

Merry Christmas



Christmas is the most popular Christian holiday. We prepare for Christmas the whole month of December. This is called the season of Advent. In our churches, we read scriptures and light candles in expectation of the coming of Jesus.



Every Sunday in Advent a candle is lit. On Christmas, the Christ candle will be lit, showing that Jesus, the light of the world, has come.

# The Christmas Story



Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem. Mary is pregnant with baby Jesus.



Jesus is born in a stable. An ox and an ass are there. A star hovers over the stable.

An angel finds shepherds in the field and tells them about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.  
The shepherds go to Bethlehem to see Jesus.





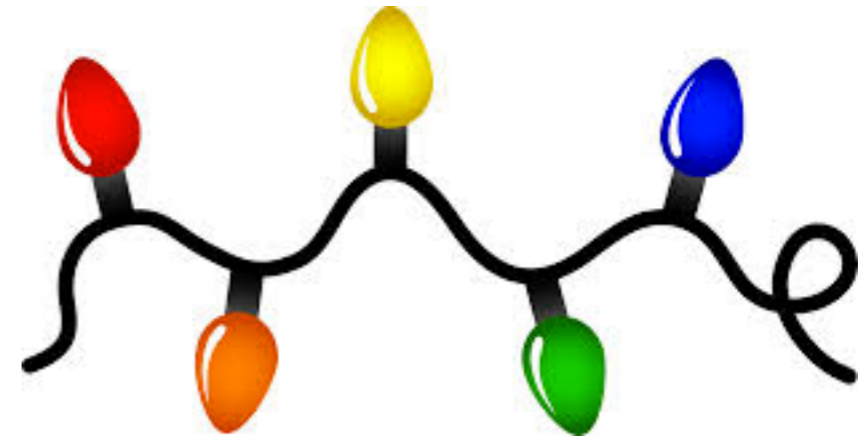
Shepherds visit baby Jesus.



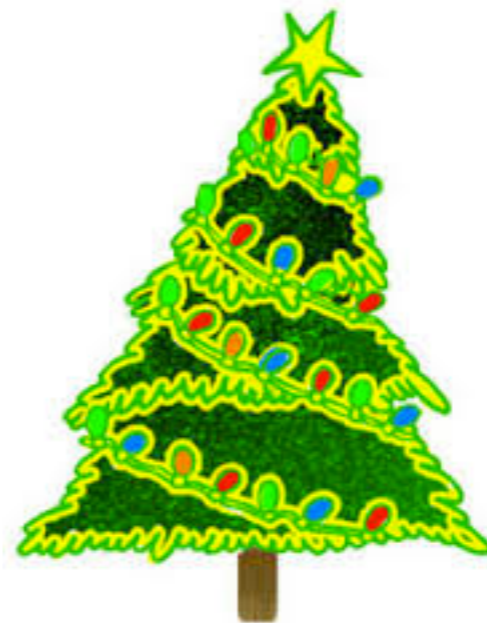
In addition to shepherds, 3 wise men from the East travel in search of Jesus. They follow a star to Bethlehem. They bring three gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh. The wise men don't arrive until January 6th which is the 12th day after Christmas. That is call King's Day or Twelfth night.

Many Christians have nativity scenes or creches they display during Christmas. These usually include both the shepherds with their sheep and the kings with their expensive gifts.





Different countries have different Christmas traditions. Even different families in the same country have different traditions. But most families put up a Christmas tree with ornaments and lights.



We buy gifts for our family and wrap them in fancy paper. We put them under the Christmas tree.





Most families hang stockings (socks) with the children's names on them. These aren't real socks. They are very large and are decorated. They are made to hold candy, nuts and small toys.

In Austin we have the Zilker Christmas Tree and the Trail of Lights in Zilker Park.



and the light show at Mozart's on Lake Austin.



My family usually goes to church on Christmas Eve. We go to the candlelight service.



Our church has many Christmas Eve services. You do not have to be a member or a Christian to attend our services. They are open to everyone.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24**

8:00AM | Worship and Feed My People Christmas Eve Breakfast

*FLC Garrison Chapel*

11:00AM | Worship with Candlelight and Holy Communion | Sanctuary

3:00PM | Worship with Focus on Families with Children | Sanctuary

6:00PM | Worship with Candlelight and Holy Communion | Sanctuary

8:00PM | Worship with Candlelight and Holy Communion | Sanctuary

11:00PM | Worship with Candlelight and Holy Communion | Sanctuary

Then we return home to eat a meal together. Our traditional Christmas eve dinner is enchiladas, beans and rice with guacamole salad



After we eat, we move to the living room where the Christmas tree is. We drink wassail and the kids each get to open one gift. Wassail is made with apple cider, cinnamon and cloves. We put orange slices in as well. It is served hot.



Sometimes we have carolers come to the door. Carolers are people who walk around singing Christmas carols (songs) .You can offer them hot chocolate or cookies if you want.



Before we go to bed, we leave cookies for Santa Claus.



When everyone in the house is sound asleep, Santa Claus comes. He rides in a sleigh driven by reindeer. The chief reindeer is Rudolph, who has a bright, red nose.



Santa enters the house through the chimney. He fills the stockings and puts out the presents. Then he eats the cookies before leaving.





Christmas morning, everyone runs downstairs to see what Santa has brought.

The children play with their toys.



In my family, we have Christmas breakfast after the gifts are opened. I serve egg and sausage casserole, pumpkin muffins, orange juice and coffee or tea.





The rest of the day, we play with our gifts and relax. Christmas can be very hectic. So, Christmas afternoon is a great time to rest and nap.

In the evening, we put on our nice clothes and go to my niece's house. My mother, brother and sister in law come with all their children and grandchildren. We eat a big meal together. The family visits and watches the children play with their Christmas toys.



# Christmas Words



angels



holly



mistletoe: you have to kiss if you are caught under the mistletoe



fruitcake



eggnog:  
made with eggs, cream  
and rum



candy cane



wreath



gingerbread man

Frosty the Snowman



# Bad Christmas Characters

These guys are greedy misers. They stand for the opposite of what Christmas is about.



Grinch who stole Christmas



Scrooge hates Christmas



## Volunteer Opportunity

Our church will host a Christmas Eve breakfast for the homeless on December 24th. Each homeless person will be given a “manna bag” with gifts inside.

Our church has asked me to invite our ESL students to **help prepare these bags** the day before the breakfast. If you would like to volunteer, please come to the Family Life Center (where we meet for in person ESL) from 10 to noon on **Saturday, December 23rd**. Children 8 or older are welcome if you’d like to bring them to help. Please don’t bring younger children.

Volunteers will be filling the manna bags. Jane, who teaches the high intermediate in person class will be there to assist students. Other teachers may also be there to help.

If you have any questions about American Christmas traditions, please ask your teacher.

All cultures have holidays that are celebrated by certain traditions. Take turns explaining the holiday traditions in your country. Talk about the symbols of the holiday, activities you do on the holiday and special food you eat on this holiday.

This is the **last class for Fall 2023.**

**Spring 2024 Classes will begin on Thursday, January 4th.**

Wednesday Discussion Classes will begin on **Wednesday, January 10th**

We'll see you in two and a half weeks. Have a wonderful holiday break.