



UNFORGETTABLE CHRISTMAS

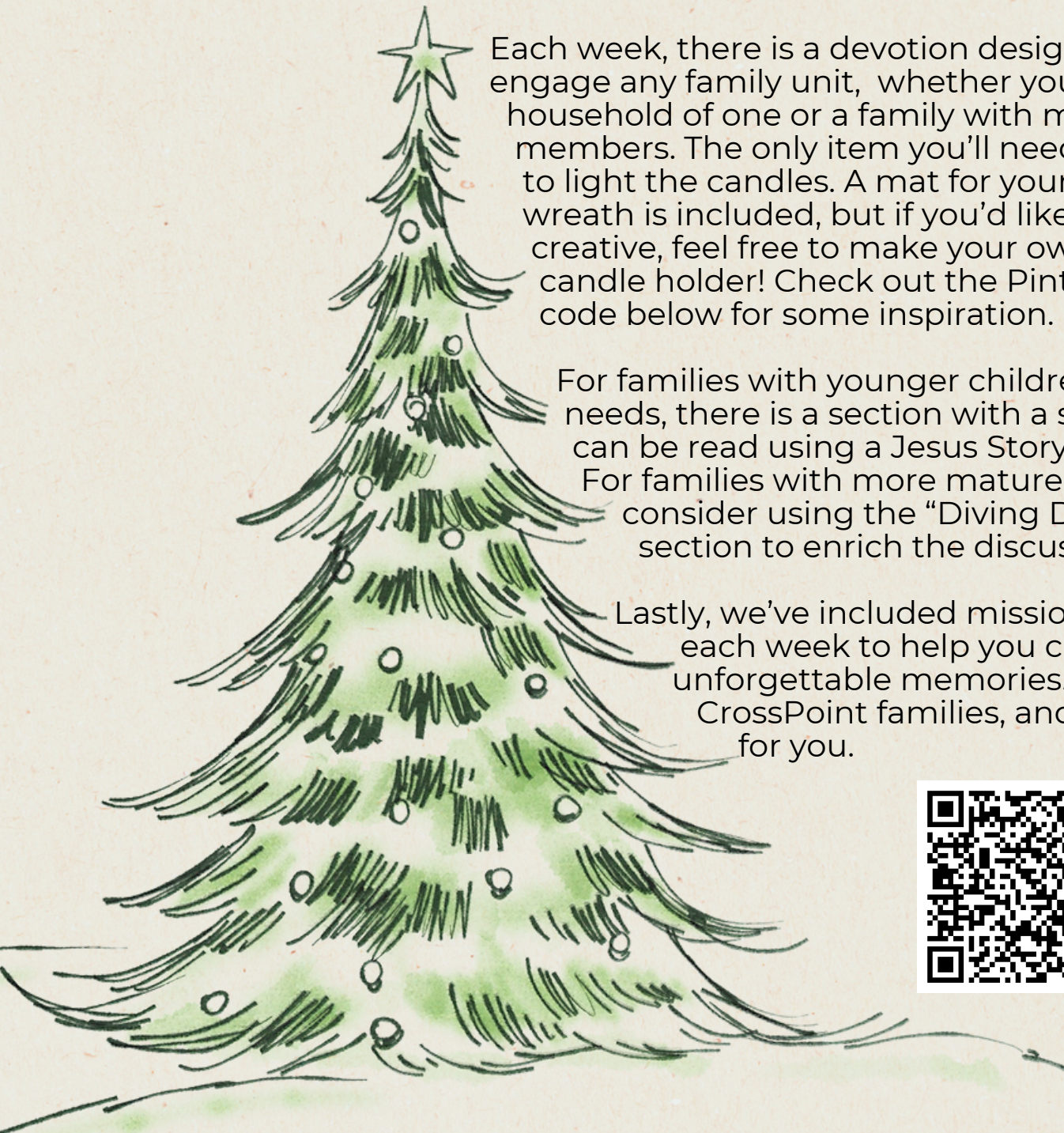


CROSSPOINT

UNFORGETTABLE CHRISTMAS AT CROSSPOINT

Can you recall your most unforgettable Christmas? Perhaps it was due to an incredible gift you received, a memorable experience, or the special people who surrounded you. Maybe it was a Christmas you wish you could forget, one that left a lasting mark on your life.

Whatever the case may be, that Christmas made an impact. This Christmas season, we want to help you create a Christmas you'll never forget—one that will be unforgettable in the best way possible..



Each week, there is a devotion designed to engage any family unit, whether you are a household of one or a family with many members. The only item you'll need is a lighter to light the candles. A mat for your Advent wreath is included, but if you'd like to get creative, feel free to make your own Advent candle holder! Check out the Pinterest QR code below for some inspiration.

For families with younger children or special needs, there is a section with a story that can be read using a Jesus Storybook Bible.

