

‘Epiphany Season’
Epiphany & Candlemas Webinar

Great to see you on the 18th November for our Epiphany and Candlemas Webinar! I hope this handout will be helpful and provide some practical ideas for working with children and families, as well as inspire conversations amongst your churches.
 For any support or information, please get in touch!

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‘How can they hear unless somebody tells them?’
Romans 10:14

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| How has lockdown impacted your ministry to children & families? | Lockdown has impacted our ministry to children and families in many ways, both positively and negatively. Take some time to consider the ways in which lockdown has influenced the ministry within your church/parish. |
| Lockdown in Melksham – all can be transferred to seasonal outreach with children and families. | <p>Toddler Groups Activity boxes/packs, online & face-to-face support.</p> <p>Schools Work Collective Worship/Open the Book videos, Easter/end-of-term/Harvest recorded services.</p> <p>Messy Church Holiday Club & Light Party (with a difference!) Messy Church ‘At Home’ & ‘In a Bag’.</p> |
| Epiphany Season | <p>How can we continue to share the light of Christ and celebrate our special festivals?</p> <p>All things are possible!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be creative. • Think ‘outside the box’. • As families what they want/need. • Remember that outreach is OUTreach. |

The key themes of Epiphany Season link beautifully to lockdown & post-lockdown ministry...

| | Key Themes | Practical Ideas |
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| Remembrance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss & grief (people, roles, freedom, jobs, etc). • The need to remember. <p>Consider how lockdown has impacted the communities in which we work & the need to acknowledge this.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about creative ways to remember: memory boxes, bubble blowing, etc. • Focus on creative prayer. |
| Light Over Darkness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating light over darkness – linking to this year and the impact of lockdown. • Consider mental health, increase in loneliness, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light Parties – a wonderful way to share the light and love of Christ. Although Light Parties are traditionally run on Halloween, they could also be used to celebrate Candlemas (more info below). • Decorating windows and front gardens. |
| New Beginnings | <p>How can we celebrate New Beginnings in the current climate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider natural endings to some aspects of ministry and new opportunities. • Think about celebrating new beginnings in relation to starting/moving school, new babies being born, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘When lockdown is lifted...’ activities & planning. • Considering opportunities to STOP and start something new. • What do families want/need? |
| Journeying | <p>Thinking about discipleship...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider ways to engage our communities during this challenging time. • How can we disciple children & families when we cannot physically gather? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring ‘big questions’ together (online & 1:1). • Discipleship through relationship (online & in person). • Social Media. |

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| <p>Giftings</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What gifts can we offer? • What giftings of other can we harness and build-up? • What giftings have become more apparent during lockdown? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘You are Special’ theme. • ‘What gifts can I bring to Jesus?’ – children, families, volunteers. • Supporting & celebrating parents/carers: ‘thank you gestures’, messages, keeping in touch, 1:1 meetings, prayer, practical support. |
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Light Parties & Candlemas

A number of people attending our Webinar were interested in ways to transfer the traditional alternative to Halloween Light Party, to a celebration of Candlemas. All Light Party themed activities can be easily transferred to celebrate Candlemas, although you may wish to alter storytelling to include more about the presentation of Jesus in the temple and the festival of lights.

It is best for all activities to be provided in full for families (apart from pens, tape, scissors, etc). Here are a few light themed activity ideas:

Play-dough – ‘Create something that reminds you of light!’



Paper Lanterns (you could include an LED tealight)





Rainbow themed activities – these are particularly meaningful because of the rainbow's significance during lockdown.



Light Collages

In addition to these light themed activities, you could include activities based on Jesus' presentation at the temple (there are different activity sheets and activity ideas on the Google).

Questions to consider:

- How can we 'do' outreach in the current climate?
- How can we continue to celebrate festivals and key aspects of the Christian calendar in the current climate?
- How do we make sure we do not lose sight of discipleship in our current ministry?
- How can we promote a partnership between online & face-to-face ministry?

Useful links:

- Melksham Messy Church YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtO0ClCvveIV8XCJw1HqIMw>
- Messy Church at Home: <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/resources/messy-church-home-ideas>
- Scripture Union Light Party Info: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/what-we-do/light-parties>
- WeTransfer (a great way to transfer files for free): <https://wetransfer.com/>
- VideoLeap (a good video editor app): <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/videoleap-video-editor-maker/id1255135442>

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