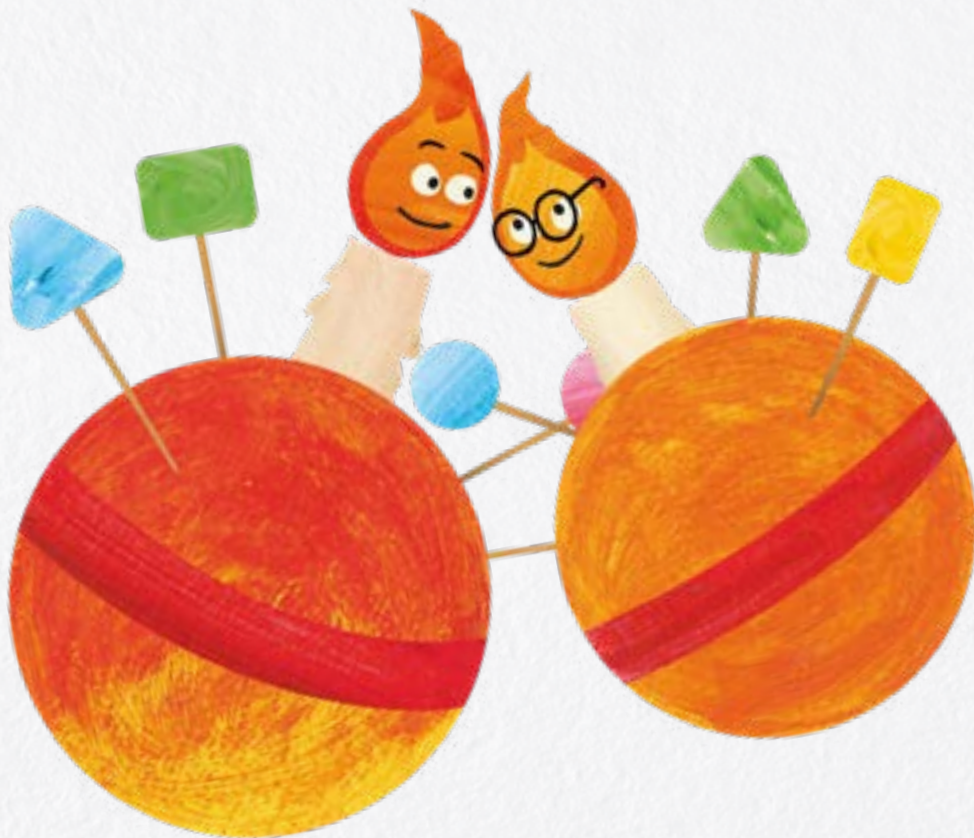


A school act of collective worship

(with options for Community Schools)



By Victoria Bush

christingle.org

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Introduction to Christingle and The Children's Society

Christingle is a candle-lit, festive celebration that's perfect for bringing families and communities together. It was first invented by the Moravian church in the 1700s, but the celebration as we know it was introduced to the Church of England by The Children's Society in the 1960s.

The celebration is named after the Christingles that are lit during it. Christingles are made from an orange decorated with red tape, sweets and a candle. They have been part of our history for over 50 years and have helped raise millions of pounds to help this country's most vulnerable children. Each year we ask those who celebrate Christingle to hold a collection to support children and young people in some of the darkest situations imaginable.

The Children's Society

Founded in 1881 by Sunday School teacher Edward Rudolf, for the last 139 years The Children's Society has supported millions of this country's children and restored hope to their lives. We believe in building a society that works for every child, so that they are safe, happy and free to fulfil their incredible potential.

We run vital local services that provide vulnerable children across the country with the support, advice and guidance that they need, and we also campaign to make children's lives better and change the systems that are placing them in danger.

Together with our amazing supporters, we're improving life for children today and working to create a society where every child has hope for their future.



Introduction to this resource

This resource is primarily intended for collective worship in primary schools, though we have also included options for community schools. There is also an accompanying Powerpoint, included alongside this resource.

A note on Covid-19 restrictions

This resource was written before Covid-19 restrictions came into place. Please feel free to adapt this resource for your context. It may just as easily be used with a small group or tutor group as with a whole school, for example. Please follow whatever guidelines your school has in place.



About the author

Victoria Bush is a part-time primary school teacher with a specialism in Christian ethos and RE. She also runs workshops on creativity at Church Schools conferences and writes materials on RE and SMSC. She is married and has two kids and a mad cockapoo. She leads Thetford Vineyard Church with her husband and is passionate about community and eating together!

