



# Celebrating New Life

## Secondary Assembly

### Additional Resources:

PowerPoint presentation

### Aim:

To understand how Christmas is about celebrating new life and to reflect on how we can all do what we can to bring new life to others

### Introduction

Introduce yourself and welcome the pupils to their Christmas assembly.

### Activity

Explain the Christmas story is all about the birth of a new baby - Jesus. So we're just going to do a little quiz to see what you know about babies. I'm sure those of you who have younger brothers and sisters might know some of these facts already!

Complete the true or false quiz on the slide asking pupils to put their hand up for the correct answer. You could ask if anyone got all the questions right at the end.

Explain that it is important that we remember that although Christians believe that Jesus was special, it's also important to remember that he was human too as were Mary and Joseph. Mary will have been scared and excited just like any new mum and Jesus will have cried when he was hungry and tired and even needed changing just like every other baby. The Christmas story may have happened a long time ago but the emotions the people felt will be the same emotions we all go through at some point. Bringing a new life into the world is hard work, tiring and a little bit scary but at the same time brings joy, excitement and love to a family. When a new baby arrives families celebrate and are swamped with congratulations and gifts because it's good news full of brand new opportunities and hope for the future.

### Story

For Christians the birth of Jesus is just this - something to celebrate! It's more than just a tradition of eating lots of food and buying each other gifts (although we enjoy that bit too!). For Christians the birth of Jesus starts with celebrating a new life and as Jesus becomes an adult it becomes clear that new life is what he wanted for everyone he came into contact with. He wanted everyone to be free and to live life to the full.

'And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his son' 1 John 5:11

(You may want to explain that testimony just means story) This is the message of Christmas this is why Christians rejoice because they are celebrating the fact that Jesus has come and that means the hope of a new life for everyone.



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### The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army tries to live in the way that Jesus did, it's members do all they can to help people who are struggling to live life in all its fullness due to their circumstances - they could be people with no money, people who are lonely, people who are homeless, people who have addictions, people who are slaves. Whatever is stopping people to live life to the full The Salvation Army tries to help them get back on their feet and start again in whatever way it can.

Here are a couple of examples of people The Salvation Army has helped to get back to get back on their feet and start enjoying a new life again:

Show the slide about Dale and explain that Dale was getting into trouble with the police and said he was in a 'pretty low place'. His probation officer knew he wanted to join the Army and that The Salvation Army was running a course that could help him. He gave it a try and enjoyed it so much that he asked to become a volunteer. He now also has a job and is training to join the Army - read the quote on the slide.

Show the slide about Andy and explain that Andy had one big win on a fruit machine which then led to him spending thousands of pounds on gambling machines as his gambling addiction spiralled out of control. His gambling debts led to his relationship breaking down and eventually to his becoming homeless. Andy ended up staying at a Salvation Army Lifehouse (hostel) and received treatment for his gambling addiction. He's now in a much better place - read the text on the slide.

When Christians celebrate Christmas they are celebrating the chance for people like Dale and Andy to get a new life. That's the good news of Christmas. A chance at a new start, an opportunity to enjoy a new way of living - that's worth celebrating and is bigger and more exciting than any present you can buy from a shop or all the mice pies you could eat!

### Challenge

Let's reflect on how we can bring new life to others at this time of year. That might be about forgiving someone and starting again with them, it might be about giving to those in need so that they might have some help getting back on their feet, or it might be about speaking to someone who feels lonely and letting them know you are there to help.

How can you bring joy and new life to others over Christmas?





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## Prayer

Dear God,

We thank you all we have to celebrate and be thankful for at Christmas. Thank you for our family and friends and for the time we have together. Thank you for the freedom we have and that we can celebrate New Life this Christmas. We pray for those who are struggling at this time, poor people, and lonely people, those suffering with addictions. We pray that you would guide us in how to be people that bring new life to all of those around us. We ask for your protection for all those in our community that are vulnerable and pray that you would surround them with life giving support.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.