



A School Act of Collective Worship

Week 2: Theme – Peace and well-being in Bethlehem.

Song: [Peace is Flowing](#)

Bible passage: Amos 5:24

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

Gather

[Way Maker](#) (Arabic, Hebrew and English) to be played as children enter the room. This is a song of praise to God, who is named as a way maker along with other attributes.

Today we continue our discovery of what peace, justice and well-being looks like in the lives of those in the world as part of the Bishop's Lent Call. Today we are going to a city we have all heard of before.

Engage

Q: When I say Bethlehem, I wonder what image comes into your mind? *Take a few suggestions.*

Yes, Bethlehem is a town where the Bible tells us Jesus was born. Bethlehem is a city about 10 miles south of Jerusalem. Lots of people disagree as to whether Bethlehem is found in Israel or the West Bank, Palestine. This is because people disagree about who this area of land belongs to, this makes it contested space. When an area is contested people argue about who is in control of it. One side says it's theirs, another that it's theirs.

This is very hard for people who live in the area. Today we are going to hear about one of these communities.

St Martha's House is a day care centre. It helps older Christian women in the area who don't have much money and family support. The name comes from a person called Martha in the Bible. Martha was really good at helping others. You might have heard of her brother, Lazarus, a man Jesus brought back to life.



St Martha's House is one of the charities we are praying for this year during the Lent Call.

Q: What do you do when you spend time with your friends?

Q: What do you predict the women enjoy doing when they are at St Martha's House?

You may want to have objects as a prompt: a lunch box, stretch exercise band/mat, craft item, mug, cards/ game, nail polish/ hair ties, cooking item.

Let's find out what happens there. Watch this clip, [St Martha's House, Bethlehem](#).

St Martha's House provides a safe and caring place where the women don't worry about whether they will have food or company. The women all say they enjoy spending time with their friends and all the extra activities they are able to take part in.

Q: Why do you think it's only for women?

Let's hear about what the women do when they visit St Martha's House:

Early in the morning the mini-bus driver and their assistant pick up the guests from their homes. When they arrive, they sit together in the dining room and have breakfast and a hot drink. They chat with each other and then they gather in the living room and pray. After this they might do some physical exercises or have a talk about how to stay healthy. Sometimes



volunteers visit and offer the elderly women self-care such as cutting and dying their hair. Some like to do embroidery and craft work, other days they like to play bingo and cards. Some days it is enough to be able to sit around the TV or to share their stories and chat. After a busy and fun morning, they are served a choice of healthy lunches and snacks.

The house has an excellent garden, lovingly tended to by the gardener, Edward. There are lemon and olive trees and various herbs including basil, mint and thyme, which produce excellent harvests. Edward also grows other vegetables, such as courgettes, tomatoes, cucumber, and green beans. The guests are encouraged to help with picking and preparing the produce for cooking. This is then used to make delicious snacks and meals.

Whenever the budget allows, the staff try to arrange for outside activities such as picnics and journeys in the area or to other cities, such as Jericho. A medical crew from the Palestinian Medical Relief Society comes to St Martha's to do health checks and they also look after the women's dental health. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society also visits and they teach the staff activities which they can use to keep help the women stay physically and mentally healthy and happy, including using music for stress relief.

Respond

Q: Thinking about St Martha's House, what can we thank God for? What can we ask God for?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for St Martha's House and that the women can meet, eat and share their lives with one another.

Thank you for...

Please would you protect the women who go to St Martha's House.

Please would you...

Amen.

A Reflection

A person called Abraham Maslow look at humans and how we behave. He said humans need certain things to feel happy and well. He put them in a triangle, and said we need the things at the bottom first, building to the things at the top. It's called Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*.

Look at the diagram below (*reproduced from [Simply Psychology](#)*).

Q: What do you spot that you appreciate in your own life?

Q: What do you spot that St Martha's House provides?



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

