

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Christian Denomination: Orthodox Christianity

The five most important things to know about this denomination

- Orthodox Christianity places great emphasis on the Holy Spirit and its work in establishing through the Body of Christ the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. The Body of Christ is us collectively as Christians, but that can only be so if we as individuals see ourselves as being part of that Body as agents of Christ on Earth tasked to do His Will. Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is not a nebulous dream of the future, but our state of being here and now as individuals and through us collectively as human beings. Every Service of the Orthodox Church begins with a prayer to the Holy Spirit.
- Orthodox Christianity recognises two types of time: eternal and temporal. Eternal time is not an endless repetition of the years into infinity; it is a totally different spiritual state which is with us always, at every moment. The spirit of Christ lives in Eternity, and so does ours. Therefore, eg Christ was not only born 2000 years ago in Palestine, but He is also born spiritually in us here and *now* in our daily life; He healed the blind man's physical sight there and then, He heals our spiritual blindness here and *now*. In almost all Services the word 'today' is used, eg "today Christ is born"; "today Christ is Transfigured"; "today Christ is Risen".
- Orthodox Christians believe that their spiritual purpose is to be found worthy of becoming Christ-like, i.e. perfect as Christ Himself is perfect. This is called *Theosis* and is the state referred to above. Mary the Mother of God who was born as we were (ie not Immaculately) and was directly assumed into Heaven at her death stands as our only example of this, and is venerated as such. The Saints are considered persons who also were once 'ordinary' but who through their spiritual purity and good earthly works, sometimes including martyrdom, became very close to Christ. Whether they attained Theosis is not for us to know. Every Orthodox Christian bears the name of a Saint (his or her *Christian Name*) who serves as a role-model throughout the life of that person. Saints act as intermediaries before God, and the Orthodox Christian will pray to that Saint to intercede for him or her before Christ.
- Orthodox Christians believe that the difference between life and death is only one of degree. The dead are not dead but merely asleep until the Resurrection (The word *cemetery* in English is an Anglicisation of the Greek word for *dormitory*.). The Resurrection is believed to be that time when *all* of humanity will enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Note that this does not imply that all humanity will become Orthodox Christians! It does imply that Orthodox Christians believe that all humanity, through their worship of the one God in their own way, will ultimately become one with God.).
- Orthodox Christianity traces its roots to apostolic times and is the original Christianity from which Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in all their forms are derived.

Three key ways belief and practice differs from Anglican Christianity

- Mysticism. Orthodox Christianity places much more emphasis on the *mystical* than on the *logical* i.e. there is much – indeed all of the deepest aspects of Christianity – that cannot be described logically or understood by the human mind. These are *Mysteries* and are joyfully accepted as such.
- Divine Liturgy. The Service, generally known in Western Christianity as Mass or Holy Communion, is known in Orthodox Christianity as the Divine Liturgy. This Service has remained unchanged since many centuries and is served in the same way in every church and in every country on any

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

given day (subject to local traditions in minor ritual). The Service is an opportunity for participants, through the Grace of God, to be drawn briefly into Eternal time and be granted a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven. The sequence of the Service reflects the Creation of Heaven and Earth, the Creation of Man, the Incarnation and Teaching of Christ, His Passion and Death, His Resurrection, His Second Coming and the ultimate Salvation of Man.

- **Ritual.** Orthodox Christianity understands ritual to be the manifestation of the spiritual world in the physical world. Thus, the invisible Holy Spirit is represented in the divine services as incense, as are our invisible prayers; the Spirit of God is represented by the flame of a candle; the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven is represented by the ornamentation of the church; our humility before Christ and our wonder of Him are represented by our prostrations and kneeling. Our subsequent receipt of His mercy and forgiveness are represented by our rising again as a justified human being.

Contact information for visits and visitors

Rugby Orthodox Church of the Ascension <https://orthodoxcommunityrugby.com/>

Tel 01788 561755

Email philip.economou@icloud.com

The Greek Orthodox Church of Coventry <https://greekchurchcoventry.org/index.html>

Church Telephone: 024 7646 4286

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Christian Denomination: Roman Catholic

The five most important things to know about this denomination

- The leader of the Catholic Church is called a Pope. Pope Francis is the current leader.
- Catholics believe St Peter (Disciple of Jesus) was the first Pope.
- Prayers to Mary such as Hail Mary are used in personal prayers.
- Catholics also use rosary beads for their personal prayers.
- Catholics believe in infant baptism, but adult baptism is also accepted.

