

Dear Grace of Christ Family,

Have you noticed what I am noticing? People are in the mood for Christmas. There are radio stations playing Christmas music. People are decorating homes. And, I don't blame them. I typically don't turn my attention to Christmas until Thanksgiving morning. That is when I have been known to begin playing Amy Grant's "A Tennessee Christmas" album. However, after 8 months of life in a "bubble", I believe people are looking for something that is familiar, and dare I say "normal". They want something that reminds them of past years. Christmas seems to do something that keeps us centered. Perhaps the sights and sounds of Christmas past, the smells in the kitchen, the excitement of selecting that perfect gift, or those old familiar songs by Bing Crosby and Andy Williams, or even the Carpenters. (I'm sharing a bit more about me than you probably wanted to know.)

At Grace of Christ, we are actually gearing up for Christmas as well. The First Sunday of Advent is November 29th, the weekend following Thanksgiving. You will soon discover that our theme this year is "Home for the Holidays". It seems fitting. We all long for Christmas to be a time when we are all together in our homes, with family and loved ones. We also long for being together with God's Family, in His home, worshipping together.

To that end, we are wanting to provide a "home" for those who call Grace of Christ "home", as well as for those who may not have much to celebrate and need a sense of "home". Whether it's decorating Christmas ornaments to be taken to those isolated in care facilities, or offering presents to families at Adams Elementary, help us provide a "home for the holidays".

We have a few surprises coming your way during Advent, and then on Christmas Eve we are going to provide two candlelight services: A Hometown Christmas at 4:30pm, filled with classic Christmas songs led by our Contemporary Worship Team; A Modified Carols and Candles at 7:30pm with those traditional Christmas Hymns and Scripture readings.

As we prepare with great anticipation for the upcoming Advent/Christmas Season, I remind you to join us for worship live and in person at 10:00am. Register online at Yakimagrace.com/rsvp. If you want to attend at the last minute, show up at the church and we will sign you up and check you in. Or, watch the live stream either on Facebook (Grace of Christ), or on YouTube (Yakima Grace). You can also watch recordings on Facebook, YouTube or our church website: yakimagrace.com.

Also, I encourage you to participate in our Stewardship Campaign, whether with the Pony Express (if you have not been called to receive a saddle bag, call the office), or fill out a pledge card on line yakimagrace.com/give. You can also pick up a pledge card at the church, or have us mail you one. It's not just about making a financial pledge. It's about being counted as part of the family here at Grace. Fill out a pledge card, without making any financial commitment, and just let us know that you are praying for us and that we are all in this together.

Because of Christ, and in His Grace,

Pastor Bill