Beforehand

What you will need:

- A table
- A selection of lighted items eg Hanukah lamp, Diwali lamps, candles, fairy lights etc
- Large pillar candle
- Small tealights or Christingle candles with card protector circles to prevent dripping
- A box of matches
- 'Hope' postcard templates (see end of this resource)
- Accompanying Powerpoint (if using – slide numbers indicated in this resource)

Preparation in advance:

- Have the hall dimly lit to make the prop lights more effective
- Choose a pupil to read the passage
- Place baskets of class postcard packs at the exit door for children to pick up
- Play 'This Little Light of Mine' as the children enter [youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtqhyQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkblZtqhyQ) (Slide 3) or other more traditional options on the slide
- Song option for Community Schools: 'Love Shine a Light' – Katrina and the Waves [youtube.com/watch?v=NnoikRec67k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnoikRec67k) (Slide 4)

Act of Collective Worship

Welcome

Welcome the children and staff, and use the following as an introduction:

At this time of year, the days get shorter and the nights get longer. Different religions and cultures all over the world use lights as part of their winter-time celebrations to bring hope and happiness into these dark times. You could show Diwali lamps, Hanukah lamps, Yule logs, street lighting, or have a selection on the assembly table – see Slide 5.

Hearing God's word

Explain that Christians believe God is love. They believe he was born into the world as Jesus to bring hope, comfort and joy to those who feel sad, lost or lonely. For children such as Jamie (show image of Jamie on Slide 6) and others like him who struggle with their mental health, every day can feel dark without any hopeful light.

In the Gospel of Matthew in the Bible, Jesus spoke about this hopeful light;

Helper read: Matthew 5.14-16 New International Version (NIV) (Slide 7)

Jesus said:

'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

Christians believe that when Jesus was born, a light came into the world that offered hope to the hopeless and reminded us all that as a family of human beings we all have one thing in common: the power to transform lives through kindness and love. Jesus asks his followers to pass on the light of God's love, not keep it to themselves. The light from a candle is one of the few things that can be shared as many times as you like without running out.

Put on some quiet, reflective music and have a helper read this passage (Slide 8) very slowly as a large central candle is lit. If you can, tape a cross onto this candle to demarcate it as representing Jesus. Have a line of children and/or adults light their smaller candles from the central one, passing the flame along the line.

'Jesus said "I'm the light of the world." And he also said, "You're the light of the world". But how does that light get from Jesus to us, and into the world? Christingles are best lit from one another: when our own flame has been lit with the light of God's love, our next job is to pass it on – that's how the light and love of God will spread through the world.'

Reverend Ally Barrett

The Children's Society

Some children do not feel bright and joyful. They feel more like Christmas lights that haven't been plugged in. They feel like they are sitting in the dark [turn off all the lights and lamp]. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has made the lives of some children worse. When someone who is filled with the light of God's great love comes near them, He wants them to see and feel it [light pillar candle].

Explain that The Children's Society (Slide 9) is a charity that supports vulnerable children

by helping to bring light and hope into their lives. Children just like Jamie (Slide 10). Jamie struggled at school because he was bullied. This made him feel isolated and alone. The Children's Society helped him through a drop-in service where he felt safe and supported. Every year, The Children's Society encourages people around the country to celebrate Christingle to remind them to carry God's love and light into the world, and to raise money to help them continue their work.

Hold up an unlit Christingle and explain its symbolism to Christians (Slide 11):

- **The orange** represents the whole world: Christians believe God made the world and looks after it; they believe he wants human beings to look after it as well.
- **The red ribbon** represents God's love for everyone: Christians believe God treats everyone like family; they believe he wants us to treat each other like family and offer support and love to everyone.
- **The fruit/sweets** represent the good things God has made: Christians believe God provides us with good things; they believe he wants everyone to be thankful for the good things they have and to share them with others.
- **The lit candle** represents Jesus, who brought light into a dark world: Christians believe God sent Jesus to bring hope to those who feel sad or lost; they believe he wants all people to live the way Jesus lived and care for each other – especially when times are hard.
- Explain that the funny thing about candles is that they can give light without losing light – demonstrate by lighting the Christingle from the large pillar candle. Tell the children that, in the same way, we can bring hope and love to those around us who are struggling with bullying, difficult home lives or poor mental health.



Display the slide of Christingle characters touching flames to pass their light along (Slide 12).

Explain that you are going to ask the teachers from each class to come up and light a class Christingle (Slide 13) so that the light of love and hope can be shared with everyone in school.

Ask the teachers to line up with their backs to the children, maintaining a safe distance between them. Light their candles. One at a time turn around and say their class name followed by the key Bible verse, 'Let your light shine before others' eg 'Tiger Class, let your light shine before others.'

Prayer

Invite everyone to join you in prayer (Slide 14):

Father of Lights, we thank you for the warmth and hope brought by the light of your love. We thank you for The Children's Society as it brings loving kindness to children and young people in difficult situations. Help us to carry your light, and pass it on to everyone we meet. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Amen.

And/or

We pray together the prayer Jesus taught us (Slide 15):

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Reflection (option for community schools) (Slide 16)

Let's take a moment to be quiet and reflect.

