

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 2026

FAMILY PRAYER RESOURCE



IN THE
LIGHT

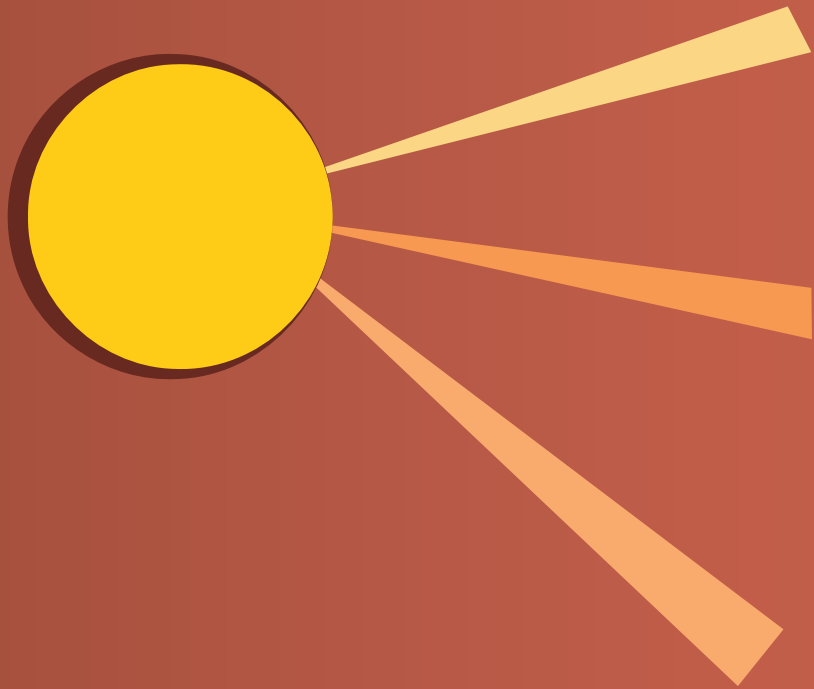
“

For you were once darkness,
but now you are light in the
Lord. Live as children of light...

Ephesians 5:8 (NIV)

”





PREAMBLE

The family prayer diary serves as a tool to engage the whole family in meaningful prayer focus and reflection. The prayer journey engages and provides opportunity to acknowledge the things that so often can cause significant dimness and darkness in the world.

Supporting Scripture verses:

- **Matthew 5:14-16 (ESV):** 'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'
- **John 8:12 (NIV):** 'When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."'
- **Ephesians 5:8 (NIV):** 'For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light...'
- **Philippians 2:15 (NIV):** '...so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky...'
- **Isaiah 60:1 (NIV):** 'Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.'

IN THE LIGHT



The supporting Scripture verses emphasise our role as light bearers, reflecting God's presence in the world. Let's for a moment look back to it where began...

#	Bible Verse	Topic	Reflection	Prayer Activity
1	Genesis 1:1-4	First things first	<p><i>'And God said, "Let there be light", and there was light'</i> (Genesis 1:3 <i>NIV</i>).</p> <p>The very first thing that God made was light. He could have made anything else first (the land, fish, the sky). He even could have made the sun first, but before even creating a source of light, God simply created light itself, letting it shine on a dark world.</p> <p>The Bible talks a lot about light, often using it as a metaphor for things that are good (Genesis 1:4), life-giving (John 1:4), powerful (John 1:5) and helpful (Psalm 119:105).</p> <p>Sometimes, when we feel alone, afraid or discouraged, it can feel like we are living in darkness. Let us remember that when God saw the darkness in the world, his first response was to fill that darkness with light. God is the source of all light (James 1:17) and he not only sees the darkness in the world, but he also wants to fill it with his good light.</p> <p><i>'God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness'</i> (Genesis 1:4 <i>NIV</i>).</p> <p>After creating light, God sees that there are now two distinct things: light and dark. God sees that light is good and then separates it from the darkness.</p> <p>Why does God separate the two? Why not keep them together?</p>	<p>Light vs darkness Set up: Two jars, one with black stones and one with white stones. Optional extras: add a flashlight/torch, candle or LED candles. Activity: Children take a white stone and pray, giving thanks to God for bringing 'me' into the 'light'. Visual: Jars with stones and a light source.</p>

2 Ephesians 5:8-9

'For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light...' (Ephesians 5:8 NIV).

We are reminded that, because of our sinful nature, we used to live in darkness. Through Jesus, however, we have been adopted as children of light. We no longer need to live with the same hardened hearts, but are freed from the power of sin in and over our lives.

'...(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)...' (Ephesians 5:9 NIV).

Fruit of the light

Set up: Baskets of artificial or paper fruits labelled 'goodness', 'righteousness', 'truth', etc.

Activity: Everyone picks one fruit and writes about/draws how they can show and live out that aspect of light every day.

3 Mirror of reflection

Mirror with the verse written onto it. Glow-in-the-dark stickers/sticks, etc., for children to wear, or part of further décor

Mirrors reflect light. Just like a mirror reflects light, we can reflect Jesus' love and goodness to others.

Mirror of reflection

Set up: Turn off the lights and shine a flashlight/torch on a mirror. Show how the light bounces and brightens the room.

(Optional) Give each child a mirror. Ask them to look at themselves and think:

- *How can I shine for Jesus today?*
- *What kind things can I do to reflect his love?*

Decorate the mirrors

Let the children decorate their mirrors with stickers or write words like **'Shine for Jesus'** or **'For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light...'** (Ephesians 5:8 NIV).

4 Darkness to light path

Life is light

'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind' (John 1:4 NIV).

His life is our light. The life of Jesus puts everything else into perspective.

When we feel lost or confused, or uncertain about what to do, we can look to Jesus to see how he responded to similar challenges. Let his life on earth guide you as you change the question 'What would Jesus do?' to 'What did Jesus do?'.

As we struggle to make sense of the constantly changing realities around us, all truth can be found in Jesus and his life on earth. Reading the gospels, to see how Jesus responded to all of the different things he experienced, shows us how we are to respond no matter what the experience or the circumstance. His life shines a light on how we are to live.

Darkness to light path

Set up (pathway): Place a piece of dark cloth at the start of the path and some bright cloth at the end (length not important).

Activity: Children walk from darkness to light, pausing halfway to thank Jesus.

Visual: Path from dark to light.

5 John 1:5

The light wins

The Bible teaches us that the darkness cannot defeat the light. Even in the deepest darkness, the light still shines. When we look at the night sky, we see stars shining clearly despite the sea of darkness around them. Although the stars are far away from earth, their light still reaches our eyes, giving us a sense of peace and hope until the sun rises.

Some translations emphasise the truth that darkness has never beaten the light. There was no point in time (and there never will be) when the darkness was ever stronger than the light. Darkness and light are not two equal opposite forces opposing each other. The light has been created by God and ordained as 'good' (Genesis 1:4). Even when it feels like the darkness is stronger than the light, we must remember that the light always wins... ALWAYS!

Candle prayer

Set up: Arrange some battery-operated candles in the shape of a cross.

Activity: Each child switches on a candle and prays: 'Lord, help me shine your light in my school and home.'

Visual: Candles in a cross shape.