



# Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:  
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus  
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:  
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

## Luke 2:36-38 Story of Anna in the temple

Theme: We are chosen as God's light-carriers, carrying God's light into everyday life

### Contents:

<a href="#">Introduction</a>	.....	1
<a href="#">Together</a>	.....	1
<a href="#">Experience</a>	.....	2
<a href="#">Explore</a>	.....	3
<a href="#">Express</a>	.....	5
<a href="#">Handouts</a>	.....	8

### Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

During the festival of Candlemas, we remember how Jesus (the light of the world) was brought to the Temple to be blessed. We see how Simeon and Anna responded. Simeon recognised who Jesus was, Anna recognised too but went a step further and shared this knowledge with others. This session gives us an opportunity to consider how we share Jesus with others, taking God's light out into our communities. During Candlemas, Christians around the world take their candles to their local church, where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year; for Christians, these blessed candles serve as a symbol of Jesus, who is the Light of the World.

Anna was a prophet, her job was to speak God's words into our world. Prophecy could be described as shards of God's light breaking through into our darkness, giving glimpses of God's kingdom.

We can use this opportunity to bless our children as carriers of God's light into their world.



Be Aware – Some Bible versions of this story say Anna worshipped by not eating. You may want to be careful to choose a version that doesn't include this. Otherwise you may want to explain that fasting is not good for growing bodies which need food to fuel them. Sometimes some adults will go without food for a short time, seeing it as a way of concentrating on God and remembering to put God first but it is never good deliberately to go without food for a long time – God gives us food to keep us fit and healthy.

You can find information about Candlemas on the Roots for Churches website, and there is a session on the story of Simeon in Week 5 of December 2023 in Faith Adventures for Children Together.

## Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

### Gathering prayer

#### Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

#### Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

#### As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

#### Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

#### Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

#### And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

#### As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

#### AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

**Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.**

**Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.**

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,**

**Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

**Amen**



## In-person game - Find the light

Sit the group in a circle and choose one person to stand in the middle. They can either close their eyes or wear a blindfold.

Group members in the circle must pass a torch or unlit candle behind their backs, around the circle. They are aiming to pass the light, without the person in the middle being able to guess where it is.

The person in the middle of the circle has three chances to point at where they think the light is. If they guess correctly, they can choose the next person to be in the middle. If they don't guess correctly, the last person to hold the Light has the chance to be in the middle. Once each round has started, no one can speak.

---

## Alternative game - Light Memory



Cut pieces of plain card or use cards from a pack of playing cards to make a Light Memory game. Draw (or print out) four or six matching pictures of lightbulbs or candles and attach them to the face of some of the cards then shuffle them back into the pack.

Lay all of the cards face down on the floor, or a table.

Members of the group take it in turns to flip over two cards, looking for a Light Match. Remind them to watch other people's turns closely, remembering where Light cards have already been turned over.

The game ends when all the pairs have been found.

*For younger groups, use a smaller number of cards so that the chance of finding a Light card is greater. Older groups may enjoy the challenge of using a full deck of cards.*

## Experience

For this story we recommend using the Contemporary English Version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A36-38&version=CEV>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Anna and Simeon by Crossroads Kidsclub

<https://youtu.be/leN-xNrkjbo?si=GPYOz7cQxVcfxOf>

Simeon and Anna VYM Bible stories

<https://youtu.be/ULboDfH53Dk?si=GbcUoH4glq-RYN0h>

Over fives: Candlemass explained with Lego by Lego Brickpriest

[https://youtu.be/rdq6g7SBcpg?si=Ftns\\_pnD37em3Be](https://youtu.be/rdq6g7SBcpg?si=Ftns_pnD37em3Be)

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: This little light of mine Wesley's wuppets

<https://youtu.be/NsbRIg-ebWg?si=0qqgHTnQuHKQvc1L>

Five to elevens: City on a hill by Becky and Nick Drake

<https://youtu.be/ITEadEftdnM?si=ol1g-jSv5Qxlo78V>



# Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

## A reflective story to share as a group

*You will need:*

Some blocks (Lego or Jenga style)

Some small people blocks (I used wooden people but you could use toilet roll people or coloured wooden blocks to represent people)

A tealight (battery powered is best)

Some ribbons or threads in bright colours

*What to do:*

Gather the group around a table or in a circle on the floor (whichever is best for your group). Explain that we are going to explore today's story together. Once everyone is settled, begin.

We have put our Christmas decorations away for another year.

