

Activities for connecting during this Season after the Epiphany

If your group or family is looking for some ideas for connecting with one another or with new friends this season, consider the following:

- **Make a notice board** If your family receives a daily newspaper, or a weekly (or monthly) newsmagazine, plan to use that in doing this activity on an ongoing basis throughout the season. Display Luke 4:18–19 in the middle of a noticeboard (or a large sheet of mural paper). Invite people to look for stories of the things in this scripture coming to fruition. If possible, cut out the articles, or headlines, and add them to the noticeboard. Alternatively, find situations in this passage where there is a need for something – for example, a group of those who need new vision – and jot down different ways you can help make that happen. How can you proclaim liberty to captives? What can you do to help people hear God’s good news?
- **Good news/bad news story** The focus scripture for February 3 is kind of a “bad news” story. The people first like what Jesus says, but then they turn against him. On the other hand, the

focus scripture for March 3 is a kind of “good news” story – Peter, James, and John almost fall asleep and miss out on seeing Jesus with Elijah and Moses. Fortunately, they do manage to stay awake, and this wonderful scene helps them recognize who Jesus is. Create a “good news/bad news” story together. Someone begins the story and states a situation that could be good news or bad news. For example, “once upon a time, a woman lived in a small town. She was very poor – she only had one goat.” The next person can decide if that is good or bad news and adds something to the story to make it so. Continuing with that example, someone might say “Good news: the government put a tax on everyone who had two or more animals, and the woman didn’t have to pay because she only had one.” The next person has to create a “bad news” situation on the same story, and then the person following states a “good news” and so on around the circle. Play as long as you want. (Sometimes things can get rather silly, and that’s okay!)

Living the Seasons at Home

Ideas for nurturing faith and discipleship at home

Perhaps you share parenting time with another household and are not able to participate in church activities regularly. Or maybe you are looking for faith experiences to share together at home. Or you might be a grandparent or other relative who wants to include faith conversations in your time with the children in your life. Whatever your particular circumstance, this resource will help you nurture faith and discipleship at home.

“Living the Seasons at Home” provides a weekly engagement of the focus passage from the lectionary. These passages will possibly be the same ones you hear in church on Sunday.

Even as you set aside space and use special material, Sacred Presence is always with us. Therefore, faith conversations can happen anytime and anywhere.

Wherever you see signs of love, God is there; wherever kindness and fairness are extended, God is there. Wherever the sacred story becomes our story, God is there.

There is much that already happens in these seasons. The activities in “Living the Seasons at Home” are designed not to add to the list of things to do, but to enhance and perhaps offer another dimension to the celebrations and activities that already make this time so rich and special.

Resources to use at home:

Lectionary Story Bible, Year C by Ralph Milton (Kelowna BC: Wood Lake Publishing, 2007)

Lectionary Story Bible Audio & Art CD, Year C by Ralph Milton (Kelowna BC: Wood Lake Publishing, 2010). Six audio CDs of author and former radio broadcaster Ralph Milton reading all the stories from the *Lectionary Story Bible: Year C*

Audio stories Audio recordings of the weekly focus passages retold in ways that are accessible and engaging for people of all ages are available for purchase at *Seasons* MP3 Downloads, www.seasonsonline.ca. The MP3 versions of the stories are also included on the *Advent, Christmas, Epiphany* CD included with the SeasonsFUSION materials.



Advent, Christmas and Season after the Epiphany

Advent is a time of waiting, of holding our breath for what's waiting for us just around the corner. We're making preparations to celebrate Christmas Day, of course, but most importantly Christians spend this time preparing and waiting for Christ to be born again into a hurting, needing world.

We're not the first people who have longed for a different world. All through history, people have waited just as eagerly for peace, hope, joy, and love.

The scriptures we read in this Advent are not just of people who sat around hoping the world would change. They are of

people who acted on this hope, who lived differently because they heard God saying the world could be different.

At **Christmas**, we celebrate Jesus who came and made justice and peace real, giving us a sneak preview of how good a different world would be. We pray for a time when this becomes the whole story, when justice, peace, and righteousness – God's reign – become the way of the world. Until this sneak preview becomes the whole story, God still needs people to act with hope, and during the **Season after the Epiphany** we read stories reminding us that God calls us to be these people.