Three key ways belief and practice differs from Anglican Christianity

- Sanctity of life- Catholics are pro- life so are against abortion.
- Pilgrimages hold special place in Catholicism such as Lourdes where St Bernadette had apparitions of Blessed Mary.
- Catholics believe in the 'Communion of Saints' which is the community of faithful including those in heaven. Mary intercedes for us in heaven (takes our prayers closer to God).

Contact information for visits and visitors

St John Fisher Catholic church 024 7644 3459

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Christian Denomination: Quakers (Religious Society of Friends)

The five most important things to know about this denomination

- Belief that there is “that of God” in everyone.
- Anyone can be inspired by God and share that with others in worship. Quakers meet together in silence during which time people may speak if they feel moved to do so.
- Quakers are encouraged to have their minds open to new inspiration, from any faith or elsewhere eg nature, science, the arts, other people.
- No creeds or beliefs are imposed. Doubt and questioning can lead to spiritual growth. Quakers are encouraged to consider and put into practice their principles (“testimonies”) of simplicity, truth, equality, peace, and sustainability.
- Christianity (and Quakerism) is a way of living, not just a set of beliefs. Worship and daily life should therefore enrich each other.

Three key ways belief and practice differs from Anglican Christianity

- Quakers have no creed setting out beliefs that people are expected to adhere to.
- There are no priests or ministers. Roles are shared and held for a period of time (typically 3-5 years). Nor are there sacraments such as Baptism and the Eucharist.
- Worship is mostly in silence, allowing for spontaneous ministry. People usually sit in a circle or square, without anyone leading the worship.

Contact information for visits and visitors

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RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Christian Denomination: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The five most important things to know about this denomination

1. We are all beloved spirit children of God, our Heavenly Father, who loves us and knows us personally. We can get closer to God through prayer, living his commandments and serving each other.
2. Jesus Christ is the son of God, our Saviour. His perfect example shows us the way to live our lives. His teachings give us direction. Through him, we can find lasting happiness as we overcome trials, difficulties and mistakes in our lives.
3. Life has a purpose. We are here to learn and grow and become more like our Heavenly Father by receiving a physical body and to have opportunities to choose to follow his plan to return to live with him as stronger, wiser and more compassionate versions of ourselves.
4. Scriptures are one of the most important ways we can learn about God and Jesus Christ. Scriptures comprise writings of holy prophets and others and help provide us with insights and inspiration to better follow Jesus Christ and his gospel. In addition to the Holy Bible, members of the Church use other scriptures such as the Book of Mormon.
5. Jesus Christ established his gospel and church during his life, which continued through the work of the apostles and those that followed. Over time, practices, teachings and beliefs began to differ considerably from Christ's church. This necessitated a restoration of Christ's original church through revelation and restitution of priesthood authority to administer and minister within the church.

More information:

[God, our Heavenly Father](#)

[Jesus Christ](#)

[Purpose of life](#)

[Scriptures](#)

[Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ](#)

Three key ways belief and practice differs from Anglican Christianity

1. In addition to local chapels, which anyone can attend, the Church builds temples throughout the world. These temples are attended by members of the Church in good standing to help them draw closer to God, learn more about the purpose of life and receive additional ordinances to enable them to return to God at the conclusion of their mortal lives. The culminating blessings of the temple are that marriages and families can be joined together not just for this life but forever. Many people have lived and died without having these opportunities. Within the temple, members of the Church perform sacred ordinances for and on behalf of these people. This is the reason for the Church's significant involvement in family history work and genealogical research.

