

ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND
SMALL GROUPS NOTES

Sharing Christ through friendship



Epiphany

God's Truth Made Known.

Isaiah 60:1-6 and Matthew 2:1-12

Welcome/icebreaker	What would make the perfect New Year's resolution? Do you make them?
Worship	Lord, the Light of Your Love is shining
Word (verses):	
Matthew 2:1-12	Why is this gospel reading chosen for Epiphany? Explain
Matthew 2:1-12	Why do you think that Matthew is the only Gospel to record this story?
Matthew 2:1-12	How many Kings were there? How many magi were there?
Matthew 2:9	What does the 'star' do? Was it a Star?
Matthew 2:11	What did the magi do when they found Jesus? What does this teach us about how our relationship with God should be?
Matthew 2:11	How soon after the birth of Jesus did the Magi present themselves before the baby Jesus?
Isaiah 60:1	What is the duty which the rising of this light calls for?
Isaiah 60: 2c & 1b	2c. The Lord rises upon you & 1b The glory of the Lord rises upon you. God is the father and fountain of lights, and it is in his light that we shall see light. As far as we have the knowledge of God in us, and the favour of God towards us, our light has come. What does this mean to you?
Wind/prayer	In their search for the Creator of the Universe, the wise men found you not in Herod's palace, but among the dwellings of the poor and needy. Teach us to search for truth and beauty in unexpected places, to relieve poverty where we are able, and to share unashamedly in the cause of the outcast and despised
Works/witness	Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Home Group leader notes:

There's no right wrong answer to this question as no-one knows why.

* Nowhere does Matthew mention 'Kings' and neither does he say how many Magi there were.

% The wise men remind us that sometimes all we are called to do is to come before God and be silent. It was only after the wise men had worshiped that they brought out their highly precious and valuable gifts to offer to the infant child.

† The exact time isn't known. Scholars believe that it may have been upto 2 years after the birth which is why Herod instructed all boys 2 years and under be killed.

The Archbishop of Canterbury once said that we should be careful and not read into scripture what is not there, whether it be about the number and nature of the wise men or the weather conditions in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth. The story of the wise men, he went on to say, seemed to work well as a legend, certainly with the accretion of the stories and traditions which have built up around it. Whoever the Magi were, and we may never know for certain, we should follow the Archbishop's guidance and not over emphasise details of which we are not sure and have little basis in scripture. **Equally important neither should we under-estimate the truth of what is contained in scripture and, in particular, the Christian message of Christmas; the message that when Christ was born, God himself came down and dwelt among us.**