For families with more mature individuals, consider using the "Diving Deeper" section to enrich the discussion.

Lastly, we've included missional activities each week to help you create unforgettable memories. We love our CrossPoint families, and we are here for you.





HOPE



WEEK ONE



Prayer

Heavenly Father, As we enter this season of Advent, we turn our hearts toward the light of hope. Help us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, and to share that hope with others. May we find strength in waiting, and trust in Your promises. Amen

Lighting of the Candle

Today the first advent candle will be lit, which is the candle of hope (Purple candle). The people of God hoped in the coming of a promised Messiah which was realized in the birth of Jesus. Today we place our hope in His return.

Scripture

Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."

Devotion

What is something you are hoping for right now? Perhaps you're wishing that Christmas would hurry up and arrive. Maybe you're hoping this Christmas will be different from those in the past. Or perhaps you find yourself longing to go back to a cherished Christmas from years gone by.

Did you know the idea of hope in the Bible looks differently than our wordly view? Hope found in God is not merely wishing for things to change; it is a firm belief in His promises, regardless of our circumstances. God meets us right where we are and offers an unforgettable hope that no one else can provide. His light shines bright even when things seem dark.

When Jesus was born, the people were filled with hope. They anticipated a leader who would deliver them from their current struggles. Instead, they received a Savior who would deliver them from their sins. Their understanding of hope was limited. Thankfully, we have a powerful God who is bigger than we can imagine.

This Christmas season, let's not lose sight of the hope found in Jesus. Whatever your circumstances, remember that we worship the God of Hope.

WEEK ONE



So, what are you hoping for this Christmas? Whatever it may be, bring it to God. Trust in His perfect plan and rest in the assurance that He is always working for our good. Embrace the unforgettable hope that only He can provide, and let it move you to shine brightly in the lives of others.

Missional Activity

This Christmas season, let's embody the hope of Jesus by extending hope to others and helping to create an unforgettable Christmas for someone. Begin planning today how you can make this Christmas special. Consider adopting a widow or a family to share the hope of Jesus. Perhaps you need to repair a relationship where hope has dwindled. Whatever your family decides, let's make this year one to remember.

Diving Deeper

Read Romans 5:1-5. Maybe you have heard the phrase, "I don't want to get my hopes up." Here, Paul tells us the hope in Christ never disappoints.

Max Lucado says, "Hope is not what you'd expect; it is what you would never dream. It is a wild, improbable tale with a pinch-me-I'm-dreaming ending... Hope is not a granted wish or a favor performed; no, it is far greater than that. It is a zany, unpredictable dependence on a God who loves to surprise us out of our socks and be there in the flesh to see our reaction."

Pray and depend on the Lord today. regardless of your situation, know that suffering will not have the last word.

Family Activity

Read the story listed below either today or sometime this week with only candlelight. Remind your children that the light of Christ shines bright even when things around us may seem dark.

Younger Children and Special Friends

Read "Operation No More Tears" from the Jesus Storybook Bible.



LOVE



WEEK TWO



Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to rescue us from our sin. Help us to learn how to love you more and to show the love of Christ to others. Amen.

Lighting of the Candle

Today the second advent candle will be lit, the candle of Love (purple candle). Christ's love is enough for us all.

Scripture

Matthew 22:34-40, John 3:16

Devotion

When you think about love, what is the first thing that pops into your mind? Maybe it's Valentine's Day. Perhaps you think about a wedding and the love shared there. Or maybe you think about the love a mother has for her child. We all love someone and desire to be loved.

Today, we want to remember the unforgettable love that God gives us through His Son, Jesus. As you light the candle, let's focus on how we can love God and love others, just like Jesus did.

In the verses from Matthew, we see that the Pharisees are trying to test Jesus. One of them asks Him what the greatest commandment of the law is. Jesus responds with two things. The first is, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 6:5, which would have been a very familiar passage to the Pharisees. How do we love God with this kind of love—with our heart, soul, and mind?

The second commandment that Jesus points out to the Pharisees is very similar: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." This commandment highlights how we are to treat others. Both commandments that Jesus gives us center around love, emphasizing the importance of loving God and loving each other.

WEEK TWO



We see the love that God gives us through His Son, Jesus Christ. God sent Jesus to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. John 3:16 reminds us of this great love God has shown us. Think about this question: Since God's unforgettable love allows us to have eternal life in Jesus, how can I show my love to Jesus today?

Missional Activity

Last week, your family began formulating a plan to make this Christmas unforgettable. Continue working on your unforgettable Christmas plan. Additionally, here are some ideas to show love to others this Christmas season:

1. Write a note or make a card expressing love to a widow or widower at CrossPoint.
2. Bake cupcakes to share with someone this Christmas season. Invite them to come to CrossPoint with you for our Christmas Musical or Carols, Candles and Communion on Christmas Eve.
3. Share the love of Christ with someone this week by sharing what Jesus has done for us.

