



Scripture Union



# LIGHT PARTY

2018  
PACK

## INSIDE

- Everything you need to plan a Light Party for children, young people or all-ages
- Mary Hawes, National Children's Advisor for the Church of England, on how we can make the most of Halloween
- Creative makes, games, food ideas, prayer activities, and a Jesus focus for your Light Party

'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.'

John 1:4



# Hello

Welcome to your *Light Party Pack 2018!* I'm really glad this pack has made its way into your hands. My hope and prayer is that it will help you and your church to share the good news of Jesus this Halloween.

In the Bible we read, 'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind' (John 1:4), or as the child-friendly *Contemporary English Version* puts it, 'His life gave light to everyone.' This 'life' – this 'light' – is Jesus Christ, our Saviour. The light is for all people, and our challenge as Christians is to share this light with our communities.

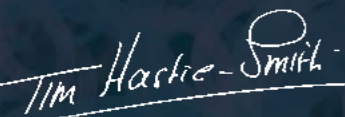
Halloween presents a perfect opportunity to do this. In stark contrast to all the scary costumes and a focus on darkness, we can provide something different – an alternative that reflects the light of Jesus and shows love to our communities.

The *Light Party Pack* is here to help you do just that. It includes everything you need to organise a fantastic Light Party or celebration event. Whether in your church hall, a local school, in your home or out in the community, the *Light Party Pack* is full of ideas for games, food, creative makes, prayer and other activities, for ages 5 through to 18. We've also included some ideas for sharing the Bible at your event and we've created some videos to help you do this which you can find at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk).

This year, we're really pleased to have the National Children's Advisor for the Church of England share her thoughts on Halloween and her suggestions for how as a church we can respond to it. We share some tricky questions about Halloween and faith that have come from unchurched children and give you some top tips for answering any difficult questions that might arise at your Light Party. And there's plenty more advice and helpful tips nestled amongst these pages.

Thank you for hosting a Light Party and joining with us in sharing God's love with children and young people across the country.

Every blessing,



Rev Tim Hastie-Smith  
National Director, Scripture Union



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Visit [www.lightparty.org.uk](http://www.lightparty.org.uk) for even more great Light Party ideas, resources and advice.

ON THE  
BACK COVER  
ORDER SCRIPTURE UNION'S  
TAKE-HOME BOOKLETS FOR  
YOUR CHILDREN  
NOW ONLY £2 FOR  
A PACK OF 10



# Celebrate light!

By Mary Hawes

Every year it's the same. From the end of September, shops are bursting with macabre costumes, pumpkins crowd the vegetable aisles, orange sweets shaped like skulls or fangs scream out at you, and films with a horror theme are released and promoted. It's Halloween again – and up and down the country communities are plunged into trick or treating, parties with spooky tales, and houses festooned with ghosts and cobwebs.

But if we asked people what they're celebrating, the answer is likely to be, 'It's just a bit of fun.' The beginnings of Halloween aren't remembered. Most people just see it as a time to let loose the scary side of life, enjoy the thrill of being terrified, and wear costumes ranging from superheroes to skeletons.

Halloween's origins are found 2,000 years ago in the festival of Samhain. In the northern hemisphere, the days are shortening, and an increasing amount of time is spent in darkness. Samhain was a celebration of the end of the harvest season in Gaelic culture, and was sometimes regarded as the 'Celtic New Year'.

Ancient Gaels believed that on 31 October the boundary between the alive and the deceased dissolved, and the dead become dangerous for the living by causing problems such as sickness or damaged crops. Costumes and masks were worn at the festivals to mimic the evil spirits or placate them.

This pagan New Year's Eve became a night of evil and terror when all hell broke loose. People believed that goblins and ghosts were abroad that night, while witches celebrated their black rites as the spirits and souls of the dead roamed the earth. To frighten the evil spirits, our ancestors created a din with bells, horns, pots and pans and built fires to frighten the witches or perhaps burn them if they were caught.

As far back as AD 835, Pope Gregory IV wanted Christians to remember that darkness cannot overcome light. 1 November was declared All Saints (All Hallows) Day, a day to remember that death is not the end and our life with God stretches beyond the grave. And Halloween (All Hallows Eve – the vigil to prepare to celebrate the saints) was born.

Most people don't question Halloween (though they might be uneasy with trick or treating when it gets out of hand) – they want their children to be part of the fun.

As Christians, we are rightly uneasy about the celebration of the dark side of life. It's not what Jesus calls us to. But folding our arms, putting on a disapproving face and being negative is unlikely to woo families away from what they see as a harmless bit of fun.

Too often Christians are perceived as killjoys, rather than those who are living life in its fullness (John 10:10). When Paul saw all the altars to gods on his visit to Athens (Acts 17), he didn't tear them down – he used them as a way in to talking about Jesus. We can do the same with Halloween.

Halloween offers us an opportunity to celebrate – to celebrate light, and to invite our communities to celebrate with us. For some years, Scripture Union has offered resources for Light Parties – ways of bringing the good news of Jesus to children, young people and families.



This year, in some regions of the UK, Halloween falls in the middle of half term – so with no school the next day, it's a great opportunity to have a celebration that links into an invitation to a special all-age service on the Sunday.

This pack has plenty of ideas to get you thinking, but here are a few to get you started:

## TRY TREAT AND TREATING

Groups of children dressed in hero costumes (along with responsible adults) take treats to the houses in the community, including a card with a simple illustration and Bible verse. Remember to tell the bemused recipients which church you're from!

## HOLD A LIGHT PARTY

Invite everyone to dress in 'light' colours – red, yellow, white, gold – and have light-themed games and competitions, like those in this pack. Include a biblical 'light' story as part of the celebrations, such as Moses meeting God in the burning bush, Creation or the first chapter of John's Gospel, as included in this pack.

## HAVE A SAINTS PARTY

Invite everyone to come dressed as a saint (you might want to give a few ideas and costume hints). Have saint-themed activities and food, and tell the stories of saints across the ages

who followed Jesus. Maybe one of the 'saints' from your congregation could tell the story of how they started following Jesus.

Hallow is an ancient word for 'holy'. Let's get ready for a holy evening that celebrates Jesus, the Light – Light that darkness can never overcome; Light that brings life, not fear.



ABOUT  
THE AUTHOR

Many years ago, Mary Hawes was the Children's Bible Notes Editor for Scripture Union. Now she is the National Children and Youth Adviser for the Church of England. She has also worked as a Diocesan Children's Adviser, Cathedral Education Officer, and primary school teacher. She was ordained in 2000 and serves as an Associate Priest in the parish of St Mary with St Alban, Teddington.

# Light breaks in

By Matty Hawthorne

What a difference Jesus can make in a young person's life! His presence is absolutely transformative.

When the light of Christ breaks into a life, liberty follows. As Paul wrote, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (2 Corinthians 3:17, NIV).

We see it in the lives of those who encounter Jesus in the Gospels – from the woman caught in adultery, to the tax collector hiding up a tree, to the children running eagerly towards Jesus.

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF LORNE

I remember working with a young guy called Lorne. Although only a teenager, he'd spent years in the criminal justice system. When I learned about Lorne's home life, it was clear why his behaviour was so disruptive.



I'll never forget the day Lorne gave his life to Jesus. The first thing he asked was whether he could have a Bible. He'd dropped out of school at 13, and I knew that he struggled with reading. But this encounter with Christ meant he went away excited by the prospect of reading this ancient text.

When we next met, a week later, Lorne came bouncing up to me and said, 'I've been reading my palms!' I was all set to explain how palm reading wasn't really what Christians do, when I realised that he meant Psalms.

For Lorne, the Bible came alive as the Spirit of life illuminated the Scriptures to him. But most remarkable of all was that Lorne's attitude and behaviour were transformed. His rebellious and disruptive traits gave way to thoughtfulness and kindness.

# Order, join, donate

## THREE WAYS TO ORDER, JOIN OR DONATE

**By post:** Complete any relevant sections of the form below and return to us at  
 Freepost SCRIPTURE UNION (without a stamp) OR  
 Scripture Union, Trinity House, Opal Court, Opal Drive, Fox Milne, Milton Keynes, MK15 0DF (with a stamp)  
**Online:** Visit [www.lightparty.org.uk](http://www.lightparty.org.uk) **By phone:** Call us on 01908 856000

### SECTION 1: YOUR DETAILS

Title	Forename
Surname	
Home address	
Postcode	
Daytime phone (In case of queries)	

We take your privacy seriously. By completing your personal details we will be able to process your order/donation/95 Campaign sign up. We would also like to keep in touch with you by post with information that is relevant to you from across the SU movement. Please tick the boxes below if you **DO NOT** wish to hear from us in these ways.  
 Resources to support you, children in your life and church   
 The difference you can make to children's lives through your giving

### CHURCH DETAILS - OPTIONAL

It is helpful for us to know a bit more about your church so we can evaluate the impact of Light Parties and tailor the communications we send you in the future.

Church name
Church town
Church website
Church denomination

Your role in Church:

- Church leader
- Assistant church leader
- Community worker
- Children's or young people's worker (paid or voluntary)
- Other

### SECTION 2: JOIN THE 95 CAMPAIGN

The 95 Campaign is all about gathering, equipping and encouraging those with a heart for the 95% of children and young people not regularly in church. So, if like us you're passionate about seeing the gospel shared with the next generation in culturally relevant ways, join The 95 Campaign today...

To join the campaign, fill in your email below and we will keep you informed by email with updates on The 95 Campaign – including new resources, news and stories, plus ways in which you can help to reach more of the 95% of children not in church.

