

Activities for Juniors.

Our activity sheet will be shorter whilst we are still busy celebrating Christmas.

- **You can learn about what the Gospel of John says about the coming of Jesus.**

The Gospel stories were written at different times, and quite a few years after Jesus went back into Heaven. The four Gospel books tell of different parts of Jesus' life. If you want to read about the birth of Jesus, when he came to the world as a baby, then you should read the gospel books of Matthew and Luke. The books of Mark and John start as Jesus is grown up and about to begin his work of preaching and teaching.

John's gospel begins by explaining just how important Jesus was and making it clear to anyone reading the story that Jesus was sent by God to show people God's love for them.

This is what John says about Jesus.

- **You can read the story as it is told in the gospel book of John.**

Before anything else existed, there was Christ, with God. He has always been alive and is himself God.

He created everything there is—nothing exists that he didn't make. Eternal life is in him, and this life gives light to all people. His life is the light that shines through the darkness—and the darkness can never put it out.

God sent John the Baptist as a witness to the fact that Jesus Christ is the true Light. John himself was not the Light; he was only a witness to identify it.

Later on, the one who is the true Light arrived to shine on everyone coming into the world.

But although he (God) made the world, the world didn't recognize him when he came. Even in his own land and among his own people, he was not accepted. Only a few people would welcome and receive him. But to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God. All they needed to do was to trust him to save them. All those who believe this are reborn!—not like being born again as a baby—but starting anew with God.

So Jesus Christ became a human being. He lived here on earth among us and was full of loving forgiveness and truth. And some of us have seen his glory—the glory of the only Son of the heavenly Father!

John (the Baptist) pointed Jesus out to the people. He told the crowds, “This is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘Someone is coming who is greater by far than I am, indeed he existed long before I did!’”

We have all benefited from the rich blessings Jesus brought to us—blessings that have been heaped upon us! Moses gave us only the Law with its strict codes, but Jesus Christ brought us loving forgiveness as well.

No one has ever actually seen God, but, of course, his only Son has. Jesus is the companion of God the Father and so it is Jesus who has told us all about him.

- **You can think about the reading.**

John begins his gospel book by telling everyone about God. He writes that God was there before anything else; that God created everything that exists. Then he begins to write about Jesus. This is the reading that tells us that Jesus was the Son of God who was sent by God into the World.

John writes about John the Baptist and what he said about Jesus. John the Baptist (who is a different John to the one who wrote the gospel) made it very clear that Jesus was the special person he had come to tell the people about. John the Baptist says that Jesus is much greater than him, that he existed before him. John the Baptist is certain that Jesus has been sent by God to show people how they should live and become members of God’s Kingdom of love.

John the gospel writer seems to use John the Baptist as extra proof to tell people that it is Jesus who is the Son of God. John is certain that Jesus is God’s Son and he wants the people who read or hear his gospel to be certain too.

John also tells about what will happen to Jesus when he comes into the world. It is almost as if John is making a prediction. However, if we remember that the gospel was written after Jesus’ life on the earth then we can understand that John would have known what actually did happen.

John writes about Jesus being rejected, even in his own land and by his own people. People did not recognise who he was. They did not listen to Jesus’ messages about God’s love. But John also explains that not everyone rejected Jesus. Some people did indeed listen and believed him; they were “reborn”. This means they became like new people who had been changed by knowing and understanding that God loved them.

This is an important message from the gospel, for the people from those days when it was written, to the people of today. All we need to do is trust in Jesus that his message of love is true. If we live our lives with this message, and this love in our hearts, then we too can be reborn, transformed, and become part of God’s Kingdom of love.

Today is a very special Sunday in our church. It is called Covenant Sunday. It is the day when church members renew their promises to God to try to live as God wants them to and so be a part of his Kingdom of love. There are special words to say and promises that each person makes. In this way people can begin again with God. John tells us that Jesus comes with loving forgiveness. If we have not kept our all our promises from the previous year we know that Jesus will not count this against us. We can begin again with God.

- **You can learn a memory verse.**

The words of the gospel of John, chapter 1, verse 1 are very famous. Here they are again. See if you can learn the verse. You can ask a family member to test you when you think you know them. You can decorate the letters to help you remember the words...

*In the beginning
was the Word, and
the Word was with
God, and the Word
was God.*

- You can colour a poster based on words from the story.

