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*Christmas
Traditions*

*Making Your
Family Celebrations
Memorable*



*Stan & Linda Loler
Elmer & Ruth Towns*

INTRODUCTION

Christmas traditions prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of *Jesus*. Without traditions, each year would be an uncharted path. We wouldn't know what to expect.

Christmas traditions give anticipation to every December. We decorate evergreen trees, purchase presents, and travel home. Christmas carols, Nativity scenes, and Handel's *Messiah* all stir our souls. Christmas sits on our shoulder and flirts with us, tempting us to embrace the season.

Christmas traditions are hot apple cider, cranberry sauce, wise men, Grandma's house, and vacation from work . Jingle bells, and “dashing through the snow.”

Everyone enjoys such traditions, and so do we. Yours are just as wonderful as ours because they stir your spirit, just as we get “warm fuzzies” dreaming about ours. We've opened our hearts to you, so you can look into our pasts and be inspired to treasure Christmas all the more.

May our Christmas traditions help your traditions become more meaningful. May everything we remember about Christmas make us say with the wise men , “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him”(Matt. 2:2).

Remembering,
Stan and Linda from Oklahoma City
Elmer and Ruth Towns from Lynchburg, Virginia

*Somehow, not only for Christmas
But all the long year through,
The Joy that you give to others
Is the Joy that comes back to you.*

John Greenleaf Whittier

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Our family has learned this important lesson. Each member of our extended family goes to his or her overflowing closets, toy boxes, or pantries to find presents for a family who might not have Christmas. After deciding who will receive the surprise gifts, we sneak information such as sizes, ages of children, or specific needs. Next, we collect a large box of goodies--lotions or fragrances for Mom--warm sweaters and a toy for each child, something special for Dad, and a bag or two of groceries--a ham, oranges and nuts, a package of dressing, some sweet potatoes, freshly baked bread, and a few candies to top it off.

Christmas Eve night, we decide who will have the honor of delivering the gifts. Amid giggles, barking dogs, and tripping over each other, the delivery team leaves the box on the doorstep, rings the bell, and runs like crazy. This is always so much fun, we now fight over who gets to deliver the surprise.

One year we received a big cardboard thank-you card in our gift-family's front yard. It said, "Thank you, Santa, whoever you are."

-Elmer and Ruth Towns



*Jesus, as we close this Christmas season
And look toward the new year,
Help us to become faithful, cross-carrying disciples who
Announce your salvation in and through our daily lives.*

-Henri J. M. Nouwen

What do you remember about your grandparents? Were they prim and proper? Did they smell like powder? Did they always have candy in the dish for you?

I really want my children and grandchildren to have great memories of a positive attitude and time to listen to each question or problem. I want them to carry on family values and traditions. I want them to find joy in serving the Lord. I want them to have a marriage like ours. I want them to know they are loved.

I want them to read the books written by their grandfather. I want them to smile when they remember us. I want them to love the Christmas season and remember having fun at our house. I want them to continue the traditions and start some of their own.

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