Email

### SECTION 3: ORDER YOUR EXTRA MATERIALS

<b>Church collection envelopes</b> (pack of 25) Code: G274772	Qty of packs	<input type="text"/>	Pack of 25	FREE
	Total cost	<input type="text"/>		FREE
<b>What Do You Do When Darkness Comes to Visit?</b> (ages 8-11) (pack of 10) Code: G065248	Qty of packs	<input type="text"/>	Pack of 10	£2.00
	Total cost	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Who is the Light?</b> (ages 5-8) (pack of 10) Code: G064647	Qty of packs	<input type="text"/>	Pack of 10	£2.00
	Total cost	<input type="text"/>		

### SECTION 4: PAYMENT AND/OR DONATION

Can I ask you to consider giving a gift today?  
 Your donation will help us reach more children and young people with the good news of Jesus.

Payment for copies of **What Do You Do When Darkness Comes to Visit?** and **Who is the Light?:** £

My donation of £  TOTAL £

Please find enclosed a:  Cheque (Please make cheques payable to Scripture Union)  
 OR Please debit my  Visa  Mastercard

Card number	Name on card		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
Start date	Expiry date	Security Number	Date
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature			<input type="text"/>

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 You can unsubscribe at any time by contacting Scripture Union: 01908856000 or email: [hello@scriptureunion.org.uk](mailto:hello@scriptureunion.org.uk)  
 Scripture Union will never sell your data or share it with another company or charity for marketing purposes.

Cut here





## 95% of children and young people don't go to church

Would your church like to share the good news of Jesus more widely, but you haven't got the time, ideas or resources?

### Sign up to The 95 Campaign for free now!

- Add your voice to an exciting, growing movement helping to ensure that reaching 'the 95' is made a priority
- Access mission funds and useful resources to help you reach 'the 95'
- Watch insightful talks on mission from experts in children's and youth work
- Connect with others passionate about sharing Jesus with the next generation
- Be the first to hear our research findings as we take an in-depth look at the successes and challenges of working with children and young people

For all this and more, sign up using the form on the previous page or by visiting

[www.the95.org.uk](http://www.the95.org.uk)

Jack's dad is a Christian, and God has been so close to him in his grief process. He chose to raise money for a great local charity helping youth mental health, with many in the town joining in.

God can restore families. As Jack's family have grieved, they've also found hope.

Jack's dad is a Christian, and God has been so close to him in his grief process. He chose to raise money for a great local charity helping youth mental health, with many in the town joining in. At a church outreach event Jack's mum and sister came to faith in Jesus. In response to Jack's death, some churches in the town decided to do something significant for their young people. They went into schools talking about the good news of Christ, and the hope and life it brings. Subsequently, out of this schools work, there has been a vibrant youth group set up, in which Jack's two younger brothers play a key role. They've both recently been baptised too.

#### GOD FREES

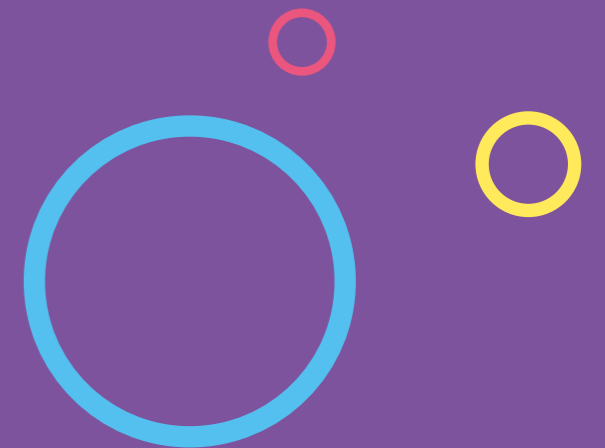
A few weeks ago I was involved in an event in Leeds. A speaker at the front brought a message about shame – particularly that we shouldn't feel ashamed about how we look. Earlier on I'd spoken with a bunch of girls, and one of them had covered her mouth whenever she spoke and especially when she smiled. At this moment, out of the corner of my eye, I saw that this girl was in tears, with friends and leaders praying for her.

When we share the good news of Jesus, there's transformation beyond what we see and recognise. He really is the light of the world!

The next day at this conference, I noticed her again, but this time smiling, shame-free.

#### GOD RESTORES

About 18 months ago, a 19-year-old called Jack tragically took his own life in a town I work in. Jack had recently made a commitment to Christ, but sadly – like so many young men – felt too overwhelmed by personal circumstances to carry on living. In the last few months, however, that town has seen how the radical love of



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matty Hawthorne is a Scripture Union Development Worker in the North-East and Yorkshire region. His role is to equip and support local mission partners and to develop opportunities to pioneer missional work with others, focusing on the M62 corridor area. He has worked with some of the most marginalised young people in young offenders' institutions and in the community. He's excited about Scripture Union's focus on reaching children and young people who don't yet know Jesus, and loves serving those who are working to achieve this.

# Real big questions about Halloween



Halloween can raise huge questions and stir up deep fears for children and young people, even though on the surface they may not want to show it. They'll probably want to appear cool and treat it all light-heartedly.

However, in the planning of your Light Party, don't pack the programme so tightly that those who attend don't have time to ask some of their questions or express their fears, if they want to.

To help prepare your team for this, think through how you yourselves would answer the questions on this page – they're real questions from Year 6 children in a London school.

On the night, discuss questions and fears when the children and young people ask you about them. If you just present questions that other people have, you may make some unnecessarily fearful where they were fine before!

## HALLOWEEN BEGINNINGS

- Why is Halloween in October?
- How did Halloween start?
- How is Halloween linked to Christianity?
- Why do we call it Halloween and what does Halloween mean?
- What is Halloween basically all about?
- What does Halloween symbolise and why?
- Does Halloween represent death or dead people?
- Is Halloween real or fake?

## HALLOWEEN AND THE DEVIL

- Is Halloween the devil's (Satan's/Shatan's) birthday?
- Is the devil real?
- Where did the devil come from?
- Does the devil have horns and a tail?
- Why are there ghosts? Are they real?

## HALLOWEEN PRACTICES

- Why do some people celebrate Halloween and others don't?
- Why do people do scary things on this night?
- Why do people go around looking for candy?
- Why do people dress up/wear costumes at Halloween?
- Why do people go trick or treating, and why is it called that?
- Why do people carve pumpkins?

## HALLOWEEN AND GOD

- Why is God magic?
- Is God a person or a spirit?
- Why did God create bad people?
- Why do bad things happen when God's love is with us?
- What's wrong with Halloween anyway? Why is it bad, or evil, or dark?



When you and your team have attempted to answer these questions, check out our answers at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

## TOP TIPS ON TACKLING QUESTIONS

- 1** Children love to ask questions about almost anything. They ask 'Why?', 'What?', 'Who?', 'How?' very often. It's only natural for children and part of their trying to make sense of their world. Similarly, young people love to ask questions, but to help them build a coherent worldview: 'What do I really believe?' Questions are an important part of their learning – don't ignore their questions or treat them lightly.
- 2** Pray before your Light Party. Ask God to guide you as you respond to any questions the children or young people may have.
- 3** Be genuinely interested in the children and young people and what they're saying. During the event itself, make sure team members aren't so busy with responsibilities that they can't stop to talk. Then take time to listen carefully to all that's on their minds. Demonstrate real concern for them – don't just fire off your pre-prepared answer.
- 4** There are two stages in answering the questions children and young people ask. Firstly, find an answer that you understand and believe, that's consistent with the Bible (especially where faith questions are concerned). Secondly, work out how to say it so that the unchurched child or young person can understand. Don't use Christian terminology unless you also explain what it means.

Think about:

- using the right words: within the range of their vocabulary
  - talking about accessible concepts: concrete as far as possible, not abstract or beyond their experience
  - using the stuff of their world in your answers: take examples from school, home, TV, pastimes, friends or culture to illustrate your answers
  - restricting yourself to short answers: or risk losing their interest, their understanding, or both!
- 5** If you're not sure what they're asking (or you need time to think!), ask them what they mean or some other question that makes them say their question in another way.
  - 6** If you're with a group of children, sometimes it's good to let other children or young people say what they think – they'll probably tell you anyway!
  - 7** If you don't know the answer or can't explain it, say so. They will appreciate your honesty. Alternatively, look it up, or ask a friend to help. Be sure to note the question – don't forget it! Try to get back to them before the end of your event, if possible.



# Deciding about your Light Party or event



## LIGHT FOR EVERYONE

The theme of this *Light Party Pack* is 'light to everyone'. It comes from John 1:4 in the Contemporary English Version: 'Everything that was created received its life from him, and his life gave light to everyone.' The 'him' is Jesus. His 'life' brings 'light' into our world – the reason we're celebrating with Light Parties.

First you'll need to decide who is the 'everyone' in your context. Clearly through the event(s) you run, you can't reach every single person in your community, though of course you'd love to be able to! Read through this whole *Light Party Pack* before you decide who you'll invite and to get lots of ideas for what to do.

### So, do you want to run a Light Party event:

**just for children?** You'll mostly need pages 14 to 19, but be sure to take a look at the great World Vision resources on page 28 too.

**just for teenagers?** Try pages 20 to 25.

### for people of all ages in the community, including the friends and neighbours of your church families?

This could be an all-age party, celebration or service, run in a community space, church premises or home. See pages 26 to 31.

