

My dearest watercolourists,

This week we embarked on one of the most complex journeys so far. First of all, I am so proud of you, your excitement, talent and willingness to engage with challenging artistic subjects! Well done! I cannot wait to see the result. Also, welcome to the new members who joined us during this session and who were not for one moment intimidated by this complex composition!

Secondly, as this painting is so complex, there was no way for us to finish it in the short two hours we had together on Monday. So this is Part One of the Church Landscape tutorial.

This whole idea was inspired by a picture lovely Christine sent me and which is attached below. It is a breathtakingly beautiful church with the most dramatic sunset I saw in a while. Of course we all had to paint a landscape inspired by this image!



Let's get drawing, shall we?

1) DRAWING

As you all know we do not usually employ pencils in our paintings, as we tend to stick to watercolours and watercolours only, but since this is an architectural element, which has plenty of details, we needed to bring out our pencils!

A) Let's start with the overall shape and position of the church. We need to simplify and abstract the shapes before we can add detail.

1. COMPOSITION, SIZE, POSITION: the tiers

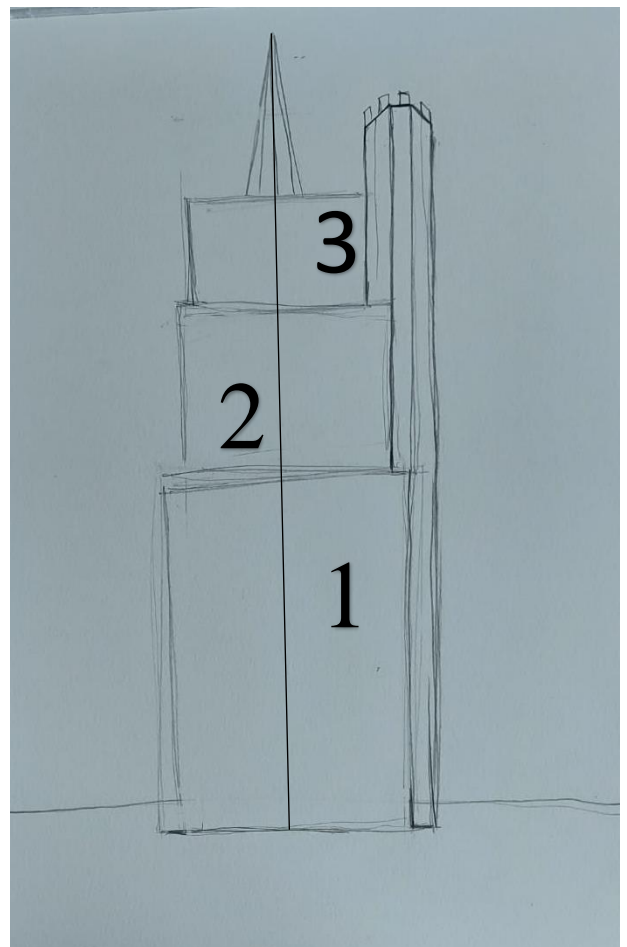
Add a mark where the building starts and one where the building ends. (top and bottom) I suggest leaving about one or two knuckles at the bottom (we have a path to add later) and a smaller space above for the sky.

