

# EPIPHANY



January 6 - February 14, 2021

**My personal baptism story falls outside of the norm of Episcopal baptismal experiences. Instead of being baptized as an infant or toddler at a baptismal font surrounded by parents, godparents, immediate family, and the rest of the congregation; instead of a beloved parish priest sprinkling water over my head and anointing me with oil while I anxiously cry and reach out for my parents, I was baptized (fully immersed) as a pre-teen in an over-chlorinated pool at an Assembly of God summer camp in the excruciating heat of Oklahoma by a youth pastor that I had never met before and who I would not recognize if I saw him walking past me on the street. I can say, however, that at least one member of my family (my uncle) was there. But that certainly wasn't planned. I didn't even know that he would be at camp that week, and to this day, I really don't know why he was—although I was glad then, and I'm still glad that he was there to witness it.**

**I find a little consolation in knowing that while my baptismal story is unique, it, at least, has some commonality with Jesus' baptism. Just like Jesus, he only had one member of his family there (unless you want to argue that his heavenly father showed up), his cousin John, the one who baptized him. But nobody else was there as far as we know: not his brothers, not his sisters, not his village. Not even his own mother was there to witness that watershed event, which laid the groundwork for both the life and ministry of Jesus and, eventually, for the emergence of the church.**

In the Western church, Epiphany marks the end of the twelve-day Christmas season and, over the course of many weeks, commemorates and celebrates the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God. The season begins on the actual feast day (January 6) with the Matthean story of the wise men from the East, following a bright star and arriving at the home of Mary and Joseph to pay homage and present gifts of ceremonial and inherent value to the newborn child; and it ends with the story of the Transfiguration of Jesus on Mt. Tabor. In between, are stories this year, from the Gospel of Mark that depict events and occasions when the unique and divine nature of Jesus is made known to his disciples and to others around him. Chief among these “in-between” stories (and the principal story of Epiphany in the Eastern church) is the baptism of Jesus, because not only is it the revelatory story par excellence that makes the identity of Jesus known, it is also the initial trinitarian moment when, as St. Basil of Caesarea (a fourth-century theologian) described it, “the God who gave, the Son who received, and the Spirit who is the Ointment” was made manifest.

**In other words, at the baptism of Jesus, we see a loving and reconciling God at work in the world in full display.**

I don't know exactly who was there to witness at the particular point in time, space, and history when Jesus was baptized by John—when God made God's self fully known. But I believe that in this season of Epiphany, some two-thousand years later, we still have an opportunity to witness Christ revealing God's self in all things; especially in the loving, liberating, and life-giving work of those united in Christ through the mystery of their own baptism—no matter how it happened (in a baptismal font, a camp pool, or a flowing river). We just have to show up—and witness it.

- The Rev. Jason Oden

**After journeying through the waiting of Advent and the celebration of Christmas, we come to the Epiphany season in which we reflect on what it means to actually have Christ here, among us. Christians have long been guilty of locating Christ somewhere else—in the distant past, in the cosmic future, or up in the sky. But the point of the incarnation is that Christ is right here, among us, within us. When we fail to make this connection, we wander in various unhelpful—even harmful—directions in how we understand our faith. Many Christians today focus deeply on the importance of being ‘saved’, often misconceptualizing salvation as a kind of prize or membership card with which one avoids eternal damnation. But the earliest Christian talk about salvation tended to emphasize a very different priority: being conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29) and sharing in the divine nature itself through our becoming like Christ (2 Pet. 1:4). The point of Salvation is not to escape our lives but rather the means by which we fully enter into them, gaining the courage and strength to actually do the good, generous and loving things we wish to do. Salvation is found in becoming living icons of Christ over the long and steady course of our lives, uniting who we are with who we are becoming.**

The Anglican Benedictine monk Gregory Dix once said that it is a categorical mistake to imagine there are multiple ‘comings’ of Christ in the Christian story (Christ came long ago in Bethlehem, Christ comes each Sunday in the Eucharist, Christ will come at the Last Judgement)—according to Dix, there is only one coming of Christ. It’s all the same act of incarnation, whether we’re talking about the baby in the manger, the elements on the Eucharistic altar, the sustaining hope which carries us towards the future...or the Christ we glimpse in our neighbors, among the oppressed of this world, and even in the mirror. It’s all one presence, intimately connected.

