



A School Act of Collective Worship

Week 4: Children and young people who have suffered trauma – the Diocese of Jerusalem

This is the fourth of five outlines for Collective Worship written to help schools pray, reflect and be encouraged that God created, loves and values all children. The passage is Matthew 19.14.

The thoughts, questions and reflections found in these Collective Worship will lead us to look beyond ourselves. We will find out about those who are in need locally as well as in Israel, Palestine and Zimbabwe. This will help us understand why it is good to pray for and give to the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call 2025.

Bible passage: Matthew 19.14

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'

Song

[Way Maker](#) (Arabic, Hebrew and English).

Gather

The song detailed above can be played as pupils enter the room. This is a song of praise to God, who is named as a way maker along with other attributes. It's recorded in Jerusalem and is sung in Arabic, Hebrew and English.

Engage

As you were entering this collective worship, we were listening to music written to praise God. It was sung in Arabic, Hebrew and English. The song is called Way maker.

What do you think a Way maker does? *Makes a way or path through something where the direction isn't obvious.* Why do you think these Christians are naming God as a way maker? *Because He directs people's routes through life and difficult times. He shows a way when there doesn't seem to be a way.*

Way maker was sung from a city in a country where there has been war and fighting for over 17 months. This city is Jerusalem. One side, the government of Israel, say they are fighting back at a group called Hamas after Hamas attacked people who are part of Israel. Hamas are connected to an area called Gaza and Hamas are fighting Israel back. Often when war takes place,

the weakest suffer the most. In Gaza, children are really suffering.

During these weeks of Lent, as Christians prepare to celebrate Jesus rising from the dead, we have been using Jesus' words to understand how much he loves children. Jesus uses organisations and charities to look after little children and makes a way for them in difficult situations. *(Display this)* Jesus said 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.' Matthew 19.14. Let's find out how children are being looked after in Palestine and how we might respond to their need.

Respond

Last time we were together we heard about two children from Zimbabwe and how their traumatic experiences, the bad experiences that changed their lives, were and could be helped by charities. Today, we're hearing about two children who live in Palestine.

The first is a little girl called Shaam. *You may wish to ask a pupil to read Shaam's story out loud.*

Shaam was born in the spring of 2023, just a few months before the war started. She and her mum had to leave their home and got separated from the rest of their family. Now, they are living in a place called Deir Al Balah. Shaam got hurt badly. She had burns and broke her leg and part of her head. Because of her injuries and everything she went through, she doesn't play or react to things around her much. She also has trouble breathing and moving her body.

A kind therapist named Al Zahraa' is helping Shaam. She works at a special centre called



Princess Basma. Al Zahraa' is also helping Shaam's mum, who is doing her best to take care of Shaam while they live in a temporary shelter. It's not easy for her mum, as she faces many challenges trying to get Shaam the right medical care.

Now let's hear about Malak. *You may wish to ask a pupil to read Malak's story out loud and display the image of Malak (permission given).*



Malak is 5 years old and is now living in Gaza City because she had to leave her home. She has been through a lot. Malak (pictured above) got hurt, and doctors had to remove part of her leg. She also lost some of her family members and her home.

A team from the Princess Basma Centre is helping Malak learn to move around again. Malak says, "I wish you could help me get my leg back so I could walk like other children, run, play, and go to the market by myself like I used to." Malak loves drawing and singing. Before she got hurt, she enjoyed playing on the trampoline, and she hopes she might get to do that again one day.

Even though things are tough, Malak works very hard during her therapy sessions. One big problem for her and other children who got hurt is that there aren't enough special tools, like prosthetic legs (false legs) or braces, to help them get better.

There is such a big shortage of medical supplies in Gaza that the World Health Organization, a worldwide group of people, started a special group to try to fix the problem. The Princess Basma Centre is part of this group, and they

even have a person ready to make prosthetic legs as soon as they get the supplies they need.

Shaam and Malak have experienced horrible things. They are receiving support to help them use their bodies again and also help for the minds, to help them heal, too. Princess Basma Centre is helping Shaam and Malak. The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call fundraising will go to this charity.

Do you remember when we looked at how experiencing bad things can change the way we see things? Can anyone explain what we did with these items? *Have the items used in Week 1, a mirror, fabric and glasses.*

We used a mirror and glasses. Both were covered so we couldn't see ourselves or out of them properly. Princess Basma Centre help Shaam, Malak and many others to see the world correctly again.

Prayer

Dear God, our Way Maker,
We thank You for guiding us through difficult times, showing a path where none seems to exist. Today, we pray for Shaam and Malak, two precious children facing unimaginable challenges in Gaza. Bring healing to their bodies, comfort to their hearts, and strength to their families. Bless those who care for them, especially the helpers at the Princess Basma Centre. Surround all children in conflict with Your love and peace. Help us to respond with kindness and generosity, following Jesus' example to love and protect the littlest ones. Amen.

A reflection

- Q:** How do you think Shaam and Malak might feel after everything they've been through?
- Q:** Have you ever been hurt or felt scared? What helped you feel safe again?
- Q:** How can we follow Jesus' example by caring for others, especially those who are hurting?
- Q:** What ideas do you have for helping children in difficult situations? Could we raise money for the Bishop's Lent Call, write letters, or pray for them?

