



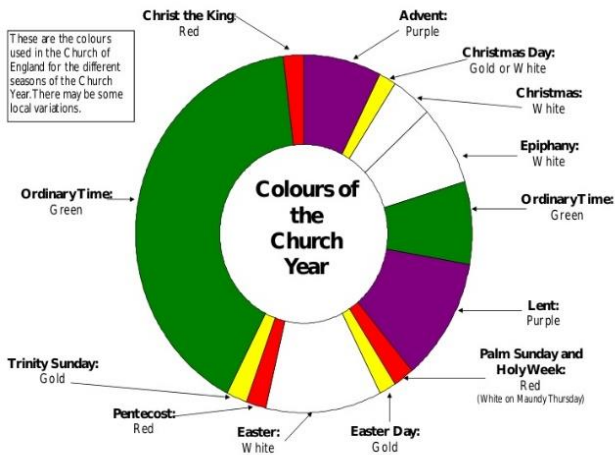
These teacher notes and the accompanying presentation are designed to support you in addressing the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, disturbing the peace in Europe. This act of collective worship could be done gathered together in a large group or in smaller groups within classrooms to offer the chance for quiet reflection and pupils' questions. There is a chance that pupils will be distressed by things they have seen in the news or by the concept of a war on our continent. Making space for asking questions and communicating hope to pupils is an important consideration when approaching this act of collective worship.

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:

<https://coventrydbe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Collective-Worship-Statement-of-Entitlement.pdf>

**Pre-Collective Worship Task:** Invite pupils to close their eyes, think about a place in the world, or a situation, where people don't get on with each other (for many, this might be the situation in Ukraine). How can you respond to that situation? Can you do anything? Take suggestions from pupils and make an ideas cloud together as a class. What helps when you feel scared or worried? Light a candle, pass around a holding cross and allow pupils to share their concerns. Focus on things that bring hope- being kind to others, praying for the world, remembering there are those that will be helping.

**Worship Table:** You will need a green cloth on your altar table to show we are still in ordinary time.



**Advent & Lent: Times of preparation & patient waiting**

**Celebration Days: Times of joy & light**

**Festival Periods: Christmas and Easter**

**Holy Week & Pentecost: Times of suffering and times of joy**

**Ordinary Time: A time for growth**

**Preparation and Resources:** You will need a candle, a zip, a print out of the Ukraine flag and the Russia flag, a large sheet of paper and the PowerPoint.

## The Main Content:

### Welcome

Go to slide 2. Light the candle and say the welcoming prayer aloud:

*We gather together as a school family in peace to think about what is happening in the world and to remember the importance of hope and love. We say thank you for our safety and think about those who are not safe today. Amen.*

Pupils can make the prayer their own by saying 'Amen' at the end if they wish to, or they may just want to be quiet and listen.

### Learning

Go to slide 3. The country of Ukraine is in Europe. The people that live there are peace-loving and happy in their own country. They are very much like you and I. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, made the decision to invade Ukraine, against the wishes of the Ukrainian leaders and people. There has been fighting as Ukraine has resisted being taken over by Russia.

The Ukrainian people are scared, sad and in pain. The world watches and tries to help. It is a sad situation and it is okay if you are feeling worried or sad about it today. Many of the people in this room feel very similarly.

Invite two pupils to hold up the Ukrainian and Russian flags on either side of you as you hold up the zip. Slowly unzip it to show there is a separation between these two countries that we hope will be temporary.

Move to slide 4. It is important to remember not all the people of Russia want a war with Ukraine. Just like the people of Ukraine, many Russians are peace-loving and want to live in generosity and kindness towards people from other countries. They do not want to invade Ukraine and causes heartache and tragedy for the people there, but they are unable to control the decisions of their country's leader. Many Russian people have risked harsh punishment to make their feelings known and have been protesting the war in Russia's cities. They are sad and hurting about the conflict their country is now in.

