



Follow the Star – Ideas for celebrating Epiphany

Star Gazing- Supplies: a bible, candles, lighter, possibly blankets for star gazing.

Activity: If you are able, spend some time outside star gazing. Have youth search the sky for constellations and the brightest star. As your group focuses on the starry sky, read the story of the Magi's journey, Matthew 2:1-12.

At verse 11, pause and light the candles. Ask the group, "what gift would you bring the Christ child today?" (a blanket, food, a heater, music, a blessing).

Then finish reading the scripture. Say a prayer and walk back to your meeting space "by another way" silently thinking about what the wisemen risked by disobeying Herod.

Discussion questions once you return:

*The wisemen went to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who was born King of the Jews?" That question sent a panic into Herod. Why?

*Having experienced in a dream to not go back to Herod and report what they had found, they went home by another way. What did they risk by disobeying Herod?

*This story is not just about visiting a future king, the magi/wisemen worshiped him. Jesus was more than a king. He was divine. What does the word divine mean? (*Of, from, or like God or a god*). How do we start this new year by worshiping God, instead of other things? What things tend to get in our way when we try to worship the Christ child? How do we go home *by another way* and do things differently in the new year?

King crowns – Supplies: Gold crowns from a discount store, a hole punch, string or yarn for hanging, glue dots or other adhesive, poms/gems, tissue paper, sharpie markers.

Activity: Allow youth to be creative and reflect on the story of the Magi. Give each person a crown and a sharpie marker. On the inside of the crown, have youth answer the question: How do we, like the Magi, go home *by another way* and do things differently in this new year? Allow youth to decorate with poms/gems, tissue paper, stickers etc. When finished, punch 3 holes in the crown and use the string/yarn to hang the crown as a reminder of their commitment to new paths in the coming year.

Chalking the door- Supplies: sidewalk chalk, newest edition of Book of Common Worship, black construction paper and white school chalk.

This is an Epiphany tradition that blesses households. Consider doing this with your youth to bless your meeting space, your church building or for youth to take home to bless their own homes.

Activity: Traditionally a chalking door would have the first and last numbers of the year and the letters C M B (thought to stand for the names of the three kings OR for the blessing, *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* which means, "May Christ bless this dwelling").

20+C+M+B+21

Invite youth to go outside and use sidewalk chalk to write this blessing by the church or using white chalk and black paper, write this blessing and hang around the entrance to your meeting space. Allow youth to make another blessing sign to take to their own homes.

There is a litany for "Chalking the Doors" on page 210 in the newest edition of the Book of Common Worship.

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