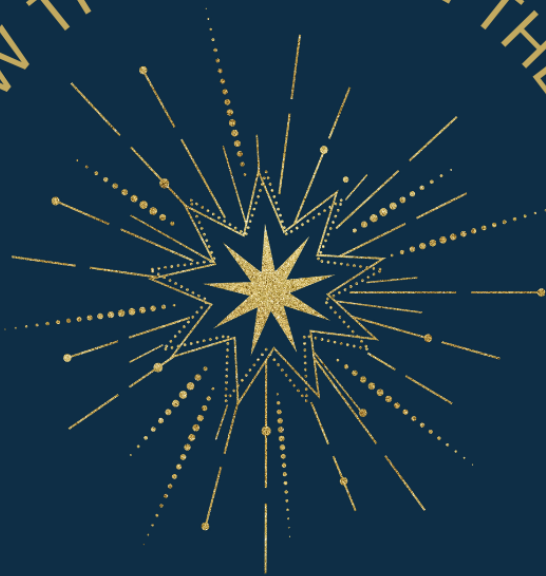


EPIPHANY GUIDE 2025



St. Stephen's
ORINDA

FOLLOW THE LIGHT, BE THE LIGHT



WHAT IS EPIPHANY?

Ever have an “aha!” moment? That’s an epiphany! The word “Epiphany” means “manifestation or realization”. It is a season where we consider the life of Jesus and ask, “what is God revealing to me through the miracles, the parables, the healings, the conversations, the debates, and the teachings of Jesus?” The work of spiritual formation during Epiphany is to build a bridge between Jesus’ life and our lives through paying attention.

Think about a favorite book, movie, TV show or music album. We know and like them, but sometimes, when we give them another listen, or go back for another watch, we sometimes pick up on something new. It might be a familiar scene, but now it seems to hit a deeper, more resonant note.

The seasons of the church are like that. Each season carries familiar stories and themes for those who have a history with the church. But like our favorite films or music, each experience of a well worn story or theme has a mixture of familiarity and novelty. Our lives are different now than when we last considered these stories and themes. This intersection of the familiar with our present unknown is the space where God’s Spirit is at work in our lives: speaking to us, guiding us and nurturing us.

Welcome to the season of Epiphany! It is a chance to look once more on familiar stories, but with new eyes, and with a deeper understanding.

EPIPHANY EVENT GUIDE

The season of Epiphany invites Christians to see Jesus in a new light. Here at St. Stephen's, we invite you to journey with us in a series of activities and events that are designed to help each of us deepen our understanding of what Christ means to us.

SUNDAY JANUARY 5

Our Epiphany journey begins with our Sunday Worship. Like the Wise Men, we are invited to follow the light of Christ and bear the light of Christ into the world.

MONDAY JANUARY 6 - DAY OF EPIPHANY

With this Epiphany Guide, we invite parishioners to bless their homes using the "Chalking the Door" liturgy provided. This brief prayer invokes the names of the Wise Men and invites Christ to dwell within our homes. (See page _ for more information)

SUNDAY JANUARY 26TH, 10AM - ANNUAL MEETING

While not directly related to Epiphany, our Parish Annual Meeting is an important time in our common life. Hear reports from our Vestry and Wardens, review the 2025 Budget, and elect members to our Vestry and Deanery. There will only be a single service this day at 10AM, with a luncheon to follow.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2, 9AM - CANDLEMAS

Candlemas celebrates Jesus' presentation in the Temple. In Luke's gospel, we are introduced to Simeon, a man who greets the infant Christ as "a light to all nations." At this single service, we will gather to bless the candles for the upcoming year, that they may bring us closer to the light of Christ.

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 12-26TH - "A MULTICOLORED GOSPEL - THE STAINED GLASS OF ST. STEPHEN'S" 6:30-8:00PM

In this three-week series, Rev. Matt will lead a tour of the stained glass of St. Stephen's. See with new eyes the gospel whose light comes to us in colorful hues. The class will be offered in a hybrid model, in person and online.

February 12- Part I: From the Annunciation to the Mission.

February 19- Part II: The Miracles and Ministry of Jesus

February 26- Part III: Patriarchs & Prophets, Wisdom & Words

SUNDAY MARCH 2, 8AM & 10AM - LAST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

The Gospel appointed for the Last Sunday of Epiphany is always the story of the Transfiguration. When the clouds dissipate, how do we recognize Christ, and where is he headed? Before the season of Lent begins, this Sunday is also our last chance to get those "Alleluia's!" out.

TUESDAY MARCH 4, 6PM - SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER & PANCAKE OLYMPICS

The final feast before the season of Lent, Shrove Tuesday is a chance for us to enjoy one another's company, along with some decadent pancakes! Children and Youth can participate in the Pancake Olympics. All are invited to bring their Palm Crosses from 2024, which will be burned to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday, which begins our Lenten season. A small lesson on the history and meaning of Lent will also accompany dinner.

CHALKING THE DOOR

Chalking the Door is a centuries-old way to celebrate and to mark the occasion of the Epiphany with God's blessing of our lives and homes. Using blessed chalk, people mark the doorpost of their home with an inscription signifying the new year (2025), along with the marks C+M+B, which stand for the Latin words **Christus Mansionem Benedictat**, which means "**May Christ bless this house.**" They also stand for the traditional names of the Magi who visited Christ: **Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.**

Here is a short liturgy (with instructions) on how to bless your home on Epiphany (January 6th)!