**So let’s commit this Epiphany season to noticing the Christ in each other, in ourselves, and in those we find hardest to love.**

- Dan Carlson

*In the pages which follow, you will find liturgical and spiritual practices for the Epiphany season which can be done alone or in community with others. We hope these shared exercises will more deeply ground and connect you to God and your community. You will also find the gospel readings for each week of the season, with accompanying reflection and discussion questions. We hope these questions will serve as starting points to help you engage with the gospel story in a new way, either alone or with those in your community. We also have an activity section where you will find crafts, recipes and activities for all ages. May these become tangible ways for you and those in your life - your roommates, your neighbors, your partner, your kids or your friends - to enter into meaningful discussion and practice together. In so doing, it is our hope that you come to notice the Christ who is present in each of them.*

- Brooklin Taylor, Cathedral’s Director of Fresh Expressions

# SHARED LITURGY

**Opening** The Savior of the nations has come,  
*To light our way and heal our wounds.*

**Prayer** Set us free, O God, from the bondage of our sins, and give us the liberty of that abundant life, which you have made known to us in your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*

**Scripture** On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.  
Matthew 2:11-12



**Prayers** Among the lowly you were born.

*Lord Jesus, save us.*

The wise and powerful bowed down before you.

*Lord Jesus, teach us.*

You have come to lead us to holiness.

*Lord Jesus, guide us.*

You ask us to call on you, and so we offer these prayers:

(Here, the people may make particular intercessions and thanksgiving)

*Lord Jesus, hear us.*

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Prayer** Jesus, you revealed yourself to the world so that all people might look to you and be saved: may we know the wholeness that you bring. Be our light in the darkness that we may not stumble, and lift us up again if we fall; all this we ask in your name. *Amen.*

**Going Out** The Savior of the nations has come *to light our way and heal our wounds.*

## **The Feast of the Epiphany: January 6**

**Matthew 2:1-12**

**In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:**

**‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”**

**Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.**

# Prayer

**Jesus, you are the light of the world:  
*May your light open our eyes to  
see those in need.***

**Jesus, you are the light of the world:  
*May the works of our lives  
demonstrate your love.***

**Jesus, you are the light of the world:  
*May your wisdom enlighten our decisions.***

**Jesus, you are the light of the world, hear the  
prayers of our heart.**

(Here, add particular intercessions or thanksgivings)

**As you enlighten our lives  
*May we be light for others.***



## **Activity**

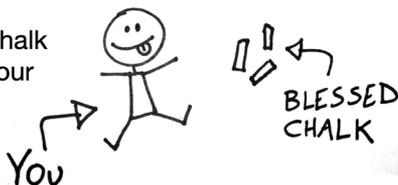
**Watch Katy Perry's "Firework" and have a dance party, knowing that the light within each of us is Christ with us, here and now.**

## **Feast Day Recipe**

**Galette des Rois (flip to the last few pages of the zine). Don't forget to bake your feve (french nativity figurine) into it!**

# How to Bless a House: Epiphany Style!

**TAKE** your blessed chalk and stand in front of your home's doorway.



**WRITE** above, on or beside your door

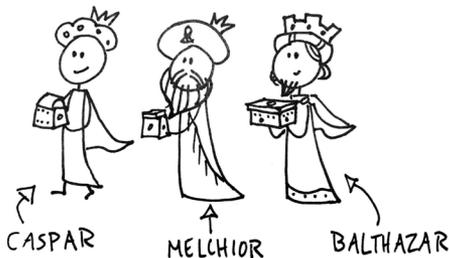
LIKE THIS

20+C+M+B+21

This is a Medieval Christian tradition. Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar (C+M+B) are the traditional names of the 3 Magi. C+M+B also means "Christus mansionem benedicat" or "Christ Bless this House."

## OFFER

the prayer below (or say your own) to bless your home for the New Year!



*May all who come to our home  
this year rejoice to find Christ  
living among us; and may we seek  
and serve Christ in everyone  
we meet. Amen.*

# First Sunday after the Epiphany

Sunday, January 10

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

- Mark 1:4-11



## **Reflection and Discussion**

**Notice to whom the voice is speaking.  
As you picture the scene, do you imagine the  
crowds could hear this startling declaration or did  
you imagine a more intimate exchange?  
If the Spirit descended like a dove  
right now, what would she need  
to say to convince you of your belovedness?**

**Tell a story about a time when  
you experienced your own belovedness.**

*Art by Megan Suttman*

## **Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Sunday, January 17**

**Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."**

**- John 1:43-51**



## Reflection and Discussion

Nazareth was considered a backwater in Jesus' day--a place you might pass through, but where nothing of real importance was going on. Nathaniel can't believe that the Messiah could ever come from such a place. What groups do you find yourself dismissing as hopelessly backward? Have you ever been pre-judged in this way by others?

Tell a story about a time when you met someone who was very different than you expected them to be.

