

“The finders of two dry beans might become king and queen of the Epiphany party. In New Orleans, the finder of a hidden black bean must give a party for all the other guests.”

Celebrate Epiphany

The Feast of the Epiphany, January 6th, is just around the corner. There are many ideas to celebrate this remembrance of the Visitation of the Magi. Every Epiphany party could use a special cake, room decorations as well as community singing. Here are some ideas to add to your own church’s tradition to mark this feast day on our church calendar.

The Three Kings’ Cake

This is a European tradition. The cake - usually a flat circle - hides a bean or two, a doll, or a clutch of tiny fortunes. The significance of the hidden fortune varies. A hidden dime might signify wealth in the coming year. The finders of two dry beans might become king and queen of the Epiphany party. In New Orleans, the finder of a hidden black bean must give a party for all the other guests. Invite your group to make (and eat) a traditional King Cake.

Ingredients for King Cake

- ½ c. blanched almonds
- 1 c. sugar
- 6 T. soft butter (save the wrapper)
- 1 t. vanilla or almond extract
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 T. raisins or currants
- 1¼ c. flour
- 1½ t. baking powder
- beans, dimes, or thimbles

Directions for King Cake

1. Grind the almonds with ¼ c. sugar in a food processor or blender.

2. Use a fork to mix the butter and sugar together in a bowl until thoroughly blended.
3. Beat in the eggs (saving a tablespoon of egg to glaze the top) and the extract.
4. Sift together the flour and baking powder into the egg mixture.
5. Stir in the sugar-almond mix, the raisins or currants and any fortunes (beans, dimes, etc.)
6. Turn the dough onto a greased cookie sheet (use the paper from the butter to grease the sheet).
7. Pat the dough flat into a ½" thick circle.
8. Spread the reserved beaten egg on the top of the cake.
9. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20 minutes. Recipe will serve 12.

Decorating for Epiphany

Change the look and feel of your classroom. Hang star garland loosely across the doorway and invite children to wait until the whole group has arrived before entering the room. The room is darkened except for a string of star-shaped lights and/or votive candles (or use battery powered candles) illuminating a picture of the magi and candles following the star. Talk about the meaning of Jesus as being the light coming into the world.

Hymns for Epiphany

Check your church's hymnal for some "star" songs. Here are some suggestions:

- I want to walk as a child of the light
- We three kings of Orient are
- Brightest and best of the stars
- Earth and all stars!
- O Morning Star, how fair and bright!
- This little light of mine
- We are marching in the light (Siyahamba)

Sharon Ely Pearson is an editor and the Christian Formation Specialist for Church Publishing Incorporated (CPI). She is the author/editor of several books, most recently [The Episcopal Christian Educator's Handbook](#) and [Signed, Sealed, Delivered: Theologies of Confirmation for the 21st Century](#). When not traveling for work or pleasure, she enjoys tossing tennis balls to her year old black lab, Chobe.

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