

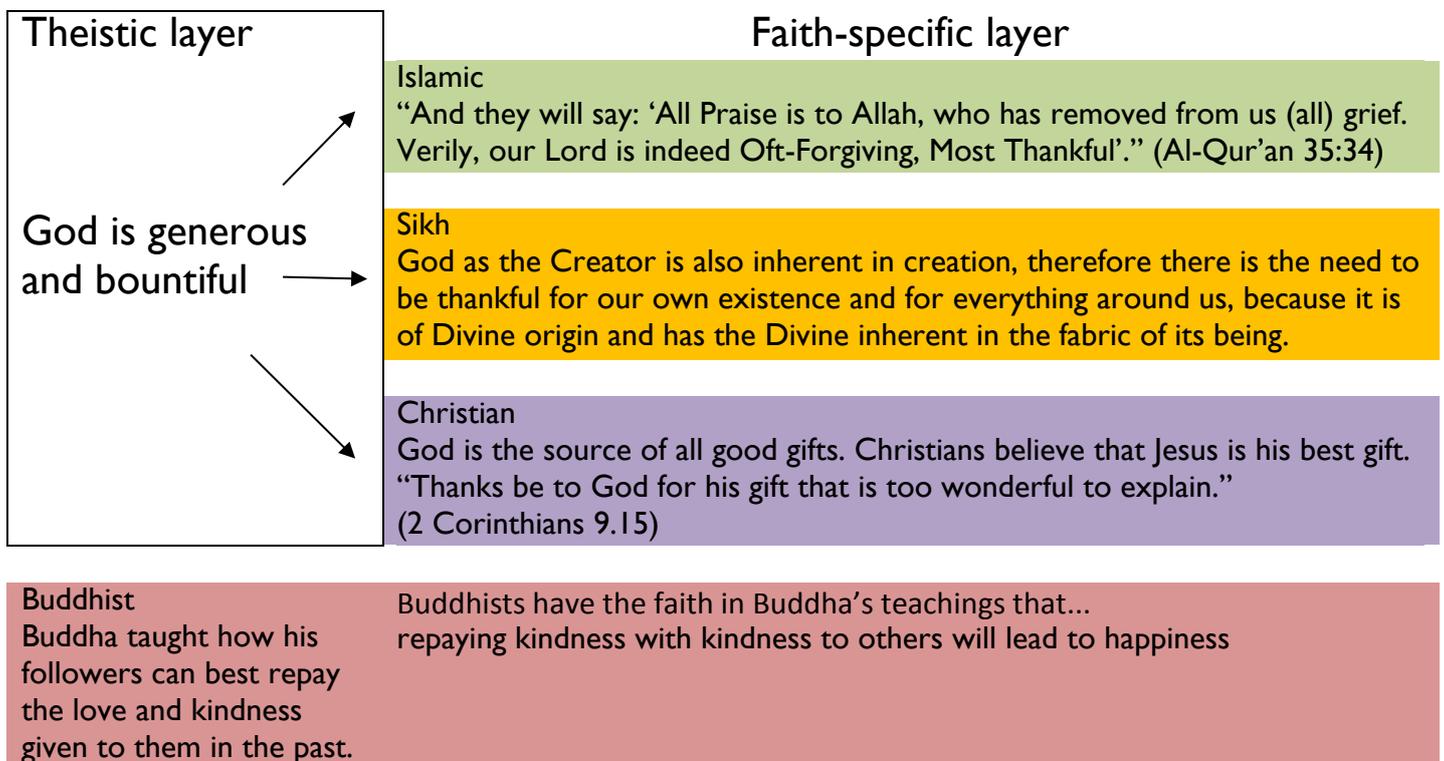
Birmingham SACRE Collective Worship Strategy

The Theistic Layer

Or “What can we say about God in Collective Worship that is unlikely to divide religious believers?”

