HALLOWEEN –
JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

— BIG IDEA —

'God's Word lights up the way for us to walk so we do not need to be afraid of the dark or anything it may hold. We can be a light for others'
Psalm 119:105

PREP *(Kids can help!)*

Buy a tea light candle and matches

Buy some glow in the dark sticks (optional)

Buy a small pumpkin. Cut off the top and loosen the seeds and flesh inside so it will be easy for you to scoop out later. Put the top back on the pumpkin.

Find a sharp knife and spoon

Find a container for the left over bits from the inside of the pumpkin

Put everything into the Faith Box before you start

INTRO

Some of you may wonder why people dress up as witches and goblins and have scary Halloween parties. It has come about because a pagan celebration and a Christian celebration got mixed up together. The ancient Celts celebrated the end of the dark seasons of autumn and winter with the festival of Samhein, which involved the use of costumes and treats and a lot of chaos. The Druids thought you could visit dead people on that day. But God says we must not do this.

Christians used to call this day All Hallows Eve. It was the night before All Saints Day when they remembered people who loved God, and had now died. They talked about how they could follow their good example by loving and serving God too.

Saints are not necessarily special people. They are people who belong to God because they have trusted Jesus to be their Saviour and have tried to live to please Him. God 'sees' every Christian as a saint. Your grandfather or your teacher or your neighbour who loves God.

God picks us from the patch, brings us in, and washes off all of the dirt which may have got on us from other pumpkins. Then, God scoops out all of the yucky stuff, removing seeds of doubt, hate, greed, unforgiveness, etc.

As you say this, take the top off the pumpkin and scoop out all the insides.

Then God carves a new smiling face and puts His light inside you to shine for the entire world to see.

CUT OUT A FACE IN THE PUMPKIN – two triangle eyes, a nose and a mouth. Then take out the candle, put it inside and light it.

Let's read what Jesus said about how Christians should live. (You may like to turn out the lights as you read.)

READ

" You are the world's light - a city on a hill, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light! Let it shine for all; let your good deeds glow for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father. "

Matthew 5: 14-16 TLB

EXPLORE

God wants us to let our light shine! We are called to be a light upon a hill, shining the light of Jesus. If you go out at night – or forget to turn on the lights in your house – you would be in darkness. What do you have to do to get darkness? Actually to get dark you do not have to do anything. It is just there. But if you want light, what do you have to do? You might say just flip a switch and you would be right but there is more to it than that. The switch will not work without electricity. The energy that makes the light work and glow, is supplied to us from generators that work hard to make the electricity. It takes work to create light. People can just do nothing and have darkness. Or we can work at letting Jesus shine in us and light up the world around us.

QUESTIONS

Jesus told us we were to be salt and light among unbelievers. We are to shine brightly for Him.

What is one way you can think of that you can let your light shine this week?

Who are the saints in your life? (Saints are people who have blessed us – or shown us how to live.)

It is not just being famous – saints are people who show us right ways to live. They can be people we know or people from the Bible or from history.

Can you think of one good thing you have learnt from a good person?

GAME
KNOW YOUR SAINTS QUIZ

1. I am the apostle to the Gentiles whose letters you read in the Bible.

2. I am the cousin of Jesus who prepared the way for the Lord.

3. I am the woman who is said to have offered my veil to wipe Jesus' face when He was carrying His cross.

4. I am the apostle chosen by Christ to be head of His Church.

5. I am the missionary who made Ireland famous for its devotion to God and learning, and am believed to have rid Ireland of snakes.

6. I am the beloved apostle and the writer of the fourth gospel.

7. I am from Italy and loved all creatures. The birds and animals happily obeyed my commands!

8. I am married to the mother of Jesus.

9. I am the valiant young girl who led France to victory over England and then suffered death by being burned at the stake.

10. When the heat of battle had confused enemy from friend, I told our men to wear a leek on their helmet.

Choose from these saints:
St. Peter, St. Francis of Assisi, St. David,
St. Joan of Arc, St. Paul, St. Joseph,
St. John the Baptist, St. John the Apostle,
St. Veronica, St. Patrick.

Answers: 1. St Paul **2.** St John the Baptist **3.** St Veronica **4.** St Peter **5.** St Patrick **6.** St John the Apostle **7.** St. Francis of Assisi **8.** St Joseph **9.** St Joan of Arc **10.** St David

PRAY

Lord, thank you that we can be light for others in the dark and others can be light for us in the dark. Then we do not need to be afraid. That is good news – thank you! Amen.

LIVE

Take a special supper to eat outside as it begins to get dark. Take your lit pumpkin and hand out torches, glow in the dark sticks, or other light/glow objects. Talk about how God doesn't leave us in the dark at night – we have the moon and the stars and we can bring light for each other too.
Ask the children about things that sometimes scare them. And after each thing is mentioned, all say together, "Because Jesus is with me, I don't need to be afraid."
Enjoy your supper in the light!

FAITH BOARD

Let your light shine!

THE ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN
(for parents)

- *Some historians trace the origin of Halloween back to the merging of two celebrations: a Christian one called "All Hallow's Eve" with a harvest festival called Samhain (pronounced sah-win).*
- *On 13 May back in 609 A.D., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome to all martyrs (Christians who gave their lives for God) and named it as a day to remember them.*
- *A later pope changed it to 1 November when he dedicated a chapel in St. Peter's Basilica to "all saints".*
- *All Saints Day was also known as All Hallow's Day (hallow means 'holy').*
- *The celebrations began the evening before on All Hallow's Eve, which became Hallowe'en.*
- *The Celtic people of Europe had their own festival at that time of year called Samhain. It celebrated the end of the autumn harvest and the beginning of the dark season of winter, and involved going door to door in disguises collecting food for feasts and using lanterns carved out of gourds and turnips (jack-o-lanterns).*
- *As Christianity spread throughout the world, pagan (non-Christian) holidays were often forgotten or merged with Christian holidays. Samhain was absorbed into Halloween.*
- *As secularism took root, trick or treating eclipsed the practice of honouring and celebrating the lives of Christian martyrs.*

OTHER IDEAS

1 *Sing "This Little Light of Mine, I'm Going to Let It Shine" and "God is Bigger than the Boogie Man" (Check out the video with lyrics: http://youtu.be/IlDdMCncEFY)*

2 *Make a mobile from a rectangular piece of heavy card with the words "With Jesus I am not afraid of…" written on it. Hang various scary things on it, e.g. monster, ghost etc. Your children will probably see these things around about at Halloween time, and this will be a way you can tackle them positively.*

DID YOU KNOW?

In pagan religions, people tried to appease their gods to stop them doing bad things to them. But they weren't real gods. The true God loves us and wants to always bless us and look after us.