## THE BIG SIX STARTER TIPS

**Venue:** For your event, decide whether the people you invite will feel most comfortable in a community space (such as a school hall or community centre), or on church premises, or (in the case of the all-age celebration, service or party) in the home of church families. It's about where *they're* happy to go, not where's most convenient for you.

**Date:** For your event to be a true alternative to Halloween, hold it on 31 October, or as near to it as possible.

**Team:** Recruit your team early, not the week before! There'll be a lot of preparation to do. Invite those who are already part of your children's or youth team at church, but also those who might just like to try things out for this one-off occasion. Make sure they're excited about sharing the love of Jesus with the community though – you all need to be on the same page with this. You must also follow your church's safer recruitment policy. See 'Safeguarding' on page 13.

**Risk assessments:** Especially since some of the event's activities will take place in the dark, it's important to limit the risk of injury or damage. Risk-assess all the activities you intend to do. There's a sample form at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk).

**Food hygiene:** If you're providing food at any point, make sure you comply with your local authority's guidelines on food provision. Be aware of allergy issues too.

**First aid:** Have a qualified first-aider on the team, so that you can safely and efficiently cope with any medical emergency. Having one of each gender would be helpful.

Now read on for more great tips from Sharon Pritchard, before you go any further.

# Top tips for your Light Party or event

By Sharon Pritchard

## FUNDING

Please don't be tempted to charge for attending your Light Party or event. Events like this should always be a gift from the church to, for and with the community. You may need to fundraise to run your party, or ask your church council for a set amount. Try to borrow resources that may be expensive, like sports equipment. Sometimes you can borrow larger items from a school or youth centre, and this will help keep running costs to a minimum.

## PUBLICITY

Publicising your Light Party or event is key to making it a success. Create a flyer that can be given out in your church, local schools and the wider community. You may want to attach a consent form to each flyer (if parents aren't going to be present) to be given out in schools, then all the required information is kept together when it arrives home in a school bag. Posters and flyers could be given out to be displayed in local shops, doctors', dentists' and vets' surgeries – wherever there are people. Posters displayed at your chosen venue are also effective. You may also encourage the children and young people who are part of your church to invite their friends along. Advertising your event on social media is another good way of getting your information out to the wider community.

## RESOURCES

Of course, you'll need this pack to help you plan and run your Light Party or event, but there will

undoubtedly be other items you'll need too. As mentioned earlier, try to borrow resources where you can; otherwise, try to keep within your budget. You may be able to recycle some of the items you have at home or in your cupboard at church. Be creative in how you use resources and share ideas, and look for new ways of using everyday items. You may be surprised at what you can come up with! Don't forget to buy the SU giveaway booklets for children in advance – *What is the Light?* and *What Do You Do When Darkness Comes to Visit?* These are now only £2 for a pack of 10! See the back cover for more details.



## FREE RESOURCES

Scripture Union has a lot of free resources to download at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk). They include extra party ideas, hints and tips, downloadable posters and invitations, sample health and safety forms, and much, much more. Check them out today, so you don't spend time creating stuff that's already available!

## SAFEGUARDING

You must ensure that safeguarding is in place for your event. The following should be used as guidelines:

- 1 Make sure you adhere to your church's safer recruitment policy.
- 2 If volunteers don't have a current DBS and need one, you must obtain these before the event.

- 3 Check that you have first-aid provision in place for your event.
- 4 Make yourself aware of the safety policies for your venue, such as fire exits and the appropriate use of the facilities.
- 5 Complete a risk assessment for your activities. Ask your venue for their own building's risk assessment, if there is one.
- 6 Make sure you are adequately insured for your Light Party or event.
- 7 Register each person who attends. A signing-in sheet is a good way of keeping a record of who is there.

## PRAY

Ask for prayer support from your church (including the children and young people) and any other Christian friends and family members you have.

Sharon Pritchard is the Children's Adviser for the Diocese of Durham and has been in post for six years. She offers training, support, resources and advice to parishes in the diocese on all aspects of children's ministry. Sharon lives in Chester-le-Street with her husband Alan. And she collects nativities and loves all things Christmassy.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



# Children's Light Party

Create your event from the following pages, including food ideas, games, creative makes and a Jesus focus, from John 1.

Make sure you make your choice early enough for your team members to gather all the equipment or ingredients you'll need. Ask for volunteers to head up each type of activity and make sure they all happen: food, games, creative makes, prayer activities and the Jesus focus (Bible-words video and the activities afterwards).

This sample running order has been chosen from the available items by Sue Clutterham of the Archway Trust, based near Northampton. She runs Light Parties every year. But this is only one possibility.

Enjoy creating your own!



ARCHWAY

## TOP TIPS

### Assumptions

Remember that you're designing your event for those who aren't used to church, and who may know nothing about Jesus and the Bible. Make sure none of the activities assume any previous knowledge. Get used to talking about the good news of Jesus in plain English, not Christian jargon.

### Decorations

Whatever your venue looks like, make it look really attractive by decorating it with lights, banners, posters, lamps and a glitter ball. If you're using a projector and screen, loop some images of light for when games or eating are taking place – in fact, all the time when you don't need the projector for something else. (Free-to-use images are available from [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com) and [pexels.com](https://pexels.com),

## SAMPLE LIGHT PARTY FOR CHILDREN

Running time: 90 minutes

- 1 **Game: Searchlight keeper of the keys** (10–15 minutes)  
introductory game for children to join in with as they arrive
- 2 **Game: Up-and-under lantern** (10 minutes)  
for time constraints, without 'Skinning the snake'
- 3 **Food: Star picker-platter; other party foods** (15 minutes)
- 4 **Jesus focus: Bible-words video** (5 minutes)
- 5 **Jesus focus: Jesus the light** (5 minutes)
- 6 **Creative make: Light star coasters** (15 minutes)
- 7 **Prayer idea: Light balloons** (5 minutes)  
not at the end since it could get pushed out or rushed
- 8 **Creative make: Look for the Light notebooks** (15 minutes)
- 9 **Game: Tic-tac glow** (15 minutes)

by setting up a free account.) And make the entrance to your venue look absolutely stunning! First impressions really count. A couple of volunteers at the front door welcoming people will help reassure nervous parents dropping off their children for the event.

### Licenses for films

You don't need a licence to show the Bible-words videos that you can download freely from [lightparty.org.uk](https://lightparty.org.uk). But if you use other film clips, and your church doesn't already have a licence, you'll need to get one from CCLI ([churches.ccli.co.uk/licences/cv1](https://churches.ccli.co.uk/licences/cv1)).

Please check on the CCLI website that you're covered for the clips you want to show.

## GAMES

Choose some of these games to use in your Light Party or event.



For the best effect, most of these games are played with the lights out, or minimal lighting such as LED fairy light chains. It doesn't need to be a complete blackout, just dark enough so the lights used in the games are effective – but light enough to be safe.

Warn the children to be careful running around when they can't really see very well – but it's great fun to run in the dark. Make sure the room is clear of obstacles like tables and chairs that they could bump into, and that there are no trip hazards on the floor, or highlight them with fairy lights. 'Fire exit' signs will need to stay on, if you have them. It's a good idea for one of the leaders to have a reliable, bright torch, in case of an accident.

Many of the games use glow sticks. Usually these are fine, but occasionally they break, spilling out their liquid, so be ready for this possibility with tissues and wet wipes. Where night lights are used, make sure these are the LED sort with a screw to hold the battery in, so that young children can't get the battery out and swallow it.

### Searchlight keeper of the keys

Activity running time: 10 minutes



**You will need:** a torch with a focused beam, blindfold, chair, large bunch of keys

Set up one chair in the middle of a circle of children sitting on the floor. Blindfold the keeper of the keys, who sits on the chair. Give them a torch and put a large bunch of keys under the chair. Choose a child without indicating which one or where they are coming from. This child has to get the keys from under the chair without getting caught by the keeper, who catches them by shining the torch directly at the child trying to steal the keys. Waving the torch everywhere doesn't count – they must shine it on the child to catch them. If the child gets the keys without being caught, they become the keeper. After three goes, if no one can get the keys without being caught, the keeper is pronounced a Super Sound Keeper, and someone else is given a chance to be the keeper.



### Tic-tac glow

Activity running time: 20 minutes



**You will need:** several glow sticks (as above in 'Pass the glow stick')

Make up a noughts and crosses (tic-tac) grid with glow sticks. Give two teams glow sticks. One team has glow sticks made into rings with the links that come in the tubes, the other team has pairs of glow sticks to make into a cross. Play the game with the children taking it in turns – in the dark, preferably. Play lots of games, keeping a tally of the score with some extra glow sticks.

### Up-and-under lantern

Activity running time: 20 minutes



**You will need:** two or three battery lanterns – available from camping shops or the internet (better to get LED types, and also not the collapsible sort)

Split the children into teams, and get them to line up one behind the other (long ways). Each team has a lantern at the front that they pass in various ways to the back of the team, which the last person carries to front. They repeat this until each person has been at the front. Patterns can be over all the heads, under all the legs, or alternately under and over.

Finish with 'Skinning the Snake'. The last child holds the lantern in one hand. All the children, except the back one, put one hand through their legs to hold the free hand of the child behind. The back child has to go through the legs of all the children carrying the lantern, without dropping hands. So after they have gone through the legs of the next to the back child, the back child will pull the next child along with them, and so on.

(This is easier seen than described, but a great challenge for a group of children.)



For more game ideas, go to [lightparty.org.uk](https://lightparty.org.uk)



## FOOD

Place these special light-themed items among other regular party foods.



