



Holy Trinity Church and Leverstock Green CE Primary School

Our final Woodland Worship of 2023 focused on how God can shelter us during the dark times in our lives, and how we can be lights in the world.



As the daylight began to disappear, we lit a tealight and looked at its bright, flickering flame, thinking about how we can be lights to those around us when we do our best to live like Jesus.

But a tea light can so easily be blown out. It needs something to protect its flame - it needs a shelter. We put it into a jam-jar and its flame burned strongly. Nothing could blow it out or stop it shining brightly.

Sometimes it can feel like our own 'lights' aren't shining brightly, when we're feeling sad about something, or cross, or not very well. It can feel like our light has gone out. God can be *our* shelter, helping us to shine brightly again – making us feel happy, and helping us to be kind, patient and forgiving to others.

Psalms 46: 1 God is our shelter and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.

Nobody's life is without problems. We all have dark times in our lives, but God is our shelter, helping us to be strong to cope with those times. We thought about how God might have given us shelter and strength in our lives. Perhaps he'd sent someone to cheer us up or help us. Perhaps his Holy Spirit had made us resilient in tough times.

We decorated jam-jar lanterns with leaves. The tea light shone brightly in some places, but as we turned our jar there were also shadows and dark patches, just like the difficult times in our lives. Our lives are always a mix of bright times and dark times, but God is with us no matter what's going on.

And yet, just like the tea light could shine through those dark patches, making beautiful colours and patterns, something good can come from dark times. Somehow God can bless us through those difficult times.



As we all sat, surrounded by the warm, comforting glow of our lanterns, we reflected how Mary and Joseph would have sat in a similarly dimly-lit stable as they waited for the birth of Jesus on that first Christmas Day. Our spontaneous rendition of *Away In A Manger* was the perfect way to bring our year of Woodland Worships to a close.