

# Eisenhower Church of Christ

## Christmas Is Coming Up Again!

Each year hundreds of thousands of people get ready for December 25th which is accepted widely as Jesus' birthday. Is it?

*Barnes, a noted Presbyterian scholar, in his comments on the birth of Christ, states:*

The climate was mild, and, to keep their flocks from straying, they spent the night with them. It is also a fact that the Jews sent out their flocks into the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced. While away in these deserts and mountainous regions, it was proper that there should be someone to attend them to keep them from straying, and from the ravages of wolves and other wild beasts. It is probable from this that our Savior was born before the 25th of December or before what we call Christmas. At that time, it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem. But the exact time of his birth is unknown; there is no way to ascertain it. By different learned men it has been fixed at each month in the year. Nor is it of consequence to know the time; if it were, God would have preserved the record of it. Matters of moment are clearly revealed; those which he regards as of no importance are concealed. (Albert Barnes, "Luke," *Notes on the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958, pp.18,19).

This Presbyterian scholar shows us that December 25th cannot be the birthday of our Lord. Where did this tradition originate that December 25th was the birth date of Christ? According to Collier's Bible Dictionary, as well as the Catholic Dictionary, the Catholic church admits they started it! Pagans were celebrating the birthday of Mithra, the sun god, on December 25th. They replaced it as Jesus' birthday. Many traditions around the birth of Jesus have sprung up which are not scriptural! Those who so devoutly recognize December 25 as the birth of Christ seldom, if ever, check the New Testament to see what is fact or what may be fiction.

What did the first century church, which was inspired by the Holy Spirit say and do about the birthday of Jesus Christ? There is not one shred of evidence that the church of Christ in the first century ever celebrated the birth of Christ. Since the Holy Spirit never authorized Christmas or December 25 as the birth of Christ, why go beyond the Scriptures and establish something by tradition which God did not give?

Churches of Christ celebrate the birth of Christ, His death and resurrection each time we come together in worship. In the Lord's Supper each Sunday we remember His death, (1Cor. 11:26). In recognizing His death, we give our testimony to His birth. We meet on the first day of the week to worship Jehovah through Jesus, thereby proclaiming that He has been resurrected. The Lord's Day or Sunday is the day He was resurrected on! We set no special day aside to give honor to the birth of Christ. That would be tradition. We recognize His birth and life each day of our lives as new creatures in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)!

The sad thing about this time called "Christmas," is that many Christians, caught up in the commercialization of the hour, will rob their contribution to Jesus to buy gifts for their family. Will a man rob God? I like to buy gifts for people, not because I believe December 25th is Jesus' birthday, but because I want to show my love and appreciation to folks at the end of another year.

I might mention one or two other things about this tradition called "Christmas." The word "Christmas" is a contraction of two words; "Christ" and Mass." It came from the Catholic celebration of a Mass for Christ.

Some complain about Christ being taken out of Christmas when they see the word “Xmas”. Actually. The “Ch” in Christ is taken from the Greek letter “X” The Greek letter X is our “Ch.” Xmas is supposed to be an abbreviation of Christmas. However, we have already seen that “Xmas or “Christmas” is nothing but a Catholic tradition rather than a Biblical teaching. Yes, Jesus was born, but not on December 25th. How can I celebrate Jesus’ birth? Not by having a special day set aside, in which I give gifts to others and call it Jesus’ birthday, but rather by living for Him who came to die for me! That is the greatest testimony that Jesus lives—in me!

—William S. Cline

### ***Prayer Request***

**Lindsey Wells** will have her carpal tunnel surgery on Tuesday, December 19th. Please keep her in your prayers that all will go well.

**Brian Weakland** (Allen’s brother) was given a heart test and it came back abnormal. Brian will undergo further tests but the dates are not known at this time.

Terresia Weaver’s mother, **Charlene McFatter**, has been diagnosed with an ulcer (in the heart). No surgery is needed due to her age. She is home and on oxygen. Her BP just needs to be kept under control. Please keep Charlene in your prayers.

Continue to keep **Mary Anchondo, Glenna Callendar, LaDonna Chism, James and Joyce Drake, Doug Guynn, Leigh Ann McFarland** and **Wilene Wright** in your daily prayers.

### ***Concerns Update***

**Terresia Weaver** is recovering from bronchitis.

Also, **Janis and Larry May** are better after having been sick for a few days with upper respiratory problems.

**Nolan Wells** has a fractured radius and will have to wear a cast for six weeks. Please continue to keep Nolan in your prayers that he is completely healed and has a short recovery.

