

## **Candlemas – Share the light**

### **Outline 1 (for Eucharist)**

Malachi 3:1-5

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

### **We gather**

Responsive Introduction (based on Hebrews 2:14-18)

You came to the world as a child, just like us

#### **You came to bring light**

You came to the world and suffered temptation, just like us

#### **You came to bring light**

You came to the world to free us from the fear of death

#### **You came to bring light**

You came to the world and gave your life for all people

#### **You came to bring light**

Lights of the world

Have a number of candles lit around the church. If it is a dull day or evening service this will work well. Make sure that all lights are off, and walk around the church. Ask everyone to say 'The Light of the world is in....' and ask for suggestions for the final word. It could be a country, the name of a person, or a town or community. Repeat the phrase a few times, moving around the candle-lit church and asking for suggestions.

### **Introduction – Light in our lives**

Talk about the meaning of Candlemas. It is when Jesus was presented, as was the custom, in his local temple. It is a reminder that Jesus is special, and some of the

people in the temple realised just how special he was. Then use this responsive prayer:

Jesus, you were born to bring light

**You bring light to our lives.**

Jesus, you brought light to the temple,

**You bring light to our lives.**

Jesus, you brought light to those who saw you,

**You bring light to our lives.**

Jesus, your light shines in our own darkness,

**You bring light to our lives.**

Jesus, your light is for us to take and shine,

**You bring light to our lives**

**We say sorry**

**Confession:** Light in dark places (based on Malachi 3:1-5)

The light of Jesus shines on the darkness of our lives.

The light of Jesus shines on all the evil and bad in our world.

The light of Jesus shines to purify, refine, and make good.

The light of Jesus will shine on the cheats, the cruel, and the unjust.

So let us think about the times when we have been filled with darkness, and commit ourselves to allow the light of Jesus to shine in us.

Light of Jesus, shine on us. Make us clean, and help us to offer you the best we can be. Amen

## **We listen**

### **Story / Talk** (Based on Luke 2:22-40)

Repeat this a few times, shining the light into different places, each time saying a different one of these:

The light shines on us

The light shines in the dark places of our lives

The light shines on our town/village

The light shines on those in need

The light shines on people across the world

Teach the congregation the phrase: '*The light shone*', asking them to repeat it whenever you say it. Then tell the story of when Jesus was presented in the temple (Luke 2:21-40), commonly known as Candlemas, covering these key points:

#### *1. The light shone* – in Bethlehem

Jesus had been born in the stable, and the *light shone* from the new-born king. The *light shone* in the sky as the Wise Men followed the star to see the new king. When Jesus was a few weeks old his parents took him to the temple to be presented there, which was the custom at that time. His parents wanted to give thanks for their son, and the *light shone* in the temple with candles lighting the way. An old man named Simeon was nearly always there. The *light shone* out of him – he loved and trusted God, and held on to God's promise that he would see the son of God before he died. As Mary and Joseph brought Jesus, Simeon was aware that the *light shone* from this special baby. He realized that the baby was the promised light of the world, and the *light shone* from him. He held the baby Jesus, giving thanks to God, and in that temple the *light shone*.

Anna was an old lady who also worshipped in the temple. She saw that the light shone, and she too went to see the baby. She knew that Jesus was the promised new King, and the *light shone* from her as she prayed and spoke to Jesus and his parents.

The *light shone* in the temple from the candles, and the *light shone* from the faces of Simeon and Anna as they saw Jesus and knew that God had sent him to save the world. The *light shone* from Jesus, who was and is the light of the world. As we remember Candlemas, when the *light shone* in the temple, we also remember Jesus, who shines on to bring light to the world.

### **We respond**

Invite the congregation to sit in quiet, or talk to one or two people around them. Ask them to consider places in the community that need the light of Christ to shine. What difference would the light of Jesus make? Is there anything we can do to shine the light?

End with repeating the phrase '**Help us to shine your light**' three times all together.

### **We celebrate**

#### **Preface before the Eucharist**

We give you thanks for the light that shines – the light of Christ, and we pray that we would become lights for our world as we remember Jesus and the light he brings.

#### **Prayer**

The light shone in the temple, and Jesus brought the light. We give thanks for the light that Jesus gave to Simeon and Anna, and the light of God that they shared.

The light of Jesus shone as he healed and helped. We give thanks for the light that Jesus offers all who turn to him, and the light that changes lives.

The light of Jesus shines in and through those who follow him. We give thanks for the light of Jesus that shines in us, and can shine from us to help others.

## **We go into the world**

### **Blessing**

Jesus brought light of the world, and we can be his light.

Jesus brought light to Simeon and Anna, and we can share his light.

Jesus brought light to everyone, and we can spread his light.

And the blessing of God the creator, Jesus the light, and Spirit the helper, be with us as we shine with his light today and every day. Amen

### **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/>