

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Keep Christ in Christmas!” We see it on bumper stickers, front lawns, and all over our Facebook feeds. I think that’s good advice! It reminds me not to get so wrapped up (pun intended) in the hectic rush of gift buying, house decorating, and Christmas prepping that I lose sight of who the season is really about. Christmas was, is, and always will be about Jesus Christ.

Tis the season to remember that Jesus is God in the flesh who came to show us how much God loves us. He did this by caring for the hurting, reaching out to the people others push away, teaching us the way that leads to life, and dying and rising again to conquer sin and death for us. The best way to keep Christ in Christmas is to keep Christ in Christian—that is, be like Christ throughout the year. Here are a few ways I suggest we do it:

- Speak kindly to the store clerk who just messed up my order
- Visit that lonely neighbor or elderly widow
- Volunteer at a ministry for the needy (The Samaritan Center, for example)
- Read the Gospel stories with your family instead of watching a Christmas rerun
- Look for reminders of Jesus Christ in all the decorations, songs on the radio, people you meet and give thanks to God for always being present with us.

Also, go to church! We are celebrating the Christ in Christmas all month long. Join us!

- **Saturday, the 8th at 5:00pm**— Bring your kids and grandkids to our **Community Movie Night!** We’ll be watching “The Star” with our neighbors and friends from around town.
- **Saturday, the 15th from 8am to 12pm**—our annual **Christmas Stocking Party** to help those in need have an even merrier Christmas.
- **Sunday, the 16th at 4:00pm**—get in the Christmas spirit at our **Christmas Cantata** as our choirs, praise team, and many more lead us in “A Noel Celebration.”
- **Wednesday, the 19th at 7:00pm**—our **Blue Christmas** service is for all those having a hard time this season. This service of reflection and hope is open to all who need it.
- **Sunday, the 23rd at 11:00am**—our Power Hour Sunday school and youth ministries are taking over the 11am service with an awesome program called **“Shout It Out!”**
- **Christmas Eve** services:
 - 5pm Family service—you’re invited to a birthday party for Jesus!
 - 7:30pm Elevate contemporary worship service
 - 11:00pm traditional Candles and Carols service
- **Sunday, the 30th at 10:00am**—a joint service for our whole congregation to come together and ring in the new year.

Together, we can help each other not only keep Christ in our Christmas celebrations but keep Christ in Christian all year long!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor John