# Central Reflection Guide

*Christmas Traditions – Week 1*

**Opening Discussion:**

What are your favorite Christmas traditions?

Is there anything you do as a family that you is kind o unique?

What is your least favorite Christmas tradition, and why?

What are your plans this year?

**Scripture Reading: Luke 2:22-35**

Were you familiar with Simon’s story in Luke?

What do you find interesting about this story? Did anything stand out?

Simeon’s words echoed Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, which said “the servant of the Lord” would be a light to the Gentiles.

When later even many of Jesus' followers struggled to accept Gentiles (cf. Acts 11:2-3, 15:1-5), what qualities do you think allowed Simeon to see and accept Isaiah’s far-reaching vision?

Most American Christians are Gentiles ethnically. Who are the “Gentiles” you might struggle to accept in God’s family today?

Simeon warned Mary that many would reject Jesus, and pain like a sword would pierce her heart. Cary Gibson wrote, “Mary couldn’t control or protect Jesus, and the personal cost to her as a mother was severe (John 19:25-27).”\* What helps you trust God and live out God’s purposes when it’s not easy or popular? Has following God ever brought you pain, as well as good things?

Simeon hadn’t let himself become a “cranky old man.” Luke said he “eagerly anticipated the restoration of Israel,” even though the mighty Roman army firmly controlled Judea, and Israel’s religious leaders often quarreled and were at times corrupt. How can you nurture a hopeful sense of “eager anticipation” about what God is doing today, even when you don’t feel any progress being made?

Any other thoughts or discussion from this passage?