

Hi Everyone

If you have been into St Mary's Church in North Stainley recently you may have noticed that we still have our Christmas crib up! Isn't that a bit late? All the other Christmas decorations have been put away!



Well, this year we decided to keep our crib up until 2nd February! Why? Well we have been waiting to celebrate the next parts of the Christmas story, first came Epiphany (when the Wise Men visited baby Jesus bringing him those strange presents) and then..... In the Church's calendar Candlemas is celebrated on February 2nd, forty days after Jesus was born, when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. (The word "Candlemas" comes from the practice of the priest blessing candles on this day for use throughout the year.)

This is how the Christmas/Candlemas story goes on..... watch it here...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leN-xNrkjbo>

Wow... what a story.....

- What's it like to wait for something for a long time?
- How do you feel when it finally arrives?
- I wonder how Simeon and Anna knew that Jesus would grow up to be a special man.
- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt after hearing Simeon's words?

Simeon's words make 'light' a theme for Candlemas. Here are some ideas of things to do:

- A Growing-up quiz
- Make a card to encourage someone else
- Make a Candlemas cake
- Some links to worship songs. Anna worshipped God all the time. We can do that too. eg "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High," "My lighthouse" etc
- Looking for snowdrops.
- Or maybe just start a 'thank you jar' and write things you are thankful for on a strip of paper and put it in the jar.

A special Candlemas prayer.

You could maybe say this when you go to bed:

Jesus, thank you that Simeon and Anna recognised you as a special baby, and knew you would grow up to do God's special work.

Help us to discover who you are, and how you are special.

Help us to discover how special we are to God, and give us courage to tell others about you. Amen.

A Growing up quiz:

Try to answer the questions on your own.

1. I was born in...
2. When I was a baby, I...
3. When I was a toddler, I...
4. When I was in Year...
5. Now I am... years old, I can...
6. Next year, I would like to be able to...
7. When I grow up, I want to be...
8. When I am a grown-up, I hope that...

Share your answers with the adult(s) in your home. Talk together about growing up: what we are looking forward to and what we are not. Be honest.

Make an encouragement card - a 'God bless you' card

Encourage others with a special message. You will need: coloured card, felt tips/pencils, stickers, sparkles, envelopes.

Simeon blessed baby Jesus. That means he prayed for God's blessing on him. We can pray for God's blessing on people, too. It could be for someone who needs God's love, his help or protection, or to feel God's presence.

- Think of someone for whom they would like to pray God's blessing.
- Make a card, saying 'God Bless You', and write a special message in the card.
- Give the card to the person and pray that God will bless them every day this week.

Make a Quick and Simple Candlemas Candle Cake

Ask an adult to buy some mini rolls (for small candles) or a jam and cream sponge roll (for a big candle). Place it vertically on the plate.

Made up a fairly thick batch of icing...using icing sugar, butter and water and cover the cake.

Make a flame with some icing or a piece of fruit (use your imagination!)

Enjoy sharing the cake, and enjoy sharing the light of Christ.



Snowdrops - due to their traditional flowering time – around February 2 – the first spring flowers are also known as ‘Candlemas Bells’. Custom says the snowdrops flower at that time to symbolise hope, and Jesus as the “light of the world”.



Can you find snowdrops in your garden, or gardens nearby, or in pots or even in the churchyard?

Thank God for His creation as you walk in your garden, in the park, around the area where you live. It can be silent – you don’t have to say anything!

Worship songs – Anna praised God all the time – you might like to join in some of these worship songs.....

Lord I lift your name on High: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNk6dvA5gIA>

My lighthouse: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeJvKkBV6rY>

We hope to be back in school for a proper JAM session after half term – look forward to seeing you then!

Love from

All the JAM Team

PS Did you know that Ripon Cathedral, not far from us, has a famous special Candlemas service every year on 2 February? There are displays of candles all around the cathedral. Hundreds of people carry candles in procession. This year they had 7000 candles at the cathedral for Candlemas!