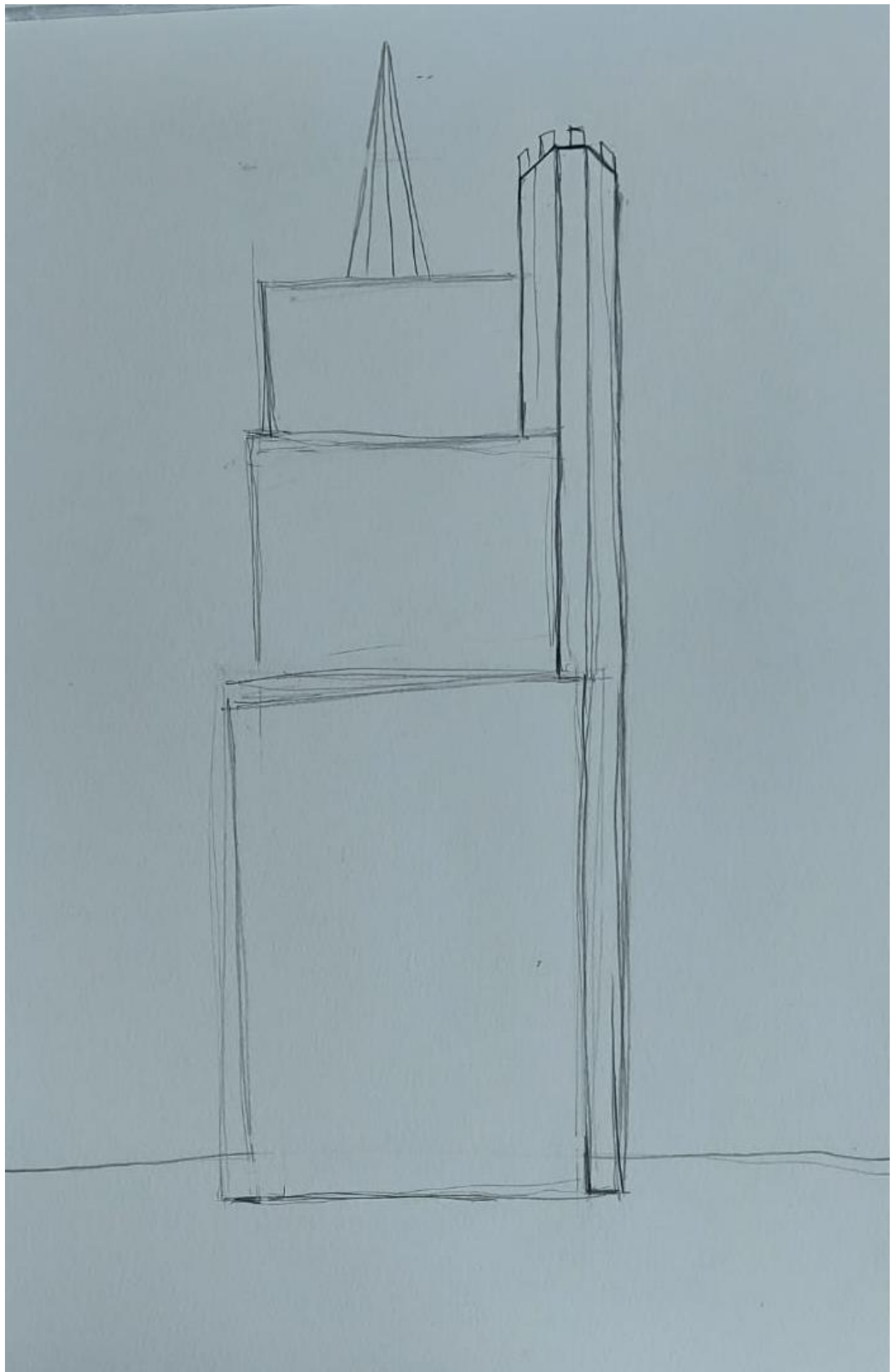
Also add 2 marks at the bottom of the composition that will define how wide the church is. (left and right) Remember we need to add the extension we see in the picture to the right as well as a tower. I would say the bottom tier of the church is less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the width of our paper. This step will help centralise the composition and make sure that you can fill it all in your paper.

A **symmetry** line may also be useful here. Connect the bottom mark to the top one.

Divide the vertical symmetry line into 2 parts (they do not have to be mathematically perfectly equal, the bottom one can actually be slightly shorter actually).

Divide the upper half into 3 parts. They do not have to be equal either. You can either copy what I did here, to the right, or look at the photograph. In the original image the second tier is shorter than the third and the

