



Dear FUMC Family,

Christmas is on its way at what seems to be lightning speed to me. Is it to you? Thanks to amazing volunteers the last few weeks, the sanctuary and the church campus are decorated for the celebration of the birth of Christ. It takes many people to get the Sanctuary ready for Christmas as you can tell from the photo above.

I hope that you will be here on Sunday! You will not want to miss sharing in the baptism of Hutch Harris, son of Caroline and Cole Harris in the worship service. Together we will also focus on the Glory of the Message of Christmas based on Isaiah 7:13-14 and 9:1-7.

Please share the word!

Sunday December 17 10:30 A Musical Story of Christmas will be presented by the Choirs.

Sunday December 24

Morning Worship Service at 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Services at 4 pm & 6 pm.

Nursery provided at 10:30 am & 4:00 pm

Children are invited to participate in a presentation of the Christmas Story at the 4:00 pm Service. See Rochelle Gray to find out more!!





## **Some ways that you can prepare your heart and life for Christmas this year.**

It's hard to believe that we are only a few weeks away from Christmas. The holidays can come and go before you know it. This year, slow down and truly experience this special season centered around family, joy, giving, and most importantly—Jesus. Here are a few ideas to help you prepare your heart for Christmas.

- 1. Reflect.* Take note of the many reasons you have to be thankful this Christmas. Spend time thanking God specifically for ways He has provided for you—spiritually, relationally, financially, etc. Praise Him for His goodness, grace, and faithfulness in all seasons of life.
- 2. Gather.* Spend uninterrupted time with the people you love. If necessary, limit the activities and parties you commit to so that you can focus on time with your family instead. We often rush through our busy Christmas

schedules and miss time to really be present in the moments we are together with our loved ones. Make memories together as you celebrate Christmas.

3. *Sing.* This may seem a little silly at first, but spend time singing your favorite Christmas songs aloud. Pay close attention to the words, thanking God for His incredible gift of our Savior. Sing these traditional carols as worship songs to the Lord.

4. *Celebrate.* Jesus, the One who holds all things together, chose to enter the world in the humblest form—a small, helpless baby. Jesus' birth is the greatest gift we will ever receive and that is definitely a reason to celebrate! Embrace the joy found in the birth of Immanuel—God with us.

5. *Listen.* Practice the art of truly listening to others as you gather with family and friends. Whether you're having dinner, opening presents, or sitting around and catching up with those you haven't seen in a while, pay attention to what is said instead of thinking about how you will respond. Truly listening is one of the best ways to show your loved ones that you care.

6. *Remember.* Reflect on the fact that our Savior was born specifically so that He would one day die for our sins. Thank Him for His willingness to enter this messy, broken, hopeless world. Rejoice in the Father's love, reflecting on the reality that He sent His only Son to pay the price for sin—our sin. Remember what He went through on the cross to save us.

7. *Enjoy.* Christmas is a beautiful season—sparkling Christmas lights, decorations hung with care, memorable moments with family. Appreciate the little moments. Slow down long enough to delight in the beauty all around.

8. *Read.* Study the story of Christ's birth. Instead of rushing through the reading of Matthew 1 or Luke 2, take time to meditate on the words. Read the passages slowly, taking note of the details you may have missed before. Ask the Lord to help you notice new things as you read the story with fresh eyes.

9. *Pray.* Lift up those who do not know Jesus in prayer. Pray for the lost and hurting. Ask God to open your eyes to opportunities to share the gospel with those around you—with family, friends, and even strangers. Pray for those who are all alone this Christmas; pray they will encounter Jesus and find hope in the One who loves them and will never leave them.

*10. Worship.* Christmas is the perfect opportunity for worship. Worshipping God encompasses so much more than simply singing. Worship is a way of life. This Christmas, seek to honor Him with the way you live. Speak words to others that breathe life, not discouragement. Love the people in your life selflessly. Humbly serve your family. Praise God with the little moments in your daily life.

Thank you for your donations for Christmas Food boxes!



God is Faithful!

Bro. Jaimie J. Alexander

Don't just come to church, Be the CHURCH!

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