We have gathered together to worship God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and to learn more about Jesus the light of the world. We will be thinking again today about the value of joy.

Jesus said, “ I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”

*Look at the 3 different candles that you have and light one of them. Call this the Jesus candle.*

Just like these candles, each one of us is unique: each one of us is different.

*Light the two other candles from the Jesus candle.*

Look at each of the candles flames. They are all the same! They have been lit from the candle in the centre which represents Jesus and represents the light of Christ.

During Jesus’ life on earth, he brought light and joy to many people who felt that their lives were dark and without hope. Jesus told his friends to follow his example of service to others and throughout time, many people have been doing just that.

We are going to hear about one lady today who is also known as ‘The Lady with the Lamp.’ This lady is remembered for making changes to nursing and showing people that nursing was a very important job. In fact, the Nightingale hospitals which the government have recently built to look after patients with COVID 19 are named after her – yes you’ve guessed it! We are going to hear about Florence Nightingale.

Story

There was a time many years ago when, if people became ill or injured, they would probably die. Doctors tried to save them, but hospitals weren't clean, so disease spread. A young English woman, called Florence Nightingale, decided to help. Florence wanted to become a nurse, but at that time nursing was not the sort of job people like Florence did. Her family was wealthy, so she wasn't expected to have a job at all! But she was religious and clever and desperately wanted to help.

After training, Florence started a job at a hospital in London. She had many ideas about better ways to look after sick people, like nurses washing their hands and keeping hospitals clean. She said the very first requirement in a hospital is that it should do the sick no harm. At the time, Britain was fighting a war in Crimea, Russia. Soldiers died from wounds but even more died from diseases. Florence went to Crimea and took nurses with her. To stop disease, she cleaned the hospitals and gave patients healthy food. She even looked after them at night, using a lamp to see in the dark. She became known as ‘The Lady with the Lamp’. Florence's great work made her famous. She used her influence to turn nursing into an important job and make hospitals better. She started a nursing school at St. Thomas' Hospital in 1860 and wrote books so that nurses could be properly trained to do their job. Florence made such a difference to nursing that she was given many awards. Today, we remember her by awarding nurses who give the best care in war and peace, the Florence Nightingale Medal!

Florence Nightingale was just17 years old when she decided that God was asking her to be a nurse. It was an unusual profession for a young woman at the time, but she was determined that she would work hard to achieve her goal and become the best nurse possible. She is a great example of someone who spent her life helping others, sometimes in very difficult situations.

Let’s say a prayer together:

Dear God,  
Thank you for all those who care for us when we are sick.  
Thank you for all the people who work in hospitals.  
Thank you for people who spend their lives helping other people to get better.

Thank you for all the key workers who are working hard at the moment to help others in their communities.  
Please help us to look for ways to help others.  
Please help us to care for those in need.

Amen

Reflection

Look at the candles lighting up the space around us. Focus for a moment on that candle.

We are going to spend some time in stillness and reflection.

As you sitting in a way that is comfortable? Become aware of your breathing.

Feel your shoulders gently rise as the air fills your chest, and then fall as you breathe out.

Spend some time just being aware of breathing in and out.

Now try closing your eyes, but still keeping your chosen candle and its flame as a picture in your mind.

That candle has been lit from the ‘Jesus candle’ at the centre. It is a symbol of the way his light can shine in every one of us.

You are unique.

You make a difference in the world that no one else can, just by being the person that you are.

No one else can shine like you and you can bring light into every place that you go today, into every conversation that you have, and into the lives of everybody around you.

Picture something that you will be doing today.

Where will you be?

Who will you be with?

How can you bring light and joy to those around you?

When you come to the end of the day, what will you be proud of?

Open your eyes now and look at the candles together.

One candle flame shining alone can bring light to a dark place, but many candles shining together can make an even bigger difference. The light can spread much further. It is like a beacon that can be from miles away.

In our prayer, let’s ask God that each member of our school community becomes a beacon of light and joy within their family and community.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ.

As we worship you together in our own homes but as part our school community, we ask you to let your light shine here.

Let our rooms be full of joy.

Let love be all around –

Love for one another; love for all people; and love for you.

Amen

Let’s close our assembly with this joyful hymn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3iB30gCqAc>

Lord the [light](https://www.definitions.net/definition/light) of Your love is [shining](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shining)

In the [midst](https://www.definitions.net/definition/midst) of the darkness, shining

Jesus, [Light](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Light) of the world, [shine](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shine) upon us

Set us free by the [truth](https://www.definitions.net/definition/truth) You now [bring](https://www.definitions.net/definition/bring) us

Shine on me

Shine on me

Shine, Jesus, [shine](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shine)

Fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, Set our [hearts](https://www.definitions.net/definition/hearts) on fire

Flow, river, flow

Flood the [nations](https://www.definitions.net/definition/nations) with [grace](https://www.definitions.net/definition/grace) and mercy

Send [forth](https://www.definitions.net/definition/forth) Your Word, Lord And let [there](https://www.definitions.net/definition/there) be light

Lord, I come into Your [awesome](https://www.definitions.net/definition/awesome) presence

From the [shadows](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shadows) into Your radiance

By the [blood](https://www.definitions.net/definition/blood) I may [enter](https://www.definitions.net/definition/enter) Your brightness

Search me, try me, [consume](https://www.definitions.net/definition/consume) all my darkness

Shine on me

Shine on me

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