How does it make you feel to put Christmas away?

How dark has it been feeling the last few weeks when all the decorations have been put away?

Today's story speaks to us about the light of Christmas.

This is the temple in Jerusalem (*place wooden blocks in a large rectangle shape*)

The temple was busy with people praying and worshipping (*place people blocks of different shapes and sizes dotted around the temple*).

Simeon was a good man who had been told by God to go to the temple this day (*place Simeon at one end of the temple*).

Anna was a prophet who spent all her days in the temple worshipping and praying (*place Anna at the opposite end of the temple to Simeon*).

Today, a baby is being brought to the temple to be blessed (*place Mary and Joseph blocks in the middle of the temple, along with a small block for Jesus*).

Simeon saw the baby and recognised him, he took the baby in his arms, blessed him and thanked God (*bring the Simeon block close to the family*).

He said "This is the light of the world for all people" (*place a lit tealight on top of the baby block*).

God had promised Simeon that in his lifetime he would see the one who God will send to save God's people. Today, he had seen with his own eyes.

Anna also recognised the baby (*bring the Anna block close the family, opposite Simeon*).

Anna blessed the baby but also spoke for all to hear. She said, "This is God with us: God's love and light are here!" (*sprinkle glitter sequins around the baby and temple*).



She told all who could hear that this was God's light, that Jesus had come for all of us (*turn all the other people blocks round to face the baby*).

She was right. Jesus had not just come to see Simeon who had been waiting, Jesus had come for all who could hear. God's love and light reached them all (*lay golden/yellow thread or ribbon, coming from the baby block out to reach each person in the temple*).

But it doesn't stop there; God's love and light breaks through time and space to reach everyone, everywhere (*remove the temple walls as you lay more ribbons coming from the baby out of the temple pointing towards each person in the circle*).

And God's love and light found in Jesus, is for you too (*place a lit tealight on the end of each ribbon, near to each person in the group*).

Anna's words given by God, carried to all who could hear. I wonder how we can carry the light and love of God our into our homes and communities?

Sit back and pause a while, to let the story rest with the group.

Ask the group: I wonder how you can share God's love and light with others?  
Take ideas from everyone.

As a conclusion, invite each person in the group to pick up their candle and if they would like to, share one thing they will do this week to share God's love and light with others.

---

## Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



'Shine' by Sarah Asuquo

[https://youtu.be/f1XgKnOfTLA?si=\\_RAdJCYiIJ9OuvJb](https://youtu.be/f1XgKnOfTLA?si=_RAdJCYiIJ9OuvJb)

### Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- Anna was in the temple when Jesus' family brought him there, but the Bible doesn't tell us clearly whether or not she saw him. What do you think, and does it matter?
- What different kinds of light are there? If you were a type of light, what type would you be and why?
- When we talk about Jesus being the light of the world, we don't mean he is actually glowing! Why do we use light as a symbol – what does the word "light" make us think of in relation to Jesus?

### Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder if there are times you light candles or have seen candles lit in church?
- Would you rather only live in the light for a month or only live in the dark for a month?



## What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- A candle, a torch, and a lamp – talk to the children about different types of light and how they are used, maybe spotlighting using the torch, lighting for comfort using a lamp and the soft light of a candle which pushes away the darkness
- Stained glass window image – look at the light shining through the window and how it changes the way it looks
- Paper chain people – talk about how Anna shared the message and passed it on to other people
- An Identity card or some form of ID – Anna recognised who Jesus was and how important the baby was, she shared the new of his identity with others
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (e.g. stones, felt, twigs etc)

## Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

### Beams of light prayers

*You will need:*

- Different coloured card or cellophane
- World Map (optional)
- Pens or pencils

Cut the coloured card to make lots of irregular triangles to represent beams of light. Lay the triangles randomly over a table.

Encourage the children to think about where God's light needs to shine in the world and select a beam of light. Write or draw pictures of people, countries or events that they want to pray for. You might want to give some suggestions of things to pray for, such as recent national and local events, their families and those who are sick.

If you are able, you could place some battery lights inside a clear lidded storage container and the children could place their triangles on it as they pray, so that the light shines through.

As an alternative, you could place the triangles over a world map.

