

Overview of services / worships 2021-22

Reverend Chris Hodgkins

	Impression / Impact
Christingle (KS2 – church)	<p><i>Totally child led service, including drama and prayers written by the children. Beautiful singing. Parents enjoyed worship. Deeply moving when candles were lit and silence held.</i></p> <p>This was my first experience of the children leading a service in church and it was excellent. The children were confident in delivering worship and this was not a ‘performance’ but genuine worship. It began with lighting the Advent wreath before moving on to an opening prayer and act of confession. I spoke to the children about the significance of the Christingle and found that the children were aware of not only what the elements of the Christingle stand for but also the wider Christian values they represent.</p>
Epiphany (Yr 6)	<p><i>Totally child led service. Child chosen to become a King for the day</i></p> <p>This was an interactive service with the children taking time to contemplate a series of questions and then giving their answers. The children were imaginative and informed in the answers thinking about how it would have felt to see the infant Jesus, why the visiting of the Wise Men was important and what it felt to be refugees as Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt. They told us of the different ways Christians across the world celebrate Epiphany before offering prayers they had written themselves.</p>
Ash Wednesday (Yr 5)	<p>This was both a special and moving service., perhaps the most reverent and spiritual act of worship this year. Together we looked at Lent, why we have Lent and what it means. We explored repentance and what it means to say sorry and then ‘turn away’ from what it is that we have done wrong. The children wrote prayers that we offered to God and were left at the foot of the cross. The highlight of the service was when all were invited to be ashed. Parents, staff and children came to the altar rail to receive the ash cross on their foreheads and begin Lent. A moving moment for me was when I knelt before a child and he began my Lenten journey by marking my forehead with the ash cross, it was a God moment and one I shan’t forget.</p>
Mother’s Day (Sunday in church)	<p>The children took over our morning worship and led the regular congregation and parents in our act of worship. We began with why we had gathered and I was impressed with how the children included everyone as we all are children of God. Early years and KS1 read our first reading which was the story of Moses’ birth and then the school sung a beautiful hymn ‘As I kneel before you’. The talk was brilliantly done by Victoria and was funny, reflecting on how many boxes a mum must hold and what we can do to make her load lighter. The PCC were very receptive to the school leading our Mothering Sunday service and the congregation loved the children leading our worship and the service’s content. The message was poignant and was delivered well. The church was full of families, joy and love.</p>
Easter service (whole school)	<p>The Easter service was a wonderful whole school collaboration. The children, had in the past, made beautiful Stations of the Cross and this year made for the church 4 amazing banners depicting the events</p>

	<p>of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The children were once again confident in leading this service and delivered the Easter story beautifully and reverently. They were able to articulate what each part of the story was about and their prayers reflected this. The gifts that were brought up at the offertory were relevant to the theme of the service and enabled us to reflect on what they meant to us in our faith journey.</p>
<p>Ascension (Yrs 2 and 3)</p>	<p>This child led service was put together well and enabled us to think and reflect on the Ascension of Jesus. We were gathered by Year 3 before Year 2 came forward with an imaginative offertory of a calendar to reminding us of the 40 days between Easter and Ascension Day, a present to remind us of the gift of the Holy Spirit, a balloon to remind us of how Jesus left the Earth and went to heaven, a candle as Jesus is the light of the world and a bible as a reminder of both God's word and how the bible guides us through life. The children had prepared artwork which they showed to us (children, parents and staff) before leading us in an Ascension day Litany. A powerful moment was when Year 3 signed, using BSL, the song 'Wonderful Love'.</p> <p>We wondered together about what the Disciples had seen, what they had been told to do and how they felt before reflecting on what it might be like to be asked to leave our comfort zone in order to find God.</p>
<p>Corpus Christi Eucharist (Yrs 3,4,5)</p>	<p>This was a service that Reverend Jacky and I led so that years 3, 4 and 5 could experience Holy Communion. In my ministry so far I have never experienced a service where the children 'understood', as far as we can, what Holy Communion is and why Holy Communion is so important to the faith of Christians. When I asked them questions about Holy Communion they were able to link it back to Maundy Thursday and the last Supper, Good Friday and the Resurrection of Christ in a way that many adults wouldn't. They were able to articulate that the bread represented Jesus' body and the wine his blood.</p> <p>For the whole service the children were captivated by what we were saying and doing and when it came to taking Communion there was a respectful silence. The children were invited to come to the rail to receive a blessing which they all did, showing a reverence beyond their years.</p> <p>This service in particular has shown me how the Holy Spirit is moving in St Nicholas School and has led to further conversations about Confirmation and School Eucharists.</p>
<p>St Peter and St Paul, Year R + Year 1</p>	<p>Child led service. The service began with the offertory of a fish (reminding us of the Gospel of St Luke), a Bible (to remind us of the Word of God), a cross (to remind us of Jesus Christ) letters the children had written (to remind us of the good news of Jesus), a fishing net (to remind us that Peter was to fish for humanity) and a stone (as Peter is the rock on which the church was built). The children told the story of how Peter was given the name Rock and Year R had painted stones to remind them of that story. They then went on to tell the story of Peter preaching at Pentecost and Saul's vision of Jesus, his changing his name to Paul and the letters that he</p>

	<p>wrote. Some of the children read letters they had written to their parents. I spoke to them about Ordination, calling and how they are little rocks sharing the good news of Jesus with us in their worship. The children's understanding of who Peter and Paul were and how important they are to the Christian faith was evident in the content of this service and in answering my questions. The songs were appropriate and enjoyable. The prayers were put together well and were spoken beautifully. I was amazed at how many parents attended.</p>
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