



Christmas

What We Believe

And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

Luke 1:30-33

Now more than ever, the Christmas season can be nothing more than a time of busyness, overspending, overeating, and experiencing many unmet expectations. A great tragedy for many Christians is that all this Christmas "rush" can crowd out the focus on the Savior whose birth we celebrate. So, with all these realities in mind, what can we do to be more intentional as the church, to make Jesus Christ the focus of our celebration? My answer is simply this, at Christmas, we need to consider what it is we believe about the miracle and wonder of Christmas as the Body of Christ.

In December we will spend time each Sunday in a four-week teaching series called "Christmas: What We Believe". Each week will be a vivid reminder that what the world celebrates at Christmas, compared to the church, is like comparing apples to oranges. Granted, there are some similarities, but as believers, our primary focus is to recognize and celebrate the birth of Jesus into this world. In a secular culture, the focus is often on family, friends, and traditions. At its core, our celebration of Christmas is a celebration of hope. God has come to be with us. Jesus is our Emmanuel.

As we gather as His church, we hear the "whispers" in the Old Testament prophecies of a coming king. In the gospel of Luke, we discover the miraculous birth that brought God to earth. This is the incarnation where God took on flesh and became

God has come to be with us

Christmas Blessings to all!

Pastor Michael



Match

Can you match the missionary in the 2nd column with the traditions in the country where they serve? Put letter from 2nd column to matching item in the 1st column.

Answers found on page 3

Christmas is a time to get together with loved ones and enjoy customary meals, and if it's possible to include meat.

Christmas Eve, the highlight of the season, is a time to gather for a meal of ham, meatballs and pickled herring with beetroot salad.

It is common to celebrate Christmas following a church service with a simple meal of roasted pig or guinea pig with corn and native grains on Christmas Eve.

Christmas traditions include decorating Christmas trees, exchanging gifts and baking cookies while also enjoying festive meals and singing carols.

Christmas dinner includes vegetables and fruit, mushrooms, beans, porridge and occasionally fish the evening before Christmas. The dinner table is covered with a white cloth to represent the swaddling clothes in which the infant Jesus was wrapped and a large white candle in the center represents Christ as the Light of the World.

Outdoor ice skating rinks are an iconic holiday activity followed by a big cup of specialty hot cocoa.

A. Ray and Kay Baker, serving in Sweden, wish you God Jul.

ray.baker@apologia.se

B. Josh and Jen Duey, serving in Minnesota college campuses wish you a Merry Christmas.

josh.duey@cru.org

C. Kyle and Carrie Eipperle, serving on behalf of Ukrainian and Russian speaking people, wish you Veseloho Rizdva.

kyleandcarrie@msn.com

D. Ross and Mary Hunter, serving in Ecuador, wish you Feliz Navidad.

EVMinistry@outlook.com

E. Ken Krup, serving from the Chicago area, wishes you a Merry Christmas.

kenk@awana.org

F. Jared and Anna Olander, serving in Kenya, East Africa, wish you Krismasi Njema.

jaredandannaolander@gmail.com

Cultural experiences are fun and sometimes challenging, but adapting is part of a missionary's life. They would appreciate a greeting from you. Using their email address, wish them a

Merry





The Impact of Giving

Impacting lives one shoebox at a time

Churches in more than 100 countries distribute gift-filled shoeboxes to boys and girls during outreach events that focus on Jesus Christ, God's greatest Gift.

*232 million shoebox gifts = 232 million Gos-

pel opportunities - Since its inception in 1993 Samaritan's Purse has organized, delivered and distributed shoebox gifts.

*11.3 million shoebox gifts collected in 2023 - 10 million came from the US and 1.3 million from 11 other nations.

*107 languages available for *The Greatest Gift* Gospel story booklet that accompanies each shoebox gift.

*23 million boys and girls have accepted Christ as their Savior through the follow-up discipleship program, *The Greatest Journey*.

*18,468 shoebox gifts donated by The Greater QC IA IL area in 2023

*94 shoebox gifts donated by Journey Church for 2025.

"Shoebox gifts are like snowflakes – no two are alike!" – Franklin Graham, President, Samaritan's Purse.

Thank you to all who participated this year in donating items,

filled boxes, and assisted in packing with the AWANA children.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is being made known among the nations through your efforts!

Family Christmas Celebration

December 14 at 9:00 a.m.

Everyone is invited to come and enjoy a light-hearted but sincere celebration of the birth of our Savior! We will have breakfast, sing some familiar carols, laugh at silly antics, and find joy in Jesus. Plan now to join us in the Fellowship Hall.

Interested in helping with the decorating or food? Talk to Joy Lower!



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"FORMING Followers OF Jesus WHO IMPACT THEIR World"

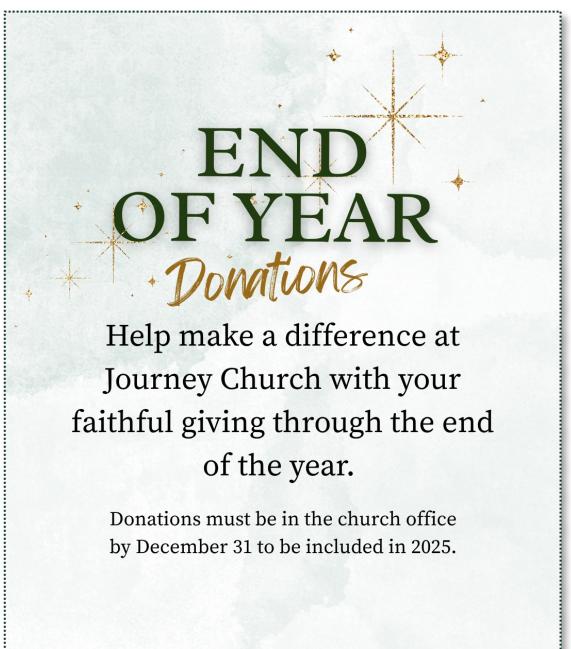


No Life Groups

December 14

December 21 and

If you no longer wish to receive the Journey News, please email info@journeyclinton.org to be removed from our mailing list.



END OF YEAR Donations

Help make a difference at Journey Church with your faithful giving through the end of the year.

Donations must be in the church office by December 31 to be included in 2025.

