The Church in the Community Summary Sheet

(Including Food Banks & Street Pastors)

(Pages 50-53 in the Christianity textbook)

This summary sheet is to help you learn about Christian pilgrimage. According to the AQA specification you need to know the following things:

* ‘The role of the Church in the local community, including food banks and street pastors.’

Some terminology is obvious in meaning but in the exam you will be asked to give definitions of words so that is why such key terms are laid out below.

Terminology

**agape**  - (pronounced aga-pay) the New Testament Greek word for unselfish, unconditional, sacrificial love

**Church**  - 1. the people of God; 2. a building where Christians worship

**Food bank** - a place where people who are short of money can get free food

**New Testament** – the second part of the Christian Bible that is all about Jesus

**Street Pastors** - a Christian organization that helps the vulnerable on the streets

What is the Church?

In English, the word church (or kirk) originally meant a **gathering of people**, like an assembly. Over time it has come to mean the Christian community and from that, the name of a building in which to worship. In the Bible, it means the worldwide people of God, i.e. Christians.

**And God placed all things under his [Jesus’s] feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body.**

Ephesians 1:22-23

What does the Church do?

1. A place for:
   1. worship
   2. prayer
   3. spiritual guidance
   4. youth groups
   5. mums & toddlers’ groups
2. Social help, such as:
   1. food banks
   2. counselling
   3. help with addiction
   4. education
   5. arts & culture.

Why should Christians be involved in the local community?

**For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.**

Jesus in the Parable of the Sheep & the Goats

1. Jesus teaches them to in the **Parable of the Sheep & Goats** (from Matthew 25 – see box). Here Jesus says they are not real Christians if they do not help others.
2. The New Testament teaches about **agape**, which means love for others that is not selfish but gives to others without expecting anything in return.
3. They **want to help** where they see there is a lack of care for the vulnerable, etc.

Food banks

Some churches are involved with food banks. These are places where people can get food for free. The food is given by companies like supermarkets or by individuals who want to help others.

A Christian example of this is the **Trussell Trust**:

1. **started 1997** by Carol and Paddy Henderson;
2. helps **people in crisis**;
3. **non-perishable food** that lasts longer;
4. professionals like doctors and social workers issue **tickets** to deserving cases;
5. **advice** to people on managing their money;
6. **420** TT food banks in the UK;
7. nearly **1 million people** a year.

**Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead.**

James 2:17

Street pastors

1. Started by Rev. **Les Isaac** in **2003**.
2. **Volunteer** network.
3. Christians from different types of churches.
4. Not law enforcers.
5. Have a **blue uniform** with white, reflective logo.
6. **Challenge gang**, gun & violence culture on the streets.
7. Try **to reassure people** afraid of drunkenness, crime, etc.
8. Try to **help vulnerable people**.
9. Work with **councils & police**.
10. Backed up by **prayer pastors** who contact them on mobile phones.
11. Operate in about **300 locations** worldwide with **14,000 trained personnel**.

Salvation Army

A Christian church that specialises in social action like helping the **homeless** and **addicts**.

Possible Exam Questions

Explain two things that the Church does to help the community. (4 marks)

Explain two ways in which Christian food banks help the community. (4 marks)

Explain two ways in which Christians street pastors carry out their Christian duty. Refer to sacred writings in your answer. (5 marks)

Explain two teachings about the role of the Church in the community. Refer to sacred writings in your answer. (5 marks)

Explain two Christian teachings that encourage them to take action to help people. Refer to sacred writings in your answer. (5 marks)

‘There will always be a need to feed hungry people in Britain.’ (12 marks)

‘Street Pastors are a great support for the police.’ (12 marks)

‘Food banks are not necessary in contemporary British society.’ (12 marks)

‘All Christians should do something practical to help their community, including praying for their neighbours.’ (12 marks)