Dear God  
 May you bring light into our world of darkness.  
 And may the light of Jesus shine in our hearts  
 that we might bring his light to others.  
 Amen







## Spoken prayer

God,  
 Let us be your light carriers;  
 Ones that **carry** the light of your love into the world.  
 Let us be your light carriers;  
 ones that **show** your love to the world.  
 Let us burn brightly everyday, everywhere and with everyone.  
 Amen

## Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

## Light up cone person

Anna had waited many years to see Jesus and, when she knew that he had been born, she praised God and shared what she knew about Jesus with others. For each of us, we can carry Jesus' light into everyday life with our words and actions shining the light of Jesus. This craft will remind us how we can shine the Jesus Light.

### You will need:

- Cone template
- Felt pens or coloured pencils
- Scissors
- Glue
- Battery operated tealights

### What you do:

Divide the cone into three sections to make two body sections and a head section. Colour in the cone to represent you. Once you have completed the colouring, glue along the tab and make the cone. Place the cone over a battery tea light and see how the light shine through.



## Simple Kalaidoscope craft

When the light of Jesus shines through, we get a glimpse of heaven and it brightens even the darkest corners of our world. Making this simple kaleidoscope enables us to experience the light from the sun making things look bright and bringing out the colours in things.

### You will need:

- A paper cup
- A paper plate with a hole in the centre
- Different coloured Cellophane (you could also use sweet packets/wrappers)



Optional – coloured beads and sequins  
Strong glue or a glue gun

### *What you do:*

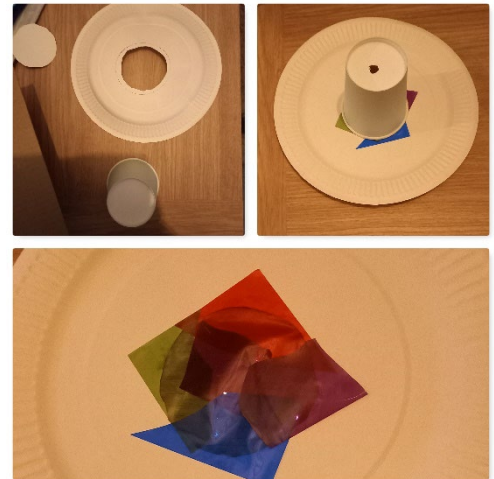
Glue squares of coloured cellophane together to cover the hole in the paper plate. If you have coloured beads and sequins to add into your kaleidoscope, put them on top of the cellophane and then glue another layer of cellophane loosely over the top to hold them in place. The beads and sequins should be able to move around a little.

Make a hole in the base of your paper cup with a pencil, just big enough to peep through.

Now use strong glue or a glue gun to glue the open rim of the paper cup over the plate so that it lines up with the hole you covered with cellophane. Press it down firmly and allow the glue to dry.

Decorate the plate and cup with stickers or drawings/patterns.

Once your kaleidoscope is ready, hold it up so the tiny hole is by one of your eyes, close the other eye, and point the plate end towards the sunlight. See the light shining brightly through the cellophane and sequins to make a beautiful pattern.



## Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

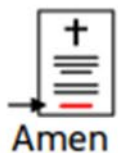
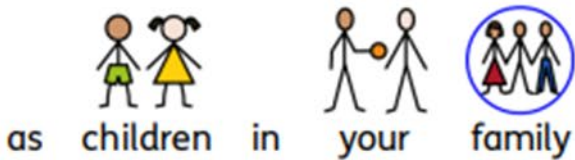
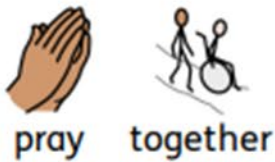
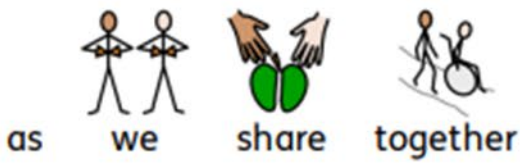
- Each day this week, take just a couple of moments to sit in the dark and to light a candle or a torch or nightlight. See how the light pushes the darkness away. Thank God for bringing light. (Remember to have a responsible adult with you if using a real candle flame)
- We bring God's light when we help someone in need, cheer up someone who is sad, help people find peace. What can you do for someone else this week that will bring them God's light?

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Anna, the prophet in the temple** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk](mailto:lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk)

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Psalm 139**





Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, repeat with left hand



Alternate hands back and forth

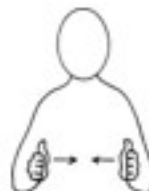




Illustration by lambsongs.co.nz via freebibleimages.com





Illustration by lambsongs.co.nz via freebibleimages.com

