



## 8

# Church at Bagayam

### Questions

Have you been inside a church in England? What was it like? Do you know when was the church built?

What can you see in this Indian church?

How is it like an English church? How is it different?

What Bible stories can you see in the decorations of the church? (The good Shepherd, see picture 6: the last supper)

How many crosses can you see in this picture? Why is the cross important to Christians?

Think carefully about the words above the arch—how would they help the congregation to think about what they were in church for?

### Background

Most of the CSI (Church of South India) churches have been built fairly recently and almost all of them are less than one hundred years old.

They are generally in a simple style, and are built as a rectangular building with a slightly raised area for an altar, like this one here.

This church is set up ready for holy communion. Pastors are responsible for several congregations which may be many miles apart, so they are not able to hold a communion service in each of their churches every week. Most worship services in the church are conducted by local lay leaders and catechists who will also help look after the Christians in their village.

Crucifixes are rare in CSI. Crosses tend to be the empty cross which is a reminder of the resurrection and the presence of the risen Christ.

The words in Tamil above the arch read “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” which is from Psalm 96 verse 9.

On the back wall is a carving of two people—Jesus and a murderer. This is a reminder of a famous Tamil Christian story and you can see copies of this carving in many homes and churches. You will find a better photograph of the carving and its story on the CD.