*Art by Brianna Kelly*

# Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Sunday, January 24

After John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

- Mark 1:14-20



## **Reflection and Discussion**

**The time is now. There is no time to think or ponder, the invitation is hanging in the air. Come follow me. Leave behind everything, your boat, your nets, your plans. How is Jesus calling you?**

**What do you need to leave behind or let go of to follow Jesus?**

**Tell a story about a time you received an invitation to step into something new.**

*Art by Megan Suttman*

# Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Sunday, January 31

**Jesus and his disciples went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.**

-Mark 1:21-28



BE SILENT, AND COME OUT OF HIM!

## Reflection and Discussion

Those in the synagogue that unexpectedly witnessed an unclean spirit being cast out of a man that day saw something incredible.

But at the end of the day, they were left with a sense of dissonance and with questions they were unable to answer. Many of us have experienced a similar situation that left us both in awe but also reeling.

Share a story of how Jesus both amazed and confounded you? How do these stories help us to live more fluently in tension and help us to better understand ourselves?

Share a story about a time when you witnessed an event that challenged your opinions about someone that you didn't know very well. How did it make you feel, and what did you learn about yourself in that situation?

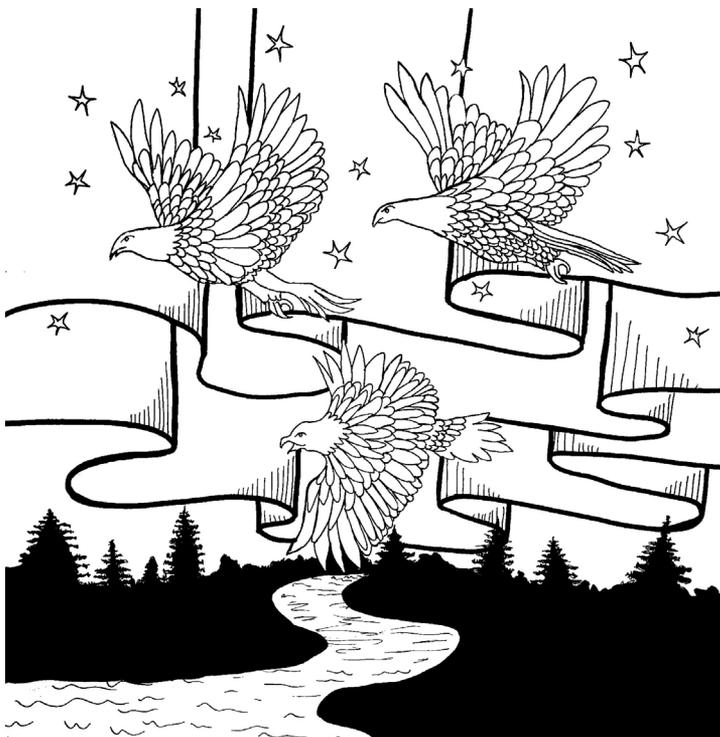
*Art by Brianna Kelly*

# **Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Sunday, February 7**

**After Jesus and his disciples left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.**

**- Mark 1:29-39**



## Reflection and Discussion

In the wake of the miraculous, Simon's mother-in-law selflessly serves others and Jesus chooses to withdraw to be by himself. Why do you think these characters opted for different responses? How do you think gender roles play into Simon's mother-in-law's response? Could Jesus be experiencing some compassion fatigue in the face of so much suffering? How do these different responses convict you and/or give you permission?

Tell a story about a time you served someone else, or a time when you were served, and how that experience felt.

*Art by Megan Suttman*

# **The Last Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Sunday, February 14**

**Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.**

**- Mark 9:2-9**



## Reflection and Discussion

This story is a testament to the power of inertia. Like Peter, many of us want to stay planted and unmoved in pinnacle situations that produce a sense of achievement, comfort, and satisfaction. But this mountain-top experience in Mark's Gospel is what biblical scholars and theologians call a proleptic moment; that is, a moment that points to a future reality, rather than representing a present one. The Transfiguration is a story that is beckoning all of us to move toward that reality because it is not something we have fully realized--in the moment. How does a renewed call to follow Jesus in this moment require you to move out of your own sense of achievement, comfort, and satisfaction?

Have you ever experienced a moment when someone stole "your seat" while you were temporarily away? What did you do? Did you fight to reclaim it? Did you willingly move to another one? Or did you respond in another way? If that moment had anything to teach you about yourself, what do you think it would be?

