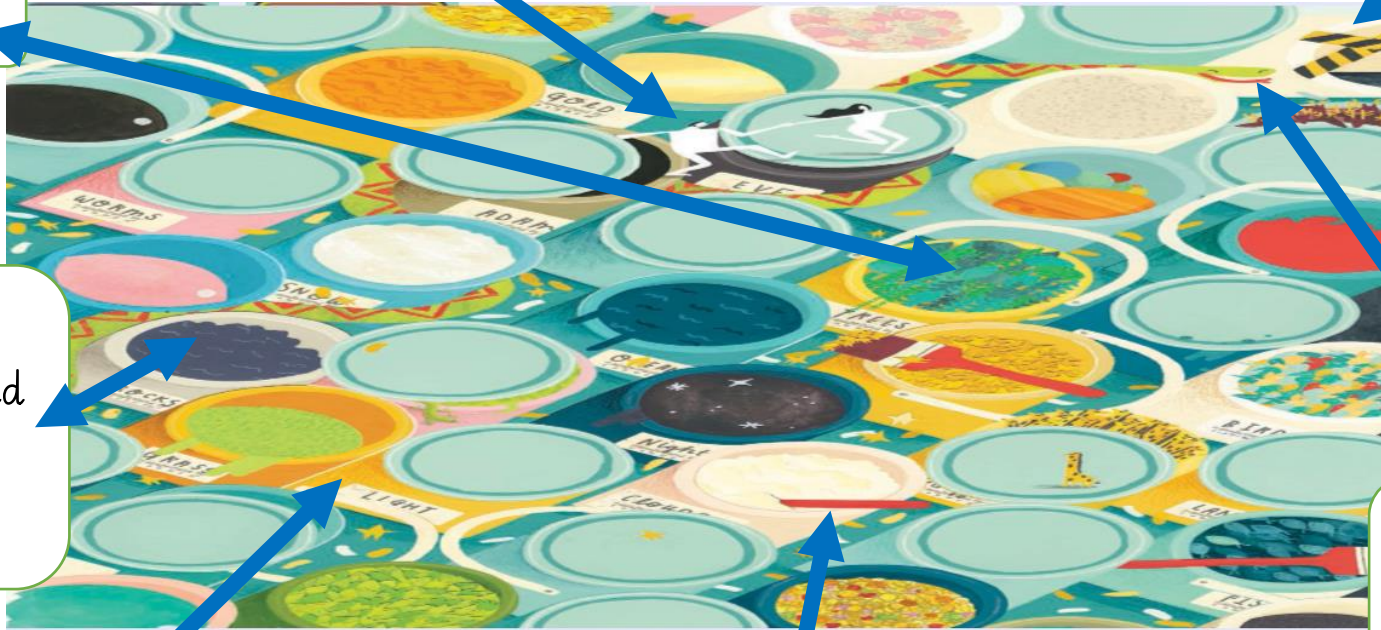
Trees – Soul of Life-

Fruits – life is
fruitful and should
be enjoyable and
sweet.

Serpent – represents
attachment to human
kind

Light showing Jesus is
here to guide us. Light
represents good in life
and God in heaven.

Paintbrush God is
the creator, a
builder the
architect.



