

Shining bright – Jesus baptism



Bible reading

The baptism of Jesus, Matthew 3:13-17 bit.ly/3SrmBXO

Parable of the lamp on a stand, Matthew 5:15-16 bit.ly/3Ubm1OZ

Bible video

- Parable of lamp on a stand – St Columba’s Presbyterian Church bit.ly/3Ogf3od
- Baptism of Jesus – Noah’s Lego World bit.ly/3vVuT12

Arrival activity

Tealight

You will need an LED tealight for each person, and an assortment of things to craft with: card, lego, junk for example. The task is to create a lantern to hold the tealight so it can be held up high, safely, to share its light as brightly as possible. Completion of this task can earn campers the “Shining Bright” badge.

Story

Baptism of Jesus

Sit the children in two groups, one group to represent the water and one group to represent the people. You need two volunteers, one to play Jesus and one to play John. The children representing the water move their arms like the motion of waves, or hold hands and do a seated Mexican wave, or could use some pieces of blue material and shake them to create a river. The children representing the people can jostle and hold their hands to their ears as though listening.

In the middle of the hard, dry land, a river was flowing (*get the children to create the effect of the water*). From the north to the south it flowed, sometimes a broad, smooth and gentle stream, (*get the children to create a gentle stream*) sometimes more lively (*get the children to make their movements a little more lively*) as it skipped and twisted between the rocks. On and on the river flowed, (*get the children to return to gentle movements*) through the Sea of Galilee and on to the Dead Sea, its banks green with trees and grasses, nourished by its life-giving waters in this hard, dry land.

And in the middle of the river stood a man. John. He was quite a sight. His hair was wild. His clothes were made out of itchy, scratchy camel hair (*a volunteer to be John can stand in the middle of the children, occasionally scratching*). He marched up and down the river, splashing water as he went (*as John walks near a child, they should raise their arms quickly and shout 'splash'*).

People had come from all over to hear John talk (*get the children to cup their hands round their ears to listen*). He stood in the middle of the river (*John stands still and pretends to shout, cupping hands round mouth*) and shouted "Change your hearts and lives, because the kingdom of heaven is coming soon"!

Some of the people heard what John said. They wanted to get to know God, so they waded into the water. (*Choose three children in turn to step forward to John, forming a heart symbol using their fingers or placing both hands on their heart. John puts his hand on their head and they duck down as though ducking into the water*). They told John they were sorry for all the things they had done wrong and wanted a new life, and then John dunked them into the water! (*as the three children are each baptised, the children representing the water can raise their arms and 'splash'*) "I baptise you with water, to show that your hearts and lives have changed," John told them. "But there is one coming later

who is greater than I am. I am not good enough to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit." The people scratched their heads and wondered, "Who could be greater than John?" (*children representing the people scratch their heads and pretend to think*).

Suddenly the people noticed someone walking towards the river. It was Jesus! He was coming to be baptised too. John couldn't understand – he knew Jesus was God's son, so why would he need to be baptised? If anyone was being baptised it should be John being baptised by Jesus, surely. But Jesus insisted. "We should do all things that are right," he said. (*John baptises Jesus*).

As Jesus came out of the water, he saw the heavens open and a dove, which was God's spirit, came and settled on him (*all the other children make their hands into a bird shape and flutter the wings, moving from having hands above head to having hands in lap*). A voice from heaven spoke. "This is my Son and I love him. I am very pleased with him".

Everyone who was there was amazed! They knew that they had seen something really, really special happen that day. Their hearts were beating faster – du-dum, du-dum, du-dum, du-dum (*children all place both hands on their hearts and move the upper hand in time with the heart beats*). As they gazed at Jesus and up at the heavens, they wondered: Maybe they too might change their hearts and their lives in a new life with Jesus. And the river flowed on, bringing new life to the hard, dry land on either bank.

Parable

Gathered round the campfire is the perfect place for a story. With the darkness behind us, we are drawn to the flickering light.

People say you can see pictures in the flames of a real fire as they writhe and twist together, warm and comforting yet with a taste of adventure and a tiny hint of danger.

Do you have your torches with you? Shine them on the ceiling, let the light play there for a while.

Close your eyes and feel the darkness, open up your imagination – see a lighthouse, see a candle, see a lantern, see a lamp. In the dark and in the light we see a glimpse of God's wonderful kingdom. Let me share the story. Story, story, story.

A person once had a lantern. It was a beautiful lantern. The frame of the lantern was made of bronze with highly polished golden gleam. The windows on five sides of the hexagonal lantern were made of the clearest glass, while the sixth side was a tiny, shiny door. There was a hoop at the top to hold or hang the lantern by. And inside the lantern was a pure white candle.

The person picked up the lantern and opened the tiny, shiny door. They struck a match. A tiny flame in the darkness. Quick – don't let it go out, don't let it burn your fingers ... touch the flame to the candle wick and set it alight.

A flicker ... Wait for it ... A flame. The candle shines brightly.

The person blew out the match and closed the door of the lantern. Oh how that lantern shone. Oh what a glorious light.

The person looked at the lantern. There was just one more thing to do. An upturned bucket would do the trick.

There ... put it over the lantern and hide it away.

This story is a parable, a picture story, of course. I wonder what it tells us about God's kingdom.

Campfire song

Sing to the tune 'This little light of mine'.