March 3, 2019 – *Living in Glory*

Luke 9:28–36, (37–43)

Read Luke 9:28–36, (37–43) in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story "A Mountaintop to Remember" on p. 210 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

The disciples had been faithfully following Jesus around as he preached, taught, and healed. They had watched him and knew they were in the company of someone extraordinary, yet even they were amazed by this experience. Jesus was there with Moses and Elijah, two of their greatest faith heroes. It was too good to believe, too good to leave, and too good to find the words to describe.

If only faith were like this every day! If only we could sit in the presence of Jesus and other great people of faith, and bask in the mystery and glory of God. But we're about to move into the Season of Lent, preparing for Easter. This is a time when we prepare for the very unexpected nature of God's greatness. We cannot stay on a mountain forever, but the mountain gives us the hope to go on.

Together

■ **This week on Shrove Tuesday (March 5), have a pancake party. Make some pancakes together. Include lots of special toppings, and talk together about the things you have done as a family over the last few months. Share together in a prayer of thanks. Close the Season after the Epiphany by talking about how God's light and love have been shining through you, and how you have been able to show Christ's love to others.**

I reflect God's love by the way I...



February 24, 2019 – *Be Holy*
Luke 6:27–38

WHAT IS LOVE?

Read Luke 6:27–38 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Jesus Talks about Love” on p. 198 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

“But I say to you that listen, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you” (Luke 6:27). Jesus makes a controversial claim about how to treat those who believe and act differently: Love your enemies. Sustain all regardless of your judgment of them as good or bad. Be merciful because God is merciful. Here, Jesus turns our focus from trying to be perfect to a life of compassion. As we grow into the people God imagines us to be, as we follow the commandments and the way of Jesus, let us remember that what we will become is more beautiful than what we can imagine because it is God who has created us.

Together

Compassion has been described as a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others and a wish to help them.

- **Each day, look over the news. Pay attention to your compassionate response.**

Compassion means that I...

Stories for this Advent, Christmas and Epiphany Day

December 2, 2018 – *Sprouting Leaves*
Jeremiah 33:14–16

Read Jeremiah 33:14–16 from an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Gardens You May Never Get to See” on p. 48 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

A long, long time ago, the prophet Jeremiah spoke of God’s reign of justice and peace, but we are still waiting for that to come. Prophets like Jeremiah didn’t talk so much about a future time. Instead, they named the realities of their own time, the sins and injustices of a nation and its people, and the inevitable consequences of those behaviours. That means most of the book of Jeremiah is a very gloomy “state of the nation” speech. But this passage is different – it offers hope.

We need people who will point out the things that are awful in our world; but we also need those whose actions give us the promise of hope, so we can make it through the present and have something to live towards.

Together

- **If you have an Advent wreath, light one Advent candle.**
- **Think about how, long ago, people were waiting for God’s special one (the Messiah) to be born. They lived in hope that this would bring a positive change to their world. Invite everyone to share how Jesus’ birth gives hope.**
- **Cut out some leaf shapes from paper and write or draw on them words and pictures that suggest hope. Hang these on your Christmas tree, or place them around your Advent wreath. You might take some leaves off a tree and use those instead.**

H
O
P
E



December 9, 2018 – The Sound of a Promise Kept
Luke 1:68–79

**P
r
o
p
h
e
s
y**

Read Luke 1:68–79 from an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Singing in the Temple, Shouting in the Wild” on p. 60 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

Part of getting ready for a new family member is wondering. When someone is going to have a baby, when a family is preparing to adopt a child, or when we meet a new in-law or other family member for the first time we wonder what they will be like. What will they do? How will they get along with others? What hopes and dreams will they have?

Long ago, people wondered what God’s chosen one would be like. In the next weeks we will read what John the baptizer and Jesus’ mother, Mary, said they thought Jesus would be like and what Jesus would do. But today we hear someone else’s words.

An elderly couple named Elizabeth and Zechariah discovered they would have a child (John the baptizer). Zechariah sang a special song to the baby. Not a lullaby, but a song about how this child would be a prophet and tell people about God’s love and forgiveness, and that God had heard their cry and was sending a saviour.