Family Activity

Take a minute as a family to go on a scavenger hunt together. For little ones: write the word "love" or draw hearts on strips of paper and hide them around the room. As your kids find the pieces of paper, have them share one way they can show the love of Christ to someone this week. For older kids, encourage them to help by looking up scriptures about love and adding them to your strips of paper. As you find the papers, read the verses together and discuss how each person will show the love of Christ to someone this week.

Diving Deeper

Take a moment to read and pray through Psalm 136. As you continually read about God's steadfast love, remember that "steadfast" means "firmly fixed" and does not change. As you pray, ask God to help you love Him more and to show the love of Christ to others this week.

For Younger Children and Special Friends

Read "Get Ready" from the Jesus Storybook Bible.

JOY



WEEK THREE



Prayer

God, as this candle is lit today, help us to embrace the joy that comes from knowing You and to share that joy with those around us.

Lighting of the Candle

As we light the candle of joy, remind us that true joy is found in You, not in our circumstances. Teach us to celebrate Your goodness and faithfulness, and may our lives reflect the joy of Christ to a world in need.

Scripture

Luke 1:5-25

Devotion

Can you remember a time in your life that was filled with unexpected joy? For many kids, the thrill of Christmas morning surprises brings immense delight—those moments when they tear open presents to find something they've longed for, or the joy of being surrounded by family and friends. But unexpected joy isn't just for children; it's a beautiful thread woven throughout our lives.

The Bible is rich with examples of unexpected joy that remind us of God's goodness and faithfulness. Consider these moments:

- Abraham and Sarah experienced the unexpected joy of having Isaac, a son born to them in their old age. After years of waiting and wondering if they would ever have a child, Isaac's arrival was a powerful reminder that God fulfills His promises in His perfect timing.
- Jacob felt the unexpected joy of seeing Joseph again after believing he had lost him forever. The reunion was not only a personal joy but also a testament to God's plan, which brought healing and restoration to their family.
- Zechariah and Elizabeth were overjoyed at the miraculous birth of John the Baptist, despite their advanced age. This unexpected gift filled their lives with purpose and joy, as John would play a crucial role in preparing the way for Jesus.
- The followers of Jesus encountered profound joy when He rose from the dead. After the heartache of His crucifixion, the resurrection brought a flood of joy and hope, changing their lives forever and empowering them to spread the Good News.

WEEK THREE



As believers, we recognize that joy is not merely a response to life's happy moments. Christian joy is a deep, abiding choice rooted in our faith and hope in Christ's power. It transcends circumstances, providing a steady foundation even in challenging times. When we choose joy, we acknowledge that our stories are being crafted by a loving God who has already secured victory for us.

So, as we reflect on our own experiences of unexpected joy, let's embrace the truth that our joy is a powerful testimony of God's love and grace. In a world that often feels heavy, may we choose joy daily, knowing that our narratives are being woven into a beautiful tapestry of victory and hope.

Missional Activity

Can you think of someone in your life who could use unexpected joy? So many around us are hurting and in need of hope and happiness. Consider someone or a ministry to whom you can share joy this Christmas, reminding them that true joy is found in Christ.

You could make something special for someone, meet a need, sing carols at a nursing home, or invite someone to dinner at your home—just to name a few ideas.

Remember to look for ways as a family to make this Christmas unforgettable for someone in need of joy.

Family Activity

Joy can be found in spending time with one another. Find a way this week to bring joy to your family - you could have a game night, go look at Christmas lights, or make joyful cookies (recipe on next page).

Diving Deeper

Read 1 Peter 1:1-12 and thank the Lord for the joy that lies ahead.

For Younger Children and Special Friends

Read "He's Here!" from the Jesus Storybook Bible.

JOYFUL COOKIES



Ingredients:

2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
2 cups chocolate chips (or your favorite mix-ins)

Instructions:

1. Preheat the Oven: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Mix the Dry Ingredients: In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Individually, these ingredients may seem bland or unappetizing, but they are essential for the structure of our cookies.
3. Cream the Butters and Sugars: In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until creamy. The sweetness of the sugars will begin to create a delightful base for our cookies.
4. Add the Eggs and Vanilla: Beat in the eggs one at a time, along with the vanilla extract. Raw eggs can seem a bit unappealing on their own, but they're what bind everything together and add moisture!
5. Combine Wet and Dry Ingredients: Gradually mix the dry ingredients into the wet mixture until well combined. At this stage, the dough might look a little odd, but trust the process!
6. Fold in Chocolate Chips: Stir in the chocolate chips (or your favorite mix-ins) until evenly distributed. These are the special touches that will bring joy and flavor to our cookies!
7. Scoop and Bake: Drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for about 10-12 minutes or until the edges are golden brown.
8. Cool and Enjoy: Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack.