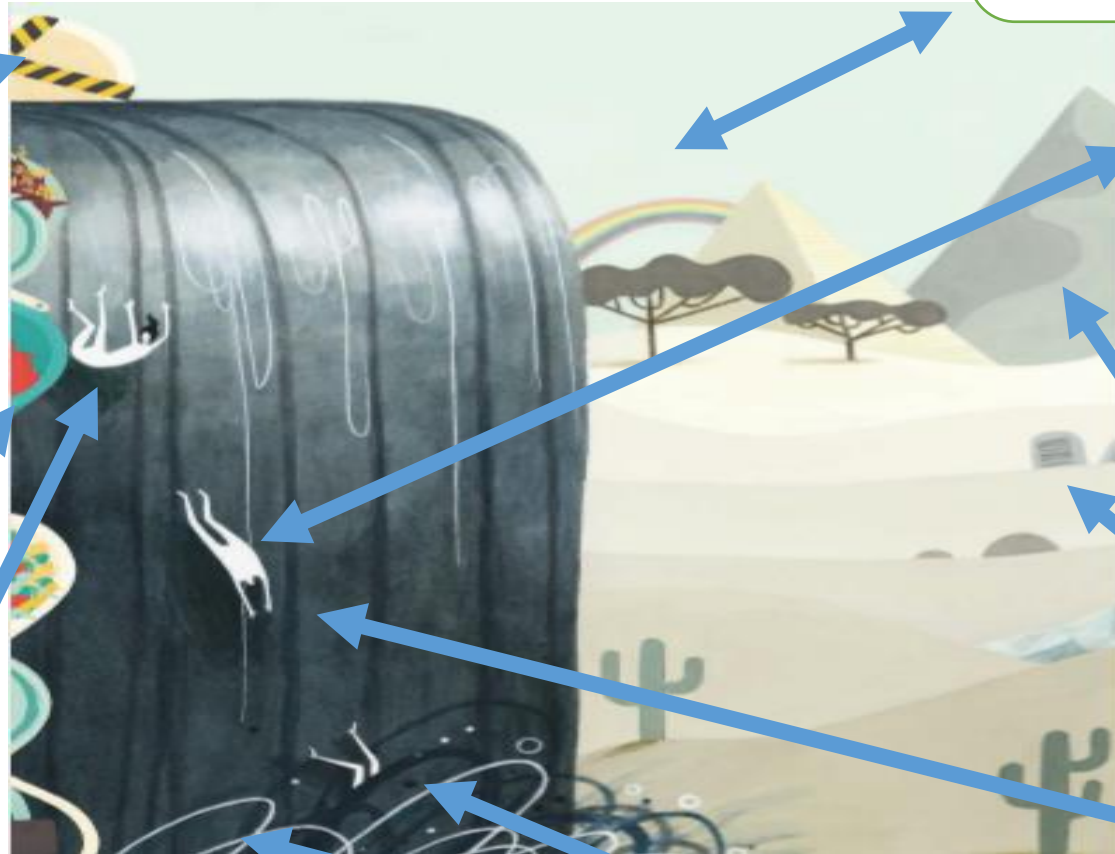
Panel – 2 The fall of Adam thus represents the way humanity became conscious of good and evil. Some say it is the ongoing reality of human existence.

Rainbow – shows God's offering and hope. Journey for people to love. Salvation of Jesus. Noah's Ark.

The dark waterfall shows the colour of creation been drained away due to sin.

Some coloured paint pots on show to represent humanity. Humans are still made in the image of God. Humans' are at the centre of God's humanity love and concern.

The descent of the fall shows a headlong journey away from peace and joy with the Creator.



The descent of the fall shows a headlong journey away from peace and joy with the Creator.

Pyramid— Moses leading the Jewish people. The Ten Commandments.

Genesis Temptation should be resisted.

The fall indicates the world is not as it should be. Lack of love, selfishness. There is a need for salvation.

Some say the fall shows Christians are free to make a choice. The God of the bible does not impose their will on them.

Panel 3 and 4 – People of God – These panels covers many generations of the People of God. The panels shows the stories from Noah to Nehemiah. It shows the story of how the people of Israel struggle with how to live – facing so many idols, gods and other temptations. Warnings from the prophets sometimes lead people to turn back to God only to sin again. The image reflects the cycle and the distractions people had to face. Even though, there are dark times God is still with them and still present with his many aspirational characters. It denotes to Christians the best way to live is God's way.

