



7. Autumn Leaves

Age range: Primary

Theme: *We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. We begin this academic year with a reminder that it's good to be grateful. Research reveals the importance of gratitude even in the midst of adversity: that being aware of each day's 'blessings' can counteract anxiety, and so this term, we want to encourage schools to continue to do this through their collective worship. We provide a script with reflective ideas for classroom use and PowerPoint; both have additional content that you may wish to spread across the week and use in classrooms to ensure that you are meeting the requirement for daily collective worship and to support the spiritual flourishing of your whole school community.*

*You may need to tailor this script to suit the needs, age range & levels of concerns of your school community, which of course includes adults as well as children. **This collective worship features the seasonal changes, which hopefully will be taking place all around us, giving children an opportunity to reflect on the beauty of this time of year. Your school may already have lots of outdoor worship ideas, but there are some ideas included with the reflective spaces resources for this week. The link in this script to Vivaldi's 'Autumn' music is about 11mins long, so if you want something shorter, there are a selection of slides at the end of the PPT (slides 20-34) that you could use with a shorter piece of music of your choice!***



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Use this section to reference how your school's vision & values help you to appreciate the beauty of the natural world and to look after it well.

How might this link with the Guildford Diocese spirituality offer?

This icons in this section show how the collective worship theme links with the elements of **self, others, beauty** and/or **beyond**



The different experiences that we have of Autumn time

The beauty of the natural world at Autumn time

The wonder of natural processes e.g. leaf colour changing / variety of leaves; that David chose to praise God for the beauty that he saw around him

Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in bold show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. To help any children with visual timetabling, we include an icon for each different part of this collective worship in the top right corner of each slide.
- Props for Autumn games: you will need to choose between Game 1 & Game 2 – or take your worship outdoors!**
- Game 1 (slide 10) Hunt the Leaf:** Gather a pile of different Autumn leaves. Children study a leaf chosen from your pile, put it back, shuffle the leaves & see if they can find it again.
- Game 2 (Slide 11) What is it?** – a describing game, without saying the name, great for developing oracy. You might want to create some extra challenges for older pupils.
- There is also a video clip that you will need to upload before the start:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-n_cXcOe6xk and a video of Autumn images set to 'Autumn' from Vivaldi's Four Seasons, as part of the reflection time: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8AN0jWNrJA&feature=emb_logo This is about 12 minutes long, so you may wish to select a section!
- For your class reflection areas:** You will need to gather beautiful Autumn objects as a class this week. Discuss with pupils first which things can be safely curated in this way – and which should be left outside! Place them in your reflection area and use them to help you be grateful this week. There are also a selection of images included at the end of the PPT (slides 20-34) which you could use as part of class worship/reflection this week, or print out for your reflection area.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Welcome stilling exercise – Autumn leaves

Use the stilling slide if desired: the suggested words should be spoken slowly, leaving pauses inbetween to create a sense of stillness.

As you sit quietly here, watch the leaves falling from the trees.....and bring your mind into a peaceful place [PAUSE]

Now practise slower breathing.....in.....and out.....in.....and out.....keep this going as you continue to watch....[PAUSE]

You maybe notice that you are feeling calmer and more relaxed....[PAUSE]

As you breathe, think about yourself and what you bring into this time today.....and think about how peace has come upon us.... [PAUSE]

We come into this special / sacred space and time to be still....to think deeply.....to be together as a school community.....

*In our time together today, we are thinking about Harvest, and we will..... **play a game.....share some words together..... and think together about this special time of year.***



But first, let's welcome one another as we begin....

- **Slides 2/3:** Use the greeting to your school community – there are two slightly different versions from the point of view of the leader; choose which best fits your school's context. One uses words adapted from [Psalm 118:24](#)
- **Leader: This is a day that God has made!**
- **ALL: We will rejoice* and be glad* in it!**

OR:

- **Leader: Today is a brand new day.....**
- **ALL: May we be a blessing to each other!**

**There are different BSL signs for rejoicing and joy/gladness. View them here: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/rejoice>
Blessing: <https://www.signbsl.com/sign/blessing> (1st video)*

Engaging:

- **Slide 4:** This term, we are thinking about our blessings – all the good things in our lives. Today we are going to be focusing again on our beautiful world – and how Autumn gives us another chance to be thankful. Watch [this clip](#) and put your hand up when you think Autumn has arrived!
- **Slide 5:** I wonder what your favourite thing to do at Autumn time is? Maybe jumping in big piles of leaves?....
- **Slide 6:** Or trying to catch them as they fall?....
- **Slide 7:** Or searching for that perfect conker? *[Take a poll using the pictures in the PPT, or just chat together]* Every season is different, and beautiful in its own way – and I especially love Autumn because.... *[add your own reason]*
- **Slide 8:** The leaves on the trees are especially beautiful at this time of year, and it only happens because the trees are getting ready for their big winter sleep. As they begin to shut down, the leaves change colour, before they drop off and turn into rich soil to feed the trees through the winter and into spring. *[Have a look at some Autumn leaves really carefully, and see how different they all are.]* How truly amazing Autumn leaves are – and what a picture for us of the beauty and variety of our world, especially at this time of year.
- **Slide 9:** Choose from **Game 1 (Slide 9)** or **Game 2 (Slide 10)** to play with your class.



