

# Light Trail



## *What is a Light Trail?*

Over the years many parishes have held light parties in October bringing light and joy to many families. This year we can't do it in quite the same way but our families still need 'light in the darkness' – so we have created a simple resource that you might like to try instead.

'Light Trail' is a simple way to invite families in your community to follow a trail of light around your neighbourhood, reflecting on the light of Christ in a gentle, fun and accessible way. It is perfect for sharing with Sunday School, Children's Groups and Messy Church Families.

Create up to 10 simple light stops in windows or gardens to bring fun and joy in the darkness.

## *How does it work?*

All you need to do is

- Ask 5 or 10 households in a walkable distance from each other, to create a light display in a front window or garden, using the simple templates provided. Each light stop links to a Bible verse.
- Nominate an evening and time for your Light Trail to be open.
- Invite people to register with you to participate. Please do not put the materials on your website to be downloaded in case local restrictions change and you need to amend the advice in the documents or send out new instructions.
- Print off the premade booklet with maps and instructions, one for each household
- Leave the booklets for 72 hours before you deliver them to registered participants and they must be able to leave them for 72 hours before they use them.

## *The Light Trail pack includes:*

- A customisable booklet, map, bible verses, stickers and questions for participants to ponder as they walk between light stops. (PDF & word)
- Template for Light Stops
- A draft risk assessment for you to customise (word)
- A 'how to stay safe on your Light Trail' (PDF)
- Instructions for participants(PDF)

## Lets get started: Creating your map

To create your Light Trial route, find 5 or 10 households that are in walking distance from each other who are enthusiastic about creating a light display in their windows. If you don't have 10 households you could do a shorter route and adapt the resource accordingly. Check whether your households are happy to have their name included in the map or not. If you want to publish their names in the booklet, you must get written permission.

It is best if you create the circular route that can be started from any point, depending on where is easier for the families to start. This resource is for individual household groups, it must NOT be advertised as one large gathering, and participants must be told not to gather in groups larger than 6. Make sure you have contact details for each Light Stop on the night in case 'clumping' of people develops and you need to close the trail.



Example of the map

In the downloadable pack you will find a blank version to fill in yourselves. To customise the route, fill in the roads that participants will need to visit, on the circles that match the light stop you have assigned to that bible verse & word, don't give them the house number as this will make it too easy!

Before you create the final route check that it's a safe to walk along, with crossings on busy roads and areas that would be safe to walk in at night time.



Above you see an example of the other side of the booklet. You will need to print the map on one side of an A4 sheet with the side with bible verses and space for stickers on the other.

There is a version for 10 Light Stops and one for 5 Light Stops. If the participants need to look up to a flat you might want to add a hint on your map. Each light stop has a bible verse and a word associated with it so you will need to allocate one word to each household for example:

The Smith family/Light Stop on Shenleyfields Rd word is 'Light'  
Mr Jones/Light Stop on Hemhock Rd word is 'Jesus'

The phase on the map corresponds to the same phase on the bible verses sheet. Each light stop will need to have its 'word' easily seen from the pavement, so the walkers notice it and can place a sticker in their booklet, to say they have completed that light stop.

Give a copy of 'Ideas for creating a window display' to each household making a Light Stop for you – check they have everything they need.

## Gathering your participants

The 'Light Trail' is ideal for people from your Messy Church, Stay and Play, Sunday schools etc. - in fact any people you might usually have invited to a light party or want to engage with again.

You will need to register your participants so you can contact them if the regulations change and we need to amend the instructions, or if the Light Trail needs to close for any reason.

Participants will need:

- A printout of the map and bible verse sheet
- If you want to use stickers you will need to buy a set of Avery stickers code: J8651, about £4 on Amazon, print off the premade stickers and cut them up into strips and attach to the map. If you don't want to use stickers then people can simply tick off the Light Stops as they pass them.
- Instructions for staying safe on a Light Trail

## Things to think about

This Light Trail is for individual households – we must follow the current restrictions and not gather in groups beyond our household or connect in groups larger than 6. We have added this line to the 'staying safe on the Light Trail' instructions:

**This activity is for groups of 6 and no more, in line with government guidelines,** if there are people at the Light Stop already, maintain the correct social distance and wait for them to move on.

So think about how you can contact your Light Stops as if there is a large crowd forming outside one of the Light Stops you will need to close down the whole Light Trail, so how will you contact your individual Light Stops?

In some areas having a pumpkin outside your house indicates that you are happy for people to knock on your door for Trick or Treat, although this shouldn't be happening in Birmingham at the moment, there may be families who go out to Trick or Treat, so you may want to consider whether your Light Stop seems to invite people to knock on your door and what you might do if they do.

To stop any confusion with Halloween and Trick or Treating, you could run your Light Trail on Sunday 1st Nov, All Saints Day instead, this might also help with the build-up of people congregating around houses and driveways.

You might want to think about who has the Light Stop with the word 'Jesus', depending on your community it may be more appropriate for this to be the Vicarage or church building

## *On the night*

On the night of the event you could use your social media account to build momentum over the evening,

- Post some pictures of the Light Stops
- Encourage people to take photos of their favourite Light Stop and say why they liked it.
- Encourage participants to comment about their thoughts to the questions they pondered as they walked around the Light Trail.
- End with a big thank you post, to all those who created Light Stops.
- Participants could recreate their favourite Light Stop in their own windows in the days to follow.



# Light Trail

## Ideas for creating a window display

There are lots of ways to be creative with Light Stops but here a few to get you started...

- Hollow out a pumpkin and using the template, carve your word in the front of it. Place battery operated lights in the pumpkin and put it on your window ledge



- Using the template, cut the word out of card and light it with fairy lights from behind
- Paint the word on your window using water based paints and light up your window with fairy lights and battery operated lights.
- Create your word using those see-through Duplo bricks and light from behind.
- On your front garden you could use the small battery tea lights and write the word out in candles



- Why not decorate a window or two in your car and put it at the edge of your drive.