

# Small Group Questions

Small groups and individuals can use these questions to engage the content of Sunday sermons.

## Epiphany – Christ for All



We have an "epiphany" when we suddenly gain a new perspective or insight about something previously hidden. The Jews longed for the coming of the Messiah to ease their oppression. And yet, the arrival of the non-Jewish magi who come and worship this newborn baby challenges the long-held assumptions about God's work in the world. What assumptions about life and faith do we need to surrender in the new year?

*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. – Matthew 2:11*

**Week 1: January 2, 2022**

**Epiphany – Christ for All**

**Matthew 2:1-12**

### Connect:

Share your favorite Christmas tradition or memory of Christmas.

### Engage:

Magi or wise men were pilgrims from the East who followed the guiding star to Bethlehem, where they paid homage to the baby Jesus. While the number of wise men isn't specified in the scriptures, the Western Christian tradition asserts three wise men based on the three gifts they offered: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In Eastern Christianity, the tradition holds that there were twelve Magi. Epiphany, or Three Kings' Day, is commonly celebrated on the last of the Twelve Days of Christmas in the liturgical calendar.

Read [Matthew 2:1-12](#)

1. What compelled these Magi to uproot themselves to come to see this newborn King?
2. Jesus was born in a humble stable while Herod lived in an opulent palace. How did the Magi respond to baby Jesus vs. Herod?
3. Why do you think this story is included in this gospel? What do you think the author is trying to tell us about Jesus and the Christian faith?
4. Isaiah 60:1-6 proclaims the universal joy when all the nations come to worship. How is this passage shed light on the symbolism of the Magi story?

### Apply

Our assumptions often limit our spiritual perspective. They can lock us into unconscious biases that prevent us from seeing what God is doing in the world. It is difficult to name our spiritual blindness, but it can be done. Committing to learning more about Jesus and having an open mind and heart can catalyze a spiritual "epiphany" that gives us wisdom.

What assumptions about life and faith do we need to surrender in the new year?

### Pray

Share joys and concerns and pray for one another, the church, and the world.