Together

- **If you have an Advent wreath, light two Advent candles.**
- **Imagine what it would be like to “prophesy” over one another. What are messages of love that you would like to give to one another?**
- **Make paper heart shapes and write a message to each person. Say something that you appreciate about them. Or, simply give each person a heart as a way to say, “I love you, and God loves you, too.”**



February 17, 2019 – Being Blessed
Luke 6:17–26

Read Luke 6:17–26 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “A Way of Blessing” on p. 186 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

Imagine the world that Jesus is talking about. It’s a world of generosity, love, life, compassion. Those are things people who are hungry, poor, and sad understand and long for. They’re ready and waiting for God’s world, or reign, to come – and they’ll welcome it with joy when it does!

People who live in ways that make life good for themselves but hard for others don’t have much space for generosity, love, life, compassion. That this kind of world will come is a very hard message for them to hear. No wonder Jesus says they are going to weep.

Jesus promises this reign will come, and those who long for it will be blessed. But even by saying it, Jesus gives those who long for it a moment of blessing and gives all of us a challenge. What do we need to let go of or change so that God’s reign can be a blessing for all?

*Blessed are...
Happy*

Together

- **Read Luke 6:17–26 and then imagine what Jesus would be saying if he were at your table speaking to you. Make a prayer together as a family. You could use the lines “God will bless us when...” and “Shame on us when...” Write up the prayer and post it on your refrigerator so you can say it each time you get something to eat.**
- **Depending on your Bible, these verses might say something like “blessed are” or “happy are...” The same Greek word means both things. It can be understood as “things will go well for you.” In the later verses, some Bibles say “woe to you” which is a way of saying, “shame on you...”**



February 10, 2019 – *Being Surprised*
Luke 5:1–11

Read Luke 5:1–11 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “So Many Fish” on p. 174 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

It was during their everyday living that many people encountered Jesus. Jesus called Simon Peter, James, and John when they had been fishing all night. They were not really in the mood to listen to Jesus’ challenge! Yet they did, and the result was astonishing.

In another of today’s readings, the prophet Isaiah heard God calling in the temple, and Isaiah was not eager to respond, either. In fact, both Isaiah and Simon Peter did not think that they were good enough to serve God.

God calls each of us to follow, to serve. And God believes that we are good enough – all of us. We are part of God’s surprising catch.

Together

- **Invite each person (if they wish) to share a reason why they might feel unworthy of God’s call. Then, have each person say something positive about each other person, affirming a gift or talent that they have – something that shows God’s love, or can be used to show God’s love and God’s way.**
- **Decide on a way you might affirm each other’s gifts.**

God loves you,
and so do I,
because you...

December 16, 2018 – *Collide with a Promise Kept*
Luke 3:7–18

Read Luke 3:7–18 from an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Waiting for the Promised One” on p. 72 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

The third Sunday of Advent traditionally is connected with joy. The joy that Jesus brings isn’t the same as just having a smile on our faces. Jesus brings a real joy that, no matter what, God loves us. Sometimes, people say that real joy is contagious – we cannot keep it to ourselves.

When preaching beside the Jordan River, John the baptizer taught that God expects everything to be different. John was talking about how people – even us – could turn our lives around and start over. No matter what we have done, God gives us another chance. That’s real joy! But it can be a little scary, too. Sometimes we don’t want things to change.

Yet in all of this, we can trust God. We can dare to change because we know God will be with us. We can be honest about things we’ve done wrong, and try not to do them again, because we know God forgives us.

Together

- **If you have an Advent wreath, light three Advent candles. (If your set of candles includes a pink one, light that candle this week as one of the three.)**
- **Invite everyone to think of something they want to change in their lives. They don’t need to say aloud what it is, but they should ask God to help them change it. And then invite them to turn around, to symbolize the changes that John talks about.**
- **Cut out a candle shape (or just a flame shape) from paper and write on it a sentence prayer about how you hope the world can be different. Attach these prayers to your Christmas tree.**



C
h
a
n
g
e



December 23, 2018 – *Welcoming the Goodness of God*
Luke 1:39–45, (46–55)

J
O
Y

Read Luke 1:39–45, (46–55) from an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Mary Remembers” on p. 84 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

What’s the best news you’ve ever had to share? Did people know you had heard good news just by looking at you? When we’re filled with joy, it tends to write itself all over us. Joy cannot be kept quiet.