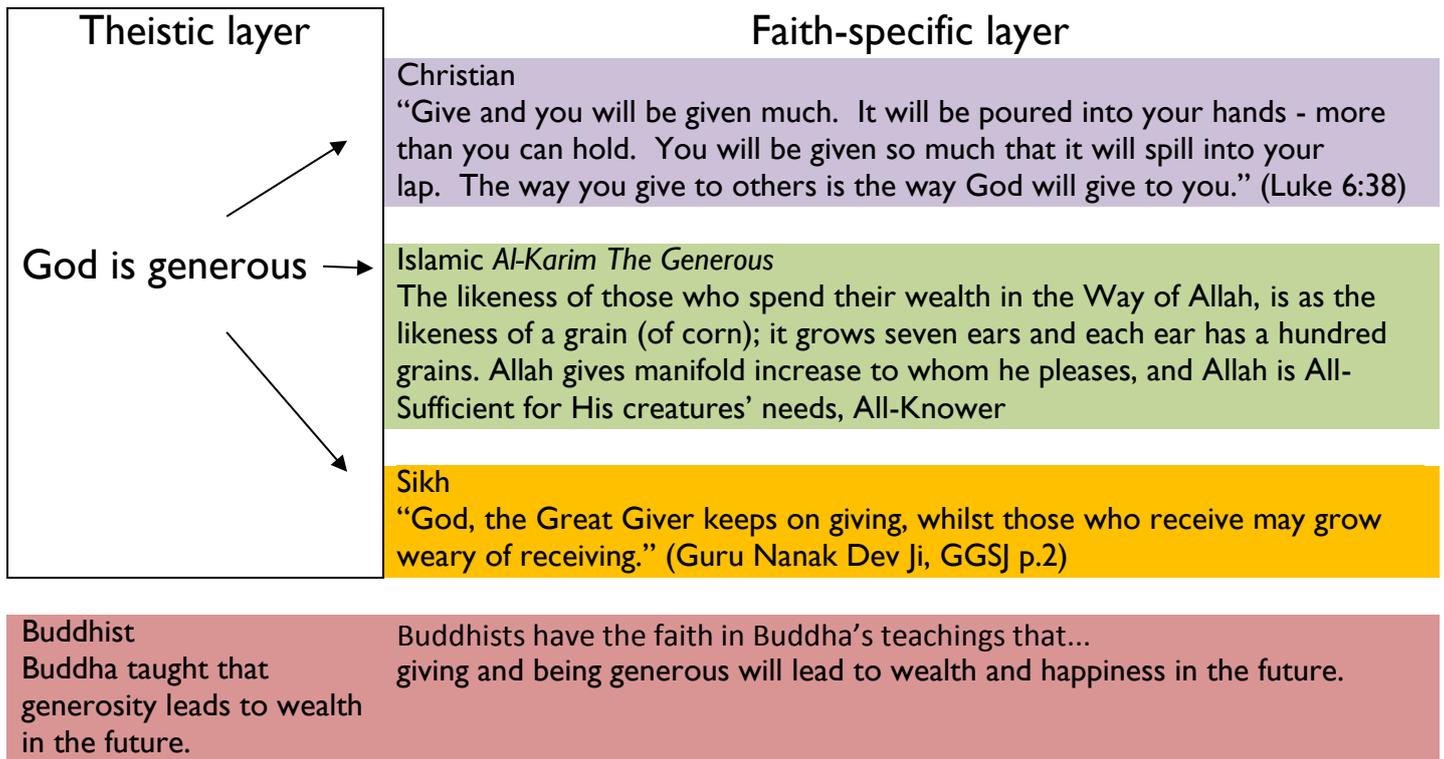
To ensure that the act of worship reflects religious belief, and yet remains inclusive, the leader will talk about God using general statements that are likely to be endorsed by most families who have a belief in God. These statements about God, or *theistic statements*, are not intended to convey a complete representation of God as understood from any one religious tradition. The validity of such statements is demonstrated over the following pages by the inclusion of faith-specific illustrations. The religious illustrations may, or may not, be used in an act of worship: their primary purpose here is to encourage confidence in including the theistic layer as a matter of good practice. As Buddhism is not generally thought of as a theistic tradition, a Buddhist illustration of the ‘Universal layer’ is given underneath each set of examples.