Reflection:

Just like each ingredient in these cookies contributes to a delicious final product, our lives are filled with moments that may not seem pleasant on their own. Flour might be tasteless, raw eggs might not taste good, and a pinch of salt can be overwhelming. However, when mixed together, they create something wonderful!

In Romans 8:28, we are reminded, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." When life hands you challenges that feel like raw eggs or plain flour, remember that God is weaving those experiences into a beautiful tapestry of joy.

So, the next time you bake, reflect on how the individual struggles in your life can come together to create something sweet and fulfilling. Enjoy your Joyful Cookies!

PEACE



WEEK FOUR



Prayer

Heavenly Father, you are the Prince of Peace. Through our relationship with you, we can truly experience peace. As we engage with your Word and learn more about this gift, open our hearts and minds to the lessons you wish to impart. Amen.

Lighting of the Candle

Today the fourth advent candle will be lit, which is the candle of peace (purple). Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased! (Luke 2:14)

Scripture

Isaiah 26:3 “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” Philippians 4:4-9

Devotion

Isaiah 26 is a song of praise celebrating the promise of peace. But what is peace? When we think of peace, we often envision a quiet or calm situation. Yet, the world we live in today is anything but quiet and calm. We are pulled in countless directions each day, which can leave us feeling overwhelmed by anxiety—the very opposite of peace.

Verse 3 of this chapter tells us that we can experience perfect peace if we do one thing: keep our minds focused on God. But how can we achieve that in our chaotic world? As Christians, we must immerse ourselves in God’s Word—reading, meditating on, and memorizing scripture. Prayer is another vital way to maintain our focus on God. Through prayer, we communicate with Him, allowing Him to guide us through any situation we face.

Consider Philippians 4:4-9. What does Paul teach us about finding peace in Christ? He begins by urging us to rejoice in the Lord—a command he emphasizes by repeating it. To rejoice means to feel joy and take great delight. We are called to rejoice in the Lord despite our circumstances. Paul further reminds us not to be anxious but to bring everything to God through prayer.

WEEK FOUR



Both Isaiah 26 and Philippians 4 highlight that the only way to experience true peace is to remain focused on Christ, keeping Him at the center of all our thoughts, words, and actions. As you prepare for Christmas, take some time to reflect on how you can keep Christ at the forefront of your life this week.

Missional activity

1. Share with someone today what it means to have peace that only comes through our relationship with Christ.
2. Memorize Isaiah 26:3 and share it with a family member or friend.
3. As we reach the end of Advent season, execute your plan to make this Christmas unforgettable if you have not done so yet.

Family Activity

For Preschoolers:

1. Have your child select 5 favorite toys and arrange them from most to least favorite.
2. Discuss why they like each toy.
3. Place their preschool Bible in front of their top toy, explaining that loving God means putting him first in everything we do.

For Older Kids:

1. Gather a medium jar, rice/beans/small rocks, and a small ball or rock, around the size of a golf ball.
2. Fill the jar with rice while each child shares a daily activity (e.g. school, soccer, reading).
3. Try to add the ball (representing God) after the jar is full. Discuss how it doesn't fit.
4. Empty the jar, place the ball first, then refill with activities.
5. Talk about prioritizing God in daily life and the peace that comes from keeping Him first.

Diving Deeper

Read the entire 26th chapter of Isaiah. As you read and meditate on the scripture, ask God to show you how to keep your mind on Him so that you can experience the peace that only He can give.

For Younger Children and Special Friends

Read "The Light of the Whole World" from the Jesus Storybook Bible

CHRISTMAS DAY



CHRISTMAS DAY



Today's devotion is a bit different. Use this time to reflect on the incredible gift we have in Jesus. We encourage you to begin your Christmas morning by immersing yourself in God's Word. Take a moment to contemplate Jesus before the busyness of the day begins.

Prayer

Lord, today has been anticipated in many ways. For some, the focus is on gifts and family time. But for those who love you, the true anticipation lies in celebrating the gift of your Son and knowing that He will return for us.

Lighting of the Candle

Today, we will light the fifth candle, the Christ candle (white). As you look at the entire wreath illuminated, rejoice! Jesus, the light of the world, came to save us from our sins, and He will return one day for those who believe in Him.

Scripture

Luke 2:1-20

Discussion

After reading Luke 2, pause to pray to the Lord. Thank Him for the salvation we have in Jesus and for the promise of His return.

Missional Activity

Many will be gathering with loved ones today. Is there someone with whom you need to share the truth that Jesus is the only one who saves and that He is coming back for those who believe in Him? If so, ask the Lord to prepare their hearts and allow the Spirit to work through you today. This is your opportunity to make today unforgettable.

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