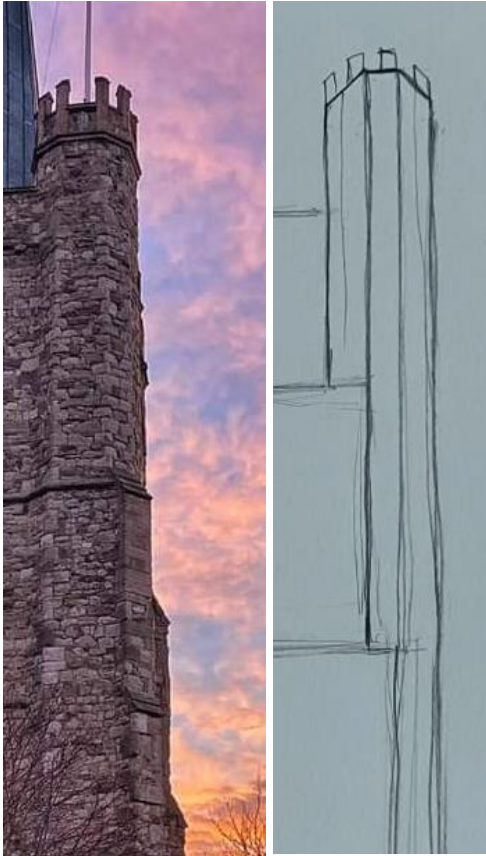




Flèche (pointy tower behind) is narrower and taller. Choose how you want to divide according to your visual taste and also your space on your paper.

Use the marks at the bottom, which define the width of the church, to create a RECTANGLE-aka our first tier. On top of it create the second and the third tiers, always slightly smaller and narrower, about 1 to 2 cm narrower. Behind the third tier, in the middle, add a very pointy triangle- the Flèche.

Add a tower to the right.



For the tower, to suggest that roundness and volume, work with the idea of a hexagon, if you look at the reference image, you will see that the tower is not perfectly cylindrical, in fact it has some corners. This is something we are going to try and copy as demonstrated to the left.

At the bottom of the base of tier one, 1 cm to the right add one vertical straight line, taller that the top of tier 3. Then elongate the right edge of tier one. This line is slightly longer than the previous one but it is parallel. Moving up, elongate the edge of tier 3. This line is as long as the first one.

At the bottom of your composition add the horizontal line which divides the sky from the earth- the horizon

