

Living Faith @

Dear Faith Shapers,

I pray you all had a joyful Christmas. Christmas may not have been the same as previous years, yet our Savior still comes to us & we find good news of great joy!

The season of Christmas is one I cherish with my family. The thing I love about the season (the season of the Church year, not the day) is that our Christmas events are done and the hustle and bustle is over, yet there is still Christmas. The kids are home on break and we can celebrate together. We love to leave our decorations up, decorate with stars, make more Christmas cookies, save a present to open on Epiphany, watch more Christmas movies, have family dinners and enjoy the season of wonder together. My hope is for you to embrace the season with your loved ones!

May your season of Christmas & Epiphany be filled with wonder & great joy!

Deacon Lisa Kammerer



Did you know that there is Christmas day and also a season of the church year that is Christmas? Many people believe the 12 days of Christmas are before Christmas (the media & stores push it as a holiday sale leading up to Christmas) but that is not the case. The season of Christmas is 12 days. It starts on Christmas day and ends on January 5th. How appropriate that it starts on Christmas day with the best gift—Jesus! The color of the season is white (paraments at church will change from advent blue to white for the season of Christmas). Here's some fun ways to enjoy the season.

- * **12 days of Christmas Kindness.** Do a act of kindness on each day of Christmas. Some popular projects we have done are: candy cane bomb a parking lot, put quarters in machines at the laundromat, shop for our local food pantry (they are low after the holidays), deliver treats or gifts, handout free flowers, bring hot chocolate or coffee to outside workers, shovel sidewalks. Involve the whole family in picking 12 projects.
- * **12 Clever Gifts for the 12 Days of Christmas.** Box of Bread mix (Jesus is the bread of life). Christmas story book (Christ is Emmanuel). Reese's Pieces (Jesus is the Prince of Peace). Soap (Christ is the Redeemer who washes our sin away). Candy cane (Jesus is the good shepherd). Flashlight or glowstick (Christ is the Light). Water (Jesus is the Living Water). Ring Pop candy or Ring (Christ is the Lord of Lords). Blanket or other warm item (Jesus is the Lamb), Prayer beads or prayer gift (Christ is the Mediator), Gift Certificate (Jesus is our Redeemer). King size something (Jesus is the King of Kings).

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15 WAYS TO CELEBRATE EPIPHANY

EPIPHANY IS JANUARY 6TH (THE TWELFTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS) AND CELEBRATES THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI TO SEE JESUS. THEY PRESENT HIM WITH GIFTS OF GOLD (A GIFT FOR A KING), FRANKINCENSE (A GIFT FOR A PRIEST) AND MYRRH (A GIFT FOR A SAVIOR). THE WORD EPIPHANY MEANS "MANIFEST".

1. READ ABOUT THE 1. VISIT OF THE MAGI IN MATTHEW CHAPTER 2
2. MAKE A KING'S CAKE (SEARCH FOR A RECIPE ONLINE)
THE ONE WHO FINDS THE BEAN OR NUT IS SAID TO BE ESPECIALLY BLESSED
3. SURPRISE SOMEONE WITH AN EPIPHANY GIFT
4. DECORATE YOUR HOUSE OR CHRISTMAS TREE WITH STARS
5. READ THE SHORT STORY THE GIFT OF THE MAGI BY O. HENRY
6. MAKE STAR OR CROWN SHAPED COOKIES
7. PLACE YOUR MAGI IN YOUR MANGER SCENE
8. DO A CHALK EPIPHANY BLESSING OF YOUR HOME (BLESSINGS CAN BE FOUND ONLINE)
20 + C + M + B + 22 (THIS MEANS THE YEAR PLUS THE FIRST LETTERS OF THE 3 MAGI- CASPAR, MELCHIOR AND BALTHAZAR AND ALSO THE PHRASE CHRISTUS MANSIONEM BENDICAT WHICH MEANS MAY CHRIST BLESS THIS HOUSE)
9. MAKE A STAR CRAFTS (3D PAPER STARS ARE ESPECIALLY FUN)
10. HAVE A 12TH NIGHT FAMILY DINNER (WE LOVE USING FANCY DISHES AND CANDLES)
11. MAKE ORANGE POMANDER BALLS (RECIPES ARE ONLINE)
12. WATCH "THE STAR" (LITTLE ONES) OR "THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM" (OLDER KIDS)
13. CALL OR VIDEO CHAT WITH A FAMILY MEMBER ABOUT GIFTS THEY RECEIVED AND WHAT GIFTS (NON MATERIAL) THEY HOPE TO DISCOVER THIS YEAR
14. TAKE AN EPIPHANY ADVENTURE AND TAKE A DAY TRIP SOMEWHERE YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN
15. GIFT YOUR FAMILY WITH THREE GIFTS. GOLD (A FAMILY ACTIVITY OR GAME), FRANKINCENSE (A RELIGIOUS ITEM), AND MYRRH (GIFTS FOR THE BODY) ON EPIPHANY