## Bible verse cupcakes



**You will need:** ready-iced cupcakes, an edible icing pen

This is a really simple option to help people learn part of John 1:4 from the *Contemporary English Version*: 'His life gave light to everyone.' Write one or two of the words on each cake. Divide up the cakes into sets that make up the whole sentence, keeping the sets separate.

1 Without telling the children the verse, challenge them in small groups to try and work out which order the cakes need to be in for the verse.

2 Encourage the small groups to say the verse out loud together three times, then someone in the group can eat a cake and then they all say it again.

3 They keep repeating the eating and saying until all the cakes are gone.



## Chocolate and star-studded strawberries



**You will need:** washed strawberries, melted chocolate, star sprinkles

1 Leaving the leaves on, dip strawberries in melted chocolate.

2 Decorate them with star sprinkles and leave them to set on foil or back paper.

If you get the right chocolate and sprinkles, this could be a popular dairy- and wheat-free option at your party.

## Star picker-platter



**You will need:** a variety of fruit, cheese, sandwiches and vegetables that can be cut into star shapes

Create a platter of star-shaped food. You could use sandwiches, cheese, vegetables (such as carrots, cucumber or pepper) and fruit (melon, apple and pear slices with a dab of lemon to keep them from going brown). This could be done in advance or for more fun, get a collection of star cutters and set out the food with chopping boards and plates for the children to create the feast. Even children with strong preferences usually enjoy creating their own food, and you can include a wide range of options for them to choose from. If you organise it well, the 'off-cuts' from the stars can be mixed together with a little mayonnaise to make a chunky coleslaw.

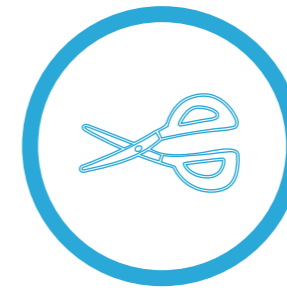
**Variation:** If making for a large number, get help! Slice items thinly, then stack the slices on top of each other and cut lots of stars at a time.



For more food ideas, go to [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

## CREATIVE MAKES

Mix and match these ideas for your Light Party. Think creatively. They could be different activities happening simultaneously on different tables, for instance.



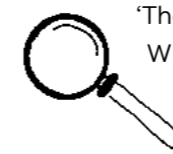
## 'Look for the Light' notebooks

Description: Create a mini personal journal to encourage children to look for the light in everyday situations.

**Difficulty level:** ★



**You will need:** A5 orange/yellow craft foam or card, 4 pieces of slightly-smaller-than-A5 thin white card, with a 'Look for the Light' printed on it, craft or washi tape, googly eyes or the cut-out, download image of the magnifying glass ([lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)), shiny stars, glue sticks, stapler or perlé thread and needle, scissors



'The light keeps shining in the dark' (John 1:5).

Where do we see the light of Jesus every day – in kindness, bravery, generosity, someone standing up to wrong, some good news, or a beautiful sky? The

children can make a journal to record and recall these things by either writing or drawing them on each page. Fold the coloured foam or card in half to form the cover of the notebook. Insert all the folded white card into the cover and either stitch it down the spine or staple it to create pages. With craft or washi (decorative sticky) tape, stick down the 'Look for the Light' title. Glue down googly eyes or the magnifying glass. Add shiny stars to the cover for decoration.

**Variations:** Encourage the children to create their own front cover designs. For an easier option, use pre-bought notebooks and decorate them as above.



## Light start coasters

Description: Create simple coasters from laminated card.

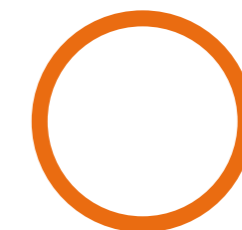
**Difficulty level:** ★



**You will need:** copies of the Light Star Coaster templates 1 and 2 (downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)), colouring pencils or felt-tip pens, scissors, a laminator and laminator pockets, access to an electrical socket

Give each child a coaster template 1 and 2, if you think it is more appropriate for them to take home a 'Jesus' message, or two copies of template 1, if you think it is appropriate to keep things more general. Encourage the children to colour and decorate the designs. Cut out the two designs and place them back to back. With six coasters in a laminator pocket, put the sheet through the laminator carefully. Ensure an adult uses the laminator – keep it out of the reach of the children due to the heat. Cut out the coasters again before distributing them.

**Variations:** Invite the children to create their own designs or use black and white card to glue on different-sized foil stars (available as table confetti), then laminate them as above. For an easier option, have pre-printed, coloured designs all ready to cut and laminate.



For more creative makes, go to [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)



## JESUS FOCUS

Show the 'Bible-words video', and then choose one of the other two activities.

### Bible-words video

Activity running time: 3 minutes



**You will need:** laptop or tablet, screen, projector, speakers, video downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

Download the Bible-words video for children. It's based on John 1:1-5,9-13 from the Contemporary English Version and New International Version. Invite the children to watch carefully and think about who or what it might be about.

After they have watched it, ask them who or what they think it might be about. Don't just tell them the answer straightaway!

### Questions children ask about Halloween

Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** questions and tips from pages 10 and 11

Ask the children if they have any questions about Halloween that they want to talk about. Encourage the children to get into small groups with a confident leader to chat about them.

You'll find some advice about how to answer children's questions on page 11, and some possible answers at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)



### Jesus the light

Activity running time: 5 minutes



**You will need:** the most powerful torch you can find, a cardboard frame (as a 'window frame'), strips of cardboard, sticky tape, red or orange cellophane

Make up your 'window frame' in advance. Onto your cardboard frame stick cross-pieces of card to make it look like a window. Then stick the cellophane to the back.

Switch off most of the other lights (but not if it will upset children) and switch on the torch. Shine it into all the dark corners of your venue.

Ask the children why light is such a good thing, and value their answers.

Light **helps us see things as they really are**. If there's a power cut, we grab a big torch. We need to see. (Shine the light into the corners again, but not into the children's eyes.)

Light **warns us**, like a lighthouse when there are rocks around that would be dangerous for ships. (Flick the torch off and on several times.)

Light **shows the way**. Think of an aircraft coming in to land on a runway at night. (Place your torch on the floor shining up at the ceiling.)

Light **attracts us**. (Hold up your 'window frame' and shine the torch through from behind it.) Imagine you're heading home on a dark, snowy night. The lights from the windows are so warm and welcoming. You just want to be there.

Jesus is like light. He comes from God; he tells people how things really are – the truth about God, the world and themselves. He shows them the way to be friends with God. Believing and trusting in Jesus is the way to be friends with God. He shows people God's love, and attracts them to himself by it. He brings the very best kind of light into people's dark lives.



## PRAYER IDEAS

### Light balloons

Activity running time: 5 minutes



**You will need:** balloons with LEDs in them – available online or at large supermarkets in the party supplies section

1 Blow up the balloons, enough for every child. Explain that the Bible talks about Jesus coming as the light into the world, to be amongst us... and that is a reason to have a party! The Bible says that Jesus' light shines on everyone, so we're going to throw some light around and play in the light!

2 Ask the children to think about where they might see the light Jesus brings into the world – the things that make them happy and that they are glad for. Suggest some things like the people they love, the good things around them, the things that they can do.

3 Play some music (maybe something like 'Praise Like Fireworks' by Rend Collective, or 'Firework' by Katy Perry) and ask the children to throw their balloons in the air! They have to keep catching them and throwing them back into the air, and every time they throw it back up they can shout something that they want to thank Jesus for that shows his light in the world!

### Paper lanterns with glitter

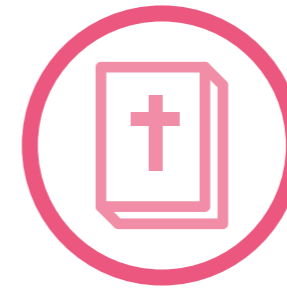
Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** brightly coloured paper, glitter pens, sticky tape, string

1 Together, make some paper lanterns. You can make simple paper lanterns by cutting slits into a rectangular strip of paper so that the cuts don't go all the way through. Then fold the paper in half (lengthways) so that the strips you've cut bend outwards when it's joined together. Join the paper into a round and secure it with tape to make a lantern, then attach the string as a handle. It might be helpful to search for paper lanterns online to see what they look like and have a prototype available to show the children.

2 In the middle of the craft, before you have joined the lantern into the round, explain to the children that Jesus came as a light to shine for everyone. On each strip, ask



the children to write down the names of people that they would like Jesus' light to shine on.

3 Once the lanterns are made, ask everyone to hold up their lantern and say a prayer for all the people written on them: 'Dear Jesus, you came to shine your light on us. Shine brightly on every person that we've named on our lanterns, and help us all remember your light when it is dark. Amen.'

### Stained glass window

Activity running time: 5 minutes



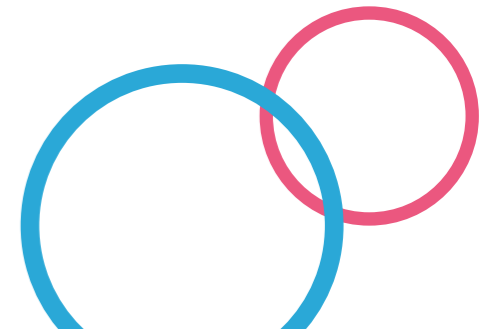
**You will need:** a large roll of baking paper, cut into a long sheet; pieces of coloured crepe paper or polythene (could use sweet wrappers!); PVA glue and glue sticks; a large torch (eg a big camping one)

1 Beforehand, write out 'LIGHT' in large block letters in a thick dark pen, so that each letter is outlined. Bring this out and explain to the children that you are going to make a stained glass window. Stained glass windows are associated with church buildings that would have pictures from the Bible. When the light shines through the window, the picture lights up. Say that today, as you're celebrating Jesus being the light that shines in the darkness, you're going to make a stained glass window out of the word 'LIGHT' to help you all pray!

