CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

LEARNING STATEMENTS:
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND WAYS OF KNOWING
### CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

#### Key Idea 1: Christians believe God is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope statements</th>
<th>CB 1.1</th>
<th>CB 2.1</th>
<th>CB 3.1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CB 1.1</td>
<td>Students discuss and describe Christian beliefs about God and the blessings God gives people.</td>
<td>Students analyze Christian beliefs about the ways God reveals himself as one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</td>
<td>Students analyse Christian beliefs about the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</td>
<td>Students explore and reflect on the nature of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as creator and sustainer of each individual and all things.</td>
<td>Students examine Christian beliefs about the nature and actions of God and evaluate their relevance to daily life.</td>
<td><strong>CB 6.1</strong> Students examine Christian beliefs about the nature and actions of God and evaluate their relevance to daily life.</td>
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<td>An understanding of who God is, is central to and forms the basis of all exploration and understanding of the Christian faith. The nature of the created world and people point to God but Christians look to the Bible to tell them who God is and what he does.</td>
<td>Students discuss and describe Christian beliefs about God and the blessings God gives people.</td>
<td>Christians believe that God is one and eternal, ever present, transcendent and personal. He is creator and sustainer, giving the world to his created people to enjoy. His love is revealed in the gifts of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Bible. He is a God who blesses richly from the bounty of his love, grace and mercy.</td>
<td>Christians believe that God has chosen to reveal himself as three persons. The three persons point to the different aspects of the work of God – creator, saviour, helper – revealing his loving and forgiving nature to people. The Christian creeds emphasise the unity, community and interrelatedness of the three persons.</td>
<td>The belief that all life begins with an ever-living, sustaining creator gives meaning and purpose to the Christian life. The majesty, complexity and goodness of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – are revealed in the created order and through his specific revelation. People are dependent on God and creation to survive and are called by God to value and treat his creation responsibly.</td>
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##### Christian beliefs about God

- God made the world
- God creates and loves all people
- God is all-powerful
- God is everywhere
- God sent Jesus to save people
- God keeps his promises
- God always listens when people talk to God
- God helps people to love him, themselves and others
- God and his love lasts forever

##### Christian beliefs about the nature of God

- **Attributes of a personal God –**
  - God is three-in-one
  - The Father, creator of all things then and now, preserver of creation
  - The Son, saviour and teacher
  - The Holy Spirit, helper and guide for people of the Old and New Testaments and people today
  - The work of God in salvation – redeems, justifies, sanctifies
- **Nature of God**
  - **God is everything and always with people**
- **God is good, loving and forgiving**
- **God created the universe and gave the world its beginning**
- **God loves the world and takes care of it**
- **God cares for everyone and everything**
- **God is revealed through scripture in the Old and New Testaments**
- **God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit**
- **God’s blessings**
  - the gift of God – Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit
- **God blesses people with the gifts of**
  - the created world
  - heaven
  - other people
  - the Bible
  - life
  - forgiveness

##### The Christian beliefs about God

- **Biblical images of the personal and communal nature of God**
  - The God of relationships
  - The God of creation
  - The God of revelation

- **Parsadical concepts**
  - heaven and hell
  - law and gospel
  - goodness and suffering

- God is active in people’s personal lives:
  - the work of the Holy Spirit in people’s lives
  - God’s work to bring people to faith
  - God’s presence in and through suffering
  - vocation

- Challenges to the biblical teaching of creation – pantheism, deism, individualism, materialism, dualism, gnosticism, atheistic evolution

- Contribution of Christians to people, community and created order in the fields of:
  - medicine
  - art, drama, music, architecture
  - science, mathematics
  - environment
  - politics
  - sociology, psychology

