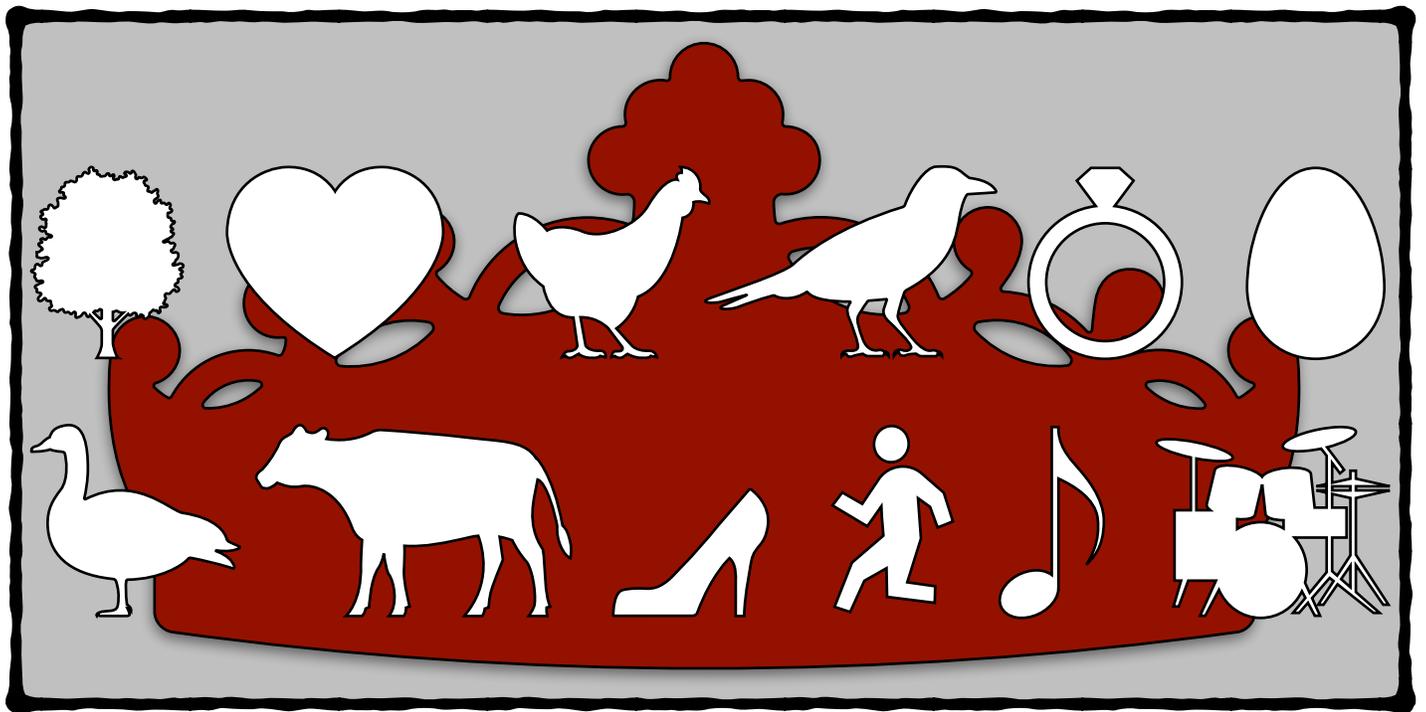


# *12 Days of Christmas*

*A Daily Family Time Guide*



*December 25 (Christmas Day)  
Through January 6 (Epiphany)*

# 12 Days of Christmas Family Time

## Significance of "The 12 Days of Christmas"

The 12 Days of Christmas begins on Christmas Day and ends on January 5, which is the day before Epiphany. Epiphany, also called Three Kings' Day, is the celebration of the arrival of the Magi and is celebrated on January 6.

Each evening, gather your family and light the Christ Candle. (A Christ Candle is a white candle. It could be placed on your dining table, mantle or other designated place.) Talk about the symbol from the song, sing the portion of the song "12 Days of Christmas" beginning with the first day of Christmas and then sing up to the current day, read the provided scripture, share responses to the included questions and pray together. Feel free to allow each person in your home to take a turn lighting the candle and closing in prayer over the course of the season.

These 12 Days of Christmas Family Time is not meant to take long but to get your family thinking about the great things God has done for us.

## For Epiphany or Three Kings' Day Celebration on January 6

Prepare: Purchase 3 gifts (one for each child or shared gifts).

Write 3 clues to lead the kids from one gift to the next.

On the night of January 5, hide the gifts around your home, lay grass or hay or cut up construction paper to look like grass from your kids' beds to the first clue. When they solve the clue, they should find the first gift there and the next clue. The clues continue until all three gifts have been found and opened. Gather together around your tree to read Matthew 2:1-12 and ask the provided questions included in this guide.

In order to help your children know that Christmas hasn't ended on Christmas Day, leave your tree up until January 6.

