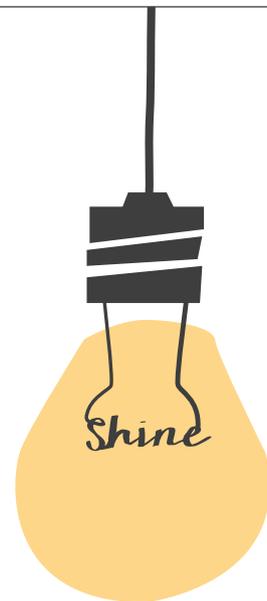




Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE



Dear Parent/Carer,

We are glad that your child is part of our new series Let Your Light Shine.

Our aim for this 6-week series is to explore what it means in practice to shine the light of Jesus to those around us. Just as Jesus was sent to be with people, to show them what God is like, so we are sent to be with people, showing and telling them what God is like (John 21:20) Jesus followers have God's Spirit, God's Light in them and when they lovingly interact with those around them, God connects with those people.

The program involves looking closely at some Bible passages about Jesus and how he interacted with, and loved people.

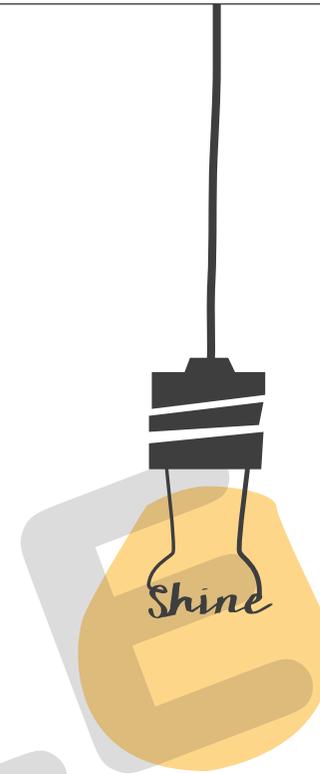
We'll be encouraging the children to:

- Be **LOVE** loving others including those who are different from us. Luke 19 Zacchaeus
- Be **INVOLVED** being involved in our neighbourhoods and developing relationships with those who live around us. Luke 5:27-31: Matthew's party
- Be **GENEROUS** looking at how we can be generous with those who are in need and with our community. John 6:1-15: Feeding the 5000
- Be **KIND HEARTED** noticing and looking out for those around us who may need a friend or some help. Mark 5:21-34: Jairus' daughter and the sick woman
- Be **TOGETHER** valuing being together as a church family and doing things together to build relationships

We pray that your kids will be inspired to truly follow Jesus, not just knowing about discipleship, but also living as disciples who make disciples. We hope that they will get excited about possible ways to put into practice what they are learning.

Please make a point of asking them about their ideas and pray about how you can support them in their growing discipleship. Consider adding a craft activity (for ideas see Pinterest). Make a light or lighthouse as a reminder to the children to LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE



This program is produced by the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT. It was developed and created by Louise Eccleston for Revive 2014 and adapted by Sally Smith for use as a 6 week children's program.

A core value of the Association is that our movement be MISSION SHAPED

- Showing and telling that God rules through Jesus Christ
- Motivated by love for God and others
- Seeing people, communities and societies transformed
- Giving what we have to mission, both locally and globally, more than to other things

Research shows that values are largely set by the time a person reaches adolescence, so this program is offered to help kids explore mission with their peers and leaders, in the hope that they will join the mission of Jesus, which is also the mission of the Church.

Since the greatest influence on growing children is their family, it is our prayer that whole families will get on board with this series. That's why each session includes a TAKE HOME CHALLENGE SHEET, which is a conversation starter and activity suggestion to continue the learning about living the mission of Jesus at home. As a leader, look out for other ways to involve family members and use this series as an opportunity to strengthen links between church and home.

The following page contains a letter to be sent out to families at the start of the series.

LEADERS INTRODUCTION

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE



This program uses a biblical metaphor for God, that of light. 1 John 1:5 says 'God is light and in him is no darkness at all.'

Light is fascinating. Scientists are still working out what it actually is and how best to describe it. Kids already have lots of experiences with light, from turning switches on and off, to seeing the power of lightning, to playing with shadows.

There are some brief educational animations about light for kids on YouTube such as:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1etCKDct_0

You could watch this together as an introduction if you don't feel your group has thought much about it, or get a couple of kids science books from the library to browse.

Because kids can see light and know what it does, it gives them a concrete way of talking about God's presence and power in them, and sharing that with others.

The Vibe

Gather your team to raise the level of enthusiasm about doing this series. Share how the light of God shines in your life now, and what a difference it will make when the kids and their families are more aware of it. Pray for the kids who will be a part of the program, their families and yourselves as leaders. Enthusiasm is contagious. The word *enthusiasm* comes from the Greek *en* - in and *theos* - God. God in us.

