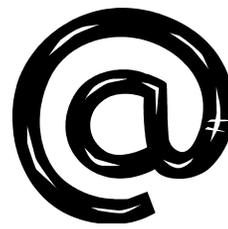


# Living Faith



## About Epiphany.....

Epiphany is a Greek word that means 'showing forth.' We begin the celebration of Epiphany the day after the twelfth day of Christmas on January 6<sup>th</sup>. It was originally concerned with the commemoration of the Baptism of Christ and later became associated with the Magi, an emphasis of the Latin Church of the West. Today it is often thought of as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

Dear Friends, For those of us who live in the Northern Hemisphere these are the darkest days of the year. But amidst the darkness there is the blessings of light.

Often, we overlook the season of Epiphany. Christmas was a busy time, we spent a lot of time preparing for the Christmas programs and worship services, not to mention the family gatherings and making food. Naturally our energy is waning.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Epiphany is when we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord, What a wonderful day to remember our own Baptisms as well as to celebrate the newly baptized. Light the Baptismal candles, remember the promises, and celebrate how the Holy Spirit has been active in the world. During the season of Epiphany, find as many ways as you can to explore light. Look at the stars. Put electric candle lights in your windows. Sing 'This Little Light of Mine'. It is also when we celebrate Mardi Gras. Look up the origins of Mardi Gras! Make a Kings Cake. May you be blessed and be a blessing during the season of Epiphany. God is Good, All the Time! Elayne Werges, DM

Happy New Year! It has been our pleasure to offer ideas and tips throughout the past year. We pray that you have been able to use this newsletter and it has been a helpful resource. The Home Life Network plans to continue to offer them to you for use in your homes and congregations. Blessings, Lisa, Elayne, and the entire Home Life Network



## Happy Epiphany!

### The Twelfth Day of Christmas: The Yearly Blessing of the Home

On the first day of Epiphany, it's customary in many homes (especially in Western Europe) to mark the lintel above the front door with symbols of blessing. You can do it, too!

Mark the front door (or somewhere on the door frame) with these symbols: the date, abbreviation of the phrase *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* ("Christ bless this home" - which are also the initials of traditional names for the Magi - Casper, Melchior and Balthasar), and four crosses (representing the four seasons).

Order the symbols in the following way: 20 + C + M + B + 13  
In the new year, this marking serves as a blessing over the entire household. Be as artistic and creative as you want! Get a jump start on an art project over Christmas break to have it ready to post it on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 - use markers or do a collage on a piece of cardboard! Alternatively, the marking may be made with chalk, for those who like to keep things simple. Gather by the front door as a family and have a prayer of blessing! Ahead of time decide who will do what.

### Blessing of the Door

Leader: Peace be to this house and to all who enter her.  
Let us pray: O God, who by the guidance of a star did on this day manifest your Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know you by faith may also attain the vision of your glorious majesty. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
Read Matthew 2:11.

With colored chalk, place the marks on the door frame.

Read Proverbs 24:3-4.

Read Isaiah 32:16-18.

**Leader: May Christ (Christus) + Home (Mansionem) + Bless (Benedicat) + and remain with us throughout the new year. Lord, remember your children and teach us to pray: Our Father, who.....**

Leader: May the Lord watch over our going out and our coming in, from this time forth and forevermore.

# 20+C+M+B+13

This information has been prepared for you by the

## Northwestern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network

for use by families and local congregations. For more ideas about how you can pass on faith in your homes go to: [http://www.neiasynod.org/synod\\_resources/YouthFamilyResources.asp](http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources/YouthFamilyResources.asp)

If you have a comment or suggestion for future newsletters or are interested in joining the Home-Life Network please contact the synod office or contact Elayne Werges at [elaynewerges@gmail.com](mailto:elaynewerges@gmail.com)

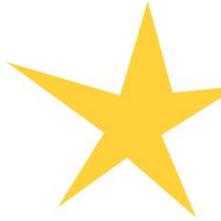




## Table Talk



# Epiphany Stars



**Conversation Starters:** Use these when you gather for a meal or you are driving in the car.

- ✓ What are your roses and thorns today/this week.
- ✓ What can we pray for today/this week
- ✓ Talk about Light....what would happen if there were no light?
- ✓ How did Jesus's birth bring light into the world?
- ✓ Go outside and look at the stars....
- ✓ Share one interesting fact you learned today/this week

**Idea:** Celebrate Epiphany by making stars and talking about how the Star led the wise men to the Christ Child.

### Things You will Need:

- ★ Corn syrup
- ★ food coloring
- ★ small paint brushes
- ★ glitter
- ★ craft sticks
- ★ stars cut from cardboard or cardstock.
- ★ parchment paper
- ★ double-stick tape
- ★ scissors
- ★ an ice cube tray.

### Directions:

1. Cut stars from cardboard or card stock (cereal boxes can work). White works best.
2. Pour a puddle of corn syrup onto one of the stars. Use a craft stick to cover the entire surface.
3. Squeeze a few drops of food coloring onto the syrup smeared star.
4. Use the pointy end of a paint brush or a toothpick to swirl the colors together.
5. If you would rather have more control of the color, place a tablespoon of syrup in a ice cube tray. Mix with coloring and stir. Paint on the colors.
6. Sprinkle glitter on the wet syrup as desired.
7. Let dry until completely dry. This may take a few days.
8. Hang them around the house and sing "We Three Kings" together.

## Celebrate Your Baptism Anniversaries

**Idea:** The gospel text on January 13 is Luke 3:15-17, 21-22. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. Learn more about baptism and Have a celebration of baptism

### What you will need:

- ♥ Beach food and Napkins, cups, plates, and forks
- ♥ A large bowl of water
- ♥ Pretty beach decorations like shells, beach balls, beach chairs, balloons, and tablecloths,
- ♥ The candles, robe, clothes, baby book, and pictures from your family members

### What to do:

1. If you are a congregation; put a notice with the date and that you are celebrating Baptisms. Extend a special invitation to the newly baptized. Encourage everyone to find their baptism anniversary dates. Make and display a calendar with them.
2. Decorate the space to look like a beach. Arrange for beach food to be served. Make sand art pictures or fill bottles with colored sand.
3. Parents talk about the day(s) your child(ren) were baptized. Share with them who was there, and memories of the day.
4. Look up the promises that were made at Baptism (ELW page 228) What are they. Make a plan to do three things in the next month to live the promises.
5. Dip your fingers in a bowl of water, make the sign on your forehead as a reminder that you are a beloved child of God.

*"Child of God...  
You have been Sealed by  
the Holy Spirit and  
Marked with the Cross  
of Christ Forever...."*