There are many reasons why this pregnancy shouldn’t have been good news for Mary. There are lots of gaps in the story that we have. We only hear Mary’s song of joy – we don’t hear her awkward explanations to her family, or the worried conversations she must have had, like every expectant mother, about how she could care for a child, or her anxious wonderings about how everything might work out.

Any parents can talk of how waiting for a child holds promise and hope, fear and excitement, wonder and joy, hard work and contemplation; all in the same moment! But, like most expectant parents, what overwhelms Mary is joy.



Together

- **If you have an Advent wreath, light four Advent candles.**
- **On Christmas Eve light the candle in the middle of the Advent wreath, which is called the Christ candle. Read Luke 2:1–20 together and imagine what it would have been like to be Mary and Joseph. Invite each person to say why they are glad that God sent Jesus into the world, and/or invite each person to suggest a Christmas carol and sing a verse together. Close by saying, “Happy birthday, Jesus. Thank you for coming to us.”**

February 3, 2019 – *Living Our Calls*
Luke 4:21–30

Read Luke 4:21–30 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Hard to Hear” on p. 162 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

In the story last week, Jesus announced that the Spirit of God was helping him to bring good news to those who were suffering. This week, Jesus says that God has heard the cries of those who not part of the Jewish nation or tradition. Jesus teaches that God doesn’t just care about the Jewish people of his hometown. God cares for all people. This idea angers those who want to see God as being only on “their side.”

Together

- **Talk about ways people still think of God as being on “their side” – favouring their church, their team, or their nation. Brainstorm a list of prophetic sentences of God’s love, such as God loves people of other religions; or God doesn’t care about which team wins – in God’s eyes they tie; or when God looks at their world, there are no borders or boundaries. Choose an “edgy” sentence to write on a piece of paper and decorate with ideas of how you can live out this “edgy” love.**

*God treats us all the same.
God loves us, each and every one of us!*



January 27, 2019 – *Shaped by God's Word*

Luke 4:14–21

Read Luke 4:14–21 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Jesus’ Hometown” on p. 150 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

What is the most important part of the body? That would depend on what one is wanting to do. If listening to music, the ear is important. If going for a walk, the legs and feet are important. If scratching an itch, you might need your finger, your hand, your arm to reach to the place that itches, your elbow so your arm could bend, and your brain to know where the itch was. In other words, all parts of the body have a role at different times for different things.

Long ago, Paul wrote to the church in Corinth and reminded them that the church – the Body of Christ – is also made up of different parts, each of which has different talents, different skills, and different tasks to do. And all of which are just as important as each other. Singing in the choir, praying, folding worship bulletins, welcoming people to worship, preaching the sermon, teaching, speaking out about injustice, listening when someone is hurting... are all important. We all make up the church.



Together

- **Think about the various ways your family is involved in your church. Stretch your imaginations to think of all kinds of things: going to worship is important, and greeting one another, and praying and singing, as well as other things such as perhaps helping lead worship, or teaching, or being leaders in other ways. Talk about others that you may know who share in the ministries of the church. Talk about how each person’s ministry helps the church do the things Jesus would do.**



December 30, 2018 – *Universal Glory*

Psalm 148

Read Psalm 148 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Skies and Sea Monsters” on p. 102 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

How does the world – indeed, the universe – respond to the good news of the birth of Jesus the Christ? All things – land, and trees, and all manner of creatures – proclaim their praise to God. This event is not merely the birth of another child, which would be miracle enough, but it’s more. It is God’s declaration of being present with all of us forever and ever. Where do you see aspects of creation praising God?

Together

- **Spend some time together thinking back over the last year. To help you remember, you might like to use the family calendar. Talk together about the things that have happened – things that have made you happy or sad, big issues and events that change things in your lives. What have you learned from your experiences? What new wisdom and insights do you have?**
- **Say a prayer, thanking God for the year that is ending, and asking God to bless you all in the coming year.**

God, we thank you for...



