Task one) Watch the churches and chapels video. Then read the poem below by Philip Larkin. You can listen to him read it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5aKknj-g3o

Church Going
Once I am sure there's nothing going on
I step inside, letting the door thud shut.
Another church: matting, seats, and stone,
And little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off
My cycle-clips in awkward reverence.

Move forward, run my hand around the font.
From where I stand, the roof looks almost new -
Cleaned, or restored? Someone would know: I don't.
Mounting the lectern, I peruse a few
Hectoring large-scale verses, and pronounce
'Here endeth' much more loudly than I'd meant.
The echoes snigger briefly. Back at the door
I sign the book, donate an Irish sixpence,
Reflect the place was not worth stopping for.

Yet stop I did: in fact I often do,
And always end much at a loss like this,
Wondering what to look for; wondering, too,
When churches fall completely out of use
What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep
A few cathedrals chronically on show,
Their parchment, plate and pyx in locked cases,
And let the rest rent-free to rain and sheep.
Shall we avoid them as unlucky places?

Or, after dark, will dubious women come
To make their children touch a particular stone;
Pick simples for a cancer; or on some
Advised night see walking a dead one?
Power of some sort will go on
In games, in riddles, seemingly at random;
But superstition, like belief, must die,
And what remains when disbelief has gone?
Grass, weedy pavement, brambles, buttress, sky,

A shape less recognisable each week,
A purpose more obscure. I wonder who
Will be the last, the very last, to seek
This place for what it was; one of the crew

That tap and jot and know what rood-lofts were?
Some ruin-bibber, randy for antique,
Or Christmas-addict, counting on a whiff
Of gown-and-bands and organ-pipes and myrrh?
Or will he be my representative,

Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt
Dispersed, yet tending to this cross of ground
Through suburb scrub because it held unspilt
So long and equably what since is found
Only in separation - marriage, and birth,
And death, and thoughts of these - for which was built
This special shell? For, though I've no idea
What this accoutred frowsty barn is worth,
It pleases me to stand in silence here;

A serious house on serious earth it is,
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
Are recognized, and robed as destinies.
And that much never can be obsolete,
Since someone will forever be surprising
A hunger in himself to be more serious,
And gravitating with it to this ground,
Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,
If only that so many dead lie round.

Notes from the web on this poem:
In the poem, Larkin explores the experience of visiting a church. He declares himself unsure why
he "often" stops at churches whilst out cycling, as he finds himself "at a loss" about what he is
looking for - both literally, and spiritually. He considers how the buildings are falling out of use,
and what they might become in the future. The final stanza of the poem adopts a more conclusive
tone about this "serious house on serious earth", to which people will always be drawn, if only
because so many people before them have been drawn there.

Think about:
-    What is Philip Larkin is saying about the church?
-    What is his opinion on the church? Does he like it? If not, why?
-    What questions does the poet ask himself?
-    How does he describe the church? What does he focus on?

Task two) Imagine you've come across one of the churches or chapels in the video and like Larkin
decide to go inside. Describe your experience in a poem.
Think about:
-    What you would look at/ choose to describe and why
-    What questions you'd ask yourself about the place
-    What would make you stop to go inside the church