

CHRISTINGLE

WHAT IS CHRISTINGLE?

The idea of Christingles came from a Moravian Church in Germany in 1747. The minister, John de Watteville, gave children at the service a lighted candle with a red ribbon around it. This represented Jesus being the light of the world and the final prayer of that first service was “Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children’s hearts, that theirs like Thine become”.

The custom went around the world with the church. Missionaries brought the Moravian Church to England in the 1700s. In Moravian churches, the Christingle Service is usually held on the Sunday before Christmas or on Christmas Eve. Over the years the symbolism of the Christingle grew into what’s known as a Christingle today. Here’s what the different parts of the Christingle represent:

- The orange is round like the world.
- The candle stands tall and straight and gives light in the dark like the love of God.
- The red ribbon goes all around the ‘world’ and is a symbol of the blood Jesus shed when he died for us.
- The four sticks point in all directions and symbolise North, South, East and West - they also represent the four seasons.
- The fruit and nuts (or sometimes sweets!) represent the fruits of the earth, nurtured by the sunshine and the rain.

A CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

The Christingle Service is a relatively recent development in Britain of the Moravian custom of distributing lighted candles to children on Christmas Eve. In Britain the distribution of candles has been replaced by the distribution of Christingles. A ‘Christingle’ consists of an orange, which represents the world, in the top of which a candle is inserted, representing Christ as the light of the world.

Four cocktail sticks are also inserted (symbolise North, South, East and West - they also represent the four seasons) to which are affixed blanched almonds, raisins and/or small jellied sweets of different colours, representing the fruits of the earth, God’s good gifts to his children. A length of red ribbon, or red sticky tape, is tied around the circumference of the orange, a reminder of the incarnation and passion of Jesus, in which all Christians share. The word ‘Christingle’ means ‘Christ-Light’.

Christingle services have normally been celebrated in Britain during the period between Advent and Epiphany. Jesus does not describe himself simply as ‘the light’ but as ‘the light of the world’. *For this reason, we are praying today especially for the poor of the world.*

Presider:

Christ has brought us out of darkness to live in his marvellous light.

Welcome to our Christingle Celebration today. We have come together in the presence of God our Father to rejoice in the gift of Jesus to us as the light of the world.

The Christingle speaks of the world in which we live, and we pray today

- for all Christians, that we may be mirrors of the light of Christ in the world;
- for those who do not know the light of Christ in their lives;
- for all children and for young people who do not have food, shelter, and clothing;

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the un-failing love of God, and say together, as Jesus teaches us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

May God our Father grant us the light of Christ, that we may shine with his love, be prompt to serve, and ever eager to follow in his steps, who is the true light and source of life. Amen.

THE LIGHTING AND PRESENTATION OF THE CHRISTINGLES

The candles are lit and the children will each offer a wish, before the Christingles are presented to members of the congregation, e.g.:

Child 1	We wish you	Joy
Child 2	We wish you	Happiness
Child 3		Peace
Child 4		Health
Child 5		Hope
Child 6		Love
Child 7		Kindness
Child 8		Respect
Child 9		Plenty
Child 10		Friendship
Child 11		God's Blessing

PRAYER: **Presider**

Father of lights,
from whom comes every good and perfect gift:
keep us in the light of Christ,
to shine in your world,
that all may believe in you
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn – This little light of mine – (or other hymn about light e.g. Christ be our Light)

BLESSING

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon us*
and make us* ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us* and remain with us* always. Amen.

* 'you' replaces 'us' if presider is a priest or deacon.