

## **The rationale behind these resources**

A key part of the Christian faith is to practice it in community with others in order to build good relationships. A great place to begin doing this, is in the home with the other people in your household.

These resources are for every family but are particularly designed for families who would not normally attend a Sunday morning service. Creating a Rhythm of Life may help a family to take ownership of their own faith and see that there are a wide variety of ways to practice it.

These resources could help parents who aren't growing in their faith within the family service that they attend as well as those who lack confidence talking about faith at home.

A church may also choose to use these resources during baptism preparation and the baptism service as a way to encourage families to live out their baptismal promises.

## **Spark and Shine Activities**

The activity suggestions are not presented as 'points with God' or 'points to get into heaven' (though this might be a misconception that some families have), but are presented as ways to make room for God to work in their lives. In our own Christian journey, we may have encountered similar concepts by the name of 'holy habits', 'spiritual disciplines', 'faith practices' or 'expressions of faith'.

All of the activity suggestions have been listed in two categories which are inspired by our calling to be lights in the world (Matthew 5:14-16).



**Spark** activities help us to receive spiritual nourishment like wisdom, love and understanding from God through the Holy Spirit.



**Shine** activities help us to express our faith outwardly and show God's love to others.

Families are encouraged to have a balance of both **Spark** and **Shine** activities overall – just like a candle needs both a **spark** to ignite it, and a chance to **shine** for everyone to see – the best way to live out the Christian life is to both receive from God and give to others.

The other important point is that the receiving and giving needs to happen regularly, on a constant loop. We need to regularly come back to God to draw on His abundant resources in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit afresh and go out into the world to love our neighbour.

## Introducing the Family Rhythm of Life resources in your context

The resources will be most effective if introduced as part of a service or small group session so that families feel supported in their discipleship journey by the wider church.

An informal service plan has been provided for churches to use and adapt to their context.

↓ **Download here** [sheffdio.org/service-plan](https://sheffdio.org/service-plan)



Baptism preparation and service resources have also been provided.

↓ **Download here** [sheffdio.org/baptism-prep](https://sheffdio.org/baptism-prep)

**Coming soon**

In your context, encourage families to:

- Develop a rhythm together as a family, parents should include children as much as possible.
- Plan activities around their existing routine.
- Regularly add or review their rhythm. In the main instructions for families we suggest trying a new activity every 4 weeks.
- Challenge themselves but keep it realistic. For some families starting with one weekly activity is still a big step which should be celebrated.

## Ideas for using these resources for ongoing discipleship

- Mention Family Rhythm of Life during subsequent services or sessions. You could build in ways for families to respond to the Bible teaching by adding to their Rhythm of Life.
- Ask families how they are getting on and encourage them to try new activities every so often.

Expansion packs - additional activity suggestions for different age groups, interests or seasons.

↓ **Download here** [sheffdio.org/expansion-packs](https://sheffdio.org/expansion-packs)



- Encourage families to share their experience on the Facebook page: **Family Rhythm of Life Community**. Here families can encourage each other, share ideas and find fellowship. [sheffdio.org/frolcommunity](https://sheffdio.org/frolcommunity)
- Have an annual Family Rhythm of Life session
- Promote seasonal materials as they are released. These will be linked to the Lights for Christ calendar. [sheffdio.org/lfc-seasonal-resources](https://sheffdio.org/lfc-seasonal-resources)
- For some young people and adults, it may be appropriate to suggest the Personal Rule of Life webpage and resources. [sheffdio.org/rule-of-life](https://sheffdio.org/rule-of-life)