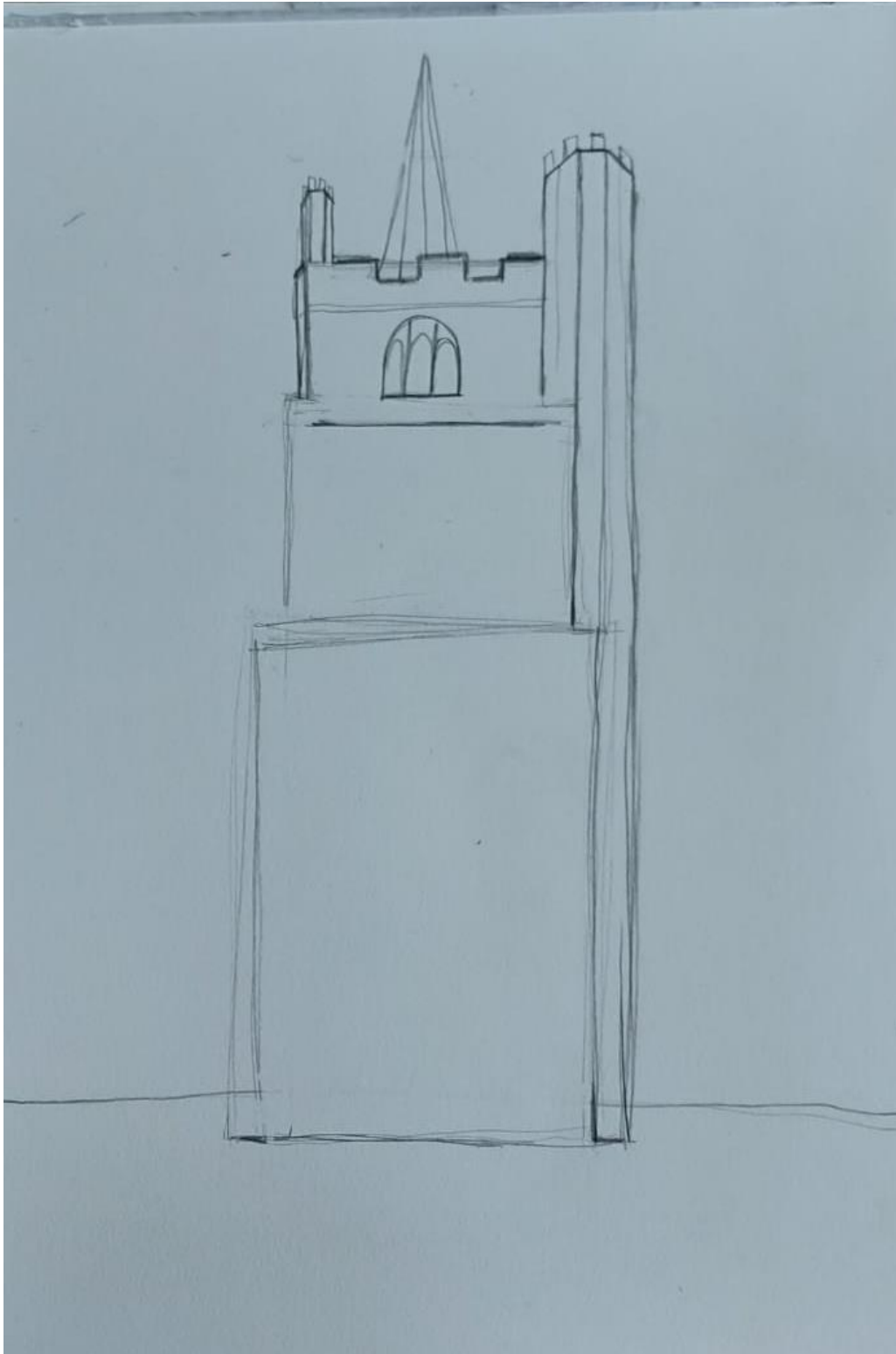
2. Décor & Detail : top tier

Let's add some simplified decorative motifs to the top tier.

The smaller narrower tower, the thin line, framing the top, the window with the arches as well as the **Crenellations** (I spent about 20 min trying to find the name for the top row of stones on a wall or tower which alternate between



raised sections and gaps, and I did find it. Crenellations, one more word in my vocabulary)



3. Middle tier

Here we add a tall narrow window resembling an Arrow Loop.

We also add a mini-roof like tile detail to separate the tiers. This detail also goes around the tower.

Looking at the original image it is apparent that to the left of our structure we can see the church elements in the distance. Using some vertical lines we add those in.



4. Bottom tier

Firstly, we frame this with the roof like tiles.

Secondly, we add the symmetry line if we do not have one already. We divide the bottom line of the rectangle suggesting our base tier into 4 equal parts.

The 2 parts in the middle are the base of our gate. We elongate those as parallel lines until about 3 cm to the top of the tier, then we link them together with an arch like line.

We divide the structure into two. The bottom one will be the gate, the top one- the window.

For the gate, we use the symmetry line to help us in creating the door. Use the bottom line of this smaller rectangle, divide it into 4. Elongate the second and the third line and either add another oval arch or a pointy arch at the top.

For the window, use the arch as frame and within it add a smaller arch, this time it can be a pointy one. Divide this smaller section into three as illustrated below. Each third then becomes an arch.

Finally, add a horizontal line parallel to the bottom lines to frame the construction. This I think is called either a **margin** or a **plinth** 😊



Here we also need to add the extension. To the right of our first/bottom tier we need to add a vertical parallel line along the horizon line. This line is as tall as the top of our gate. We then link this line to the main building with a diagonal line. We reinforce the horizon line and add a corner to our building. We also add a window here.

AND WE ARE DONE WITH THE DRAWING! Can you believe it?!