2 Ask the children to gather round and glue bits of polythene/crepe paper, into the middle of the letters.

3 Once you've filled the letters, explain that you're going to use the stained glass to help you pray! Hold it out, with a helper, and explain that you're going to shine the light through it to light up the window! Ask each child to take a turn at shining the torchlight through the window. When each child takes their turn, as a group you can say, 'Dear Jesus, shine your light on...' and ask the child to shout where they want Jesus to shine their light.

4 After everyone has had a turn, say a big 'Amen!' to finish the prayer!





# Young people's Light Party



Create your event from the following pages, including food ideas, games, creative makes, prayer activities and a Jesus focus, from John 1.

Make sure you make your choice early enough for your team members to gather all the equipment or ingredients needed. Ask for volunteers to head up each type of activity and to make sure they all happen on time: food, games, creative makes, prayer activities and the Jesus focus (Bible-words video and the activities afterwards).

This sample running order has been chosen from the available items. But this is only one possibility. Enjoy creating your own!

## TOP TIPS

### Assumptions

Remember that your Light Party is for young people who aren't used to church, and who may know nothing about Jesus and the Bible. Make sure none of the activities assume any previous knowledge. Get used to talking about the good news of Jesus in plain English, not Christian jargon. Also, don't do anything that will put the young people on the spot – always give them the option to opt out of any activity. So provide a cosy seating area from where they can just watch the action.

### Building relationships

A vital aspect of your event is to take time to build relationships with the young people who come. You don't want to put on such a slick, fast-moving programme of fun that it doesn't allow your team the time and space just to speak with the young people and begin to get to know them. No one has to be a youth work expert to do this – they just need to show an interest and be prepared to listen. Good relationships begun at your event will make follow-up activity more successful. You'll find some suggestions of ways of doing this on pages 32 to 34.

- **SAMPLE LIGHT PARTY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**
- **Running time: 90 minutes**
- **1 Game: Treasure hunt** (15 minutes)
- introductory game for young people to join in with as they arrive
- **2 Game: Mirror tag** (10-15 minutes)
- **3 Food: Glow-in-the-dark jelly; cheese candles; other party food** (15 minutes)
- **4 Jesus focus: Bible-words video** (5 minutes)
- **5 Jesus focus: Questions young people ask** (15 minutes)
- **6 Prayer idea: Candle prayer jars** (5 minutes)
- not at the end since it could get pushed out or rushed
- **7 Creative make: Stitched star chimes** (15 minutes)
- **8 Game: Glow-in-the-dark frisbee** (15 minutes)
- giving a rolling finish so that people can leave when they need to
- 



## GAMES

Choose some of these games to use in your Light Party or event.



For the best effect, most of these games are played with the lights out, or minimal lighting – for example, LED fairy light chains. It doesn't need to be a complete blackout, just dark enough so that the lights used in the games are effective. Warn the young people to be careful running around when they can't really see very well – but it's great fun to run in the dark. Make sure the room is clear of obstacles like tables and chairs that they could bump into, and there are no trip hazards on the floor, or highlight them with fairy lights. 'Fire exit' signs will need to stay on, if you have them. It's a good idea for one of the leaders to have a reliable, bright torch in case of an accident.

If you can get your room completely dark, it may be a good opportunity to teach them about letting their eyes get accustomed to the dark, which takes a few minutes – so a chance to sit quietly in the dark at some stage in the party. (Well, you can try!)

Many of the games use glow sticks. Usually these are fine, but occasionally they break, spilling out their liquid, so be ready for this possibility with tissues and wet wipes. Where night lights are used, make sure these are the LED sort with a screw to hold the battery in.

### Glow-in-the-dark frisbee

Activity running time: 20-25 minutes



**You will need:** one or more glow-in-the-dark frisbees (the soft Aerobie Squidgie disc is safest) – Firetoys sell these online, as does Amazon (along with many others); or get a flying toy that a glow stick can fit into, like a Night Booma (an internet search will show lots of alternatives)

**Frisbee tag:** Divide into two teams. One team is 'It', throwing the frisbee between them and keeping it away from the other team. If the other team catches it, they swap roles and the other team is 'It'.

**Speed frisbee:** Let everyone get into small teams and stand in a circle. The challenge is to see how many times they can throw the frisbee around all the team in 2 minutes. Vary the game by making them miss out throwing it to the person next to them. (This only works, of course, with odd numbers in the teams!) Alternatively, they can throw it across the circle until everyone has had a turn, and that counts as one round.



**Frisbee fridge:** Divide into two teams. One team has the frisbee, and has to throw it to try and hit the other team. When members of the other team are hit, they're out and have to stand still ('frozen'). If someone from their team catches the frisbee in their hand, they can tag one 'frozen' teammate, who then becomes 'unfrozen'.

**Frisbee football:** Divide into two teams. Each team has the aim of getting the frisbee into the opposing goal (like football). The only rule is that they can't move when they're holding the frisbee.

### Treasure hunt

Activity running time: 20 minutes



**You will need:** lots of CDs, a small torch per person, optional tokens (eg counters)

Hide the CDs around the building, preferably in more than one room. Turn off the lights, maybe leaving on a few LED nightlights or fairy-light chains for safety. The young people must find the CDs using a small torch to see the way, which will reflect off the CD if it's placed shiny side visible. Either they collect up the CDs or to make it longer, provide tokens next to each CD that they collect when they find them.

### Mirror tag

Activity running time: 10-15 minutes



**You will need:** torches and unbreakable mirrors (camping and outdoor shops sell these) – enough for half the group to have either a torch or a mirror

Divide into two teams – runners and catchers. The runners run across the room in front of a long wall. Half of the catchers have torches, the other half have mirrors. The catchers sit on the floor in pairs, a distance from the wall the runners are running along. They must shine their torches on the mirrors, so that they reflect light on to the runners. If lit up, a runner is caught. It doesn't count if anyone is 'caught' by direct torch light.





## FOOD

Place these special light-themed items among other regular party foods.



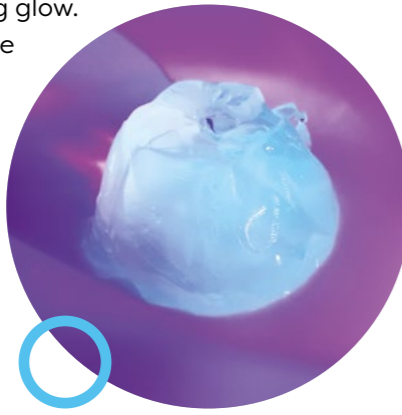
## Glow-in-the-dark jelly!



**You will need:** tonic water, gelatine sheets or light-coloured jelly (such as yellow), a UV torch or black light bulbs in your lamps

Make your jelly glow in the dark by making it with tonic water and using a UV or black light. You can buy 'black light bulbs' to replace one or two lights in your room to make everything glow.

Jelly glows best if you use gelatine sheets. This makes clear jelly that you could flavour with fruit syrup or cordial. When the UV light goes near it, it glows!



## Cheese candles



**You will need:** yellow (such as Cheddar) and orange cheese (such as Red Leicester), short cocktail sticks (or carefully cut longer ones to around 3 cm making sure there are no splinters)

Make candles out of two colours of cheese and cocktail sticks.

- 1 Cut the Cheddar into cuboids approximately 6 cm long and 1 x 1 cm wide and deep.
- 2 Create the flames by cutting a suitable orange cheese such as Red Leicester into cubes, then 'sculpt' them into flames shapes. (You could do this with a suitable cookie cutter or by cutting it into cubes then slicing off the sides to make them pointed.)
- 3 Attach the flames to the candles with short cocktail sticks. This could be done in advance, or given as an activity to do at the party.

For more food ideas, go to [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

## Rocky road lighthouse



**You will need:** 100 g apricots, 125 g softened unsalted butter, 300 g chocolate, 3 tbsp syrup, 200 g biscuits, 100 g mini marshmallows, 2 tpsps icing sugar for dusting

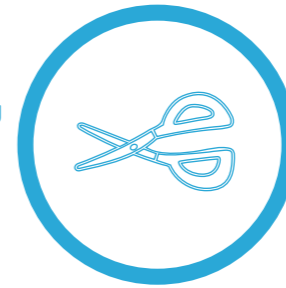
Make rocky road 'bricks' with dried apricot 'windows' and build them around fairy lights to make a 'light house'.

- 1 Carefully slice the dried apricots in half creating two ovals.
- 2 Lay out the slices on a foiled-lined baking tray leaving 2 to 3 centimetres of space on each side of each apricot.
- 3 Melt the butter and chocolate, then stir in the syrup, broken biscuits and marshmallows.
- 4 Gently spoon the chocolate mixture around the apricots, not over them.
- 5 Leave everything to cool in the fridge.
- 6 Slice the rocky road into equal-sized and shaped rectangles and use them to build a house around a set of fairy lights. One option is to put the lights inside an upside-down pint glass, then lean the pieces up against the glass. In a slightly dark room, the lights should shine through the apricot slices like windows.



## CREATIVE MAKES

Mix and match these ideas so that there's variety for the young people to choose from. Set out the choices in different areas of the room, making them all available at the same time.



## 'In the beginning' creation lamp

Description: Create a decorated lamp, inspired by the words 'Everything that was created received its life from him' (John 1:3).