January 6, 2019 – *Consumed by the Fire of a Star*
Matthew 2:1–12



Read Matthew 2:1–12 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “So Many Different Ways to Be Wise” on p. 114 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

Like the magi, we may find our lives transformed by events beyond our imaginings, only to have them be altered again. It can be both wonderful and a little scary to find ourselves living in openness to change. As you embark on a new year, invite the Spirit of God to guide you – even a little more than you may at first be comfortable with. Open yourself to the idea that sometimes God may need to take you down new and different paths.

Together

- **Go on a neighbourhood walk, searching for signs of God’s presence. How many can you count?**
- **Are there changes coming to family life? Will there be new directions for you? How might you plan for this new road? Where might God be leading? Extend your walk to talk about these things.**

**What
is
God’s
plan
for
me
this
year?**

January 20, 2019 – *Witnessing God’s New Way
in the World*

John 2:1–11

Read John 2:1–11 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Nothing Left to Drink” on p. 138 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).

Something to think about, talk about or do

This story is about celebrating life, and how God wants to help us do that. In those days it would have been a sign of very bad hospitality to run out of anything to serve one’s guests, and so Jesus saved the host from certain shame by providing more wine. Not only that, Jesus provided the best! It’s surprising, too, because the people in charge do not know from where the wine comes. The servants do. Jesus came to the rescue when it wasn’t his responsibility, offering lavish hospitality that was unexpected and glorious.

God’s love is like that. It’s extravagant, abundant, always more than enough. It tastes better than we could ever hope for or expect. It’s like having a wonderful, delicious, extravagant dessert at the end of a casual, simple meal. We can choose to question it or doubt it, or – just for once – we can simply indulge.

Through the turning of the water into wine, Jesus is revealed. This miracle speaks of God bringing extravagance and abundance into everyday activities. God’s glory is revealed, and the disciples believe in Jesus. The world – or at least the world of this wedding party – has been turned around. All because of Jesus.

*God’s
abundance*

Together

- **This week, make one of your meals a feast for your family. Invite some friends – perhaps some people from your church that you don’t know well. Serve a very simple meal, and then have a wonderful, extravagant dessert. Tell this Bible story as part of the feast.**
- **Share together: When have you been surprised by something that God has done in your life?**



Stories for this Season after the Epiphany

January 13, 2019 – *Remembering God’s Promises*
Luke 3:15–17, 21–22

Read Luke 3:15–17, 21–22 in an age-appropriate Bible or story Bible, or the story “Jesus’ Ministry Begins” on p. 126 of SeasonsFUSION (copies available from your church office).



Something to think about, talk about or do

Everything needs water to live – humans, plants, animals. Of all the things that make up our bodies, we are more water than anything else.

Just as we cannot imagine life without water, we cannot imagine life without God’s love, either. Because Jesus brought God’s love to us in such a special way, we often speak of Jesus as being “living water.”

On this Sunday, we recall the story of John baptizing Jesus in the Jordan River, and how God said to Jesus at the moment of baptism, “You are very special to me. I love you.”

We often write our names on the things we love most so that everyone will know they are ours. We try to take very special care of those things, and we worry if they get lost or damaged. Baptism is like that. It’s like God writing God’s name onto us.

Together

■ **Take a pen and write “I love you” or “you are special” on the palm of each family member’s hand. Or draw a heart. Tell each person, when they look at it during the day, to say the words to themselves, knowing that this is what God says to them.**

■ **If the members of your family have been baptized, take some time this week to tell the story of each of those baptisms. If you have pictures or mementos, bring those out. If baptismal candles are a part of your tradition, take the opportunity to light them.**

GOD
BELIEVES
I AM
SPECIAL



Activities for connecting during this Advent and Christmas

If your group or family is looking for some ideas for connecting with one another or with new friends this season, consider the following:

Advent, candles and colours Few symbols are as closely associated with Advent as the wreath with its candles. The Season of Advent (as with the other cycles of the church year) was developed in the Northern Hemisphere. People were very conscious of the shorter days of winter. In the midst of this cold darkness, people celebrated the birth of the Light of the World. The increasing light of the Advent candles helped mark the time of waiting and anticipation, with the climactic lighting of a central Christ candle on Christmas Eve.

