

## Advent: Epiphany – A Light to Follow

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Matthew 2:1-12

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### **Epiphany means ‘shining out’ or ‘revealing’**

It’s revealed to us in the gospel story that the birth of Christ isn’t just for the Jews, but that Jesus came for all of us, Jew and Gentile alike.

\*Is Epiphany something you have celebrated or paid attention to in your faith?

\*Has anything shined out or been revealed to you this Advent season?

### **The Magi travel to worship the Messiah**

Read and discuss Matthew 2:1-12 (NIV)

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup> “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for out of you will come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

\*What stands out to you from this passage?

\*What do you notice about the Magi? What contrasts do you see in the Magi and Herod?

\*What can we learn from the Magi through their encounter with Jesus?

### **The Magi were led by God to something different than they expected**

They were responsive and sensitive in their search and found Jesus.

\*What things are you seeking as we begin 2024? Where are you expecting to find them?

\*How can you be responsive and sensitive as you go?

### **Epiphany has a communal invitation for us as the family of God**

Scripture is full of surprises to who is included in that family and the Magi foreshadows that.

\*What do we see about the family of God in this story?

\*How can you lean in to the wild and diverse community of God in 2024?