- Fulfilling of excellence in relationships, sexuality, creativity, parenting

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• explore ideas about God as creator, helper and friend
• retell, in a variety of forms, the creation story and other Bible stories about God
• observe the complexity of creation
• make connections between their experiences and Christian beliefs (eg, rainbows, in the garden – discussion about God making flowers)
• participate in group discussions about God
• brainstorm their ideas about God
• list God-made and man-made objects in the surrounding environment
• share their ideas about God and what God is through a range of mediums
• construct and explore their own questions about God/Jesus
• listen to the story of Jesus’ life
• use a range of Bible stories to identify ways Jesus was a friend (make connections with CB2)
• illustrate ways in which God shows his love for people

• identify words in songs, poems and the Bible that describe the nature of God
• retell biblical stories that focus on different aspects of God’s nature
• represent God’s goodness, love and forgiveness through the arts
• share their responses to different accounts of the creation story
• describe their understanding of God
• investigate the order and patterns of the natural environment and reflect on what it may reveal about God
• portray God’s creation through various art media
• use sensory experiences to investigate the wonder and beauty of creation and to reflect on God as creator
• identify things God gives to people
• suggest different ways people can respond to God’s gifts (eg, prayer, sing a song, draw a picture)
• discuss why God’s gifts are important to Christians
• plan a creation celebration
• describe ways God helped people such as Noah, David, Daniel

• describe the different works of God as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit
• using a variety of texts, songs, hymns, prayers and creeds compile descriptions of the nature and attributes of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
• using a variety of mediums, represent biblical images of the three persons of God
• retell the key events of the Pentecost story and identify changes the Holy Spirit brought to the lives of people
• respond to information gathered from various Christian texts (eg, creeds) and media resources about the roles of God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit
• demonstrate or illustrate an understanding of the interconnected roles of Father, Son, Holy Spirit
• identify the presence and work of the three persons of the Trinity in different key biblical events (eg, creation, work of the prophets, birth of Jesus, coming of the Holy Spirit)
• discuss key Christian beliefs and write own creeds
• identify and compare stories of the Spirit at work in the lives of Old Testament leaders and prophets

• locate and discuss the e-significance of biblical symbols and metaphors for Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit
• trace the use and meaning of a metaphor/title for God (eg, king) in the Old and New Testaments and identify what it communicates about God
• identify people’s experiences of and responses to the attributes of God (eg, almighty, all-seeing, all-powerful, patient, forgiving) in biblical times and today (eg, Christians)
• research ways God revealed himself and communicated to people in both Old and New Testaments
• identify Jesus’ teachings about God and how Christians have interpreted them through song and images
• examine the influence of the Holy Spirit on various biblical characters (eg, King Saul, Paul)
• compare various cultural and artistic representations of the Trinity and God and create new meaningful representations selected for a selected audience
• discuss key Christian beliefs and write own creeds
• identify and compare stories of the Spirit at work in the lives of Old Testament leaders and prophets
• describe ways God helped people such as Noah, David, Daniel

