**Halloween Café Plan**

There are three parts to the evening:

1. Discussing intro questions (p.3) at tables – hearing students’ opinions
2. A reading/”finding the answers” Halloween game, highlighting answers which Halloween gives to the questions above
3. A matching game to find out what the Bible says to answer the questions above

**a. intro Questions** (page 3)**:**

Cut up & put in a mug at each small group table. Students take turns to pick a question, read out loud, answer for themselves, and open to answers from all at table. (This sets up the topic. Very important for all tables to discuss all questions.)

Leader goes through questions with whole group with PowerPoint, asking for opinions.

**b. Halloween Jigsaw Reading** (page 4-9):

Print each page on a different coloured paper. Make enough copies so everyone has a sheet. You can distribute by asking who wants what colour.

Ask those with the same coloured sheet to get together. They read the opening paragraph – from it they need to find the answer to one question and write it down.

Then each person individually moves around to find answers to all other questions from people with different coloured sheets.

Once all have returned to their original seats, finish by discussing answers together so everyone is clear about Halloween.

Then refer back to questions in a. (you can go through them one by one again on PowerPoint): what are the answers that Celtic beliefs about Halloween give to these questions?

**Take a break to do something fun: dook for apples, get people to sing a song or say a poem for sweeties (traditional things to do at Halloween…)**

**c. Epilogue/Bible bit**:

Point out that we’ve discussed our own beliefs about intro questions and also Halloween’s answers*. What are the Bible’s answers?*

One set of 4 Bible verses (p.10) for each table, to be read aloud. Make sure tables have still got intro questions from activity a. (they will only need 4 of the 6 questions). At tables, students match verse with question and a photo (leader goes through PP to show).

Give enough time for answers to be discussed at the tables.

Then check answers together. You could point out:

* Evil is a reality. The Bible speaks about the evil one, the devil, who is at work in the world so that we believe lies and walk away from God. Evil also a reality in our hearts. Here, Jesus is pointing out that it isn’t the things we eat that make us unclean, not right, but what we think in our hearts and we then do.
* We should fear God, in awe and reverence, who made us and loves us. If we are God’s sons and daughters then we don’t need to fear evil.
* How do we become part of God’s family? God gave his son to die on the cross and take on himself all the evil and sin of the world so that if turn from our own ways and we trust and believe in God we are part of his family.
* Feeling safe: not walking in darkness but having the light of life and walking in that light.

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Intro Questions

To be cut up and put in a mug at each table. Every takes turns to pick a question, read it out, answer it and invite others to answer too.

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| In your culture, are there any festivals where you wear masks or costumes? |
| In your culture, do people honour ancestors? |
| Is there anything you are afraid of? |
| What do you think about evil? |
| Do you think death is the end, or is there something after it? |
| What makes you feel safe? |

Halloween is often linked to the Celtic festival of Samhain, which was celebrated many centuries ago. The name means "summer's end".

Samhain celebrated the end of the lighter half of the year and beginning of the darker half.

*You can now answer one of the questions below. People with different coloured papers have the other answers. Ask them!*

*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic (Scottish, Irish, Welsh) culture?*
2. *Why are there costumes and masks at Halloween?*
3. *What is ‘guising’?*
4. *How will a child know that a house is open for ‘guising’ on Halloween?*
5. *Name one Halloween game.*
6. *Is there anything Christian about Halloween?*

The ancient Celts (Scots, Irish, Welsh) believed that the border between this world and the world of the spirits became thin on the Celtic festival of Samhain, allowing spirits (both harmless and harmful) to pass through.

A family invited their ancestors home and honoured them. But the family tried to keep harmful spirits away.

They dressed in costumes and masks to trick the harmful spirits. They believed if you disguised yourself as a harmful spirit you wouldn’t be hurt by them.

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*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic culture?*
2. *Why are there costumes and masks at Halloween?*
3. *What is ‘guising’?*
4. *How will a child know that a house is open for ‘guising’ on Halloween?*
5. *Name one Halloween game.*
6. *Is there anything Christian about Halloween?*

Today in Scotland children (and some adults!) still wear costumes on Halloween. Some of these are scary: ghosts, witches and skeletons. But others are funny or interesting. Children in Scotland go ‘guising’ in their costumes. In this custom the child goes from house to house and performs some sort of trick, i.e. sings a song or tells a joke, to earn some sweets and fruit.

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*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic culture?*
2. *Why are there costumes and masks at Halloween?*
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4. *How will a child know that a house is open for ‘guising’ on Halloween?*
5. *Name one Halloween game.*
6. *Is there anything Christian about Halloween?*

A child will know that a house is open for ‘guising’ if there is a carved pumpkin in the window or on the front step. The face on the pumpkin is usually scary, and in the past was to keep harmful spirits away.

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*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic culture?*
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5. *Name one Halloween game.*
6. *Is there anything Christian about Halloween?*

At Halloween parties various games are played. One common game is dunking or ‘dooking’ for apples, in which apples float in a tub or a large basin of water. The player kneels on a chair, holding a fork between the teeth and trying to drop the fork into an apple. Or the player just sticks his or her whole face in the water to try to bite an apple!

*You can now answer one of the questions below. People with different coloured papers have the other answers. Ask them***!**

*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic culture?*
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What happens at Halloween is based on a non-Christian festival, but the name has a Christian basis.

‘Hallow’ is an old way of saying ‘holy’, and ‘een’ is a short way of saying ‘evening’.

What it means is that October 31st is the day and evening before the Christian festival of All Saints Day, when many Christians remember the Christian people (holy people, or ‘saints’) who have died in the past.

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*Questions:*

1. *What is the link between Halloween and Celtic culture?*
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Halloween verses

To be cut up and shuffled before given to each table.

Each table group links a verse to an intro question (page 3) and a PowerPoint photo.

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| Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.  I Peter 5:8 NIV  For from your heart come the evil ideas which lead you to kill, commit adultery, and do other immoral things; to rob, lie, and slander others.  Matthew 15:19 Good News Translation |
| The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom  Proverbs 9:10 NIV |
| For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,  so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.  John 3:16 Good News Translation |
| When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’  John 8:12 NIV |