### ***Prayer List***

David Alaniz; Mary Anchondo; Maria Baeza; Irene Balerio; Ameer Blumenauer; Betty Branson; Mary Brown; Naomi and Adelynn Bustillos; Glenna Callendar; Arthur Campos; Sylvia Campos; LaDonna Chism; James Drake; Jon Easley; Cathy Eastwood; Daniel Eastwood; Hattie Gilmore; Paul Gunn; Doug Guynn; Brent Harrell; Lon & Lana Howard; Connie Jimenez; Vanessa Machuca; Leigh Ann McFarland; Keith Mitchell; Milous Mitchell; Juan & Estella Morolez; Inocencio Munoz, Sr; Julie Munoz; Bruce Plyler; K’ Lynn Roberts; Linda Straw; Marilyn Upshaw; Terresia Weaver; Lindsey Wells; Carolyn Wilkerson; John Wood; Wilene Wright.

### ***Eisenhower’s Homebound...***

Glenna Callendar; James & Joyce Drake; Kathy Marshall; Janelle Shirley & Marilyn Upshaw. Remember to keep all of our sick, shut-ins, the bereaved, our military personnel and spiritually weak in your daily prayers.

### ***Events***

Watch “*In Search of the Lord’s Way*” Sunday mornings at 7:30 am on KWES TV 9

### ***Office News...***

We will not have a 5th Sunday “Potluck Luncheon” this month due to the holiday season.

### **“December Attended Nursery”**

12/17 Sonia & Jaque

12/24 Julie & Gloria

12/31 Robbie & Jeanette

## ***Food for Thought ...***

The secret of happy living is not to do what you like, but to like what you do.

We never lose so much that we have nothing left for which to give thanks.

### **Christ's Church and Denominations**

What is the difference between a denomination and Christ's church? Is the "church of Christ" (Romans 16:16) just another denomination among the many denominations? In a denominational age it is difficult to get people to understand that a church can exist that is not a denomination. It is hard for many to think in non-denominational terms.

A denomination is a religious group that is different from and divided from the original church that Christ established, the church of the New Testament. A denomination somehow *differs*. It may differ in any way from worship, to organization, to allegiance to some man, to false doctrine; but it is *not* following the New Testament pattern for the church of the Lord.

Very often these days when a person says he is a member of a "non-denominational" church, he really means that his "church" is "*all-denominational*." That is, they are affiliated with no one particular denomination and have a doctrinal platform that is broad enough to accommodate people from various denominations. They would not be very insistent that their members take a definite stand on many important issues.

Now, Christ's church is not a denomination at all. It is a group of people who are Christians, and only Christians. Not any "*kind*" of Christians! They have obeyed the Gospel and have been saved and added by the Lord Himself to His church (read Acts 2:38-47). They have "joined" nothing and have been "voted" into nothing. They follow Christ, and Him only. Their only doctrine is the "doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9). The New Testament is their only guide—without any man-made creeds, manuals, or catechisms.

"Aw, one church is as good as another!" *NOT SO!* While one denomination may be as good as another, no other church can ever come close to Christ's own. Only His church was built and bought by Him (Matthew 16:18 and Acts 20:28). He loved and gave Himself up for His own church (Colossians 1:18).

—Mike Warner

#### **December 17, 2023**

	<b>A.M.</b>	<b>P.M.</b>
Announcements	Larry May	Larry May
Song Leader	Cody Wesson	Caleb York
Sermon	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Opening Prayer	Larry May	Larry May
Scripture Reading	Craig Wesson	Richard Siler
Second Prayer	Scot Straw	David Baldwin
Closing Prayer	Jr. Munoz	David Ryan
Lord's Supper	<u>Jon Roemisch</u> Don Easlon Richard Siler Trini Wood	Jacob Carson Communion (In Library)

**Other Responsibilities:** *Elder:* Larry May 638-3990 — *Deacon:* John Wood 413-7444—  
*Pulpit:* David Ryan 512-924-0983—*Table:* Jacob Carson 940-3775 — *Song Leaders:* Cody  
Wesson 934-4646 —*Recording Sermons:* Steve Easlon 260-9716— *Contributions:* Jacob  
Carson

**Sunday AM**

*“Garden of Gethsemane” (Mark 14:32-42)*

**Sunday PM**

*“Entreat the Lord” (Exodus 8:8)*

**Our Records**

*Bible Class... 66*

*Morning Worship...104*

*Evening Worship ... 51*

*Wednesday...78*

*Contribution...\$4,702.00*