Go to slide 5. This is the reconciliation statue in the ruins of Coventry Cathedral. It was created by sculptor Josefine de Vasconcellos to represent two people finding each other again after the separation of World War 2 and has come to represent the reconciliation of the nations after that conflict. It stands in the ruins as a reminder of what Europe has had for decades and what needs to be rediscovered again now there is conflict between nations once more. Reconciliation is the coming together after conflict. It requires listening to each other, telling the story of our hurt and making it right. We can have hope that the countries of Europe will be able to do this again as they have done in the past.

## **Reflecting**

Move on to slide 6. All the news coverage and talk about the conflict between Russia and Ukraine may be making you feel sad, worried or angry. Jesus knew humans would feel such things. As someone who was fully human and fully God (something we call the 'incarnation'; God in human form), Jesus understood our human emotions and he felt them himself. If you feel those things today, you are just being human. But Jesus also said, *'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.'* John 14:27.

It is hard to not let our hearts be troubled when we hear frightening or terrible things, but peace is a gift we can do our best to accept.

***I wonder if you can close your eyes and be still for a moment? Can you imagine that peace washing over you? Can you feel it like a blanket wrapping around you? I wonder if you can let your worries go?***

## Responding

Move to slide 7. Romans 12:18 says *'If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.'* Sometimes world leaders make choices not to live at peace with everyone, but we can make different choices. We encounter conflict every day; people being unkind to others, leaving people out or saying mean things. In those moments, we can act as peacemakers.

Go to slide 8. During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said *'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.'* We can all be peacemakers.

### ***I wonder how we can do that?***

Create a 'How to be a peacemaker' list using the suggestions by pupils. Prompt them towards listening to others, being honest about the harm caused, making it right and repairing the damage, if these things are not suggested.

Finish the act of collective worship with a prayer. As you say it, draw the zip back together between the two flags.

*Dear God,*

*We can all be peacemakers. It is a good way to live. There is not peace on our continent right now. We have leaders who are not choosing peace but we hope they soon will. We open our hearts to a peace that surpasses understanding. Jesus knew what it was like to be human and he knew that peace was vital for all of us to live together.*

*Amen.*

## Courageous Advocacy

You may find pupils are moved towards action to help the people of Ukraine. They can write to local MPs requesting they ask the government do all they can to offer relief aid to the people hurt and displaced by the conflict. This is a quick way for pupils to contact MPs: <https://www.writetothem.com/> or you can find them here: <https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/contact-your-mp/>

They might also wish to use their skills or talents to raise money for charities working to support the Ukrainian people. If this is something pupils suggest, here are some charities that they can support through their own action:

<https://www.ucm.org.uk/>

<https://unitedhelpukraine.org/>

<https://voices.org.ua/en/>

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/>

<https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-crisis-appeal>

<https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en/emergency-response-conflict-eastern-ukraine>

In the coming days, Christian charities such as Christian Aid, and charities such as Save the Children, will likely launch their own campaigns in support of the people of Ukraine.

It is likely that some Ukrainian refugees will end up in the UK and they may end up in our local CE schools. Schools of Sanctuary is a programme supporting schools in welcoming refugee and migrant children. Find out more here:

<https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/>

### **Post-Collective Worship Task:**

You may wish to set up some peace prayer/reflection spaces in school to allow pupils to process their feelings, ask questions, offer prayers or share reflections. You will find a peace dove template as part of this pack:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/christmas18-children-church-resources.pdf>

There are several relevant prayer spaces available via Prayers Spaces in Schools:

<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/resources/dove-of-peace/>

<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/resources/reconciliation-zip/>

<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/resources/pray-for-the-world-2/>

If you wish to do some further work on the reconciliation statue at Coventry Cathedral, this is a useful resource:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/wpsite/wp-downloads/Resources/Reconciliation%20Statue.pptx>

Send home some talk homework for families: *Today we have been thinking about the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. How are we feeling about this as a family? What can we do to keep our own peace and help those who are struggling?*