All gather at the front door of the home. The leader begins with these words

At the end of these days of Christmastide, we keep the Feast of Epiphany. We celebrate Christ being made known to the Magi, to John in the River Jordan, and to the disciples at the wedding in Cana. Today Christ is made known to us! Today this home is a holy place!

Peace be to this house and all who enter here.

People **Amen!**

Leader Let us pray: O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

Leader Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you—Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary.

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

Using blessed chalk, mark your lintel or doorpost (inside or out) as you read:

The Magi, Caspar (C), Melchior (M), and Baltasar (B)... came from the East to Bethlehem to adore the Lord.

C M B

Some families will now pass the chalk to the youngest member of the family, continuing to pass the chalk at each successive step to the next oldest member of the household. Now add the year as written below as you read the next section:

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh two thousand (20) and twenty-five (25) years ago.

20 C M B 25

Then add the crosses as you pray the blessing:

May Christ

20 C + M B 25

Our home

20 C + M + B 25

Bless

20 + C + M + B 25

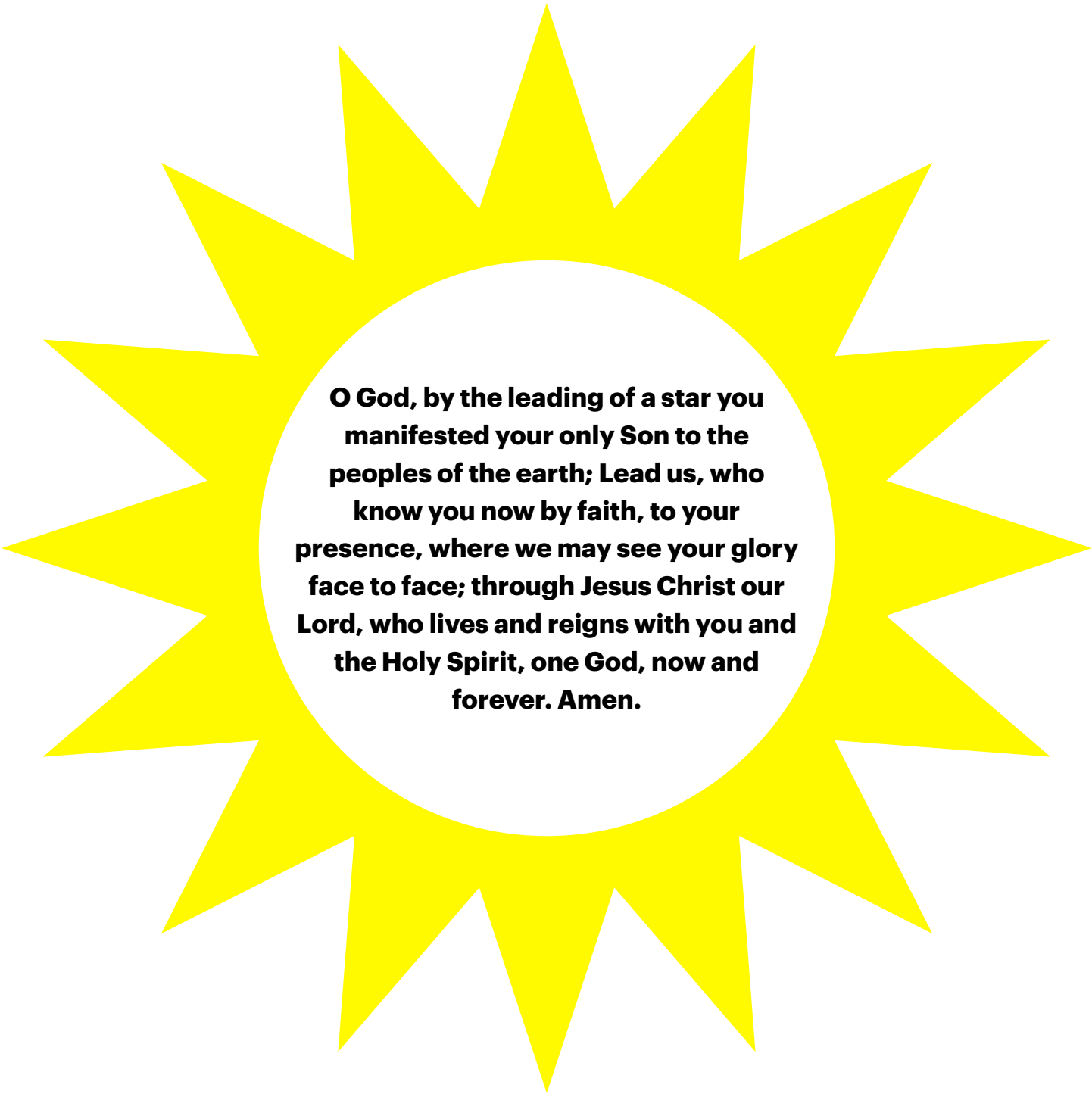
and remain with us throughout the year

20 C + M + B + 25

People **Amen.**

Leader Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever.

People **Amen.**



O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth; Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.