

January 8, 2023

SLOW EPIPHANIES

Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

In stories of call and teaching that turn our world view upside down, we glimpse a re-imagined realm and, together and apart, we reflect on our call as individuals and as a community.



The Season after the Epiphany begins with words of affirmation, “You are my beloved.” We hear echoes of that blessing in the weeks that follow, in the beginnings of discipleship and the ways we are invited to see ourselves.

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On this first day of the Season after the Epiphany, which begins with the memory of Christ’s baptism where it seems everything has become clear, we find ourselves wondering about what is revealed.

You Are Beloved

Read [Matthew 3:13–17](#) or **listen** to the audio story “[Jesus Is Baptized: A Family Legend](#)” or **gather** around as someone tells the story “[John Baptizes Jesus](#)” in this week’s Exploring Our Faith.

Baptism is often a sweet memory of a tiny baby cradled by bewildered, hope-filled parents. That moment is full of blessing and emphasizes the care that will follow for this child in this community. That care, however, continues through every age.

- **How are you being cared for by your church community right now?**
- **In what ways are you offering care to others?**
- **Why is that care important to you?**

Watch Sylvia Boorstein’s [Loving Kindness Meditation](#) to find two minutes of contemplative wonder together as a family or by yourself. When prompted to imagine all of the people in the room, imagine the people that care for you in your church community. Reflect after practicing:

- **What does it feel like to imagine all of the people in the room with you?**
- **How might this meditation help orient you each day?**

Practice, Make, Share, Tell

Practice, like Martin Luther did, by washing your face every morning and saying to your reflection, “I am God’s beloved child.”

Make a [water xylophone](#) and play with water. Try to play your new instrument to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me”.

Share the story of baptism for each member of your family. Pull out old photos, candles, shells, Bibles, and any other special things you might have been given when your family members were baptized.

Handprint dove

Make a dove, following the [directions](#) on this week’s Exploring Our Faith, to help remember Jesus’ baptism.

Decorate this week’s [activity sheet](#). Show friends and family as you tell about John baptizing Jesus.



During the Week

Explore your Baptismal promises

Find the liturgy for your denomination's liturgy for baptism online and then reflect on the questions asked of parents, godparents, or the baptized. Are there commitments you can make together as a family to live more fully into these promises?

Growing seeds

Through Baptism, we enter a new life with God. Water is one of the things that seeds need to grow into a new life. At this station, we will plant seeds and water them. It will take a little while for the seeds to start growing, but if you take them home and water them a little every day, you will soon see new life beginning to grow. Make a trip to the garden store to find seeds to plant in your garden or share in the simple sprouting wonder of a seed in a paper towel in your kitchen. Find out how [here](#).

Conserve water

Water is a precious gift from God. It is vital to all life on Earth, including our own! We can honour this gift by using our own refillable water bottles to reduce waste and conserve water. Did you know it takes three times the amount of water to produce a plastic bottle than it does to fill it! Watch [this video](#) together and commit to keeping your water bottle clean and ready to use every day. Prepare it for this special task with stickers. If your congregation is using star words, you might add your star work to your water bottle.

Prayer

Thank you, God,
for the gift of water
that reminds us of your love
every time we wash
our hands and face. Amen.

Listen to the song "Come to the Water" (MP3 available [here](#) for purchase and download).

Visit [Lecture Connection](#) for current events that connect with this week's scriptures.

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