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# 12 Days of Christmas Lyrics

On the first day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
A Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the second day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the third day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the fourth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the fifth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the sixth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the seventh day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the eighth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
8 Maids a Milking  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the ninth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
9 Ladies Dancing  
8 Maids a Milking  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the tenth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
10 Lords a Leaping  
9 Ladies Dancing  
8 Maids a Milking  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

On the eleventh day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
11 Pipers Piping  
10 Lords a Leaping  
9 Ladies Dancing  
8 Maids a Milking  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

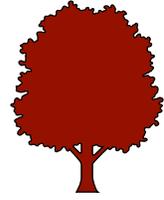
On the twelfth day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
12 Drummers Drumming  
11 Pipers Piping  
10 Lords a Leaping  
9 Ladies Dancing  
8 Maids a Milking  
7 Swans a Swimming  
6 Geese a Laying  
5 Golden Rings  
4 Calling Birds  
3 French Hens  
2 Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

## Day One: Partridge in a Pear Tree - December 25

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

My True Love...Symbolic of God the Father.  
A Partridge in a Pear Tree...Symbolic of Jesus.



### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

John 3:16-17

### **Share**

Thinking about these two phrases from the song: my True love and a Partridge in a Pear Tree - and the scripture: John 3:16-17, what connections are coming to your mind between these three things?

### **Pray**

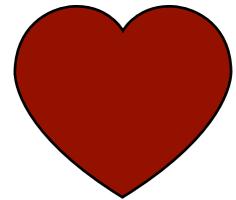
Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Two: Turtle Doves - December 26

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verse.  
Two Turtle Doves...Symbolic of the Old Testament and New Testament.



### **Sing**

Sing the first two verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Psalms 119:103-106

### **Share**

Why do you think God gave us the Old and New Testaments? How can God's Word make a difference in your life?

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

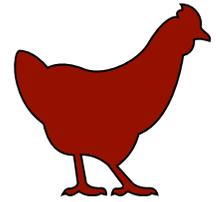
## Day Three: French Hens - December 27

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Three French Hens...Symbolic of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.



### **Sing**

Sing the first three verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

1 Corinthians 13:1-7; 13

### **Share**

Why do you think love is so important to God? Think of one way you can show love to someone in our family.

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

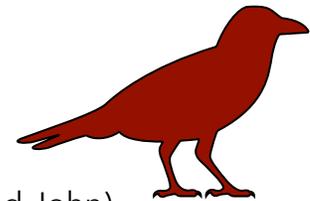
## Day Four: Calling Birds - December 28

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Four Calling Birds...Symbolic of the 4 Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).



### **Sing**

Sing the first four verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

John 20:30-31

### **Share**

What do you think it would be like if you were a disciple and you saw Jesus do miraculous things with your own eyes?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Five: Golden Rings - December 29

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Five Golden Rings...Symbolic of the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

### **Sing**

Sing the first five verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Psalm 19:7-11



### **Share**

What do you think the world would be like without rules and laws? Why do you think it was important for God to give His followers instructions?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Six: Geese - December 30

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Six Geese-a-Laying...Symbolic of the 6 Days of Creation, remembering God rested on day seven.

### **Sing**

Sing the first six verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Portions from Genesis 1:1-2:3 (NLT)

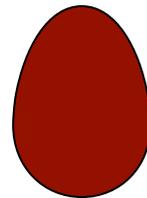
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

**Day 1:** "Let there be light," and there was light. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

**Day 2:** "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth." And that is what happened. God called the space "sky."

**Day 3:** "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." God called the dry ground "land" and the waters "seas." Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit."

**Day 4:** "Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth." He also made the stars.



**Day 5:** "Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind." So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird...

**Day 6:** "Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals." Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

**Day 7:** So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work.

### **Share**

What do you like about the Creation story? Why do you think God rested on the seventh day?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

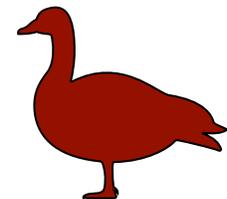
## Day Seven: Swans - December 31

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Seven Swans-a-Swimming...Symbolic of the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit



### **Sing**

Sing the first seven verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Romans 12:6-8

### **Share**

Why do you think God gives people different gifts/abilities? What gifts/abilities do you think God has given to you, and how can you use them right now?

