

Listen. Talk. Go.  
*Written by Rev. Lauren Mills*  
*Minister to Children*  
*First Baptist Church Marietta*

Week 1 – Week of January 7th

**Listen.**

Bible Story: The Wisemen's Journey (Matthew 2:1-12)

Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, there were three wise men who were experts in studying the stars. One night, they saw a dazzling star in the sky, brighter than any they had ever seen. These wise men knew that this extraordinary star was a sign from God, and it led them on a journey to find the newborn King – Jesus.

The wise men traveled a long way, following the light of the star. They brought precious gifts to honor and worship Jesus. When they finally found Him, they were overjoyed! They knew that this special baby was the light of the world.

Just like the wise men followed the star to find Jesus, we too have a light to guide us – Jesus. Just like a bright light in the sky can help guide us to see during a dark night, Jesus can help guide us in our lives as we make choices to please God.

Just as the night can be dark and scary, sometimes our lives can feel a little dark too. We may be frustrated at school when we don't understand what our teachers are teaching us. We might be hurt by the way a friend treated us. We might be scared to try something new. All of these things can leave us feeling like we don't know what to do.

But when we believe in Jesus, and live our life the way Jesus teaches us to live, we are able to get through those hard and difficult times as we know that Jesus is always with us.

Verse to remember: "Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won't walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus. In the same way, we can follow Jesus by reading our Bibles, praying, and doing kind things for others. When we follow Jesus, we let His light guide us in everything we do.

**Talk.**

- I wonder how the wiseman thought when they first saw the star in the sky.
- How does it feel to know that Jesus is always with you – even when things in life are difficult?

*Dear Jesus, thank you for being the light in our lives. Help us to follow you, just like the wise men followed the star. May your light shine in our hearts, guiding us in all we do. In your name, we pray. Amen.*

**Go.**

Find a flashlight for every member of your family. Either go outside at night or turn all the lights off in your house. Have everyone hide in your yard or inside your house. Use the flashlights to find your family members.

As you find each family member, say, "Thank you Jesus for guiding me in the dark."

Week 2 – Week of January 14th

**Listen.**

Today, we're embarking on a special journey through a practice called Star Words, a beautiful tradition that reminds us of the light of Jesus. Let's explore the story behind Star Words and discover how Jesus is our everlasting light.

At the time of Epiphany, which means "revealing" or "showing," Christians celebrate the arrival of the wise men to see baby Jesus. During this special season, some people participate in a tradition called Star Words. Each person receives a word that will guide them throughout the year, just like the star guided the wise men to Jesus.

Just like the wise men received guidance from the bright star, during the season of Epiphany, people receive Star Words. These words are like a special gift from God, guiding us throughout the year. They help us remember that Jesus is our guiding light.

Verse to remember: "Your word is a lamp before my feet and a light for my journey." (Psalm 119:105)

The wise men trusted the star to lead them to Jesus. Similarly, we can trust Jesus to guide us in our lives. Our Star Words remind us that Jesus is with us, shining His light on our path, helping us make good choices and showing us the way.

Just as the wise men reflected the light of the star by bringing gifts to Jesus, we can reflect Jesus' light in our actions. Our Star Words encourage us to share love, kindness, and joy with others. When we do this, we show the world the light of Jesus in our hearts.

**Go.**

Pick a number 1-100. Visit the website below and find the Star Word for you that correlates with the number you picked.

<https://flcsm.org/star-word-list/>

**Talk.**

- How can your Star Word guide you this year as you make choices to share Jesus' light and love to those around you?
- What are ways you can share Jesus' light and love at school? At home? At church? In your community?

*Dear Jesus, thank you for being our guiding star. As we reflect on our Star Words, help us trust your light to lead us, just like the wise men trusted the star. May we shine your light through our actions, bringing love and joy to those around us. In your name, we pray. Amen.*

**Week 3 – Week of January 21st****Listen.**

Bible Story: God Creates Light (Genesis 1:1-5)

Today, we're going to explore a fantastic story from the Bible – the story of creation. In the very beginning, God made something incredible happen.

In the beginning, there was darkness, and the earth was formless. But God, in His amazing power, spoke, "Let there be light," and there was light! God saw that the light was *good*, and God separated the light from the darkness. This was the first day of creation, and God's light brought beauty and order to the world.

God's first gift to the world was light. This light didn't just brighten up the sky; it brought warmth, joy, and life. Similarly, Jesus is a gift from God who brings light into our lives. Jesus' light shines in our hearts, filling us with love and joy.

Verse to remember: "Through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light." (John 1:4-5)

Jesus Himself said, "I am the light of the world." Just as God's light brought order to the chaos of creation, Jesus brings order to our lives. When we follow Jesus, Jesus' light helps us make good choices, be kind to others, and live in a way that pleases God.

Did you know the moon is not a light? The moon reflects the light of the sun. First the sun shines on the moon, then the moon reflects the light of the sun which then lights up our night sky. Just like the moon can reflect the light of the sun, we can reflect the light of Jesus in our actions. When we love others, show kindness, and help those in need, we're reflecting the light of Jesus to the world. It's like being a little light in a sometimes-dark world.

Verse to remember: "In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

**Talk.**

- I wonder why God created light on the first day of creation.
- How can you reflect Jesus' love to other people?
- Is it ever hard to reflect Jesus' love to other people? Why or why not?

*Dear Jesus, thank you for being our eternal light. Help us to follow your light, just like the light in the beginning of creation. May your light shine in our hearts, guiding us to live in a way that pleases you and shares your love with the world around us. In your name, we pray. Amen.*

**Go.**

Using your camera on your smart phone, stand in a dark room and take a picture of a family member without the flash on. Then take a picture of that same family member in the dark room with the flash on. Look at the two different pictures.

How does the light help you see in the second picture?

Just like the light helps you see the person better in the picture, when you share Jesus' light and love with others, it helps others see how much Jesus loves them.

**Week 4 – Week of January 28th****Listen.**

This month we started a brand-new year – 2024! As we step into a brand-new year, we have an exciting opportunity to make goals and grow in different ways. Did you know that God cares about the plans we make for our lives?

Verse to remember: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will succeed." (Proverbs 16:3)

God has amazing plans for each one of us. Just like a roadmap or GPS helps us reach our destination, God's Word guides us in making wise choices. Take some time to pray and ask God for guidance as you think about your goals for the new year.

Verse to remember: "I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Before making new goals, think about the past year. What are some things you enjoyed? What challenges did you face? Ask God to help you learn from those experiences. Remember, God is always with you, and He can turn every situation into something good.

As you set new goals, think about how they align with God's teachings. Whether it's being kind to others, studying well, or helping your family, God cares about the choices you make. Choose goals that not only benefit you but also honor God and show His love to others.

**Pray.**

*Dear God, thank you for a new year filled with opportunities. Please guide us as we make our goals, and help us to honor you in everything we do. May our plans bring glory to you and be in line with your wonderful purposes for our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

**Go.**

Pick three goals for the new year. Have one goal relate to something you do at home. Have one goal relate to school. Have one goal be about how you can share Jesus' love with other people.