

## Why Light a Candle for Children?

The needs of the world's children should be a priority for all of us as individuals, groups and communities of faith. Not all of us have been afforded the gift of working directly with children, but none of our lives has escaped the touch of a child in some special way.

The National Council of Christian Churches' Committee on Justice for Children and Their Families invites you to join in praying for a brighter future for all of God's children. Remember your church can and should make a difference where the needs, hopes and dreams of children are involved.

Take the time to become involved in the lives of children. Let the candle of their lives inspire you and light your pathway as you advocate on their behalf.

...and a little child  
shall lead them.

Isaiah 11:6

We are grateful to the 1996 Children's Sabbath planning team of Bethany Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Louisville, Kentucky for sharing this "Light a Candle for Children" prayer vigil project with all of us.



## Light a Candle for Children



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Light a Candle for Children, is an advocacy and prayer vigil project that invites congregations to join in Forty Days of Prayer for Children. It begins forty days prior to the observance of the National Children's Sabbaths (sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.).

During these Sabbath celebrations, held annually on the third weekend of October, thousands of congregations unite simultaneously in witness for children through prayer, education, and worship.

Light a Candle for Children is part of this witness and your congregation can participate.

## 1 A Planning Team

Ask a diverse group of people from your congregation who love children to organize your children's prayer vigil project. The role of this team is to educate the congregation about the prayer vigil, to help implement it, and to give guidance to planning a Children's Sabbath worship for your congregation.

## 2 Develop a List of Participants

The team should develop a list of participants to pray during the 40-day period. Include members of the congregation, local and state government officials, friends from organizations that work on behalf of children, ecumenical partners, and others with an interest in children.

## 3 Schedule and Instructions

Develop a prayer schedule for the forty days prior to the Sabbath weekend. Assign specific day(s) for participants to light candles and pray for children. The team should design either a brochure or type a list with the names of all participants and assigned prayer vigil day(s).

## 4 Inviting Participants to Pray

Mail the brochure/list with a letter of instructions. Ask participants to:

1. Select a place - home, work, school, office - to gather and reflect on the needs and gifts of children.
2. Light a candle and offer a prayer or share in a moment of silence remembering all children.
3. If possible, keep the candle lit and visible throughout the day as a reminder of children's needs and gifts.

The National Observance of Children's Sabbaths are coordinated by the Children's Defense Fund and are always held on the third weekend of October. See brochure insert for additional information.