Universal layer: **Thankfulness**

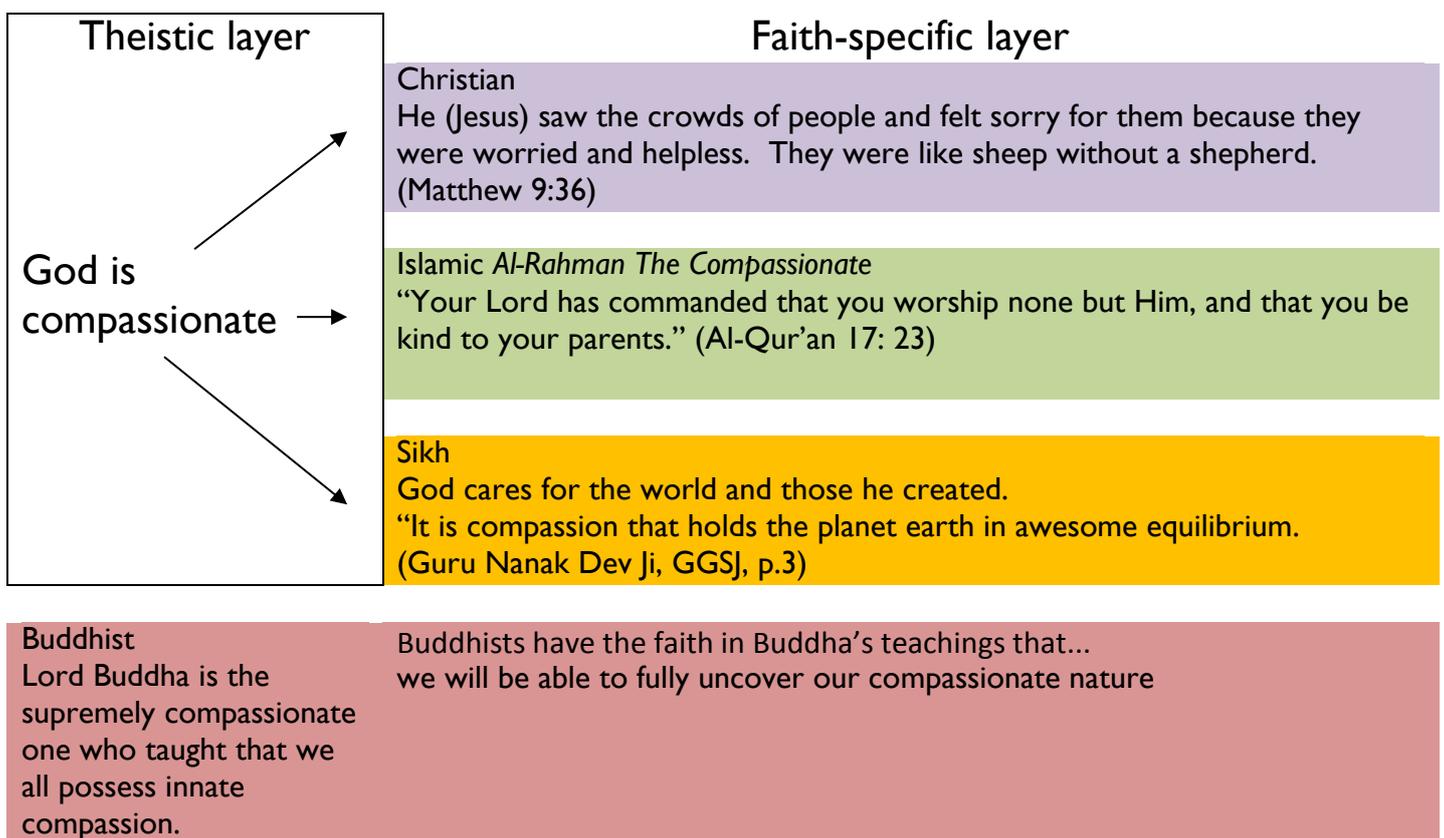


Christian references are to the Bible; Islamic ones to the Qur’an; Sikh references are to the Guru Granth Sahib; Buddhist references are to the 2nd Century Indian Buddhist saint Nagarjuna’s Letter to King Gautamiputra which is a distillation of Lord Buddha’s sutras.