Theme Songs

Which songs do you know about light? Is there one that you sing in church? Choose one as a theme song. Perhaps get a small group of kids to learn and teach it to the others. Here are some suggestions. Challenge the kids to find others.

- *Let Your Light Shine* Hillsong Kids
- *This Little Light of Mine, I'm Going to Let it Shine* (Find it on You Tube) traditional or see the modern adaptation by Addison Road
- *Wanna be great? Then Serve* Free download from max7.org
- *My Lighthouse* by Rend Collective

Your Group Area

Consider creating theme decorations. Kids learn as much from their environment as from what is consciously taught. Is there a parent or someone else you know who would like to be involved in creating banners and props, perhaps involving some of the kids in making them? Anything from static yellow and orange fabric to moving spotlights could help create atmosphere and make it memorable. Involve the kids in planning and producing the décor.

Take Home Challenge Cards

Each session children will be given a card to take home.

PART 1

This talks about what was done in the session and what the group will try to do during the week.

PART 2

This contains an interesting fact and suggests a simple family activity

We suggest copying these onto coloured card, perhaps with a fridge magnet so families will notice these during the week. You may also consider personally handing them to parents, or posting them to the family.

SESSION ONE

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE



Leaders Notes

Aim

To establish the theme 'LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE' by helping the group to explore what Jesus meant when he said,

'I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.' (John 8:12)

'You are like light for the whole world... Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise your Father in heaven' (Matthew 5: 14,16)

Don't be tempted to tell your group the meaning. Give them information about light and help them to use it to work out the meaning for themselves. (Jesus didn't explain it. He simply said it and left others to ponder the meaning.)

How to Prepare

Familiarise yourself with the whole unit and all the materials included.

Think of your group and what they might already know about light and what Jesus said about it. What do they need to take them to a greater understanding?

For Session One, a science teacher or someone with a love of optics could help you set up the science stations and help with the explanations afterwards.

You Will Need (depending on the activities you choose)

- Mirrors
- Prism and light source
- Other science light gadgets
- Kids reference books about light
- Bibles
- Copies of the take home challenge

Session Outline

1. Explain what is happening this week 'We'll be exploring two things Jesus said about light and doing some experiments to help us work out what he might have meant.
2. **Light Experiment Stations**
 - One child (or more) stands behind a blanket. Give the others a mirror and challenge them to use it to watch the person behind the blanket, without moving the blanket or putting their head around it. Give everyone a turn
 - Using a data projector or flashlight, invite kids one at a time to make a shadow shape projected on a wall and the rest of the group guesses what it is.
 - Get the kids to use felt pens to decorate a 10cm fish cut from plastic milk containers. Put it in a clear glass bowl. Does it look bigger? Smaller? Why?
3. **Facts About Light**
 - Gather everyone back together.
 - Have someone explain something about each of the stations and what it shows us about light. E.g. *A mirror works by the light coming from the object in straight lines and bouncing off the mirror, if you have it in the right position for the light rays to reach your eye; Shadows are formed when the light (which travels in straight lines) is blocked; Things in water look bigger because light bends as it goes from one material to another.*
 - Get kids into groups and give them two minutes to think of as many facts about light as they can, from the stations and their own knowledge. At the end of the time, ask each group for one of their facts. Keep rotating around the groups hearing new facts until they can think of no more. Make it more active by having the next child in the group run 'like lightning' a safe set course and give their fact when they return.
4. **What Jesus Said**
 - Make two groups. Give one group John 8:12 and challenge them to read it together and have the whole group memorise it, then present it in a way to make it memorable.
 - Give the other group Matthew 5: 14,16 with the same challenge.
 - Ask each group to present their verse.
 - Pose the question: Who is the 'you' in the Matthew 5? How can both these sayings be true? If Jesus is the true light how can his followers be too?
 - Challenge everyone (yes, leaders too!) to memorise both verses for next week.
5. **What Should We Do About It**

Now we know what Jesus said about light, what do you think we should do? What could we do this week to start doing what Jesus said?

SESSION ONE

LET YOUR LIGHT

SHINE



Take Home Challenge

This week we did some experiments that helped us understand light and we looked at what Jesus said about light.

Next week we'll see if we can recite **BOTH** these verses.

'I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.'

John 8:12

'You are like light for the whole world... Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise your Father in heaven'

Matthew 5:14,16

DID YOU KNOW?

Light from the stars travels all the way to us, and it's a long way! The sun is the closest star. The next closest star is about 9.46 million million kilometres away from Earth. The light from it takes 4.3 years to get here. That's a long time considering its travelling 300,000 km every second.

Perhaps your family could go outside after dark on a clear night and look at the stars. Talk about what Jesus said about being light for the world.



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