

## A season of love



### **Bible verses:**

Isaiah 9:6

A child will be born to us



### **Aim:**

To explore how God shows his love for us



### **Today's fruit:**

Love



In today's session we reflect on the themes of Advent we have shared throughout the past month.

We'll look at the Christmas story as a whole and consider the theme of God's love. As we step into the new year, we'll think about all the ways God shows his love to us.

The Christmas story is full of examples of God's love. He wants to grow the same love in our hearts.

### **Each child will need:**

- Snacks for the mini-movie (optional)
- Resources to make a calendar - see Action it
- Pens/pencils
- Heart-shaped paper to write on
- *Explore It ideas* handout

### **You will need:**

- Today's fruit sign: *Love*



## Start it

Start by giving the children the opportunity to share what they have been up to over the Christmas holidays.



## Say:

In today's session we're going to finish learning about the Christmas story and start thinking about how we can take its message into the new year and beyond. Before we do that, let's learn how people across the world celebrate the new year. Watch the clip and see if you can answer the questions.

## Video

*How does the UK celebrate New Year?* By Twinkl Educational Publishing (2:24)

## Ask:

- What date is New Year's Eve? **31 December**
- What date is New Year's Day? **1 January**
- How do people often spend New Year's Eve? **Spending time with family and friends – they might even have a party**
- What often fills the sky on New Year's Eve? **Fireworks**
- What traditional song is often shared on New Year's Eve? **'Auld Land Syne'**
- What other traditions do some people carry out to bring in the New Year? **Banging pots and pans; opening the back door and someone coming through the front door with salt, coal and bread; saying 'Happy new year!' when they see each other for the first time that year**
- What is a new year's resolution? **A promise to yourself to do something better in the coming year**
- How are you celebrating the new year?

## Say:

In our session today we are going to look back at the Christmas story and the Advent themes we have explored over the past month. We are also going to look forward into the new year and see how we can continue to experience God's love in (*insert year*).

## Sing it

## Say:

Our song for today reminds us to look for God's love in the everyday moments of life.

## Song

'Don't forget to remember' official lyric video by Ellie Holcomb (3:38)

## Tell it

### Ask:

What are the Advent themes we have talked about over the past month?

### Discuss

Discuss with the children each Advent theme and which characters it made them think of.

**Session One: Hope** – We started to learn the memory verse and learned about the hope brought through God’s message to the prophet Isaiah.

**Session Two: Faith** – We looked at Mary’s story and the way she placed her faith and trust in God’s plan for her life.

**Session Three: Peace** – We found the shepherds on the hillside as they listened to the promise from the angels that Jesus would bring peace to the world.

**Session Four: Joy** – We saw the joy of the wise men as they went to visit Jesus, the person in whom we find all our joy.

### Say:

Today we are going to focus on the Advent theme of love. As you watch the clip, look for all the different ways God shared his love through the Christmas story. Get ready to share after the clip has finished.

This clip is longer than the ones we usually share and tells the whole Christmas story. You may want to give the children a snack or drink as if they are having a mini trip to the cinema. Once the clip has finished, then discuss with the children all the examples of God’s love that they spotted.

### Video

*The Christmas story – the fully animated reading* by J John (9:34)

### Ask:

- How is God’s love shown in the story of Christmas?
- What is your favourite part of the Christmas story? Explain why you love it so much.

### Say:

This month we have spent time learning the words God gave to the prophet Isaiah. Let’s share them together.



## Read:

'A child will be born to us.

God will give a son to us.

He will be responsible for leading the people.

His name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Powerful God,

Father Who Lives For Ever, Prince of Peace.'

(Isaiah 9:6 ICB)

## Ask:

- How did the words of Isaiah's prophecy come true?



## Action it

Display the *Love* sign.

## Say:

God loves us so much that he sent his son to be born here on earth. He wants to grow that same love within each of us so that we can share it with others. Our song for today tells us not to forget just how much God loves us. We're going to create a calendar to help us remember that we are loved by God.

For this activity the children are going to create a calendar that reminds them of God's love. Refer to the song from the Sing it section for ideas about the different ways God shows his love to us. The children can choose their own idea, or one from the song, to create a picture of how they see God's love every day.

## Examples from the song include:

- The sun rising each day
- Birds humming their tune
- Catching snowflakes
- Flowers growing in the garden
- Stars shining in the sky

A few options are listed below for how the calendar could be created.

## Suggested calendar resources

- Use a pre-printed calendar

Purchase from **Baker Ross** or **Amazon**

- Attach mini calendar pads to a sheet of A4 card

Purchase from **Baker Ross** or **Amazon**

## Pray it

### Say:

Today we have talked about the many different ways that God shows his love to us. God wants to grow that same love in our hearts just like fruit grows on a tree. We can't grow this kind of love all by ourselves. We need the help of the Holy Spirit.

Discuss with the children the times they find it difficult to show God's love to others. What help do they need from the Holy Spirit to show God's love?

Explain that instead of new year's resolutions, they are going to write new year prayers asking God to help them love others. Give the children a heart-shaped piece of paper to write their prayer on and share them together. They can take this prayer away with them to use as part of the Explore It at Home activities.

If needed, a song is provided to use as part of the prayer time.

### Listen

'Your love for me' official lyric video by LifeKids (3:09)

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



## A season of love

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



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**Aim:**  
To explore how God shows his love for us



**Today's fruit:**  
Love



### Pray

In this week's session you wrote a new year's prayer on a heart-shaped piece of paper. Put the heart up in your room and take a moment each day to ask God to help you love others.



### Create

Ask someone at home to help you to create a 'New Year celebrations from around the world' quiz. You could even test it out on your family on New Years' Eve.



### Song for the week

'Don't forget to remember' official lyric video by Ellie Holcomb



### Memory verse

'A child will be born to us.  
God will give a son to us.  
He will be responsible for leading the people.  
His name will be Wonderful Counsellor,  
Powerful God,  
Father Who Lives For Ever, Prince of Peace.'

(Isaiah 9:6 ICB)

**LIVING  
OUT FAITH**

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(Isaiah 9:6 ICB)

- What is your favourite part of the Christmas story? Explain why.
- How does the Christmas story show us that God loves us?
- How can we show the love of God to people that we meet?



## Sing It

**'Don't forget to remember' official lyric video** by Ellie Holcomb

**'Friend of God' by Israel Houghton** uploaded by Spring Harvest – Topic



## Start it

Throughout this month we have thought about the themes of Advent. We've thought about hope, faith, peace and joy, and today we'll be thinking about God's love for us.



## Tell it

Watch the following clip together that tells the Christmas story.

***The Christmas story for kids Bible Stories with Sarah & Simon***, by Bible Kids (3:30)

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- Name as many characters as you can from the Christmas story.



## Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Cut out some colourful hearts to remind you of God's love. You could give one to the people at home.
- Draw a picture of your favourite part of the Christmas story.
- Think of three ways God shows us he loves us. There are lots of examples in the song 'Don't forget to remember'.
- Ask God to help you grow love, the fruit of the Spirit, in your heart so that you can love other people just like God loves you.