



## Introduction

Schools have differing views about running Halloween activities in their school. Where schools have chosen to join in with Halloween, there is an opportunity to explore deeper ideas about what makes us human. This idea for collective worship uses a popular fantasy idea to explore how we can all show greater self-control in our dealings with others.

## Preparation

You might want to use the internet to search out humorous images of the werewolf as illustration, but please take great care to only use images that are suitable for a young audience. Searches that include the phrase 'for children' tend to be more helpful. If in doubt, check your choice of images with a senior member of staff.

## Props

- magnifying glass
- cushion
- clock
- dog lead

## Development

What makes you angry? Everybody gets angry, sometimes. Anger is a powerful feeling we can all get when something happens that we think is wrong. But what happens if we can't control our anger?

Many of the oldest myths in the world are about people who change into wild animals. And the most famous of these is the werewolf. In the past, many people were naturally scared of wolves because they were fierce, intelligent and could hunt in packs. Nowadays we think they are beautiful animals, but in the past wolves could be very scary if you were a farmer living out in the countryside by yourself. Let's all try howling like a pack of wolves! (Terrifying!)

But stories of werewolves went further. They imagined someone living a perfectly normal life, but on a night with a full moon they would change into a fierce wild animal - and then go hunting. It's a scary idea, that somebody could change (*click your fingers*) just like that. Even if people can't really turn into wolves, it can be scary if someone suddenly gets angry. It's unsettling.

But anger can also be a good thing. If we see something wrong, our bodies react. Our heartbeat may get faster, and we stiffen up inside as we work out what to do. But how can we learn to control our anger, so it doesn't do any damage?

One tip, is to **think hard** (*show the magnifying glass or tap your head*), and try to work out why we



are angry, really. Studying why we are angry can be hard. That's why it can be really helpful to find someone sensible you can trust, to talk about what makes you cross, because it's surprisingly easy to get cross at the wrong things. It's like falling out with your friend at school, then going home and kicking the cat! It's not the cat's fault! But talking about our anger helps us sort out what's really going on.

Second tip. **Find good ways to express your anger** (*squeeze a cushion*) that don't involve hurting you, hurting someone else or breaking stuff. Try deep breathing slowly, taking some exercise, punching a cushion, or talking about, drawing or writing about the thing that makes you angry. Find out what works for you.

Third tip. Use your anger to **do something good** (*show a clock*). Do you need to make time to have a difficult conversation with someone? Find the right time and place - not last thing at night before bedtime! Do you need to say sorry and sort things out (*open up a fist to show an open hand of friendship*)?

Controlling your anger is like putting a dog on a lead (*show a dog lead*). Why do we put dogs on a lead? To stop them getting lost or hurt, or to stop someone else getting hurt. Controlling our temper does the same thing.

St Paul said:

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

**Self-control and gentleness** - that's what keeping your anger on a lead is all about. So don't be a werewolf. Instead, become the werewolf's master, staying in control. Because that's what being really strong is all about - showing gentleness and self-control. And then your anger can become your friend.

## **Meditation**

In the silence, would you put your hands on your lap. Think of a situation you've been in, where you felt someone wasn't respecting you, and you got really angry, even if you didn't express it. Imagine putting all your anger into your hands, in your fists. Talk about that to Jesus. I'll pray a prayer. If you're comfortable with it, say 'Amen' at the end. During the prayer, if you feel comfortable with that, offer your anger up to Jesus, opening your hands and letting it go.



## **Prayer**

*Lord Jesus, sometimes, I get very angry and don't know what to do with it. It's not fair. What do you want me to do about it? Help me to be honest with my feelings, and help me to serve you and do the right thing in this. Amen*

*(Afterwards, say:) It is all right to be angry. But remember, if you need help with handling it, talk to a responsible adult, who can help you sort it out.*

## **Information for teachers**

When Halloween celebrations are a talking point for children in school, teachers can often choose either to ignore them, or to go with the flow, revelling in the fantasy elements of the season and using them in class as a basis for cross-curricular work. This Idea for collective worship offers another alternative: to explore some of the underlying ideas in the mythology, and point out positive elements from the original folklore that can relate to Christian values.