

## Welcome to our Christingle Service!



### **Reflection part 1: Light and darkness (SLIDE)**

Christingle is a Christian celebration of light. All celebrations of light are concerned with the ways in which light chases away darkness.

We are going to think now what it is like when there is no light.

#### **GAME 1: Guessing objects blindfolded – 1 volunteer.**

Point: without light it is harder to understand some things.

#### **GAME 2: Walking across room blindfolded (from Cmas tree to side chapel)**

2 different volunteers – first without blindfold and then with.

ASK - Which is the easiest? How did it feel to be in the dark?

Bring out that it is easier to do things when it is light because we can see. If we let even a small chink of light into the blindfold it becomes easier to see/do things.

ASK – ‘How do you get rid of a dark winter’s night?’ (street lights/moon/stars/wait for morning)

ASK – ‘How do you see in a dark cupboard?’ (light/torch)

ASK – ‘How do you chase away the darkness when you’re frightened in the night?’ (put the light on).

Explain that there is only one way of getting rid of darkness – that is by replacing it with light.

Explain that Christians refer to Jesus Christ as ‘The Light of the World’. They believe that Jesus came to replace the darkness of hatred, jealousy, anger and death with love, forgiveness and life forever. For the people who lived at the time of Jesus, there were no electric lights or battery torches.

They would have understood how special light was and each day as dark fell they would know there would be no natural light until the morning. Some things would be impossible without light and some things just too dangerous. So for someone to say that they would be the light of the world would have been a very powerful image.

**EXERCISE: Light and dark words – lots of volunteers!**

Some hold words, group of 4-5 separate light from dark

Explain that there is now one set of light words and one set of dark words. I am going to collect up your dark words in this dark bag to go in the bin.

(USE) These are the things that, Christians believe, Jesus can take away from our lives.

Whilst these light words we are going to put into this bright shiny gift bag.

(USE) These words in the light shiny bag are the things Jesus wants to bring into people's lives, which we will remember through the symbol of the Christingle.

Think about light a bit more later. But if we're honest, some of those dark words can be true for us as well. Light sometimes highlights darkness – see those dark corners. Jesus' light reveals the dark corners of our lives and our world. Chance to say sorry...

## Reflection part 2: THE LIGHT (S)

I love Christmas lights (who else? ASK – who has lights up?). Bought another set of 100 last week for tree (set of 24 broke, get about same, rounding up to nearest 3 figs – got 100).

Christmas lights one of great traditions of Christmas. (ASK – HOW OLD?) Only goes back about 200 years, wealthy Germans put candles on tree – sounds dangerous – don't try that at home.

Great tradition because connects with one of key meanings of Christmas. At Christmas Christians celebrate coming of Jesus, this idea that God breaks into our world. How do we understand that? What does it mean for God to come into our world? One answer is in our bible reading – here's how St John, one of writers of Jesus' life, puts it: (S) v9 'The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.'

When Jesus is born, John says, light comes into world. And so our tradition of Christmas lights connects with that deeper meaning: it reminds us that light comes into world at Christmas.

But that's all very well, but what's point of that in first place? Think about value of light: what uses does light have?

helps us see clearly, guides us, comforts us (– who's afraid of dark?). Also draws us in – on a dark night we all love finding nearest source of light.

Light only works in darkness. Remember buying our kids their first torch – very excited (one of them still is – couldn't say which). Remember them jumping up and down in shop shouting 'daddy make it dark, make it dark!' Obviously just clicked my fingers...

point is, we need light to drive away the darkness. Darkness only exists where there is no light.

And as we reflect on our world, we see lots of darkness at the moment. Maybe prompts us to ask – where is the light? Light more necessary now than ever.

So my hope and prayer for this Christmas is that these Christingles will remind us all of the deeper meaning, the hopeful meaning of Christmas: or as John puts in v5 – 'light comes into the world at Christmas, and the darkness has not overcome it.'

PRAYERS