

## HOW DO WE CELEBRATE?

Today, the word 'celebration' is all through the service; we are celebrating 100 years of *Girlguiding*! We will think about what we celebrate later, but how do we celebrate? What things do we have when we celebrate anything?

- Food, cake, special party food, chocolate, sweets
- Cards
- Balloons & decorations
- Presents
- Singing songs

Here are some songs we might sing, but what do they celebrate?

*Florence played the introductions to the following pieces:*

- "Happy Birthday to you!" – to celebrate a birthday
- A Christmas carol – to celebrate Christmas
- Flower of Scotland – to celebrate being Scottish, or winning a rugby match!
- Scotland the Brave – winning a gold medal for Scotland at the Commonwealth Games
- Bridal march – played at a wedding, celebrating two people getting married.

The Church has always used singing and songs to celebrate all kinds of good things, especially to celebrate God's love for us; for hundreds of years people have written songs and hymns to help us celebrate in Church, to celebrate the fact that God loves us and that God is worthy of our singing. There are special hymns to sing at Christmas and Easter that tell stories of these times of year in story of Jesus; there are others that we sing all year round. People have been inspired to write songs for us to sing that make us feel happy about God's love for us, and that allow us to sing with all our hearts to celebrate.

The Bible has its own song book and we will hear one of these songs read for us in a minute, but first we are going to sing a song that is called '*Celebrate!*'

## SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE!

100 years of *Girlguiding* is well worth celebrating! Birthdays, wedding anniversaries, graduations from university, a new job, passing exams, passing your driving test, moving into your first house, a new baby in the family, your team winning the match/cup/league, winning a gold medal. There is so much to celebrate!

Psalm 98 wants us to celebrate God: "*Sing, shout, resound*" are all celebration words, that make us rejoice and celebrate God. I just love this psalm because it has a picture at the end of the whole of creation celebrating God: the sea, the rivers clapping their hands, the mountains singing for joy. It is a bit like a cartoon picture to show us that whole earth will one day celebrate God and we are being asked to join in! What are we to celebrate? 2 things:

**1. God has done marvellous things** He has made the world and everything in it, from the sun, moon, and stars, to the world we live in, trees, flowers, animals, and birds; He has given each one of us the gift of life and we are all different, unique and we celebrate that! The Bible is full of stories of ways in which God has helped people live their lives in good and right ways and especially God has done marvellous things in our world by sending Jesus into the world. We read stories of Jesus healing people who were sick, making the blind see, the lame walk, feeding hungry people with loaves and fishes and then at end, Jesus died and rose again from the dead – the

most marvellous things of all. They didn't seem marvellous at time: when Jesus died His friends were sad and frightened, but three days later they saw Him alive again, and they celebrated all over again. All of this, God did, so that Jesus would be our Saviour and Lord, the One who blesses us, helps us and teaches us how to live in good and right way.

**2. God loves the world** Why should God love our world? We're not always very nice people; we make mistakes, we make wrong choices, we hurt other people at times. God knows all of that and He still loves us. Jesus knows what we're like, but He still loves us. Because of His love for the world He was willing to die on the cross in the first place. The love that God has for us is new every day of our lives; it is good to know when we're young that God loves us; when we're growing up, it is good to remember that God loves us, when we're finding our way in the world we need to know God's loves for us when everything seem uncertain; when we're old, God's love hasn't gone away, but He loves us still! Because He loves us, we have all kinds of things like hope, peace, forgiveness in our hearts.

So much to celebrate! 100 years of *Girlguiding*. God has done marvellous things for us, especially in Jesus; God loves us every day. Learn to celebrate God! Learn to celebrate marvellous things that He has done for us! Learn to celebrate His love for each one of us! We celebrate by singing. The best way to celebrate God is by living life well and by being the kind of people God wants us to be, the people who love God & love other people – that is the best way to celebrate! We have so much to celebrate!