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Christmas Leads to Epiphany

Advent and Christmas are rich with rituals that draw together community. These rituals retell our common—yet uncommon—narrative. With the Advent wreath we mark the growing light of Christ in the world. When arranging the crèche we remember Jesus’ humble beginnings. We move the wise men ever closer to the Christ child to arrive on Epiphany, reminding us that Jesus is King, worthy of our finest gifts.

Ritual is good indeed. Participating in ritual engenders belonging, and it creates meaning in a community where we become known. Belonging, meaning and being known are three basic needs of our lives. While Advent and Christmas are rich with rituals, the birth of Jesus is not the end of the story. Our church year has just begun and we continue to tell the story of God’s love - celebrating the rituals that deepen community in Epiphany.

Revealing Jesus

The stories of Epiphany reveal the Jesus we know—God’s son, miracle maker, teacher, prophet, and healer. He challenges us to walk the way. And we learn the way by telling our stories, by marking them with ritual. Through those rituals we know ourselves as people of the way, we deepen our belonging to a community with particular meaning, a community called to justice, partnering with Jesus to bring the Kingdom to earth today.

“It is this emphasis on the manifestation of Christ that permeates the entire season that follows the feast of the Epiphany. In Christ we see the fullness of God dwelling in a human being. This fullness is Christ’s by right, but it is to be ours as adopted heirs of God. On this feast, we celebrate the glory that is to be revealed in us when Christ is ‘all in all.’” (Living the Good News)

Resources for Epiphany

The liturgical year invites—no—compels us to continue to tell the story with ritual, to tell the stories at home. We cannot remain in the manger with angels singing on high, however sweet that is. We must move ever closer to the greatest of celebrations—Easter.

Here are three books to help your family move through the year. They explain the liturgical seasons, offer prayers and blessings and present crafts and activities for the home.

[All through the Day, All through the Year](#) by David B. Batchelder

[To Dance With God: Family Ritual and Community Celebration](#) by Gertrud Mueller Nelson

[Festivals of the Christian Year](#) by Lois Rock.

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