• investigate the natural order in creation and evaluate what this order reveals about the nature of God
• compare different biblical accounts of creation (eg, Job, Psalms) and analyse what they reveal about God’s relationship with his creation
• illustrate how God continues to sustain creation (eg, laws of nature, life cycles, procession, role of people – natural world and world of work)
• critically reflect on Christian interpretations of the power of God and the intricacy of creation as depicted in a variety of media (eg, poems, artwork, songs by Christian writers)
• analyse Christian beliefs about God’s ongoing presence and intervention in the world (eg, does God intervene to avert or cause disasters?)
• discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in leading people to a realisation of the nature of God the Father as creator, God the Son as redeemer, God the Holy Spirit as comforter
• examine and discuss how God works through people to maintain, sustain and grow creation (eg, built environments, use of knowledge and resources, communication)
• identify structures in society which help people maintain order in their lives
• identify principles of care and responsibility for the created order
• evaluate different governments’ policies on the environment in light of biblical principles
• develop an action plan which honours, nurtures and fosters all aspects of God’s creation
• identify the features and limitations of scientific and biblical explanations about the origin of the universe
• compare and contrast religious beliefs and scientific theories about the origin, intricacy and complexity of creation (eg, how does the process of evolution align with the creation accounts?)
• deduce people’s understanding of God by studying characteristics of the God people don’t believe in
• report on how Christians accommodate the paradoxical nature of God (eg, heaven/hell, inclusive/exclusive, saint/sinner, law/grace)
• summarise historical ideas of God and chart their influence on current thinking about God
• critique how different ideas about the nature of God influence the way people approach life
• research the history of the Christian creeds, identifying and reflecting on key areas of dispute (then and how)
• create a profile of the view of God that emerges from a reading of a range of Old and New Testament texts on how God relates to people in a variety of contexts
• arrive at a position on the relationship between God’s goodness and human suffering
• formulate a response to the question, are there three gods or one? through a study of Christian and non-Christian perspectives on the Trinity
• examine ways people (including themselves) can be co-creators with God
• examine conflicting biblical passages on the nature of God, identifying the current values and practices that these challenge
• compare Christian and non-Christian responses to crises in the environment or the search to cure diseases or respond to human suffering and their motivations and rationales
• propose a charter of excellence for community life, providing biblical support
• provide an analysis and comparison of various views, beliefs, the ories on the origins of the universe
### Key Idea 2: The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning statement</th>
<th>Band A</th>
<th>Band B</th>
<th>Band C</th>
<th>Band D</th>
<th>Band E</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CB 1.2</strong></td>
<td>Children identify stories about Jesus and discuss what Jesus said and did</td>
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<td><strong>CB 2.2</strong></td>
<td>Students gather and present information about the life and teachings of Jesus</td>
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<td><strong>CB 3.2</strong></td>
<td>Students research the social and cultural context in which Jesus lived and draw conclusions about how he chose to respond to people and events</td>
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<td><strong>CB 4.2</strong></td>
<td>Students investigate and evaluate the significance of Jesus’ the Christ, his life, death and resurrection for Christians</td>
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<td><strong>CB 5.2</strong></td>
<td>Students analyse and interpret the message and identity of Jesus the Christ for all people</td>
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<td><strong>CB 6.2</strong></td>
<td>Students research, analyse and discuss claims that Christians make about Jesus the Christ</td>
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#### Stories about Jesus’ life
- Birth
- Childhood
- Family
- Death and resurrection
- Relationships

#### Stories about what Jesus did
- Jesus as human and Son of God
  - Jesus’ birth, childhood, adult life
  - Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection
  - Jesus at God’s right hand and ministry
  - Jesus’ teaching about love, forgiveness
  - Jesus’ teaching about the way to live
  - Jesus interacted with all kinds of people
  - Jesus helped and healed people

#### Stories Jesus told
- Social, historical and cultural context
  - Social groups in Jesus’ time (e.g., Samaritans, Gentiles)
  - People Jesus interacted with and the significance of this (e.g., outcasts, women)
  - Religious groups (e.g., Pharisees, Zealots)
  - Roman occupation
  - Cultural and social codes (e.g., purity laws, punishment, customs, social status, gender, religious observances, patriarchal society)
  - Lifestyle (e.g., foods, dress)
  - Geography and climate

#### Jesus’ life and in his social and cultural context
- Jesus’ role and saviour
- Jesus confronted the social and cultural contexts of his day
- Ways people responded to Jesus’ challenge to the restrictions
- The social and cultural contexts of the parables

#### The significance and application of Jesus’ life for the contemporary context
- Jesus’ life – fully human
  - Jesus demonstrated God’s love for all people
  - Jesus wept, slept, was hungry, tired, disappointed, angry
  - Jesus was tempted and overcame temptation
  - Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane
  - Jesus lived in obedience to God, his Father
  - Jesus’ teachings (e.g., the law of love)
  - Jesus, an advocate for the poor and marginalised of his day
  - A life of prayer
- Jesus – fully God
  - Redemptor and saviour
  - Lived the perfect life
  - Fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about a saviour
  - Conquered sin and death
  - An atonement for people’s sin
  - Restores people’s relationship with God
  - New covenant established with God
  - Eternal life for Christians

