

*Warming Up*

**Have you put up your Christmas decorations yet?** Describe the experience to your group? Joyous? Makes you grumpy?

What are some **strange Christmas traditions** your family observes?

Have you ever been **startled and awakened** by something in the middle of the night? Share the story with your group?

Have you ever been **“moved”** by something you saw in God’s creation? Northern Lights? A beautiful sunset?

*Digging Deeper*

Read the Christmas story out loud...to kick off the season. You can find it in **Luke 2:1-20**.

Why do you supposed God decided to announce the coming of the Messiah to a group of Shepherds?

Read Mary’s Song in **Luke 1:46-55**. How are Mary and the Shepherds similar? What does this reveal about the character of God?

Has God ever **“revealed Himself”** to you...when you were overwhelmed with that the sense that it truly was God...or perhaps it was something supernatural like Mary, Zechariah, Joseph and the Shepherds all experienced?

Read **2 Peter 1:1-11**. Where are you on the path that Peter reveals that leads to experiencing “grace and peace” in abundance?

*Bringing it Home*

The gospels tell us that Mary kept “pondering” these things and that she “treasured” them in her heart. What precious event has God done that you “treasure” in your heart?

We wrestled with the question of **how people respond to Jesus**. Some of us know Him in a very deep and profound way—we arrange our lives around being followers...apprentices. Still others, if we’re honest, are a bit numb to the Christmas story and the names have become empty cliches on a Christmas card or in a song. Where are you?

Close by **praying for one another**—that the names of Jesus and the power of His coming...would impact your life in a fresh way this Christmas.