

# THE ULTIMATE EPIC ADVENTURE BOARD GAME

**A faith formation resource from  
the Center for the Ministry of Teaching**

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## INTRODUCTION

We believe the greatest epic adventure of all time is the call to follow Jesus. This game is an attempt to experience that call. It is a call from birth to grave (lifelong), and the call extends across all dimensions of human experience (lifewide). The ultimate “win” is becoming the person God created us to be.

This game is for a group. Before playing the game, the group (or a different group) makes the game!

This game is for conversation. As players progress through the game, they are encouraged discuss the events and issues that it presents.

## BUILDING THE GAME

Materials Needed:

- Numbered work stations (tables and chairs)
- White index cards
- Colored index cards
- Fluorescent index cards
- Markers/pens/crayons
- Tape (masking or painters)

### **Step One: Gather the Group**

- The group of mixed ages works best.
- If you have a large group (such as a conference or retreat), split them into work stations of 2 – 8 players each
- Have a facilitator (you) to lead the group through the making of the game.

### Step Two: Setting the Tone

- Explain to the players that each group is now “Mission Control” to build a board game called *The Ultimate Epic Adventure!*
- Point out that each work station is numbered, has stacks of white, colored, and fluorescent index cards, and a selection of markers/pens.

### Step Three: Building the Game

Each work group has 15 minutes to create the following items:

2 GAME PIECES (use the white cards)

- *Think Monopoly ...*
- Identify two images that represent meaningful objects in your ministry setting, e.g. baptismal font, Starbucks cup, iPhone, dog leash, wheelchair, etc.
- Create two “game pieces” by drawing them on white cards

GAME BOARD SPACES (use the colored cards)

- The game spaces are significant life events
- The different colors represent different age brackets at which these events might occur
- Write one life event per card
- Create as many cards in as many colors as time allows

◆ Yellow	Birth – age 11
◆ Purple	12 - 25
◆ Green	26 - 50
◆ Pink	51 - 70
◆ Blue	71 – death

“WILDCARD” SPACES (use the fluorescent cards)

- Brainstorm potential outside events that have an impact on everyday life. For example: world events, trends, natural disasters, etc.
- Write one event/trend per card
- Two or three cards from each group is enough

### Step Four: Collect and rotate cards

After 15 minutes, have each work group collect their completed cards and do the following:

- White cards: leave on the table
- Fluorescent cards: give to the facilitator
- Colored cards: pass the stack to another work group. For example, table 1 pass to table 2, etc.

### **Step Five: Create ministry responses (use colored cards)**

Each work group will receive a stack of colored cards from another table. They now have 15 minutes to imagine an “epic ministry response” to each of the life events described on the colored cards they have just received.

On the back of each of the colored index cards you received from another table, the group should write a possible ministry response.

- For example, if the card says “moving to another state” you might write, “plan a liturgy of departure and huge party” on the back of the card. For “loss of job,” the response might be, “offer to accompany the individual to a meeting of a career transitions group.”
- You should leave space at the bottom of the card for a future entry.

### **During Step Five: Facilitator completes “wildcard” spaces (fluorescent cards)**

Based on your assessment of the impact of the world event or trend, add player gameplay consequences on the back of the cards. These can be negative, positive, or spiritual impact.

#### Negative Gameplay Options:

Miss a turn

Move back 1-4 spaces

#### Positive Gameplay Options:

Go again (extra turn)

Move forward 1-4 spaces

#### Spiritual Gameplay Options:

Player will identify a Bible verse that relates to the event

Player will say a prayer related to the event

### **Step Six: Rotate cards again (use colored cards)**

After 15 minutes, once again rotate the stack of colored cards to the next group/table. Table 1 to table 2, etc.

### **Step Seven: Add level of challenge to each game space (use colored cards)**

Each group has 10 minutes to determine how far a player will move on the game board when they land on each life event.

Using your best judgment of the potential impact of each event on an individual, AND the extent to which the identified ministry response is truly epic, assign a number of spaces for the player to advance (or go back) when he or she lands on that space.

In a sense, the group is now assessing the ministry response that has been written on the back of the card.

The group then determines gameplay consequences based on their evaluation. Suggested scale, “the proposed ministry response is \_\_\_\_\_”

Doable	Advance ONE space
Inviting	Advance TWO spaces
Inspiring	Advance THREE spaces
Transformative	Advance FOUR spaces

Disappointing	Go back ONE space
Draining	Go back TWO spaces
Destructive	Go back THREE spaces

### **Step 8: Collect all cards and thank the builders**

The facilitator should have finished adding consequences to the fluorescent cards.

- Gather the white cards.
- Gather the game spaces (colored cards) and sort them by color.
- Thank the game builders.
- Recruit assistants to construct the game board and schedule a time to play, *The Ultimate Epic Adventure!*

### **Step Eight: Constructing the Game Board**

- Create START and FINISH squares.
- Locate dice.
- Put the GAME PIECES (white cards) next to the START square on a large table or open floor space. Players will get to choose one game piece each.
- Lay out the GAME SPACES (colored cards) from START to FINISH chronologically:

◆ Yellow	Birth – age 11
◆ Purple	12 - 25
◆ Green	26 - 50
◆ Pink	51 - 70
◆ Blue	71 – death

- Note, if you have ample colored cards, create alternative pathways of approximately equal length, to make the game route more interesting.
- Distribute the “WILDCARD” SPACES (fluorescent cards) randomly throughout the emerging game board.
- Be sure the event is face up, and the ministry response (with number of moves/consequence) is face down.
- Feel free to be creative and add silly or imaginative spaces along the way, e.g. “Get ice cream cone – Move ahead one space.”

## PLAYING THE GAME

- Recruit players.
- Explain that the goal is to move through life confidently becoming the person God created each of us to be by following the Way of Jesus.
- Determine whether throwing one die or two dice is best, given the scale of your board game and the amount of time available to play.
- Invite players to choose their game piece – and reflect on why they chose the piece they chose.
- Begin the EPIC ADVENTURE with a prayer.  
*God, whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever we go: guide us on our playful adventure, inspire our imaginations; fill us with hope; stir our hearts for justice; so that in play we may discover more fully the joy of following the Way of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*
- Take turns rolling the dice and moving your game pieces toward the Finish Square.
  - Encourage discussion and conversation along the way.
  - What do the events of the game stir for people?
  - What are their reactions to the proposed ministry responses?
  - What would have been better?
  - Where is God in all this?
- The game can end at any point because life is not tidy or linear or predictable. It is not a race. It is a journey. It is important to make the connection between the game and Jesus’ real invitation to each of us to, “Come and follow me!”