



EPIPHANY

SPECIAL DAYS

PREPARATION

- + Check out the [Why Christmas](#) website for more information about Epiphany
 - + Prepare a crown shape and resources for members to decorate their own crown, perhaps ahead of the session, and invite members to wear them.
 - + Ask members to bring or wear a favourite piece of gold jewellery, a favourite perfume, or a moisturising hand/body cream.
 - + Prepare representations of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The latter two are available as essential oils - resin and incense.
 - + Prepare a star shape and pen for every member, Blu-Tack, and a night sky backdrop to attach star prayers to.
 - + Arrange for an [Epiphany cake](#) to be made for everyone to enjoy
 - + Prepare to show the [What is Epiphany?](#) video by DisciplesNet Church
 - + Prepare to play the video [‘In the face of a child’](#) sung by The Salvation Army International Staff Songsters
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-  *Email in advance the recipe for the [Epiphany Cake](#) for members to make if they choose.*
 -  *Ask members to make crowns to wear, improvising with what they have at home.*
 -  *Ask members to cut out a star shape to write on.*

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Epiphany comes from the Greek word meaning revelation, and this is why we might hear people say they have had an epiphany when they’ve experienced a moment of sudden and great realisation. Within the Christian tradition, Epiphany points to the visit of the Magi to Jesus when Christ was revealed as fully human and fully divine.

Epiphany, also known as Three Kings’ Day, is celebrated on 6 January and marks the start of a Christian festival particularly celebrated by the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is a special date within the Christmas story celebrating how a star led the Magi, also known as the Three Kings or the Wise Men, to visit Jesus after he had been born.



ACTIVITIES

CRAFT

Invite members to decorate their own crown either ahead of or during the session and wear them to celebrate the festival of Epiphany together.

SHARE AND DISCUSS

Ask members to show their favourite piece of gold jewellery, favourite perfume, or moisturising cream.

GOLD: Jewellery sets off our outfits, makes us feel good and is perhaps purchased as an investment. Gold also represents the currency of politics, economics and commerce, humanity's desire for material things, greed and desire for power.

PERFUME: An expensive purchase, a gift perhaps from someone special, a fragrance that brings memories of people we love.

CREAM: Applied to our skin to keep our skin feeling soft and looking young!

Discuss the gifts the wise men brought to Jesus, the cost, time and thought that went into these presents.

- * Gold represents Jesus' kingship
- * Frankincense, an incense, as a symbol of his deity
- * Myrrh, an embalming oil, as a symbol of suffering and death

A line in the song 'We three kings of Orient are' sums up these gifts:

'Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and sacrifice.' SASB 129

WATCH

[What is Epiphany?](#) by DisciplesNet Church (3mins 9secs)

 Screen share the video.

BIBLE READING / THOUGHT

Matthew 2:1-12

Although the Bible doesn't say there were three magi, one wise man per gift seems logical. Melchior, Balthasar and Caspar are the names traditionally given to the wise men who are remembered around the world at this time of Epiphany.



When we think about the Magi's journey, we can only marvel at the complexities of the preparations and decisions made. Theirs was a process of reasoning and a desire to find the truth based on the knowledge they gained from their studies.

The shepherds would have been brought up with the Scriptures and the foretelling of a Messiah, and so they knew something of who they were waiting for, even though they had little warning when the event started to happen. The wise men, however, made their plans for their long journey to follow the star, thinking they were only looking for a king, not realising he was the Son of God. They had faith that the hassle, effort and sacrifice would all be worth it. They persevered, despite taking a wrong turn which led to Herod; but they hung on to their faith that the star would lead them to the truth, and so discounted the lies peddled by Herod.

They had to put aside any preconceived ideas about the King of the Jews they would encounter and accepted that they had found God in the form of a small child.

 **'And they bowed down and worshipped him.'**

(Matthew 2:11)

Imagine three intelligent, well-versed men kneeling in worship to this baby in a simple home, because it is where the star led them. No questioning, just acceptance, a natural response to the revelation of the King of kings!

What is our response to God's revelation of Jesus the Saviour of mankind?

May we, at the beginning of this new year, be willing to respond to the revelation in a positive way, opening ourselves to his love and wanting to serve him to the best of our abilities.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Set the scene for the reflection by playing the song ['In the face of a child'](#) in the background.

 *Screen share the video.*

Invite members to reflect on the questions from the Bible thought.

Give members a star shape and a pen. Give members the opportunity to reflect and write the first name of someone they know who is searching for God, or someone they want to develop a relationship with God. Display all the stars.

 *Ask members to write on the star they cut out earlier.*

Connect



Dear Heavenly Father,
We are reminded of the epic journey of the Magi - the great pilgrimage of faith - as they stepped into the unknown, persevering despite adversity, searching diligently until their quest was rewarded. Lord of all, we come seeking in our turn - seeking to learn from their experience, to worship the One to whom they knelt in homage, to understand what his birth, his life, his death and resurrection mean for us. Help us through this time together to discover a little more of what your revelation of Jesus has to say to us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

SONGS

- ♪ SASB 101 'As with gladness men of old'
- ♪ SASB 129 'We three kings of orient are' adult voices or children's
- ♪ SASB 133 'Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God among us'

WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect Website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect
- Family Ministries Website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families
- Email: familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk
- Facebook: @sarmyfm
- Twitter: @ukifamily
- Instagram: safamily_ministries



Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for

Children | Adults | Everyone



Family
Ministries
Having faith in the family