Universal layer: **Generosity**



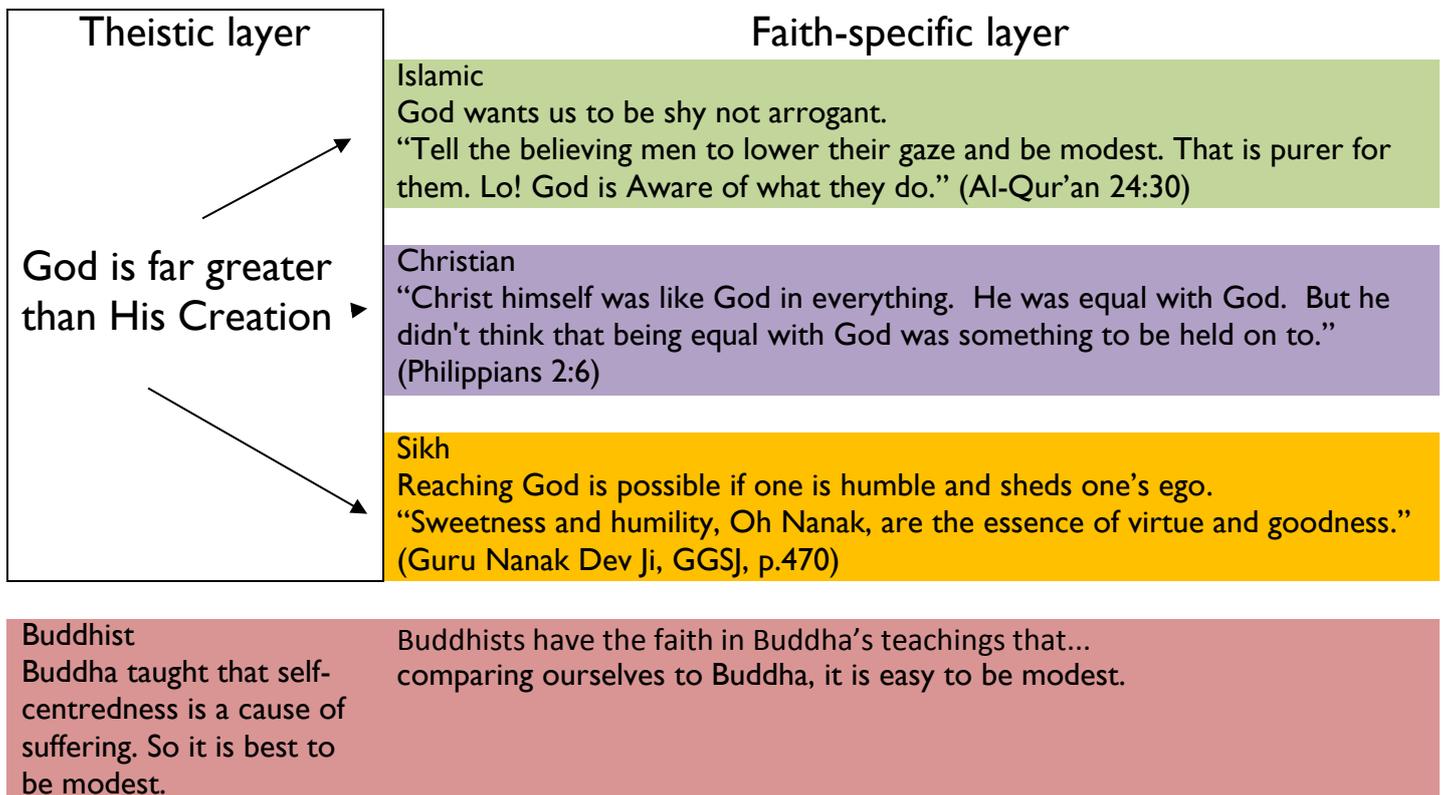
Universal layer: **Compassion**



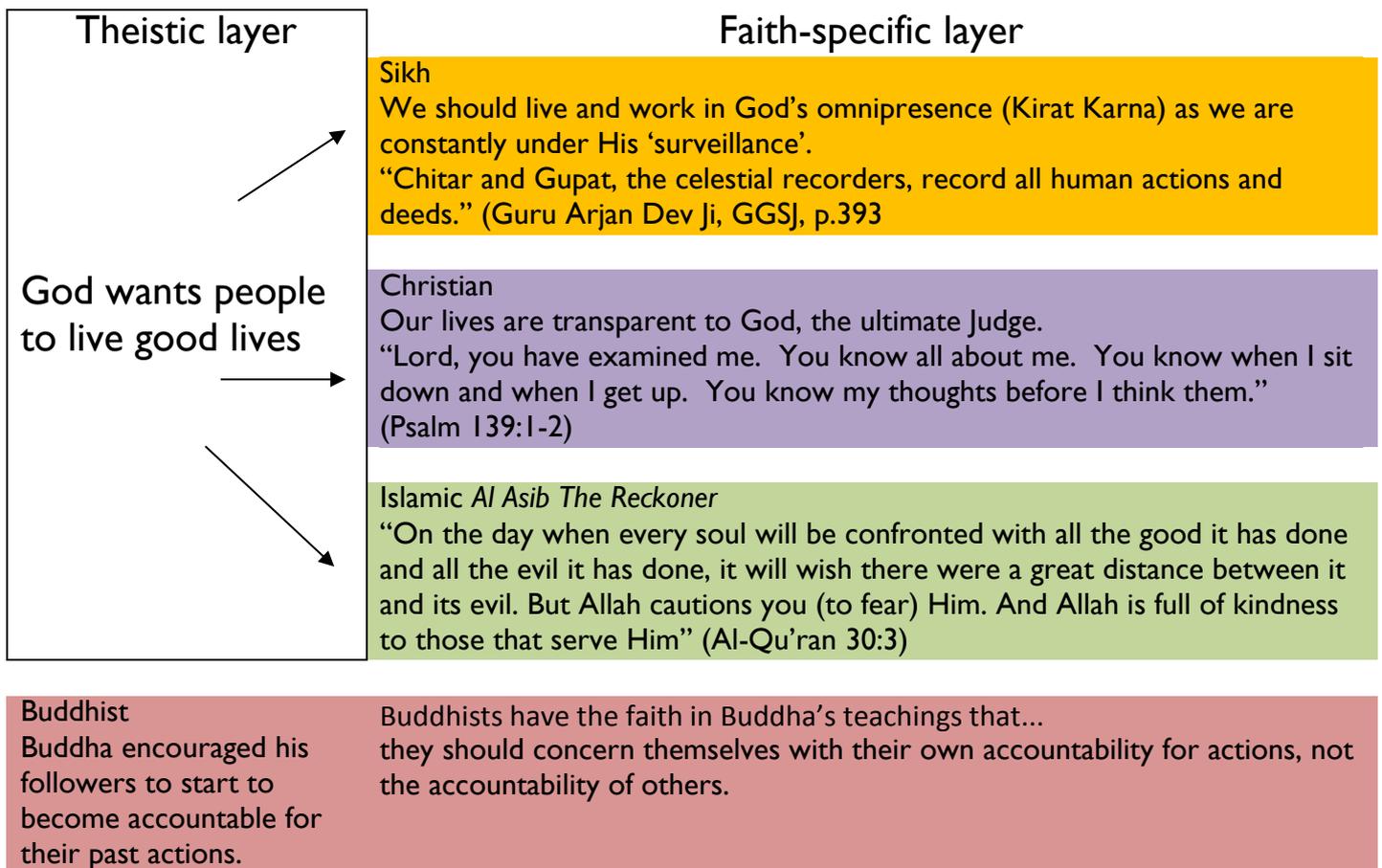
Universal layer: **Forgiveness**



Universal layer: **Modesty**



Universal layer: **Accountability and Integrity**



This is just a small sample of the kinds of theistic statements that it is possible to use, when leading collective worship using the strategy. These and others can be found on the website for Birmingham SACRE: www.faithmakesadifference.co.uk Of course, there are references supporting these statements from other faith traditions too, and these will also appear on the website in due course.

We should like to thank members of Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Sikh communities represented on SACRE for their invaluable contributions to the preparation of the leaflet.

Birmingham SACRE Collective Worship Working Party 2013