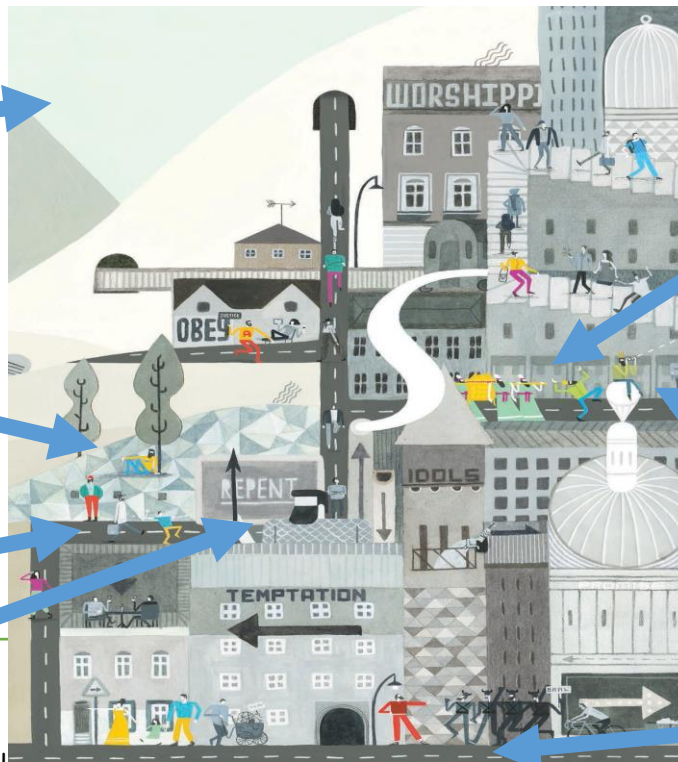
1st part of the panel is the Old Testament. .

Jonah, under his tree?
(Jonah 4)

Amos challenging the 'cows of Bashan' drinking wine on ivory beds? (Amos 4:1 and 6:4)

David and Goliath

(1 Samuel 17) Everyone has talents. You need to trust God and stand up for what you believe in.



David dancing in front of the Ark of the Covenant?
(2 Samuel 6)

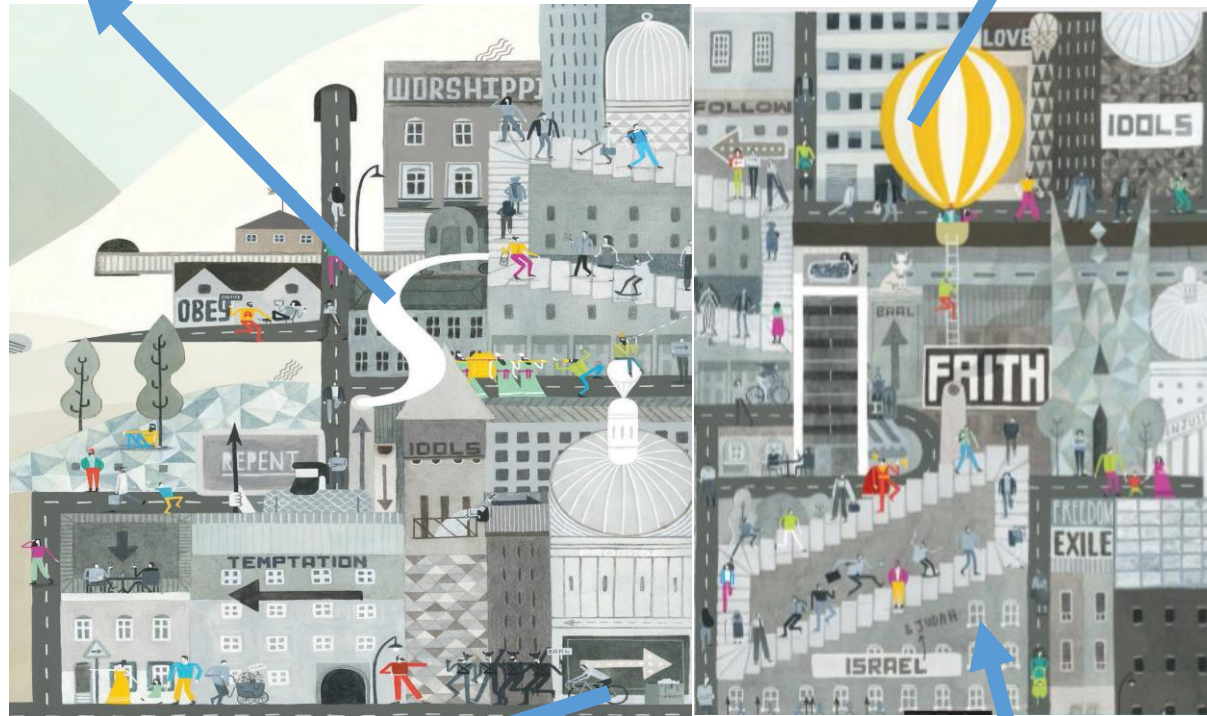
David spying on Bathsheba?
(2 Samuel 11)

