

## **Candlemas – Share the Light**

### **Outline 2**

Psalm 24:7-10

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

### **Preparation**

Make sure you have enough candles for everyone in the congregation to take away with them. As they arrive give them a candle, but ask them to put it down and not light or use it during the service.

You will need pens and candle-shaped paper for everyone.

### **Introductory Prayer**

From the darkness of the outside world

**we have come into the light.**

From the darkness of our own guilt and sorrow

**we have come into the light.**

From the darkness of our own lack of faith

**we have come into the light.**

### **Responsive Reading** (based on Psalm 24:7-10)

Lift up, open up, gates and doors,

So the King of glory may come in.

**Who is this King of glory?**

He is the Lord, strong and powerful,

He is the Lord, mighty in battle.

**Who is this King of glory?**

Lift up, open up, gates and doors,

So the King of glory may come in.

**Who is this King of glory?**

The Lord Almighty,

He is the King of glory.

### **Confession**

The creation you made has not been cared for and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

The journey you took has not been followed and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

The suffering you went through has not been felt and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

The sacrifice you made has not been valued and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

The hope you sent has not been received and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

The future you offer has not been grasped and we live in darkness,  
**in sorrow we ask for your light.**

### **Reflection and discussion** (based on Luke 2:22-40)

Ask the congregation to form themselves into small groups of 6-8 in each, and where possible a mix of ages. Tell each of these sections of the account of Jesus being presented in the temple, asking the questions and giving a short time for discussion after each one.

A few weeks after the birth of a baby the mother, sometimes with the father, took the child to the temple to give thanks for a safe birth. The temple was the centre of worship, and would have had candles lit. Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple. How do you think they felt?

An old man called Simeon had felt God promise him that he would see the new King, the light of the world. On the day Jesus was brought to the temple Simeon felt the spirit of God telling him to go there. What do you think Simeon would have thought?

As soon as he saw the baby Simeon knew Jesus was the light of the world, and he celebrated with a special prayer. (Read Luke 2:22-40). The Bible says that Mary and Joseph 'marvelled' at those words – what do you think that means?

At the same time a Godly lady and prophetess, Anna, was in the temple. She saw Jesus and gave thanks that God had sent the promised saviour. What would her reaction have been to seeing Jesus?

After all this had happened Mary and Joseph left the temple with the baby Jesus, having been reminded again that he was special. What do you think they talked about on the way home?

Jesus brought light to the world – Simeon’s words were that Jesus would be a ‘light of revelation’. Jesus gives the light of his love to us – how can we share that light with others?

### **Prayer activity**

With: pens and candle-shaped paper (optional)

Ask everyone to close their eyes for 30 seconds and really concentrate on what they see. Ask them to ‘see’ the faces of work colleagues, friends at school, neighbours, and others in the community who may be sad and struggling with dark things in their lives.

Ask those who are able to write on a piece of candle-shaped paper the names of those they have thought about, and take the paper as a reminder to keep praying for the light of Jesus to shine.

Then ask everyone to silently pray for them, asking God to bring the light of Jesus into all the dark places of peoples’ lives.

### **Discuss/presentation - light in our world**

Invite representatives of two or three charities or organisations to come along and share briefly what they do to bring light into the lives of others. It may be that your church is directly linked to community work, homeless shelters, foodbanks, mission agencies, and so on.

This is a reminder that, as the light of Jesus shone at Candlemas, so we are called to take the light and hope of Jesus into the dark places and situations in our world.

## **Blessing the candles**

Gather all the candles to be used in church this year, and ask everyone to stand (if they are able) and hold up the candle they were given at the beginning of the service.

Bless us, your people, as we seek to follow the light of Jesus

Bless us, your followers, as we seek to shine with the light of Jesus

Bless these candles that shine in our church and homes, as a reminder of the light of Jesus

## **Closing Prayer**

May we know your joy in our hearts,  
for you are the God of light and joy.  
May we know your happiness in our spirits,  
for you are the God of light and happiness.  
May we know your smile on our faces,  
for you are the God of light and smiles.  
May we share your joy, happiness and smiles  
And share your light with all those we meet,  
for you are the God of light.

## **Ending**

Every family receives a candle mat as a gift, and hold it in their hands. This is to remind us all of God being with us on our journey, and helping us to give and use our gifts. Once every family has a candle mat in their hands ask them to repeat the simple prayer that is on the magnet:

## **Loving God, help me be a light for others today**

Source: Revd Canon Dr Sandra Millar Head of Life Events Church of England Evangelism and Discipleship Team

<https://churchsupporthub.org/download/service-outline-for-post-christmas-services/>