



Family Discipleship Guide
Epiphany 2023

"Arise, shine, for your light has
come, and the glory of the Lord
rises upon you.

See, darkness covers the earth and
thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you and his
glory appears over you.

Nations will come to your light, and
kings to the brightness of your
dawn."

Isaiah 60:1-3

Check out the QR code!



This link contains music, activities,
and articles to accompany you on
your journey through this
Discipleship Guide.

Worship

- We have an opportunity to make our homes a sacred place for all to encounter our divine God. As a place to start, consider creating or choosing a home blessing. Click on the QR code for an example of a home blessing liturgy. Spend time as a family expecting to encounter God in every room and closet. Or consider speaking an impromptu blessing throughout your house by walking through each room together asking the Holy Spirit to fill the space, bringing peace to this home, pouring out grace and forgiveness for wrongs that have been said or done, and for protection from any force of evil.
- Chalk your front door with this phrase: "20 + C + M + B + 23." Yes, write this on the doorframe of your front door, driveway or wherever it makes sense. The first and last numbers simply refer to the current year. The letters C M B come from the traditional names for the three kings: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Some also suggest "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" which means, "May Christ bless this dwelling!" One prayer suggestion after completing the "chalking of your door" is: Loving God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and abiding in your will. May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living among us; and may we seek and serve everyone we meet. May our lives be a light to the world; and may God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us, and remain with us always. Amen.

Worship

- Sabbath is one of the most beautiful gifts of worship to God. If you don't yet observe the Sabbath, what traditions would you like consider incorporating into such a day? Check out the QR code for a beautiful article and ideas on how to keep the Sabbath and rest, studying God's word, spending time as a family while blessing one another. Start small and grow from there. The best part is that keeping the Sabbath shows we're in covenant with the God of the universe and we're His people. Shabbat Shalom!
- Jesus came for the whole world, consider attending a worship service at a culturally diverse church or a different denomination. Plan for conversations afterwards about what you experienced, how it felt, where you saw Jesus and what was hard or uncomfortable and why.
- For younger children read the Jesus Storybook Bible each night or a Bible-based story and talk about God each night before bed. Pray with your child and ask them to pray out loud. Their prayers are amazing! Spend some time each night listening to God. Ask your child what s/he hears.
- For older children, pray with your child before a game or performance. Assure them of the talents God has given them and give praise to our Almighty God who is the giver of all good things. Pray for all the glory to go to Him in all that we do.
- If your teenager spends more time behind a closed bedroom door than with the family, pray in front of the door each day and before bed each night. Try not to do it from your bed but physically go and pray over the door and even ask to come in and talk. It is great to be on "their turf."

Formation

- Pick one night and UNPLUG - in Jewish homes this is called Shabbat.
 - Disconnect - Disconnect from technology for 24-hours, from sundown on Friday evening to just after sunset on Saturday, or any 24-hour period. This practice encourages conversation and connection.
 - Take a Pause - Allow your family space to decompress from hectic life.
 - Embrace a Moment of Gratitude - Chemicals in our brains actually change when we express gratitude. Combat negativity and acknowledge blessings from God.
 - Set a Beautiful Table - To mark this night as different and holy, set a beautiful table, complete with candles, flowers, and even a tablecloth.
 - Savor a Delicious Meal - Whether you cook or order in (no judgment!), the actual meal is central to the Shabbat experience. For a modern Shabbat table, there are no rules. Play around with different recipes or themes: Who says you can't have a falafel or taco night?
- Each week learn a verse on the theme of light. Consider lighting a candle before dinner and recite the verse together. Click the QR code for more ideas on verses.
 - One example: "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you," Isaiah 60:1

Formation

- Teach your family how to pray the Daily Examine. Click the QR code for more info. A great way to pray is to look for God's presence in your life. St. Ignatius of Loyola encouraged an exercise called The Daily Examen. This is a prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and to discern how He is speaking to us. Try this version of St. Ignatius's prayer taken from ignationspirituality.com.
 - Become aware of God's presence. Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Holy Spirit. The day may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.
 - Review the day with gratitude. Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day's gifts.
 - Pay attention to your emotions. One of St. Ignatius's great insights was that we detect the presence of the Spirit of God in the movements of our emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings?
 - Choose one feature of the day and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that God thinks is particularly important.
 - Look toward tomorrow. Ask God to give you light for tomorrow's challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what's coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Ask for his protection and help. Ask for his wisdom about the questions you have and the problems you face. Do all this in the spirit of gratitude. Your life is a gift, and it is adorned with gifts from God. End the Daily Examen with the Lord's Prayer.

Mission

- Teens can be passionate. Ask them what breaks their heart and how they can make a difference in the world. They see the world from a different perspective, which is wonderful. Students have amazing ideas for ways to serve. Take an idea and work on it as a family!
- "Adopt" a Cross Purpose leader and bring them special snacks and notes of encouragement throughout their program.
- Volunteer to tutor/mentor a WhizKids student at Wellspring on Tuesday evenings from 5:00-6:30pm. If you have a middle school-aged child or older they can help tutor also.
- Serve a meal in the Well. Either join the Children's Ministry as they serve the meal once a month, or find another family or two and sign up to host the meal on another Sunday.

Mission

- Teach your kids to pray through a “five finger prayer” which includes:
 - People closest to you
 - Someone who instructs or leads you
 - Someone in authority
 - Vulnerable people (the homeless, refugees, foster kids, etc.)
 - Any immediate, tangible needs for you or your family
- Shovel snow for an older neighbor.
- Write cards for a local nursing home or hospital and deliver them.

Connection

- Christ came for the whole world. This Epiphany, plan a family outing to experience another culture. Check out the QR code for multicultural ideas in Denver including Indigenous People Art exhibits, Black American West Museum, Jazz concerts at DU, Latin festivals, MLK marches, and more. There is SO much culture to experience in Denver - get out and do it!
- Read God's words about the Magi looking for the King of the Jews in Matthew 2:1-12. Draw a map of the journey of the Magi. Discuss: What is a Magi? Who are the Magi? Where were they from? How long was the journey? What were their names? What did they bring Jesus? What happened after the visit from the Magi? Where did Mary and Joseph flee? How might Mary and Joseph use the gifts they received over the course of their exile in the time that follows? For a map and detailed info, click the QR code.
- Add a monthly game night into your family's rhythms. If your kids are old enough, you can rotate through which member of the family picks the game each month. You can add special snacks to this evening to help get your children excited about it.

Connection

- Build a lego set involving the Magi! Scan the QR code to watch the video!
- Do a "Secret Snack" activity with your family (like Secret Santa, but each person gets a snack for someone else in the family). For a twist, make a snack and create it to look like the person you are serving. For example, to make curly hair add noodles or a pretzel twist.
- This is your year to connect as a family! Click on the QR code for an amazing list of conversation starters like: Where did you see Jesus today? Can you name a quality you like in yourself and a quality you like in someone else in the family? Do you find you are harder on yourself than other people? If there is one thing you could instantaneously change about yourself, what would it be and why? Who are your role models and why? Is there a biblical character you identify with and why? Is there an aspect of the birth of Jesus that really "WOW's" you?