#### Identity of Jesus
- Birth, death, resurrection
- Miracle worker, healer
- Teacher
- Intercessor – represents all people before God
- The only way to salvation – Jesus as a present reality and a future hope
- Revolutionary nature of Jesus’ identity – Jesus’ role as king
- Historical, cultural and social images of Jesus
- Jesus fully human and fully God – implications for all people

#### Four gospel portraits of Jesus
- The message of Jesus
  - What Jesus communicated about himself, and God the Father
  - Paradoxical nature of Jesus’ teaching (e.g., you must die to live, give to receive)
  - Implications for Jesus’ followers

People’s response to the identity and message of Jesus, historically and in the contemporary context

#### Biblical claims regarding
- Jesus as saviour, Messiah, redeemer
- Authority of Jesus – stated in the gospels, Paul’s letters, Old Testament
- Jesus’ divinity (e.g., the Alpha and Omega)
  - The confronting nature of Jesus
- Jesus is the ‘means of salvation’ – not just a role-model to be followed
- The confronting nature of Jesus’ teaching and actions
- Jesus, the wisdom of God – stumbling block to Jews; foolishness to Greeks – confronts contemporary society’s view of itself
- The continuing Christian debate regarding the nature of Jesus (fully God, fully human) beginning with the early church

The claims of Jesus address people’s ultimate questions and therefore demand a response
Other religious, historical and secular claims about Jesus

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The confronting nature of Jesus is revealed in the identity of Jesus. Fully human, Jesus knows and identifies with the temptations, limitations and suffering of people. Fully God, he has complete control of life, having conquered sin, death and Satan. Each gospel writer focuses on this unique identity of Jesus reflected in his life, work and teachings.
Christian Studies Curriculum Framework

Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.
## Key Idea 3: A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace

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<td><strong>Children demonstrate an awareness of the Christian belief that God creates people and loves them unconditionally.</strong></td>
<td>Students analyse rescue stories from the Bible</td>
<td>Students investigate and summarise what the Bible says about sin and grace</td>
<td>Students examine and reflect on the impact of sin, evil and grace in the world</td>
<td>Students apply Christian beliefs about the intrinsic value of human life within the context of sin and evil</td>
<td>Students propose a response to crises and conflicts in the world, applying a Christian understanding of sin and grace</td>
<td><strong>Lutherans understand that God’s righteousness and justice require that sin is punished. God’s continuing love, mercy and compassion for each person is revealed in the incarnation, the sacrificial death of his own Son, the gift of the Holy Spirit – God bearing the judgement of sin himself. People are free to reject his gift of forgiveness and disobey him.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Bible teaches that in rejecting God’s friendship and God’s instructions people come to be lost in a broken world. God’s love overcomes people’s failings, reaching out to save and restore them. People often repeat their mistakes, needing continual forgiveness and guidance. God’s love and faithfulness are constant and un-failing.</strong></td>
<td>The Bible teaches that people’s wilful disobedience has serious consequences for this life and eternity. Selfishness, pride, greed and revenge result in broken relationships. The root of sin is lack of trust and faith in God. God’s unconditional love and forgiveness of sin is demonstrated in the gift of Jesus’ saving sacrifice.</td>
<td>According to the Bible, the fruit of sin – disharmony, judgement, death – is evident in all areas of life, the created world, human relationships and individual self-concept. The repercussions have been devastating and cumulative, traced from one generation to the next. God’s love and forgiveness breaks the destructive cycle of sin bringing hope and an overflow of goodness and grace.</td>
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### Created by God
- God creates people different to other living creatures
- God creates people with bodies, feelings and the need to be with other people
- Only people can think about God