Difficulty level: ★★★



**You will need:** for each person, an A4 sheet of white card or acetate, old plastic store or gift card, acrylic paint (black, dark blue, purple, pink, white), paper plates, water, small pots, old paintbrushes or toothbrushes, kitchen roll, double-sided tape, LED tea lights or small torches

Please note that this craft can be quite messy! Squeeze a little of each of the acrylic paint colours onto the paper plate. Squeeze some white acrylic paint into a small pot and add a little water so that the paint is fluid but not runny. Using the long edge of the plastic gift card, pick up some black acrylic paint and swipe a few times over the A4 paper. Wipe off any excess black from the plastic card. Repeat this for the dark blue paint, then purple, then pink. Ensure there are no lumps of paint on the surface of the card or acetate. Use paintbrush or toothbrush to pick up the fluid white acrylic paint and spatter it across the design. Dry the design fully, then add double-sided tape on the reverse of one short side of the decorated card. Roll it round to form a tube and stick it. Insert an LED tea light for acetate or use a torch or mobile phone torch for the decorated card version.

**Variations:** Using the decorated card, create a pencil pot wrapped around an empty gravy granule pot, or cut an empty 2-litre pop bottle. (Be sure to tape around the cut top as it may be sharp.) For an easier option, use the decorated card to create a poster.

## Graffiti gospel

Description: Create graffiti-style phrases from the Bible verses about light. This activity may be best after the young people have watched the video of the verses.

Difficulty level: ★★



**You will need:** a copy of the Bible verses (The Message version of John 1:1-5,9-15), white A4 card, black card, acrylic paints, paintbrushes, water pots, pencils, thick black marker pens, kitchen roll, wipes, glue sticks or double-sided tape

Read out the Bible verses, inviting the young people to catch any phrases that particularly speak to them. With a pencil, they create graffiti-style lettering using a short phrase they've chosen. Then they can add patterns, stars and spirals around the writing. Use acrylic paints to decorate it. Once dry, they can outline the lettering with a thick black marker pen to create a 3D effect. Cut them out carefully, leaving a white border around the design. Mount the designs on black card for effect.



**Variations:** Use fabric and fabric paints or pens to create the graffiti. For an easier option, use chunky chisel-tipped felt pens.

## Stitched star chimes

Description: Stitch a star onto card to create a wind-chime reminder about light.

Difficulty level: ★★★



**You will need:** for each person, two black card circles each 9.5 cm in diameter, a copy of the Stitched Star Template (downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)), glitter or perlé thread, tiny wind chimes, chenille needles, scissors, tape, thin white marker pens, double-sided tape

Use the Stitched Star Template and needle to poke holes gently into the circular card. Thread up the needle with approximately 35 to 40 cm of thread.

From the back of the card, push the needle through hole 1 and fasten the thread securely with tape at the back. Using the following guide, sew around the circle of holes to create a star pattern:

1,3,5,1,2,4

6,4,3,5,6,2

3,6,1,4,5,2

Secure the thread at the back with tape and cut off any spare thread. Repeat this with the second star. Using the white marker pen, write around the edge a message about light (or if meaningful for the young person, a few words from John 1:1-5,9-15). Thread the chimes, and tape them on to the back of one of the stitched stars. Attach a hanging thread at the top. Using double-sided tape, fasten the two stars together and hang the finished wind chime in a prominent place.

**Variations:** Instead of using wind chimes, create a tassel from the glitter thread and fasten it as detailed above. For an easier option, stitch an easier six-point star by using the pattern 1,4,3,6,5,2.





## JESUS FOCUS

Show the 'Bible-words video', and then choose one of the other two activities.



### Bible-words video

Activity running time: 5 minutes



**You will need:** laptop or tablet, screen, projector, speakers, video downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

Download the Bible-words video for young people. It's based on John 1:1-5,9-13 in the *New International Version* and the *Contemporary English Version*.

After they have watched it, ask the young people what the value of light is in our lives. What good does it do? Try to relate what they say to what the Bible words tell us about Jesus.

### Questions young people ask about Halloween

Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** questions and tips from page 10 and 11.

Ask the young people if they have any questions about Halloween that they want to talk about. Encourage the young people to get into small groups with a confident leader to chat about them. You'll find some advice about how to respond to questions on page 10, and some possible answers at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)

Encourage them to share their best and worst experiences of Halloween. Ask whether they think Halloween is good or bad.

### My story

Activity running time: 5 minutes



**You will need:** a willing Christian to give a brief testimony

Base this activity on The Message paraphrase:

**'He [Jesus] was in the world, the world was there through him, and yet the world didn't even notice.**

**He came to his own people, but they didn't want him.**

**But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said,**

**He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves.'**

John 1:10-12

In advance, ask one of your leaders – good at communicating without using Christian jargon – to say how Jesus brought light into their life. In doing this, they will help everyone understand about some of the words they heard on the video.

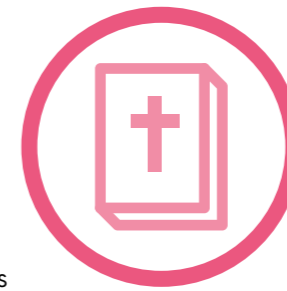
Key phrases to base their testimony on would be:

**'The world didn't even notice [Jesus]...'** Talk about life before Jesus, ignoring him. Was there any 'darkness' in your life, anything that oppressed you, held you back, made you feel trapped, just wasn't right? (There may not have been, of course.)

**'Whoever did want him...'** Mention how and why you first began to be interested in Jesus.

**'He made to be their true selves...'** Say what difference Jesus has made – the 'light' he has been and has brought into your life.

## PRAYER IDEAS



### Fairy light washing line

Activity running time: 10 minutes



**You will need:** a string of fairy lights hung across a room, luggage tags, pens, washing line pegs, music (optional)

**1** Read from John 1:3-5: 'Everything that was created received its life from him, and his life gave light to everyone. The light keeps shining in the dark, and darkness has never put it out.' Say that this passage describes Jesus as the one who brings light to the dark places, and says that no amount of darkness can put his light out. It is a message of hope to us when things feel too dark to be overcome.

**2** Ask the group to consider where they think Jesus' light most needs to bring hope. Turn on the fairy lights, and turn off the main lights of the room if possible. You might want to play some background music.

**3** Invite them to take some tags and write down the dark places or situations where they want to ask Jesus to bring his light. As they write them down, invite the group to peg up the tags onto the line as an act of prayer.

### Candle prayer jars

Activity running time: 10 minutes



**You will need:** glass jars, strips of coloured tissue paper, PVA glue, pens, tea lights

**1** Read John 1:1-5,9-13 and ask the group to consider what words in the passage feel most important to them.

**2** Explain that you're going to make candle holders to help you pray. Ask the group to write the words from the passage that feel important, as well as other words that give them hope, onto the strips of coloured tissue paper. Ask the group to glue these strips of paper with the words of light and hope around a glass jar.

**3** Give each group member a tea light to put inside their jar, and explain that Jesus' light is a promise of hope to those who need it (like we all do at times). The jars are to take away and use to help us pray when we feel like we, or those we love, need light and hope.

### There is a light that never goes out

Activity running time: 10 minutes



**You will need:** a copy of The Smiths song 'There is a light that never goes out', something to play it on, printed copies of the lyrics

**1** Play the song to the group (you could explain that it's a classic to an older generation!), and give them copies of the lyrics to read. It's OK if they laugh – the lyrics are a bit extreme, which may feel comical!

**2** Ask the group: what do you think the light is to the person who wrote the song? Let them discuss it a bit. Ask them: do you think the light that they talk about is similar to the light that is described in the Bible passage we've been looking at? Finally ask them: when are the times in people's lives that they need to know that 'there is a light that never goes out'?

**3** Now ask the group to think about the times in their lives that they most need to know that 'there is a light that never goes out'. Explain that you'll play the last part of the song again and, as they listen to the words, invite them to ask Jesus to bring light into those parts of their lives.





# All-age celebration or service

Create your event from the following pages, including food ideas, games, creative makes, prayer activities and a Jesus focus, from John 1.

If you're planning it as a service, use more of the 'Jesus focus' and 'Prayer' ideas, and fewer of the 'Games' and 'Food' ideas. Perhaps use the games as people arrive, and the food ideas for after the service. If you're planning a celebration event, create a programme from a mix of all the items.

Make sure you make your choice early enough for your team members to gather all the equipment or ingredients needed. Ask for volunteers to head up each type of activity and to make sure they all happen on time: food, games, creative makes and the Jesus focus (Bible-words video and the activities afterwards).

This sample running order has been chosen from the available items. But this is only one possibility. Tailor your own event to the needs of anyone you know who might come!



## SAMPLE ALL-AGE CELEBRATION OR SERVICE

Running time: 75 minutes

- 1 **Game: Glow stick towers**  
(15 minutes)  
introductory game for young people to join in with as they arrive
- 2 **Song: 'Light Party'**  
(10 minutes)  
from Chip Kendall's album *All In*, possibly with your own simple dance routine created too!  
Downloadable from Amazon, iTunes or other music store.
- 3 **Jesus focus: Bible-words video**  
(5 minutes)
- 4 **Jesus focus: The bead keyring (short talk)**  
(5 minutes)
- 5 **Prayer idea: Lantern scene from *Tangled***  
(5 minutes)  
not at the end since it could get pushed out or rushed
- 6 **Creative make: Bead keyring reminders**  
(15 minutes)  
to take home
- 7 **Game: Lantern parachute**  
(15 minutes)  
for everyone to join in with or just watch
- 8 **Food: Chocolate sun bread, chocolate macaroon stars, corn, carrot and cucumber candles**  
(15 minutes)

## TOP TIPS

### Keep it jargon-free

Remember that many at your event may not be used to church – they may know nothing about Jesus, the Bible and the way Christians do things. Make sure none of the activities assume any previous knowledge. Get used to talking about the good news of Jesus in plain English, not Christian jargon.

### Prayer activities

In prayer activities, say that people should do only what feels comfortable to them. You're providing opportunities if people want to take them, not forcing people to do things you think they should. There may well be an appetite for prayer, even among those who wouldn't call themselves Christians, but people will want to engage in their own way or have the space not to do anything at all.

### Costumes

People of any age may want to come to your event dressed for Halloween in a way that you don't think would be helpful. So let everyone know on the invitation that you want them to come dressed in a particular type of costume, if they want to. For instance, you might offer prizes for the brightest or most reflective costumes. If someone turns up dressed as a witch or ghost, welcome them in as you will everyone else – it's too late now to do anything about it. You just need to get over it! No one must feel they're being rejected or made to feel uncomfortable for any reason.

## WANT SOME MORE LIGHT PARTY RESOURCES? VISIT [LIGHTPARTY.ORG.UK](http://LIGHTPARTY.ORG.UK)

Here you'll find:

- downloadable Light Party posters and invitations
- videos to use in the 'Jesus focus' segment of your Light Party or event
- craft templates for creative makes
- PowerPoint presentation templates
- downloadable Light Party logos to use in your promotion
- extra games, creative makes and food ideas for your party or event
- sample risk-assessment form and other admin helps

LIGHT  
PARTY





**World Vision**

NO CHILD WITHOUT A FUTURE

Sing-along song

Patch the Pumpkin story book & film

We're joining with our friends at World Vision again this year, as together we find ways to help you share God's love at Halloween. We're both passionate about sharing God's love with children and young people: World Vision through their work with some of the world's most vulnerable children, and Scripture Union by sharing the good news of Jesus with the next generation. World Vision's Pumpkin Heroes resources are back for a second year and can be used effectively alongside your *Light Party Pack*.

# PUMPKIN HEROES

Posters & Invitations

Join World Vision this Halloween, as our cheeky little pumpkin Patch is heading out on another adventure, and he wants kids age 4-10 to join him.

Games, crafts & activities

With a fantastic storybook, film, games, activities and Patch's very own pumpkin light trail, we've done all the work so that churches and families can enjoy putting on a fantastic party that will help children enjoy discovering about God's love for all of us.

Handy Guide for Pumpkin Heroes Party

Get your free, easy to use Pumpkin Heroes pack at [pumpkinheroes.com](http://pumpkinheroes.com)

## GAMES

### Glow stick towers

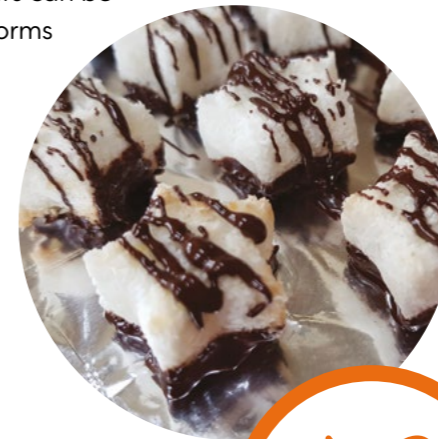
Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** glow sticks, sticky tack, sheets of card, LED nightlights (these and the glow sticks are sold in under-a-pound shops)



In mixed-age teams, everyone can get involved in making a tower to hold a nightlight, using the glow sticks, sticky tack and sheets of card. One sheet of card can be the baseplate to fix the bottom of the lower glow sticks; others can be smaller for platforms on the way up or to hold the nightlight.



## FOOD

### Chocolate macaroon stars



**You will need:** 230 g dried unsweetened shredded coconut, 1.5 tbsp potato starch, 100 g caster sugar, 0.25 tsp salt, 4 large egg whites, 1 tsp vanilla, 370 g dark chocolate (if you make sure this is dairy-free, this will be a yummy dairy- and wheat-free treat), star-shaped moulds



- 1 Mix the coconut, potato starch, sugar and salt with a fork.
- 2 Whisk the egg whites and vanilla until they are frothy.
- 3 Mix the coconut and eggs together.
- 4 Press the mixture into star moulds and bake at 180°C for 20 to 25 minutes, until the edges start to go golden brown. Don't over-bake them as they'll go dry and less yummy.
- 5 Cool the stars, then gently remove them from the moulds.
- 6 Dip the bases in melted chocolate and drizzle melted chocolate on the top.
- 7 Leave them to set on baking parchment.

### Making shadows

Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** a torch with a good beam per team, a list of animals, TV ready to show a YouTube clip or a laptop with internet and a projector (optional)

Teams sit next to a wall. They shine the torch on the wall. The leader calls out the name of an animal. The teams have to make a shadow picture of it on the wall using the torch and their hands to make shadows. The first to make the animal in a way that's recognisable by the leader wins the point. Everyone should take it in turns in the team with the torch and their hands. Choose some animals that need two or more people.

Show the video 'What a Wonderful World Shadow Puppet' by Raymond Crowe, from YouTube, either as inspiration at the start or at the end to round the game off and give a focus.

You'll find 'Spotlight charades' and 'Lantern parachute' at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk).

### Corn, carrot and cucumber candles



**You will need:** carrots, mini-corns, cucumbers

- 1 Using an apple corer or knife, cut circles out of the centre of 2 cm-long chunks of cucumber. This is your candle holder.
- 2 Next slice a fat carrot as thinly as possible and cut circles out of the slices too. (You could stack them in a pile and use the apple corer again.) Then cut two slivers off the carrot circles to make a point on one side of the circles. (Again you could do this with them in a stack.)
- 3 Next lie your mini-corns on the board and carefully cut a 1 to 1.5 cm slit in the top of them. This should be as wide as the width of your carrot slices. Make this slit a little wider at the top of the corn than at the bottom of the slit, as this will help the carrot flames to stay in.
- 4 Assemble your candles by putting your corn into your cucumber holders and carefully slipping the carrot flames into the top of the corn.

If you want to make these as part of your event, create a production line, with people doing one part at each station, or do all the cutting in advance and just have people putting them together.

You'll find instructions for **Chocolate Sun Bread, Cheese Straws and Raspberry Star Biscuits** at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk).



## JESUS FOCUS

Show the 'Bible-words video', and then choose one of the other two activities.

### Bible-words video

Activity running time: 5 minutes



**You will need:** laptop or tablet, screen, projector, speakers

Download the Bible-words video for children. It's based on John 1:1-5,9-13 from the *Contemporary English Version* and the *New International Version*. Invite everyone to watch carefully and think about who or what it might be about.

After they have watched it, ask them who or what they think it might be about. Don't just tell them the answer straight away!

### The Jesus puzzle (short illustrated talk)

Preparation time: 60 minutes to make the card shapes



**You will need:** the card shapes made up according to the pictures 'Jesus Puzzle 1,2,3 and 4' (downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk))

Beginning with the black shapes for the word 'ONE', ask if anyone can spell 'one' looking at these letters. Talk about how there is 'One' person whom for hundreds of years before he was born, people were eagerly looking forward to seeing.

Next, with the black shapes for the word 'WORD', ask if anyone can spell 'word'. Talk about how in John 1 we can see how important the 'Word' is because it was through him that all things were created.

Then ask a similar question using the black shapes for the word 'LIGHT'. Hopefully, most will now have worked out how to do this. Explain how much we need a kind of light to show us the best way to live.

Finally, ask people to use the black shapes for the word 'JESUS'. Explain how Jesus has many names and that these four words help us learn just a bit about who he is: the 'One', the 'Word', the 'Light' and 'Jesus'.

But people don't really want to know Jesus. They choose to look away from the light and concentrate on the dark spaces instead.



### The bead keyring (short talk)

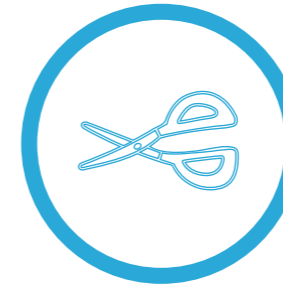
Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** all the items to make a keyring as in 'Bead keyring reminders' on page 31, the Beaded Keyring Guide (downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk))

Using the Beaded Keyring Guide, talk through the Bible verses, introducing each bead to tell the story. Do the 'Bead keyring reminders' activity immediately afterwards, to see how well everyone can remember what the symbols mean. Different age groups can help each other.

## CREATIVE MAKES



### The Jesus puzzle (creative make)

Description: Use card shapes to explain that the Bible tells us that Jesus is the light.

Difficulty level: ★



**You will need:** for each person, a copy of the picture of the Jesus Puzzle 4 (downloaded from [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)), white card, black card or craft foam, hanging thread, tape, scissors

Cut out the black shapes. Arrange them on the white card to spell 'JESUS'. Stick them down. Add thread to the word to hang it up with.



## PRAYER IDEAS

### Lantern scene from Tangled

Activity running time: 10 minutes



**You will need:** a copy of the lantern scene from the Disney film *Tangled* (available on DVD or on YouTube), something to play it on, ideally a projector and screen

1 The lantern scene from *Tangled* might be one that children and families know quite well! However, it will be helpful to introduce it to the group. It's the moment where the king and queen light lanterns and send them out into the sky in a hope that they will guide their lost daughter home. Throughout her life, Rapunzel has seen the lanterns, but didn't know that they were to call her home. In this scene, she sees them in the outside world for the first time. The song talks about how finally seeing the light changes everything, and part of that for Rapunzel and Flynn is how light and love change everything.

2 Say that today we've been celebrating the light that Jesus brought into the world. Like the lanterns in the film, God sent Jesus out as a light to the world to guide his children home. Pray simply that God would bring light and the love of Jesus into our lives, and then ask the group to watch the scene together, thinking about how God sent a light out that we might see it and be called home.

### Bead keyring reminders

Description: Make a bead keyring to remind everyone of truths contained in the Bible verses John 1:1-5,9-13.

Difficulty level: ★★



**You will need:** for each person, one metal key ring, approximately 32 cm of beading elastic, beads (1 heart, 1 large wooden bead to represent the world, 2 stars, 1 black pony bead, 1 cross, 2 or 3 smiley beads, 2 letter 'W' beads, a hand-shaped button or bead)

Fold the elastic in half over the keyring and knot it securely. On one end of the elastic, thread the heart bead and at the other end thread a letter 'W' (to signify the 'Word with God'). Push the two beads up towards the knot. Thread the wooden bead with the two ends together. Next add one star, the black bead and another star. Now, split the two ends of the elastic again, and on one end thread the other letter 'W' and on the other, the cross (to signify God with Jesus together). Next, thread the hand bead, then the smiley-face beads. Knot it securely and cut off any excess elastic.



### Sky lantern

Activity running time: 15 minutes



**You will need:** a biodegradable sky lantern (be aware of safety issues), a match, an outside open space

1 Go somewhere outside with the group – this will be ideal, of course, from early evening as it gets darker! Ask several volunteers of different ages to read John 1:1-5,9-13 – you might want to prepare them to do this beforehand and print off sections to give out.

2 Then, using a group of volunteers, carefully hold out the lantern, light it and watch it inflate and float out into the sky.

3 Finally, have printed out sections of this prayer to ask volunteers to read out:

**Dear God, we have read that you sent Jesus to bring light in our dark places. You give us your light, because you made us your children. Please help us to see your light when things are dark. You light us up so that we might shine your light in the world. Please help us to shine your light to others who need it.**

**Amen.**



# Staying in touch

Through your Light Party, event, service, celebration or whatever, you'll most likely have made contact with new children and young people – congratulations! That's a great starting-point, and we want to help you continue to develop meaningful relationships with these children and young people. It's these relationships that will help them grow in faith and want to explore more of who Jesus is.

When children and young people come into contact with us, they come at different stages in their experience of Jesus. Some may have been regularly hearing about him in a church setting. Others may be just beginning their exploration, and still more may have no knowledge at all of who Jesus is and what he did.

## DON'T STOP HERE!

Create opportunities for them to keep going with you after your Light Party or event. Try to stay in touch regularly with the children or young people you've met, until Christmas at least.

## SOMETHING ALREADY EXISTS?

Join with other leaders in your church to think and pray about the following questions.

How could your church continue to engage with the children and young people in a way that makes sense to them, isn't too threatening, and allows them to ask and explore their questions (not the church's) about life and Jesus? Is there any existing church group, gathering or service that might help, where they can build relationships and grow?

If you already have such a place, how well are you speaking the language of the children and young people who know nothing about Jesus except what you've shared with them at the Light Party? Is your church addressing their specific challenges and adventures?

## NOTHING YET EXISTS?

That's why we've developed a selection of follow-on resources that you can use to build on the momentum of your Light Party. Download your resources at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk).

Maybe your next step won't be in your church building or in a church service. Think of taking your church – the gathering of God's people – beyond your regular church buildings, structures and events. Maybe it's a

weekly youth club the young people will need, a cell meeting, play group, or some other place or platform for them to explore the Bible and build relationships with Christians who will listen to them and guide them, and of course with Jesus.

When you plan your Light Party or other event, ensure you have the 'What's next?' in mind. Have invitations to it ready at your party or event. Remember that you're in this for the long haul. For some, the journey to respond to Jesus and grow in faith is longer than others, some require more help and support than others – what they need from you is for you to be willing to hold their hand and lead them to Jesus, no matter how long it takes. Is it hard work? Yes, of course – the Lord Jesus calls us labourers.

But one thing is certain – there's no effort too great and no price too high to pay for children and young people to know the beauty of Jesus in this world and to spend eternity with him. Remember, God gave his very best to make it possible, so let's do all we need to do to make sure everyone knows about it.

Download your free follow-up resources at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)



# What next with Scripture Union?

Scripture Union is an inter-denominational Christian charity working to share the good news of Jesus with the next generation.

## OUR VISION

A new generation of children and young people who have a vibrant, personal faith in Jesus.

## OUR MISSION

We create opportunities for children and young people to explore the Bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith.

## OUR PRIORITY

Those who don't yet know him.



## THIS WINTER

### WHY NOT RUN A CHRISTMAS PARTY?

Help the children and young people in your community discover the real meaning of Christmas by hosting a Christmas party.

**This year's Christmas Party Pack will be ready and available for you to download for free from October, giving you plenty of time to prepare for this busy season.** Perhaps you could even give out the invites at your Light Party!



The activities we're involved in are wide and varied, but they all remain true to our vision, mission and priority. Together with our mission partners and churches across the UK we're seeking to share the good news of Jesus with the 95% of children and young people not in church.

**We'd love to support your church as you reach out to the children and young people in your community. There are many ways we can do this; please read on to find out more.**



## WORKING TOGETHER TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS WITH THE NEXT GENERATION

As you seek to share the love of Jesus with the children and young people in your local community, we're here to support, serve and equip you.

## HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR CHURCH

### RESOURCES

We're continually developing new resources to help your church in their work with children and young people. We offer as many of these as we can for free, to ensure that everyone can use them. Visit [su.org.uk/resources](http://su.org.uk/resources) to find out more.



### LOCAL WORKERS

Your local SU worker is on hand to provide support, advice and training for your church. They would also be interested in hearing about any projects or events they could support you with. To find out more and to get in touch with your local team, please visit [su.org.uk/local](http://su.org.uk/local).

### SU HOLIDAYS

We have a huge range of affordable holidays where children and young people can have fun, make friends and learn about Jesus. Are there any children and young people in your church or community who would benefit from going on an SU holiday? Find out more about our holidays at [su.org.uk/holidays](http://su.org.uk/holidays).



### THE 95 CAMPAIGN

An estimated 95% of children and young people aren't in church. Join The 95 Campaign for news about the latest resources, tools and ideas to reach out to them with the good news of Jesus. You can sign up for free by using the form on page 7 or by visiting [the95.org.uk](http://the95.org.uk).



## WE NEED YOUR HELP TO TELL MORE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT JESUS

Not everyone is aware that Scripture Union is a charity. We know that many people know us for our holidays and resources, but did you know we don't provide either of these things to make a profit?

As a charity we rely on donations and only with the support of people like you can we do what we do.

Your support enables us to create new resources and to provide free support and training to churches to help them as they reach out to the children and young people in their communities. By donating, you allow us to offer subsidised holidays for all and special holiday grants to those whose families are facing financial difficulties. You can also help our local workers to develop new missions, allowing them to share the good news of Jesus with even more young people.

Can I ask you to consider giving a gift today?  
Or perhaps you could ask your church to support Scripture Union in their charitable giving?

There are many ways you or your church can donate:

- Give a gift using the form on page 7
- Donate online at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)
- Take a collection in your church service – you can order collection envelopes using the form on page 7 or at [lightparty.org.uk](http://lightparty.org.uk)
- Give us a call on **01908 856000**.

- Many churches choose to donate via BACS. Our account details are:  
**Bank account:**  
HSBC, 24 College Green, Avon, Bristol, BS1 5TD.  
**Sort code:** 40-14-12  
**Account Number:** 91050478

Please include '55290' as part of the reference and email [care@scriptureunion.org.uk](mailto:care@scriptureunion.org.uk) to let us know the details of your donation.

**Thank you for your support. It really does make a difference to the lives of children and young people across the country.**





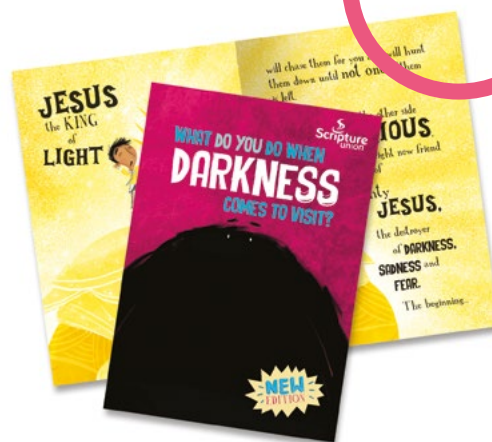


## WHO IS THE LIGHT?

presents Jesus as the Light of the World and how those who follow him are called to be like light too. Ideal for children aged 5-8.

## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN DARKNESS COMES TO VISIT?

Invites children to discover Jesus as the Light of the World, who is able to overcome darkness, sadness and fear. This has been revised and updated since 2015 and is aimed at those aged 8-11.



These 20-page evangelistic booklets are ideal for introducing Jesus to children using the themes of darkness and light.

They are great for:

- giving to children who come trick or treating
- giving away at your Light event
- using as an evangelistic tool in your service.

**Order from Scripture Union:  
01908 856000**

**Online:  
[www.lightparty.org.uk](http://www.lightparty.org.uk)**

**Or by using the form on  
page 7**

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