

“May we each be guided by our chosen star and find wonderful things this year. Amen!”

A Guiding Star for the Year

Epiphany, January 6, is the official end of the 12 days of Christmas. Many Christians celebrate this day by remembering the journey of the Magi. The Magi found their way to Jesus by following a bright heavenly body, usually represented by a star. This activity allows each member of the family to pick out a star that will guide him or her throughout the coming year. **Designed for ages 10 and up**

Materials Needed

- Box or basket large enough to hold the stars
- 25 paper stars labeled with the star words listed below:
*Grace; Mercy; Love; Faithfulness; Peace; Patience; Kindness; Joy; Rest
Adventure; Attention; Imagination; Faith; Compassion; Friendship; Song; Art
Generosity; Time; Humility; Persistence; Dedication; Inspiration; Comfort; Wholeness*

How To Do It

1. This tradition is meant to be held on January 6, Epiphany. Ahead of time, one person in the family makes the 25 stars with the words on them and places them face down in the basket. When the family has gathered together, read Matthew 2:10-12 out loud. It says, *“When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. They came to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. They opened their gifts and gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”*
2. Say, *“This story is a story about how the Magi (or wise men) came to Jesus and brought him gifts. They determined which way to go by following a star. Today we are going to pick out our own star to guide us in the year to come. We will each reach into the basket and pull out a star that will be our guide for the year.”*
3. [Note: This step is skipped the first year] Say, *“Before we pick out our star for this*

year, let's reflect on the star that was our guiding light last year. What was your guiding star last year? What did you think about it? How did you see it as your guiding light during the year?"

4. Say, "As we leave, we will each pick out a star to guide us for the coming year. We will pick one out of the basket, and not share what we have received with each other until next year. May we each be guided by our chosen star and find wonderful things this year. Amen!"

5. Everyone leaves by saying, "Happy Epiphany!"

Notes

- This activity requires a fairly advanced level of abstract thought. What does it mean to be guided by hope, for example? For this reason, the age is listed as 10+. For younger children, try one of the variations below.
- Teens in particular may feel a special connection to this activity because of its "secret" component. If you have teens in your home, give this one a try!
- In contrast to most of the activities in this book that are created together as a family, I advise that one person be in charge of making the stars in advance of this activity. This allows the words to be a surprise to those who pick them out. As the stars become less numerous through the years, new ones can be added.

Variations (and suggestion for younger children)

- Make and decorate stars and hang them up in your house to remember and commemorate this day.
- With younger children, instead of having individual stars, choose just one star as a family and let that star guide the whole family for the year to come.
- Take turns preparing the stars and coming up with words that will be used year after year.

Traci Smith is the author of [Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home](#). A pastor in the PCUSA, she loves the intersection between pastoring and parenting, and is passionate

about helping families develop simple faith practices that will enrich their life together. She lives in San Antonio, Texas with her husband, Elias Cabarcas, and children Clayton, Samuel and Marina. You can find Traci at her [website](#).