



CREATING SPACES
TO SHARE OUR STORIES
AND BUILD FRIENDSHIPS ACROSS
DIVIDES

How can we be peacemakers? – ISLAM

Background:

Wherever in the world they are, Muslims turn to the direction of Makkah in Saudi Arabia five times a day for their prayers. They are also called to do a pilgrimage there once in their life if they can. At the heart of the city of Makkah is a building called the Ka'aba, a simple black cube structure, which the Qur'an says was built by Abraham and his son Ishmael. Before the advent of Islam, pagan Arabs also used to do pilgrimage at the site.

Set within the Ka'aba is a stone known as the 'black stone'. The origins of the stone are not known for sure, but it was an important part of the pilgrimage to the Ka'aba both before and after the advent of Islam. This story comes from the Hadith-stories about the Prophet Muhammad's life.



The Ka'aba – (Story can be found on back)

Follow up questions:

1. What do you think of Muhammad's suggestion for moving the Black Stone?
2. Why do you think it was so important to the different clans to put the Black Stone in its place?
3. What do you think this story teaches us about how we can be peacemakers?
4. Can you think of ways we could apply these principles to our schools and communities?

The Ka'aba

When Muhammad was a young man and had not yet been sent revelation from God, the Ka'aba was not in a good state. The protectors of the Ka'aba, the Quraysh tribe, decided that it should be rebuilt. The community started to collect stones to rebuild the holy house. Many clans contributed to this important effort.

Finally, all the stones had been collected and placed, and the only thing left to do was to put the black stone in its place. This was a task of great honour, and all of the tribes of the Quraysh wanted to do it. In fact, some of the tribes wanted this honour so much that a dispute broke out over who would put the black stone in its place; two clans pledged to fight to the death for this honour!

The oldest member of the Quraysh suggested that the first person to come through the entrance of the Ka'aba should be a mediator between the two disputing clans. The suggestion was respected.

The first person to come through the entrance of the Ka'aba was Muhammad. He was not yet a prophet, but he was known for his honesty and trustworthiness. When he walked in, they all proclaimed, 'This is Al-Amin (the Honest one). We all accept him; this is Muhammad.'

Muhammad reached the area where the clan leaders were gathered, and they informed him about the dispute. Muhammad thought about the problem, and said, 'bring a large piece of cloth and place it on the ground'. He placed the Black Stone on it, and requested that each of the clan leaders hold the cloth from a different side to move the Black Stone to its designated area. And so all of the clans participated in placing the Black Stone.