Visualise a dark room. Imagine how you might feel. Lonely, confused, perhaps hopeless?

Imagine a candle being lit somewhere ahead of you. You look up and begin to walk towards it.

When you reach the candle, you find that there is a smaller candle in your hand.

You reach out and light it.

Your feelings change. You feel comforted, warmed and hopeful.

Feel grateful for the light, grateful for the hope, grateful that you can have hope and pass it on.

Setting a challenge (Slide 17)

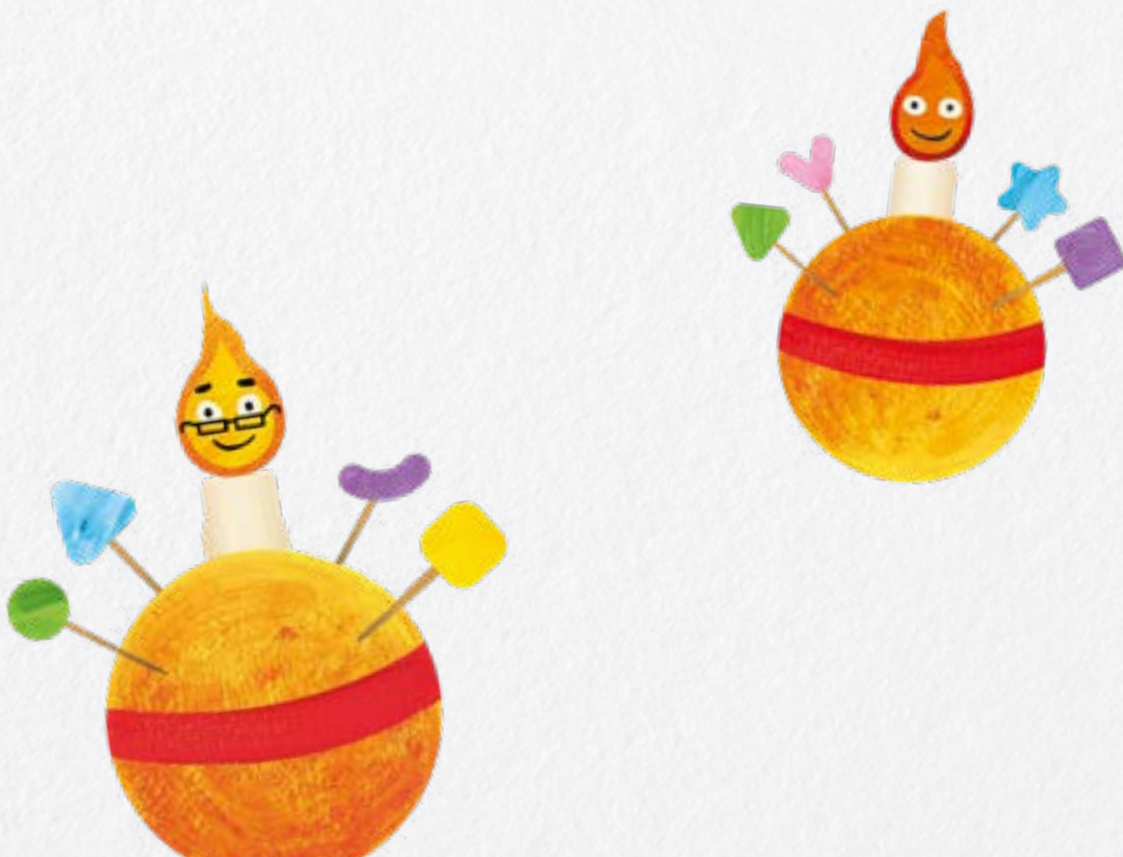
Remind the children that we have been focusing on the idea of sharing the light of God's love, and that that is the work of The Children's Society, which brings hope and love to children and young people around the country.

As the children leave, play 'This Little Light of Mine' again (Slide 18) and encourage the children to sing along.

Remind the children that we have been focusing on the idea of sharing the light of God's love, and that that is the work of The Children's Society, who bring hope and love to children and young people around the country. Set the children a challenge: to create a 'chain of hope'. Spend time thinking of encouragements that they could say or write to another person. Record this as a group to create a 'hope bank'. Give each child a postcard template and the word bank. Challenge them to find someone who needs hope and use their postcard to pass it on!

Sending out (Slide 18 or 19)

As the children leave, play 'This Little Light of Mine' again and encourage the children to sing along, or play 'Love Shine a Light' (Katrina and the Waves) as they leave.



You **inspire** me



Share the light

Celebrate **progress!**



Share the light

You are the **best!**



Share the light

I'm **grateful** for you!



Share the light

High five!



Share the light

Make it happen



Share the light

You make me smile



Share the light

Cultivate joy



Share the light