### Stories about God’s love (eg, first story of creation, Noah, Abraham, Exodus, birth of Jesus, Jesus welcoming little children, miracle stories)
- God loves all people
- Jesus is a special friend to everyone
- God’s love continues
- For people even when they do wrong
- When things go wrong

### God loves people no matter what they do
- What people can do when they make mistakes
- Children demonstrate an awareness of the Christian belief that God creates people and loves them unconditionally

### Bible stories which highlight God’s love for people in spite of their failings (eg, Adam and Eve, Exodus story, Joseph, Moses)
- Analysis of rescue concept
- People’s need of rescue, the concept of sin

### Consequences of sin for
- How people feel
- Relationships with others
- The environment
- People’s relationship with God

### What God does to rescue people
- How God demonstrates his love and care
- Forgiveness

### Different ways God rescues
- God gives his laws
- God heals
- God works through circumstances
- God works through other people’s love and care
- God’s ways are unpredictable and unexpected WAYS PEOPLE RESPOND TO BEING RESCUED
- Adam and Eve’s sin impacts all people
- What makes Adam and Eve’s actions sinful
- God’s response to sin
- Justice, punishment
- Provides laws to protect people and their relationships
- Forgiveness
- Love and reconciliation
- Sending a saviour – Jesus
- Biblical images of sin (eg, falling short, enemy of God)

### People’s response to sin
- Feelings of guilt, shame, remorse, confession, repentance, need for forgiveness

### Bible stories that show God’s grace and mercy
- God acts to bring forgiveness and reconciliation
- God’s Son became a human being to save the world
- Jesus died and rose to save all people from sin and death
- The gift of the Holy Spirit to renew, strengthen and guide
- The gift of eternal life

### Images of good and evil
- The cycle of grace – sin – grace
- God’s friendship with Adam and Eve
- A broken world – sin and evil ruin God’s creation.
- Patterns of relationship with God and people, eg, people sin, ask for forgiveness, relationship restored
- Origins of sin – fall of creation, devil
- Human strengths and limitations of character

### Impact of sin and evil on the world
- Breakdown of God’s creation (eg, hurricanes, earthquakes)
- Broken relationships, eg, divorce, violence, harassment
- Human and environmental disasters (eg, war, famine, pollution)
- Evil corrupts good order
- Separation from God, death

### Evidence of grace in the world
- New beginnings
- God uses people to inspire, comfort, transform life

### Human condition
- God’s special creation is humanity
- God gives people talents and abilities equipped for their role on earth
- Sinful nature – people experience separation from God, others and in themselves as a result of sin
- Human sin has consequences for God’s creation

### Earthly life has an end
- Human failure does not negate human worth
- Human worth does not depend on people’s talents, abilities or achievements; illness, handicap or age, race, colour or gender
- Human worth comes from God, who loves all people equally, evidenced by God sending his Son for all people without exception
- God accepts the sinner – God and Jesus reach out to people who have sinned (eg, King David, Peter)
- Christians are called to love their enemies and forgive those who have hurt them
- God’s provision for human beings
- Jesus’ response to suffering

### Impact of human sin and evil on God
- God’s special creation is humanity
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- Human sin has consequences for God’s creation

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- God’s provision for human beings
- Jesus’ response to suffering
- Impact of human sin and evil on God

### Manifestations of evil
- Natural evil
- Social evils
- Institution/system evil
- Personal/individual evil

### Human beings and the problem of evil
- Free will
- Original sin
- Spiritual dimension of human beings
- Need for salvation and saviour
- New creation through Christ – Christian as fully human

### A Christian perspective
- Theology of the cross versus theology of glory
- Grace and unmerit
- Salvation by grace alone
- Justification by faith
- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Transformation
- Eternal life
- God’s presence in a broken world
- Biblical concepts of reconciliation

### Responses to evil
- Revenge
- Indifference
- Models of reconciliation (eg, South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission)
- A compassionate life
Achievement standards for each band comprise concepts and content drawn from Learning Statements and Scope Statements together with evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing.