

**Focus:** Being the Light of the World

**Materials:**

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth  
Advent Wreath-and flames  
CD: Advent CD Cycle B  
Bible: Black Notebook- reading in lesson  
Flashlight and mirror

**Gathering** (children sit on carpet/floor-“Criss-Cross Applesauce”)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about Last week we heard a story about John the Baptist. John the Baptist told us we need to tell others about Jesus so we can be prepared when Jesus comes again. This week we will talk about how we can be Jesus' light in the world today.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Let us pray.*

*Jesus our Light, Fill our hearts with joyful hope, as we wait to celebrate your coming into the world. Guide us each day with the light of your love.*

*Today is the 3rd week of Advent. We light the pink candle; this is the candle of Joy. We are waiting for Jesus, the bringer of true and everlasting joy.*

*Let us pray: Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Through Your Son we have found joy in living as your children. Help us to prepare our hearts for this gift. We ask in the name of your son, Jesus. Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*Hope, Peace, Joy and Love*, track: 1, from Advent Cycle B

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.

Chorus:

*I got your hope, peace, joy and love  
The best gifts come from above  
I got your hope, peace, joy and love  
in my heart  
(Repeat)*

*Hope is a light in the darkness,  
shining brightly on Bethlehem town  
The Messiah is born; he's our king  
and our lord; the promise of hope  
we have found  
Glory to god in the highest; peace  
on earth and good will to all men  
Take the star in the east to the  
prince of peace who will someday  
be coming again.*

*Repeat chorus 2x*

*An angel appeared from the  
heavens, bringing news to the  
shepherds that night.  
Good tidings of joy, in the birth of a  
boy, born to give us forgiveness and  
life.  
Jesus Emmanuel Savior; little baby a  
gift from above  
He loved us so much he gave his  
only son, the gift of hope, peace, joy  
and love.*

*Repeat Chorus 4*

### Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Make straight the way of the Lord.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Another way to say this would be "Clear the path to the Lord". If your room was messy-toys and books and clothes all over the floor-wouldn't it be harder for someone to get in the room. How could you get to your bed to go to sleep? You'd have to push stuff out of the way or you might trip and fall. It wouldn't be easy. But when your room is clean, you can walk straight to the bed without a problem. When the path is clear you can get to where you want easily.*

*When our hearts are full of love and kindness we can easily follow the way to Jesus. If we let our hearts be filled with anger and hate, we can't see Jesus. We want to keep our hearts clear and our eyes toward the light of Jesus.*

### Gospel Story

Play CD: Track 2-"Stay Awake-Be Ready" from Advent CD

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of John.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: None, pp. N/A,

A man named John was sent from God.

[Point into the distance]

He was not the light, but he came to tell about the light.

[Shake head no, then chatty hands]

The heads of the temple sent people to John to ask who he was.

[Walk in place]

"Are you the Messiah, the chosen one from God?" They asked.

[Chatty hands, thumb against fingers]

John told them that he was not the Messiah.

[Shake head emphatically -no-]

They asked John if he was one of the prophets.

[Chatty hands, thumb against fingers]

John told them he was not one of the prophets.

[Shake head-no-]

They asked him again who he was.

[Shrug shoulders; lift wondering hands, palms up]

John answered:

[Chatty hands, thumb against fingers]

"I am the voice calling in the desert,

[Cup hands around mouth]

‘Make straight the way of the Lord.’”

[Holding palms together fingertips pointing upward, raise hands toward heaven in straight line]

The people wanted to know why John baptized if he was not the Savior.

[Shrug shoulders; lift wondering hands, palms up]

John answered:

[Chatty hands, thumb against fingers]

“I baptize with water.

[Pour imaginary water from cupped hand]

There is one among you whom you do not recognize.

[Search the crowd with hand over brow, turn right and left, shrug shoulders.]

I am not worthy to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

[Praying hands, bowed head]

The Gospel of the Lord.

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

#### **Discussion Starters:**

- *Who is John the Baptist? (recall from last week-lived in the desert-telling people to say they are sorry for their bad choices)*
- *Who does John say is the light of the world?*
- *Why is Jesus called the Light of the world? (Saves us from sin and helps us to live like God wants)*
- *Who does John say he is? (the voice in the desert...)*
- *Why does John say to make a straight path?*
- *How does John Baptize? (On the outside our bodies-with water as a symbol or sign of our desire to be good and follow God’s laws)*
- *How does Jesus baptize? (inside our hearts with the Holy Spirit so we have the power to make good choices and love others as Jesus taught us)*

#### **Reflection on Reading:**

*In today’s gospel the Jewish leaders question John the Baptist to find out the truth. They want to know if John is the promised messiah. John the Baptist makes it clear that he has been sent by God to help prepare the hearts of the people to be able to know who Jesus was when he came.*

*Jesus is the Light of the World. In Jesus’ time there were no phones or TV or internet. John couldn’t just send out a tweet to his followers and have thousands of people know all at once that Jesus was coming. He walked the desert telling those that came to him about Jesus, he used his voice and actions to let people know about the Savior that was coming. John helped people find Jesus-the light.*

**Gospel Activity**Activity 1:**Reflecting the Light of Jesus**

Have you ever sat outside on a bright sunny day and used a mirror to reflect the sun's light? If one of you will take this flashlight and shine it on me I will show you what I mean. You see, as the light shines on me, I hold up my mirror and I can reflect the light to shine on you. I am not the light, I am just letting my mirror reflect the light to shine on you.

If I am going to reflect the light on you, there are a couple of things that are very important:

1. I must keep my mirror facing toward the light. If I turn away from the light, I cannot reflect the light.
2. I must make sure that nothing comes between the light and me. If that happens, I cannot reflect the light.

The Bible tells us that "There was a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light: he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world."

Who was the true light is that the Bible said was coming into the world? It was Jesus. Jesus is the light of the world.

You and I need to be like John. The Bible says that we are to let our light shine, but we need to remember that "Our Light" is Jesus. We are not the light; we are just mirrors that reflect His light. If we are going to reflect the light of Jesus, we must remember a couple of things:

1. We must keep our faces turned toward Jesus.
2. We must not let anything come between us and Jesus.

When we remember those two things, we will reflect His light to the entire world.

*Dear Jesus, we want to reflect your light in the world. Help us to keep our faces turned toward you and help us to keep anything from coming between us and you. Amen.*

Activity 2:**The Light and the Dark** (a variation of red light/green light)

Instruct the children to move either to the right side of the room (toward the window –the light) or left side (toward the bathroom –the dark) when a choice is called out.

Some examples of choices that reflect light: helping someone who is sad, saying thank you, telling the truth, saying I'm sorry, praying, making a card for someone who is sick, going to church, etc.

Some examples of choices that reflect darkness: staying angry, lying, holding a grudge, refusing to share, teasing someone at school, taking something without permission, making a fuss when you have to clean up your toys, etc.

Mix up the choices so that the children can move from one side of the room to the other.

Discuss:

- Who helps you to make good choices?
- How can you help others make good choices?
- How does Jesus help us to make good choices?

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

### **Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who sent Jesus to be the light of the world?*

*Do you believe in Jesus, who is the light of the world?*

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us be the light of Jesus every day?*

### **Sending Forth**

Say: *We can remember to be the light of the world by making good choices. When you make good choices this week imagine yourself stepping into a great big sunbeam of love from God.*

### **Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "*Tell Me the Story of Jesus*" track 3 from Advent CD Cycle B while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.