### **Prayer**

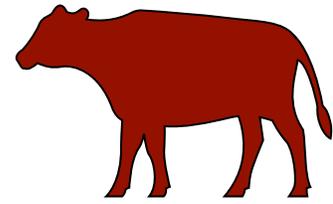
Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Eight: Maids - January 1

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.  
Eight Maids-a-Milking...Symbolic of the 8 Beatitudes



### **Sing**

Sing the first eight verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Matthew 5:3-10

### **Share**

Which beatitude stands out to you, and what do you think about it? After reading these verses, what comes to your mind when you think about what is important to God?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Nine: Ladies - January 2

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.  
Nine Ladies Dancing...Symbolic of the 9 Fruit of the Spirit



### **Sing**

Sing the first nine verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Galatians 5:22-23

### **Share**

Which of these fruit are the easiest to live in your life? Which of these is the hardest?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Ten: Lords – January 3

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.  
Ten Lords-a-Leaping...Symbolic of the 10 Commandments



### **Sing**

Sing the first ten verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Exodus 20:1-17 (NLT)

Then God gave the people all these instructions:

I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.

1) You must not have any other god but me.

2) You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods...

3) You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name.

4) Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God...

5) Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

6) You must not murder.

7) You must not commit adultery.

8) You must not steal.

9) You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.

10) You must not covet your neighbor's house. You must not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.

### **Share**

Why do you think God gave the people the 10 Commandments? Do you think they are still helpful for His followers today? Why?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Eleven: Pipers - January 4

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.  
Eleven Pipers Piping...Symbolic of the 11 Faithful Apostles



### **Sing**

Sing the first eleven verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Mark 3:16-19

### **Share**

If Jesus stood before you and asked you to follow Him like these apostles, how would you feel and what would you say? How can you know if Jesus is asking you to follow Him? Share about when you accepted Christ into your life.

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Day Twelve: Drummers – January 5

Gather around and light the Christ Candle.

### **Symbol**

Review the symbolic meaning of the previous verses.

Twelve Drummers Drumming...Symbolic of the 12 Points in the Apostles' Creed

### **Sing**

Sing all twelve verses of "12 Days of Christmas" together.

### **Scripture**

Apostles' Creed\*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.



I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic^ Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

\*The Apostles' Creed is not scripture, however it is an early statement of Christian belief - a creed - and is widely used by a number of Christian denominations. The earliest historical evidence of the creed's existence is in a letter written by the Council of Milan in 390 A.D.

^ "catholic" means the whole Church or all churches that confess the entirety of this creed. This is different than "Catholic" which refers to the Roman Catholic Church. The difference is found in the capitalization or non-capitalization of the letter "c" in its use.

### **Share**

What stands out to you from this creed? What part is most meaningful to you? Why?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Epiphany or Three Kings' Day Celebration - January 6

This activity is to remind us that the Magi, or Three Kings, journeyed to find Jesus.

Just for fun: The grass or hay has been left by the camels that carried the Magi or Three Kings.

### **Prepare**

Purchase 3 gifts (one for each child or shared gifts).

Write 3 clues to lead the kids from one gift to the next.

On the night of January 5, hide the gifts around your home and lay grass or hay or cut up construction paper to look like grass from your kids' beds to the first clue. When they solve the clue, they should find the first gift there and the next clue. The clues continue until all three gifts have been found and opened. Gather together to share the scripture and questions.

### **Symbol**

Epiphany is when we celebrate the arrival of the Magi, or Three Kings, to see Jesus and bring the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Magi, or Three Kings, arrived sometime after the birth of Jesus.

### **Scripture**

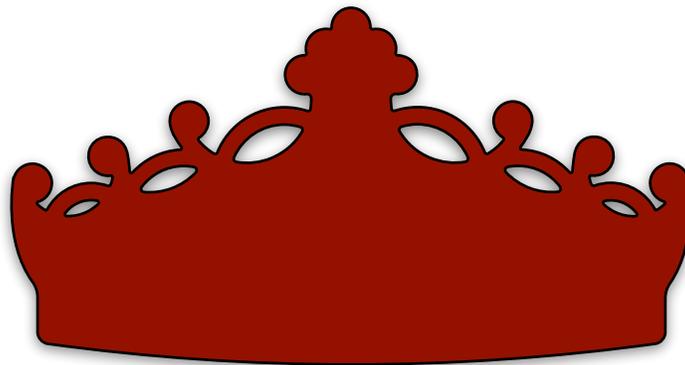
Matthew 2:1-12

### **Share**

What do you think the Magi were thinking about as they were traveling on their long journey and following the star? How do you think they felt when they saw Jesus? How will you feel when you see Jesus face-to-face?

### **Prayer**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the journey of the Magi.



## Created By:

This resource is created by Trey and Candice Brooks, Co-Directors of Equip to Engage.

Equip to Engage is called to serve children's leaders through quality, affordable, local leadership development. This is accomplished with retreats, weekend events and specialized programs.

What makes Equip to Engage unique? We concentrate on equipping, encouraging and connecting local children's leaders and local churches. We understand many children's leaders are lay people and are unable to attend national conferences. Equip to Engage brings resources and encouragement to the local church or geographical area.

Equip to Engage collaborates with local and district leaders as it seeks to make gatherings and resources as cost effective as possible for children's leaders. Equip to Engage desires to be a resource to the local and district church.

For more information about Equip to Engage,  
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