Elijah facing down the priests of Baal? (1 Kings 18)



The word sin looming amongst the People God?

Hot air balloon symbols people wanting to search for a place with less distractions away from sin. There yellow shows there must be help with from the righteous one.



A sacrificial lamb?

Many of the occupying forces that ruled the land of Israel and Judah

Panel – 5 – Incarnation – The purpose of this panel reflects the coming of Jesus. It is about the 'salvation narrative'. The People of God fail to overcome the effects of the Fall. Instead of people being drawn back to God, they continue to sin and turn away from him. For this reason, plots his next part of the salvation rescue by sending his son Jesus, God 'incarnate', in human form.

Dark world because people continue to live in sin.

Crown shows at kingly status.

Jesus recognises his role and journey of life. He knows why he has been sent to Earth and he recognises his need to sacrifice himself.

Jesus God's son, God 'incarnate', in human form to show and tell people how to live in this dark world.

The words reflect the names given to Jesus.

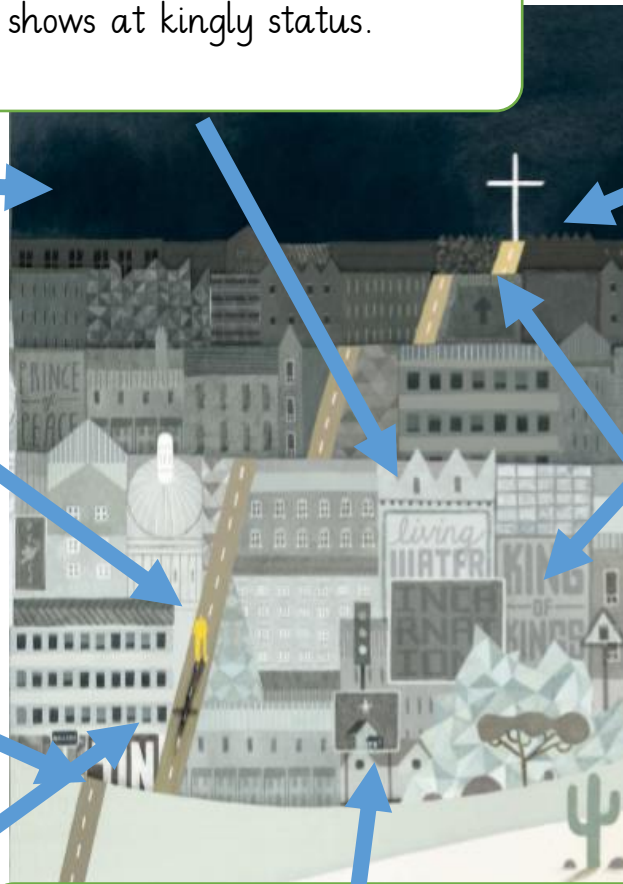
The path shows Jesus' journey that he has to make to sacrifice himself. The path begins with poverty and simplicity of human birth to death on the cross.

The golden path hints the riches that will come if Jesus is successful in his mission.

