

A Christmas Eve Resource for Parents with Young Children

We regret that we are unable to offer an in-person service this Christmas, but hope that this short reflection can involve your children and speak to them in a meaningful way about Christmas!

See you in 2021...

Sing your favourite Christmas Carol

YouTube to the rescue! There are many sites, often with lyrics, for example <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK9DUvj50iY> - a Collection of 82 Christmas carols with lyrics – easy to find, see notes below video - for example

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| 8 Angels we Have Heard on High at 14:54 | 9 Go Tell it on the Mountain 17:56 |
| 10 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing 20:42 | 11 Silent Night 23:26 |
| 13 The First Noel 29:53 | 14 O Holy Night 34:41 |
| 15 Away in a Manger 39:09 | 16 The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy 41:03 |

The Christmas Light

Everything is Ready

The parent(s) discuss(es) that everything is ready for Christmas – all the things they have done lately - and it's been a lot of work: getting the house ready, setting up the tree, sending cards to family and friends, baking Christmas treats, shopping for the big meal, buying gifts etc. Now everything is in place.

The Lights Go Out!

Adjust the next scene to your family's preference: One parent can keep talking to the child(ren), while the other cuts the power supply / turns off the light and suddenly everything is dark except the Christmas tree / the Advent wreath Christ candle / one candle. You can also simply talk about what it would be like to be suddenly plunged into darkness – that would put a damper on the celebration!

Jesus as the Light

In the Bible, Jesus is often called the Light.

Before Jesus' birth, the prophet Isaiah (a wise person who knew about future events) told of one to come, who would be the Light:

The people who walk in darkness will see a great Light." (Isaiah 9:1)

Christmas – Jesus Birth – the Light has Come

At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus' birth. Parent(s) could now ask the children what they remember about the Christmas story, and retell it together:

- the Angel who told Mary that she would have a child
- Joseph
- their journey to Bethlehem because the Emperor wanted to count everyone
- they ended up in a stable,
- Jesus' birth,
- the arrival of the shepherds and the 3 kings.

For small children, this might have to be very short and left to be further explored on Christmas Day.

Jesus as the Light of the World

The stories about Jesus in the Bible tell us what he said and did, and they give us instructions on how to live a good life. In this world, there are lots of bad things going on – dark things. Jesus is like a Light that helps us to make good choices when we feel like we are a little lost.

We are to be Light to the World

But that is not all! Jesus also tells us that we are to be the Light to others.

The Bible says: Let your Light shine!

(14 You are like light for the whole world. A city built on top of a hill cannot be hidden, 15 and no one would light a lamp and put it under a clay pot. A lamp is placed on a lampstand, where it can give light to everyone in the house. 16 Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise God in heaven. Matthew 5, based on the Contemporary English Version).

When we follow the Light, we have much to give to others. And we should ask ourselves, how we can make this world a better place, and bring Light to others who need it.

What can we do? How can we bring light to the world?

Parents know about issues in your child/children's lives: other students, a sibling, teacher, neighbour etc whom they either like very much or don't like at all. Help your kid(s) think about how to show their appreciation and support, or ways how to better get along with others, or things to do for others, like helping to shovel snow. This might be an opportunity to talk about issues at home. Empower your child(ren) by making them aware of their gifts. Speak about what you want to do to be a Light.

Remembering

Now or some time later during the holidays, complete a craft to remind everyone that they want to let their Light shine, and how they want to make the world a better place. Cut out a simple candle shapes as a symbol of the Light ahead of time, or have everyone draw a candle, you can make popsicle stick candles, or use gift wrap to make candles that sparkle. Write on the candles about how you and you child(ren) plan to bring Light to the World.



This Little Light of Mine, I'm gonna make it shine!

If you feel comfortable, pray as a family:

Dear God,

Help me to see your Light and to follow it.

Help to hear when others need my help.

And help me to love others like you do.

I want to shine your light and be a light to the world! Amen.

A nice way to end this story time is to sing with Raffi the classic *This Little Light of Mine* which you can find here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6jHFtvSiaM>

Christmas blessings to you and your child(ren)!