Traditionally, the Advent candles have been purple, associated with royalty. This reminded us of Jesus, the descendant of David, coming to usher in the Reign of God. Another tradition, dating from the Middle Ages, called for royal blue candles and decorations. In recent years, as many churches have switched to blue, this colour has come to represent hope.

Yet another tradition calls for the use of a pink- or rose-coloured candle on the third Sunday, known as *Gaudete* or “rejoice” Sunday.

This mirrors an early practice in which the Bishop of Rome gave away roses on the fourth Sunday of Lent, which in turn got transferred into the Season of Advent. The lectionary readings for the third Sunday of Advent each year speak of joy.

Over the years, people have attached a variety of meanings and symbolisms to the Advent candles such as hope, peace, joy, and love; prophets, shepherds, angels, magi; and expectation, proclamation, joy, and purity. However, the symbolism of the candles lies in the circle of light that they create together. A weekly emphasis that grows from the scripture readings is far more powerful than trying to make the candles “fit” any particular scheme.

Prayer time During family or group prayers, allow time for silent reflection near the beginning of the prayer time. Many people find it helpful to have some time to gather their thoughts before praying aloud. To encourage silence to settle, you might play a song, such as “All Is Wonder” (in *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 5 and #17 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 5. Sheet music and recording also available for purchase and download at www.seasonsonline.ca, *Seasons* MP3 Downloads).



Advent chain Create a paper chain of activities to do during Advent. Cut 23 strip strips of paper (about 2 cm/¾ in wide, by about 15 cm/6 inches long); coloured paper will make this more festive. Mark one side of each piece with a date of Advent, from December 2 through to December 24. Brainstorm ideas of things to do during Advent. For example, “make a card to send to someone who is lonely”; “give money to a local charity”; “sing a favourite Christmas carol,” and so on. (Suggestions can also be found on many Advent calendars.) Write a suggestion on the back of each strip, and then form the one marked “December 24” into a circle, stapling the ends together. Insert the strip for December 23 and staple its ends together. Repeat with all the strips until you have a long chain. Hang it somewhere in your home – perhaps on the Christmas tree. Tear off a strip each day and do the activity.

Let creation sing Celebrate justice and peace for creation by using only locally available or found nature items to decorate your tree. Seed pods and cones, buds and blossoms, interesting stones and shells, seaweed and grasses can all be used as decorations.

Jesse Tree The Jesse Tree is an old Advent tradition. It involves taking a tree and decorating it with illustrations of activities or people from Hebrew Scriptures, leading up to the birth of Jesus. In some traditions, people add a symbol of Jesus’ birth on Christmas Eve. Consider making a Jesse Tree, and decorating it with illustrations of people you consider to be prophets. These can be people from the Bible (both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament), or people from history, or people who have influenced your life. Or you can combine all these elements; it would be important to include family members as well. These can be drawings, photographs, or simply names written on paper. Hang a new one each day, or simply make several and decorate the tree all at once.

Boxing Day Many countries observe “Boxing Day” on December 26. Numerous stories abound regarding the origins of the day and its name. Many assume that, whatever the origin, the point was to create another day of holiday! One tradition states that it was a day to “box up” leftover treats and goodies from Christmas and give these boxes to service people such

as those who delivered the newspaper and/or mail, or to those who worked on the holiday. In another tradition, this is the day to put toys that were no longer needed into boxes. How might you incorporate either or both of these traditions into your family celebrations? Consider giving some goodies away to folks who might not have received much, or who deserve a little extra appreciation. Similarly, if new toys have been received this would be a great time to pack up some older

ones that are still in good shape and set them aside for giving away at a later date.

Twelfth Night party Invite friends and family to celebrate Twelfth Night on the evening of January 5 with a potluck feast. This is traditionally the day for taking down Christmas decorations, before Epiphany on January 6, and a great chance to reconnect with people after the holidays and before returning to routines.

