



A School Act of Collective Worship

Week 1: Theme – Resilience and well-being in the Diocese of Zimbabwe

This is the first of five outlines for Collective Worship written to help schools pray, offer love and be encouraged that God wants peace with justice, that He gives us resilience and He desires our well-being. After all, in Amos 5:24, the prophet wrote 'Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.'

The thoughts, questions and reflections will lead us to look beyond ourselves. We will find out about those who are in need in Israel, Palestine and Zimbabwe, which will help us understand why it is good to pray for and give to the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call 2024.

Song: [Your Love, Oh Lord by Third Day](#)

Bible passage: Amos 5:24

Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Gather

Play the Song: Your Love, Oh Lord by Third Day as the children enter the room. This is a song of praise to God. It reminds the worshiper and listener that God's love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice are bigger than anything we can imagine.

Engage

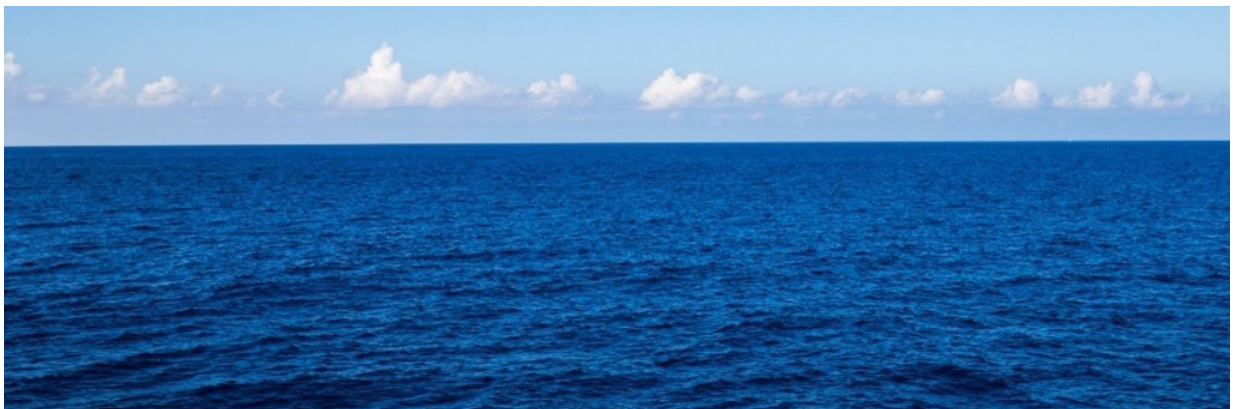
What is the biggest thing you can think of? How could you measure it?

The music as we entered spoke of three things: love, faithfulness and righteousness.

Faithfulness is sticking with someone no matter what. Righteousness is being fair, honest and doing the right thing in something. The song

tells us how Christians say God's love reaches to the heavens, his faithfulness stretches to the sky and righteousness, or fairness and honesty is as big as the mighty mountains. The words are from a book of the Bible called The Psalms. If love, faithfulness and righteousness were objects to touch, they would be bigger than we could ever hold or climb over. The words in the song say that God's justice flows like the ocean's tide; God's justice rolls down like water, it can't be stopped!

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark, is asking schools this year during the time of lent to think about justice in our world. When we look at the ocean or a sea, we can't see where it ends (*show image one of the ocean*). The sky meets the ocean. It looks huge. God says his justice is this big. God brings fairness and equality like the rolling water of the streams and ocean. God promises that his justice will flow and is bigger than the biggest thing we can imagine. But sometimes it doesn't feel like it.



Zimbabwe is a country where life is very difficult for lots of people. Where is Zimbabwe? People struggle getting money out of the bank to use to buy food. And when they do get money out, it doesn't buy very much as the money is worth less than it used to. This means more money is needed to buy the same thing. The cost of a loaf of bread has doubled in the last two years from 40p to 81p. Getting to school can also be very hard for children, many have to walk miles and miles, sometimes not being able to go at all because it's too far.

This is injustice. Injustice is the opposite to justice. We can see injustice in our world. Sadly, it is all around. People shouldn't struggle for food. All should be able to buy food to grow and live well. Children should be able to go to a local school, not have to remain at home.

Respond

Yet God promises that his justice will roll like water of an ever-flowing stream. When water flows fast, it crashes into and bashes down what it meets. God's justice bashes and crashes injustice out the way.

(You may want to demonstrate this by having a camera/ visualiser set up, filming the effects of water flowing along a tube or in a tray and how it knocks things over as it goes. The moving image below, of fast-flowing water, could also be used).



God uses us and others to fight injustice. Take a look at this video, [How bikes are changing lives in Zimbabwe](#) explaining how Mavis and other children are helped in Zimbabwe. The bikes are helping fight injustice because they mean Mavis and her friends can get to school and have an education.

Can you think of an example of someone known to you who fights unfairness and injustice?

Prayer

Lord, we thank you that you care for those experiencing injustice. Your heart hurts for those who are suffering. Thank you that you don't let it continue but your justice and righteousness bashes injustice out of the way like an ever-flowing stream.

Please bring more justice to Zimbabwe; help those who are in charge to love others more than themselves, to speak up for those who are suffering and would you help Mavis and her friends succeed in education.

Amen.

A reflection

Consider the moving image of flowing water (left) and the passage from Amos.

Q: Can you describe the water?

Q: Where does the power come from?

Q: Where is the water flowing to?

Now connect it to the verse Amos 5:24, *Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

Q: Why do you think God says in the Bible book of Amos, that his righteousness is like an ever-flowing stream?

Q: How might this verse and picture encourage a Christian to act with righteousness and justice?