*Art by Brianna Kelly*

# PRACTICE

Epiphan(ic) adaptation of a loving kindness meditation



**1. Find a comfortable seat. Gently close your eyes. Bring your attention to your body and begin by taking a few deep breaths.**

**2. First, bring to mind someone in your life for whom your affection is uncomplicated, someone who you love easily and love deeply. Picture that person in your mind, hold them there. As you visualize them, imagine what it feels like to look into their eyes. Without judgment, pay attention to the emotions that may arise. Direct these blessings to that person: May you be safe, may you be happy and may you know the light of Christ that is within you. Deep breath in and out.**

**3. Now, visualize yourself. Hold the picture of yourself in your mind. Imagine what it feels like to look into your own eyes as you direct these blessings to yourself. May you be safe, may you be happy and may you know the light of Christ that is within you. Deep breath in and out.**

**4. Next, bring to mind a neighbor, someone who you come in contact with regularly but wish you knew better. Picture that person in your mind, hold them there. As you visualize them, imagine what it feels like to look into their eyes as you direct these blessings to them. Direct these blessings to that person...May you be safe, may you be happy and may you know the light of Christ that is within you. Deep breath in and out.**

**5. Now, visualize someone who you consider to be your enemy, someone for whom it is difficult for you to love, understand or relate to. Picture that person in your mind, hold them there. As you visualize them, imagine what it feels like to look into their eyes. Without judgment, pay attention to the emotions that may arise. I know this is hard but, as you visualize this person, direct these blessings them: May you be safe, may you be happy and may you know the light of Christ that is within you. Deep breath in and out.**

**6. Then, add all beings everywhere. All people. All creatures. All those in existence. Near and far. Known and unknown. Direct these blessings to the world: May you be safe, may you be happy and may you know the light of Christ that is within you. Deep breath in and out.**

**7. When you feel ready, you can open your eyes.**

**MAKE**



# EPIPHANY STARS

First you'll need eight pieces of square-shaped tissue paper, whatever colors you have!

**Step 1:** Now lay one on the table, Fold it in half lengthwise. Unfold and fold it again crosswise. Unfold and now you see creases forming four smaller equal squares

**Step 2:** Pull and fold each point of the outer edge of the paper toward the center. Now turn the paper so one of the edges is pointing up.

**Step 3:** Fold one point towards the center line. And repeat the same with the other point forming a sharp point. This is your first star point!

**Step 4:** Repeat the same with other seven papers.

**Step 5:** Glue them together into a star. Put glue into the lower right side of one point and put another one on top so its bottom edge is lined with the centerfold of the bottom point.

For a visual of all this folding, check out the original instructions: <https://babyccinokids.com/blog/2016/09/27/waldorf-window-star/>

These Epiphany Stars can be used in many different ways. Hang them in your window and let the sunlight shine through them. Mod podge them inside an old glass jar with a led candle inside to make a lantern. Or glue them to a home-made card and send them to someone you know who could use a little extra light this season.

**EAT**



# Galette des Rois or Epiphany Kings Cake

Though these cakes sometimes more commonly known for marking the end of the Epiphany season (Fat Tuesday or the day before Lent begins), Kings cakes got their name from the 3 kings of our Epiphany story and are traditionally baked on the eve of Epiphany or the 12th day of Christmas. This recipe is a Gerdson family favorite. Whoever gets baby Jesus baked into their slice gets to be king (or queen) for the day!

## Ingredients

- 2 Sheets store-bought puff pastry
- 1/4 cup almond paste
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter
- 3 tbsp powdered sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp almond extract
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 egg beaten for egg wash
- Feve (small porcelain french nativity figurine)  
or a piece of chocolate will do!

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pre-heat oven to 400F (200C).
2. In the bowl beat together the almond paste, butter and powdered sugar until well combined. Then add eggs 1 at a time, beating in between. Then add almond extract and salt and beat again. Lastly add flour and beat until combined. Set aside.
3. Roll out puff pastry sheet onto a floured surface, making sure you have a flat rectangular with no seams remaining. Cut out 2 10" inch circles with a dinner plate. Place one on a parchment-lined cookie sheet and set the other aside.
4. Spread the almond cream on the circle on the cookie sheet leaving a 2" border. Brush border with egg wash, place your feve or a piece of chocolate in the cream. Place 2nd circle on top and press together to seal circles together creating a decorative scalloped edge.
5. Brush the center part only of the circle with more egg wash and place in freezer for 10mins.
6. Bake at 400F for 25-30 mins.

Original Recipe: <https://entertainingwithbeth.com/galette-des-rois-recipe/>

# NOTES

# DOODLES



THERE IS ENOUGH

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*Front cover Art by Megan Suttman  
Back cover art by Brianna Kelly*