The shadow of the cross.

The Nativity scene.

The desert reflects the story of Jesus' temptation, but also links to the story of the children of Israel in the wilderness too.



Panel – 6 Gospel– This panel reflects love. It shows how Jesus demonstrates God’s love for all people. It portrays the God’s message of the commandments of how we should love God, their neighbours and themselves. It advocates Jesus’ teachings show that this way of love is the best way for everyone to live. The colour in the panel shows that Jesus brings back the intended colours of Creation. The panel is really bright, to show the bright and life- giving gospel and message of Jesus.

Gold showing the richness and goodness of the bible.

There is a solution- to help keep everything light and the darkness back.

The Holy **Chalice**, also known as the Holy Grail. The Synoptic Gospels refer to **Jesus** sharing a **cup** of wine with the Apostles, saying it was the covenant in his blood.

“I am the door” (John 10:9)
Who ever enters through Him will be saved. Jesus is the door of life and we can all become part of his flock.

Washing the disciples’ feet.
(John 13:1-17)

Jesus’ disciples to spread the Good News. (Mathew 28:19-20)

Feeding of the five thousand.
Shows Jesus can do many things. (John 6:1-14)

Centrality of love. (Luke 10:27-28).
This emphasises how we should all love and care for each other. Love God our Lord Saviour.

You can tell Jesus’ disciples by their fruits. (Mathew 7:15-20)

Jesus came to fulfil the law and the Prophets.
(Mathew 5:17)



Panel – 7 Salvation– This panel reflects that humans are in need of salvation and need to be rescued. This is because of an in-built tendency for humans to go their own way, resisting will and guidance of the good Creator. Christians believe that sin separates people from God and that this is an unbridgeable divide unless God offers forgiveness and cleansing himself. It is a dreadful day. It is when Jesus was nailed to the cross and died for our sins.

The road is a symbol of people on the road to Salvation.

The arrow indicates the right direction or path to take to find salvation. The arrows pointing up shows Jesus is the way, and gives us access to bright vitality

The water and river symbolism as in The Fall to show that it is sin that separates people from God.



Pots of colour reflect the idea of Salvation rescues Christians from sin. The colour shows goodness, the creativity and the extravagance- of the original purpose of being human.

The cross reflects the Christian idea that through Jesus God saves human kind. Jesus and the cross are the bridge between Creator and the Earth.

Panel – 8 Kingdom of God – This panel shows the impact of Jesus. Christians believe his incarnation repairs the damage of sin. The Holy Spirit has been sent to empower people and to bring the 'good news' of love, peace and justice. It takes the church to spread the good news, to make the world look more like the Kingdom of God, in anticipation of a future restored kingdom in – Heaven. The people within the panel could represent any figure that is prepared to live in the light of God's commands.

Colour been painted and poured focus on the Kingdom of God transforming the world. This is not to reduce the importance of eternal life.

St Pauls describes it as 'eternal glory' that far out weights the suffering of this

People are followers of Jesus and they can help make the world as it should be. The people are spilling Christian Values into the world.



Gates to the future. Kingdom of God, heaven?

(Revelation 21) The New Jerusalem – 12 gates made from 12 pearls. The gate gives a hint to the wonders that await.

Peter healing the lame beggar?

(Acts 3) God asks that we continue to be disciples by sharing his Word, by praying together and alone and by continuing to learn about His wonderful ways.

People are followers of Jesus and they can help make the world as it should be. The people are spilling Christian Values of love, joy and hope.

Paul writing from prison. (Philippians 1:12-14) Paul's chains have not stopped the world of Jesus.

The dark waterfall shows the colour of creation been drained away due to sin.

Panel – 2 The fall of Adam thus represents the way humanity became conscious of good and evil. Some say it is the ongoing reality of human existence.

Rainbow – shows God's offering and hope. Journey for people to love.

The crime tape – Adam's crossed the line and committed a sin. He has disobeyed God.



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