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine,
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Don't hide it away,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Don't hide it away,
I'm gonna let it shine,



Don't hide it away,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Put it way up high,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Put it way up high,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Put it way up high,
I'm gonna let it shine,

Let it shine, let it shine, LET IT SHINE (Jazz hands)



Wondering questions

- I wonder where you see God in today's stories and in your story.
- I wonder what one thing you liked best from today's stories.
- I wonder what you will remember about today's stories and maybe share with someone else.

What's your story?

- Can you share the story of a baptism or Christening (any age) you have been at?
- Can you share the story of a time you told someone about what Jesus means to you?
- Can you share the story of how you got your name?

Small group prayer

Shining bright

What you need:

- Old CDs or DVDs (check what images are on the label)
- Blu tack
- Glass pebbles
- Marker pens.

What you do:

Blu tack a glass pebble to the centre of a recycled CD or DVD – this will enable the disc to spin. Invite the children to think of people who shine for them: it may be people who help them, people they wish to be more like, people who are good role models. Draw or write this onto the CD using marker pens to decorate it.

Children could also think of the skills God has given them which mean they can also support and help others. As the disc spins, they give their thanks to God.

Activity/craft

T-shirt decorating

Each child will need an old t-shirt which they can decorate to make a new, fun item of clothing.

You can use fabric paints, pens, iron-on patches or additional fabric to create a dazzling 'light' design.



Remember to place a piece of cardboard inside the t-shirt so that pen ink or paint doesn't leak through to the back panel. Younger groups may prefer simpler materials such as paint or pens; older groups may prefer to try a new skill such as sewing.



STEM activity

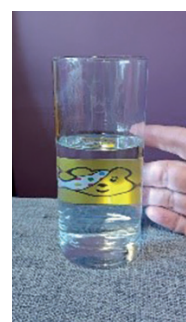
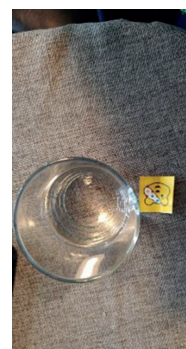
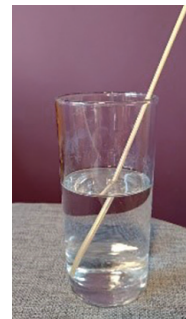
Light Refraction Experiment

What you need:

- Drinking straw or a pen
- Clear water or glass of water
- Long clear glass or glass with water.

What you do:

1. Fill the glass half full with water.
2. Stand a straw/pen in the glass of water quite straight and watch from the side.
3. Slowly tilt the straw and watch what happens.
4. Raise the glass or lower your eyes to look at the straw from under the water surface. How does the straw look now.
5. Move to different angles and watch how the straw seems to change in shape at the water surface as you move.
6. Try other objects and see how they change in the water.
7. You can also place images under the glass or at the side of the glass how do they change; try moving them away from the glass, how do they look now?



Recipe

Sunrise drink

What you need:

- 60ml orange juice
- Orange slice
- 60ml cranberry juice
- 15ml peach juice
- 15ml pineapple juice
- Sugar
- Ice
- Glass
- Paper/reusable straw.

What you do:

1. Wash hands to start. Dip the rim of the glass in orange juice, let it drip to remove excess fluid and then dip it in sugar to create a sugary rim.
2. Fill a glass with ice, crushed or cubed.



3. Add the peach and pineapple juice. Pour in 60ml of orange juice over the ice.
4. Carefully pour in 60ml of cranberry juice on top of the orange juice so that it layers rather than mixes in.
5. Add a slice of orange for garnish.

Games

Under a Bushel

Line the group up according to height then take each alternate player to create two similar teams. Label them Team A and Team B and then line the two teams up opposite each other. Number the team members, starting at opposite ends of the lines, so that player one on the first team is opposite the player with the highest number on the opposite team.

In the centre of the room have twelve upturned buckets spread out across the floor and twelve LED nightlights. Put half the nightlights underneath buckets and the other half on top of buckets. The leader shouts out a number and then shouts GO, starting a 30 second timer. The two players whose number is called out run to the centre. The player from team A tries to place all the nightlights under buckets, the player from team B tries to place all the nightlights on top of the buckets. After 30 seconds, call out another number. The players currently playing return to their places and the new players take over. Once everyone has had a go, count the nightlights and see which team has won.

Pass the Cup

Water games can lead to spillage (the best ones do!) so ensure you play in a suitable area and have mop and bucket ready to stop floors becoming slippery.

Split the group into teams. Teams should sit on the floor in a line, one behind the other. The person at the front of the team should have a bucket full of water in front of them and there should be an empty bucket at the back of the line. Each team needs a paper cup.

On "Go" the first person in the team fills their cup with water. They then pass it over their head to the person sitting behind them. This person takes the cup and passes it over their head, and so on until it reaches the person at the back of the line. This person stands up, pours the water into the bucket at the back of the line, then runs to the front of the line. The team shuffles back one place and the player with the cup sits down at the front and fills the cup again. Continue until everyone in the team has had a go at the front (so that everyone has an equal chance of getting wet), then the winning team is the team with the most water in their bucket.

Large group prayer

You will need one LED tea light for each person.

1. Each child sitting in the circle has an unlit tealight in front of them. Choose who will begin.
2. The first person says a word or phrase to express something they have enjoyed or learned during this session.