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

2. The Church is directed by a living prophet and a quorum of twelve apostles mirroring the original church structure established by Jesus Christ. The Church has a lay ministry. All members are encouraged and given opportunities to provide voluntary service, including missionary/humanitarian/temple service for young adults and those who have retired. Priesthood authority is not restricted to a few ordained people but is widely given to allow blessings and ordinances such as baptism to be performed by a family member.
3. Our physical bodies are a precious gift from God, and we should do all we can to look after them. Members of the Church follow a code of health called the Word of Wisdom. This is an inspired writing from the early years of the Church in the 1830s. Key teachings from the Word of Wisdom include:
 - A healthy, varied diet is encouraged focusing on grains, vegetables and fruits and less on meat.
 - Avoid using tobacco products, alcohol, tea and coffee.
 - Avoid recreational and illegal drugs or any other substances that are known to cause addiction or harm to our bodies.

More information:

[Temples](#)

[Church leader biography - Russell M Nelson](#)

[Apostles](#)

[Lay ministry](#)

[Missionary service](#)

[Word of Wisdom](#)

[Advice to the youth of the Church on the Word of Wisdom](#)

Contact information for visits and visitors

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www.churchofjesuschrist.org

<https://uk.churchofjesuschrist.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/EnglandBirminghamMission/>

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Christian Denomination: United Reformed Church

The five most important things to know about this denomination

- Global and Social Justice have always been a principal cornerstone of our tradition.
- We believe the Bible to be the Word of God and we are free to discern the meaning of the written words to address contemporary issues.
- We are non-conformist, which enables a much broader approach to worship, how the church engages in society and how the church addresses issues of state.
- There is no hierarchical structure and there is a single standard stipend across the whole denomination at all “levels”.
- Women are treated equal to men and there are no barriers to women being Ministers, Moderators or General Moderator (primarily symbolic leader normally appointed for a 2 year term of office).

Three key ways belief and practice differs from Anglican Christianity

- Authority lies with the local church meeting and Ministers do not “report” to Moderators. This gives the local church broad autonomy in worship and outreach.
- We believe in the “priesthood of all believers”. The Minister (Priest) does not intercede on behalf of the congregation and is “the first amongst equals” regarding decision making.
- Communion is open to all people of all ages and the belief is that the elements used in communion are not transformed, it is the celebration of the sacrament which transforms the participants.

Contact information for visits and visitors

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RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Denomination	Eucharist	Saints	Prayer	Baptism	Clergy
Church of England	<p>Believe that the bread and wine hold the spiritual presence of the body and blood of Jesus but do not become it.</p> <p>Separate hosts, same cup</p>	<p>All faithful deceased considered saints but some deserving of greater honour and emulation.</p> <p>Recognised but not venerated.</p>	<p>Use of rote prayers and other forms of prayer</p>	<p>Infant or adult baptism by pouring water</p>	<p>Male and female vicars and bishops</p>
Roman Catholic	<p>Believe that the bread and the wine become the actual flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. This belief is known as transubstantiation.</p> <p>Shared cup</p>	<p>Saints (e.g. Mary the Mother of God) are prayed to for intercession and icons and statues are venerated.</p>	<p>Use of rote prayers and rosary beads</p>	<p>Infant baptism by pouring with water</p>	<p>Male priests and bishops interceding on behalf of the people.</p> <p>Pope as head of global catholic church</p>
Orthodox	<p>Believe that Jesus is mystically present in the bread and wine.</p> <p>Shared spoon</p>	<p>Saints venerated through icons as important part of liturgy and worship</p>	<p>Use of icons for prayer and use of rote prayers in divine liturgy and home worship</p>	<p>Infant baptism by full immersion</p>	<p>Male priests and bishops representing Christ on earth.</p> <p>Archbishops</p>

RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Project

2021-22

Christian Worldviews: Different Denominations of Christianity

Denomination	Eucharist	Saints	Prayer	Baptism	Clergy
United Reformed	Believe that the elements used in communion are not transformed, it is the celebration of the sacrament which transforms the participants. Separate bread/wine	No veneration of saints	Personal and corporate prayer	Infant or believer's baptism by pouring with water or full immersion	Local minister a first amongst equals
Quakers	No Eucharist celebrated	No veneration of saints	Silence in worship	No baptism	No clergy. People hold roles for short periods of time (typically 3-5 years)
Jesus Christ of the Latter day Saints	Participants eat bread and drink water in remembrance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Separate bread/wine	No veneration of saints	Personal and corporate prayer	Believer's baptism by full immersion	Living prophet and 12 apostles in emulation of Jesus and the early church