PAINTING

a) Skyscape

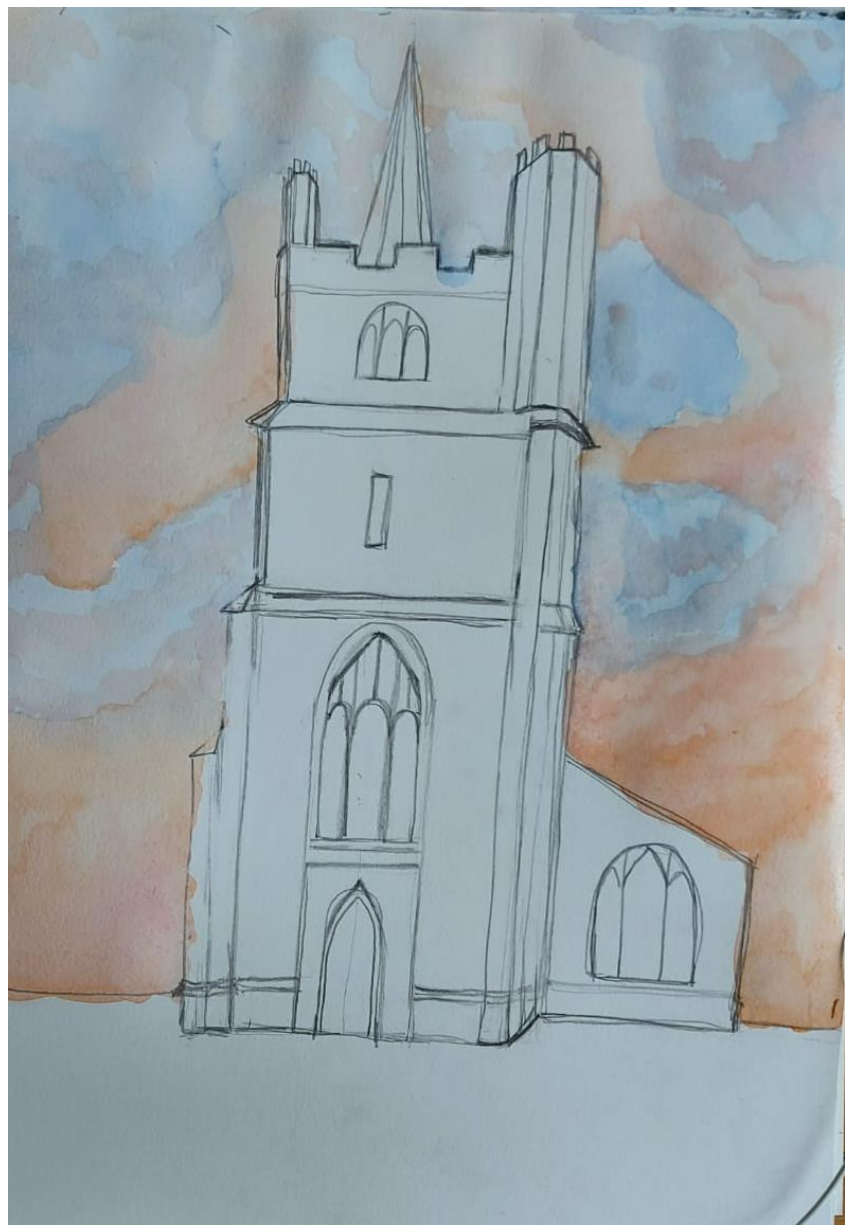
Here comes the fun!

Painting the glorious sunset!

For this we mix together red, orange and white. Here we use a lot of water. We want some fluid, interesting patterns and a wet technique helps us achieve it.

We apply it just above the horizon as tall as let's say the first tier. We apply it in a dot like fashion, which will give a cloud-like texture.

We also take this colour higher up, creating some organic oval shapes, looking like clouds.





Next up we completely clean the brush and we add the blue. We use blue mixed in with plenty of white and a lot of water.

We let it all dry and then we can go over the red-ish nuance with the same exact mix and dot a bit more pigment to add to that texture and depth. We do the same with blue.

Finally, using plenty of water, we allow these colours to interact, we can also add thin webs of the pink-orange tone above the layers of blue, and likewise with our blue, going on top of the pink. This is so much harder to explain in words than it is to just show. I did try but honestly, if you were there you already know what happened.

Put it another way, for the first layer of sky we had two colours applied with a wet on dry technique, the colours were kept completely separate from each other and did not mix. We let that dry.

The second layer we added more depth to our colours and some more water. Some very delicate intertwining of blue and pink may have happened, but the first layer was already set.

For the third layer we manipulated the blue on top of the pink and vice versa. We controlled how the colours overlaid and mixed. This was a wet on damp technique, the paper and the under layers were not perfectly dry.

b) Foreground

optional step- adding a path and or some tombstones

Finally we added some light green to our foreground. We let that layer dry and then we added another layer of darker green- the shade from the sun. Our sun is setting to the bottom right of our page so the shadows are starting behind the objects it is shining upon. The shadows move from right to left as seen in the image.

And here we are!

This is where our session came to an end. Next Monday we work on painting the church, adding some texture, adding some trees in full blossom and a well defined sun.

I hope you enjoyed this and I am excited to finish this with you on Monday!

Kindest regards
and all the best

Ioana