Slide 11: Responding (and words for worship)

- Many people find themselves experiencing feelings of wonder at the world during Autumn. When David the Psalmist (who wrote many songs in the Bible) saw something amazing in the world around him, the first thing he wanted to do was to praise God, and he wrote these words (although he probably wasn't writing about Autumn!): **'at the works of your hands I sing for joy' (Psalm 92:4)**



....I wonder if you can understand how David felt when he saw something beautiful in the world?....

....I wonder which part of Autumn time David might praise God for?....

....what's *your* favourite part of Autumn?....

....think quietly to yourself for a few moments....

....we're going to have a very special time of reflection now, featuring some images of Autumn at its best....with some music written for Autumn by a composer called Vivaldi....

....as you watch, you might want to turn your thoughts into your own prayer of thanks for the beauty of Autumn.... or just enjoy them....

[video is linked from the image on the screen and will activate in another window when you click]

A prayer to share if you wish: say the words in bold

Slide 12: For walks in crunchy leaves, **Creator God, we're thankful.**

Slide 13: For misty Autumn mornings, **Creator God, we're thankful.**

Slide 14: For shiny, glowing conkers, **Creator God, we're thankful.**

Slide 15: For all of Autumn's wonders, **Creator God, we're thankful.**

Slide 16: Amen

Slide 17: A challenge as we part

As you are enjoying the outdoors this week, here's a challenge! Can you find two leaves that are exactly the same – in order to find out the answer to the question of whether all Autumn leaves are different.



To listen to: *Vivaldi, Autumn, with images of Autumn*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8AN0jWNRJA&feature=emb_logo

Songs to sing:

[Seasons](#) (NBD) or [Creator God](#) (NBD)

Slide 18: Sending

Leader: As we leave this place & time and go into the day ahead...

All: May we open our eyes to the beauty around us!



Slide 19: Reflection areas

Go outdoors this week and find an Autumn object that you think is beautiful. Discuss with pupils first which things can be safely curated in this way – and which should be left outside! Gather them in your reflection area or take photos if they can't be brought indoors. You could

also use slides 20-34

Think: As you look at the objects that have been gathered, which one(s) do you think are the most beautiful?

Talk: Compare your idea with the ideas of others in your class. Do we all think the same?

Do: Have a go at writing some words a bit like David's words from the verse in Psalms.

Ideas to build spirituality, using the outdoors – and your classroom reflection areas:

- **How many trees?** Using the evidence of the leaves around school, how many different types of tree do you think there are? Use this tree spotter guide to help you identify the leaves:
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Spotter-Guide/Tree-leaf-spotter-guide>
- **Go outdoors!** Use the ideas from Engage Worship (for churches, so you may wish to adapt some) to set up some outdoor worship areas. There is a set of prayer stations [here](#).
- **Make leaf creatures** out of interesting leaf shapes that you find. Use your imagination and the shape of the leaf to guide you. Go for birds, or people, or animals – or make your own fantasy creatures! There are lots of examples on the internet. Add googly eyes to give them some personality. A diluted mixture of water & PVA glue painted on the leaves should help preserve them for slightly longer and stop them from getting too crispy. You could even write a short factual piece about your creature's life and habits.
- **Go on an Autumn walk:** find an Autumn object that you think is amazing and reminds you of David's words. Gather them in your reflective area. Or take up the challenge to see if you can find two Autumn leaves that are exactly the same, or the biggest conker.... Or find some leaves to jump in..... Or play conkers.... Take time in these Autumn activities to 'wonder' like David the Psalmist.
- **Share a story together:** [The Oak Inside the Acorn](#) by Max Lucado, or [The Tale of Three Trees](#) retold by Angela Elwell Hunt.
- **Use some Autumn poems** to inspire some Andy Goldsworthy- style natural art.
- **Set up an Autumn scavenger hunt:** you could swap your class hunt with another class's.





**When he saw something beautiful in the world,
David said 'At the works of your hands, I sing for
joy!'**



**As you look at the objects that
have been gathered, which
one(s) do you think are the most
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**Compare your idea with the ideas
of others in your class. Do we all
think the same?**



**Have a go at writing some words
a bit like David's words from the
verse in Psalms.**

