

ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND
SMALL GROUPS NOTES

Sharing Christ through friendship



Epiphany

Wise Men Seek Jesus.

Ephesians 3 : 1-12 and Matthew 2:1-12

Welcome/icebreaker	What would make the perfect New Year's resolution? Do you make them and if so do you break or keep them?
Worship	#362 Lord, the Light of Your Love is shining #243 In the Bleak Mid Winter
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 or Maji were there? †
Isaiah 60:3	Read Isaiah 60:3 – discuss could this be what has helped us to think of them as Kings?
Matthew	Can you name the 3 Kings? †
Matthew 2:1 (Ephesians 3:1)	Where were the Maji from and why is this important to know? †
Matthew 2:3	Why did Herod feel threatened? What didn't he understand about the Kingdom Jesus would establish?
Matthew 2 :11	They brought gifts of gold and incense and myrrh – what did they symbolise? ** What is the gold, incense and myrrh in your life? Have you offered this to Jesus?
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? †††
Wind/prayer	Ask God to show you ways he is working today, as He keeps His promises, fulfils His purposes and blesses those who trust Him.
Works/witness	<i>Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.</i> 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 Bible doesn't even say that they are "kings." It calls them "magi" or "wise men." Scientists, scholars, learned students of the stars they were not necessarily "kings" at all - though Isaiah's prophecy, that "**nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.**" has helped us come to think of them as royalty

††† Melchior, and Caspar, and Balthasar

†††† The Bible says, they are "from the East." They are from outside Israel, outside the ancient covenant with the people of Israel. They are foreigners and strangers confirming the Christ had come for all..

††††† The gold, which represents wealth and royalty, was the sign that he would be king. The incense, which was burned daily in the Jerusalem temple as a holy offering to God -- was the sign that he was holy, our "Great High Priest," as the letter to the Hebrews calls him. And the myrrh, a bitter spice used to wrap the bodies of the dead, was the sign that, royal and holy though he was, he would die.

†††††† 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.