

The Birth of Jesus - Luke 2 (NIV)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.
(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

"Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



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May the Prince of Peace be with you and your family this Christmas

THE ADVERTISER





Members of the Greater Lake Area Chorale perform their final Christmas concert of the season Sunday, Dec. 17 at Eldon First Baptist Church



Michele Meikle (left) and Maggie Butterfield provide flute accompaniment for the Greater Lake Area Chorale performance of Here We Come A Caroling Sunday afternoon



Members of the Greater Lake Area Chorale perform their final Christmas concert of the season Sunday, Dec. 17 at Eldon First Baptist Church



Greater Lake Area Chorale Christmas concert



From left, Lisa Jackson, Lisa Galeski, Amy Foley and Rev. Bill Foglesong perform solos during Sunday's Greater Lake Area Chorale Christmas concert at Eldon First Baptist Church



Men's Christmas Breakfast

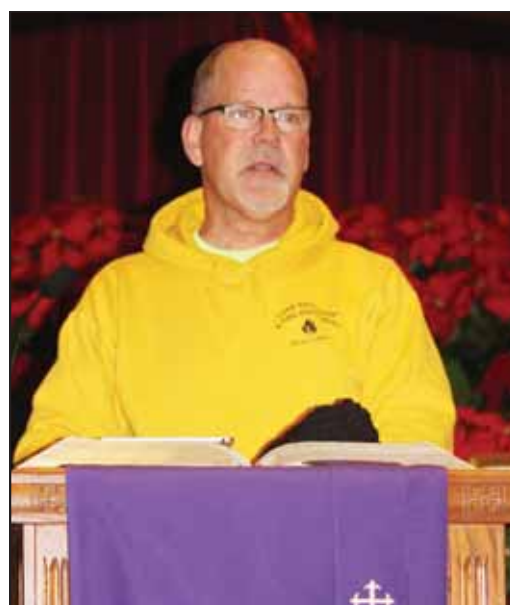
Songs of the season – Attendees sing during the Eldon Men's Christmas breakfast Thursday, Dec. 14 at Eldon First Christian Church.



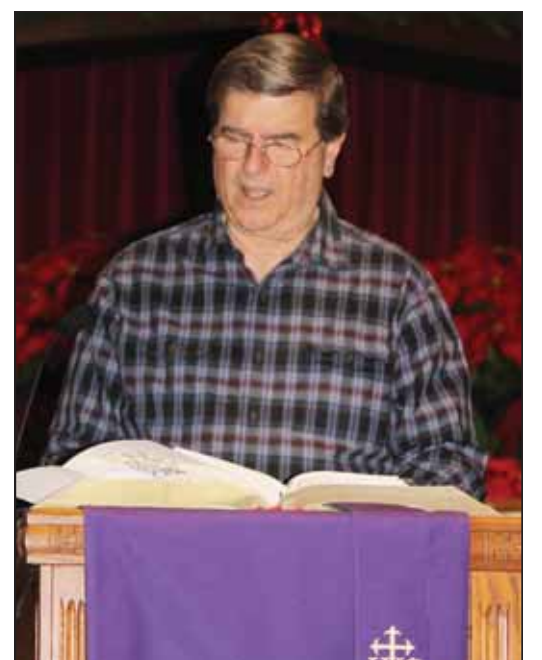
Gotta have gravy – Judah Walton gets some gravy for his biscuit at the Thursday, Dec. 14 Eldon Men's Christmas breakfast at the First Christian Church.



Brothers breakfast – Attendees go through the serving line at the Thursday, Dec. 14 Eldon Men's Christmas breakfast.



Are you ready for Jesus? Kevin Hamel from New Life Assembly of God gives the devotional for the Eldon Men's Christmas breakfast Thursday, Dec. 14 at Eldon First Christian Church. He spoke of getting ready for Jesus this holiday season.



Worship time – Dr. John Gambill leads songs at the Eldon Men's Christmas breakfast Thursday, Dec. 14 at Eldon First Christian Church.



Learn about Christian Christmas traditions

Many adjectives can be used to describe the holiday season, including festive, jolly and religious. Another word that may come to mind is tradition. Traditions factor heavily into holiday celebrations of faith and family.

According to The Public Religion Research Institute's "2020 Census of American Religion," 70 percent of Americans identify as Christian. Data from the Pew Research Center indicates that 55 percent of Canadians identified as Christians in 2018. Millions of Christians will be celebrating Christmas this year, and many of those celebrations will feature cherished traditions. Here are some popular Christian traditions during the holiday season.

Advent calendars and wreaths

The word "Advent" is derived from Latin and means "coming forward." Advent is the four-week period preceding the Christmas celebration. Advent wreaths and calendars typically are part of Christmas in Christian households. Advent calendars are sold in stores or can be made as craft projects. Most of them contain small prizes like chocolate treats or other trinkets behind each date on the calendar. Advent wreaths have four candles (three purple and one pink). One is lit each Sunday of Advent. The evergreen wreath signifies continuous life.

Nativity scene

Another popular religious tradition is setting up a

nativity scene. A nativity scene places the focus on Jesus Christ. One tradition involves moving nativity figurines closer to the manger leading up to Christmas, and placing the infant Jesus in the manger on Christmas Day.

Some churches and towns also put on living nativity scenes, in which adults and children dress up, and together with live animals, depict the manger scene.

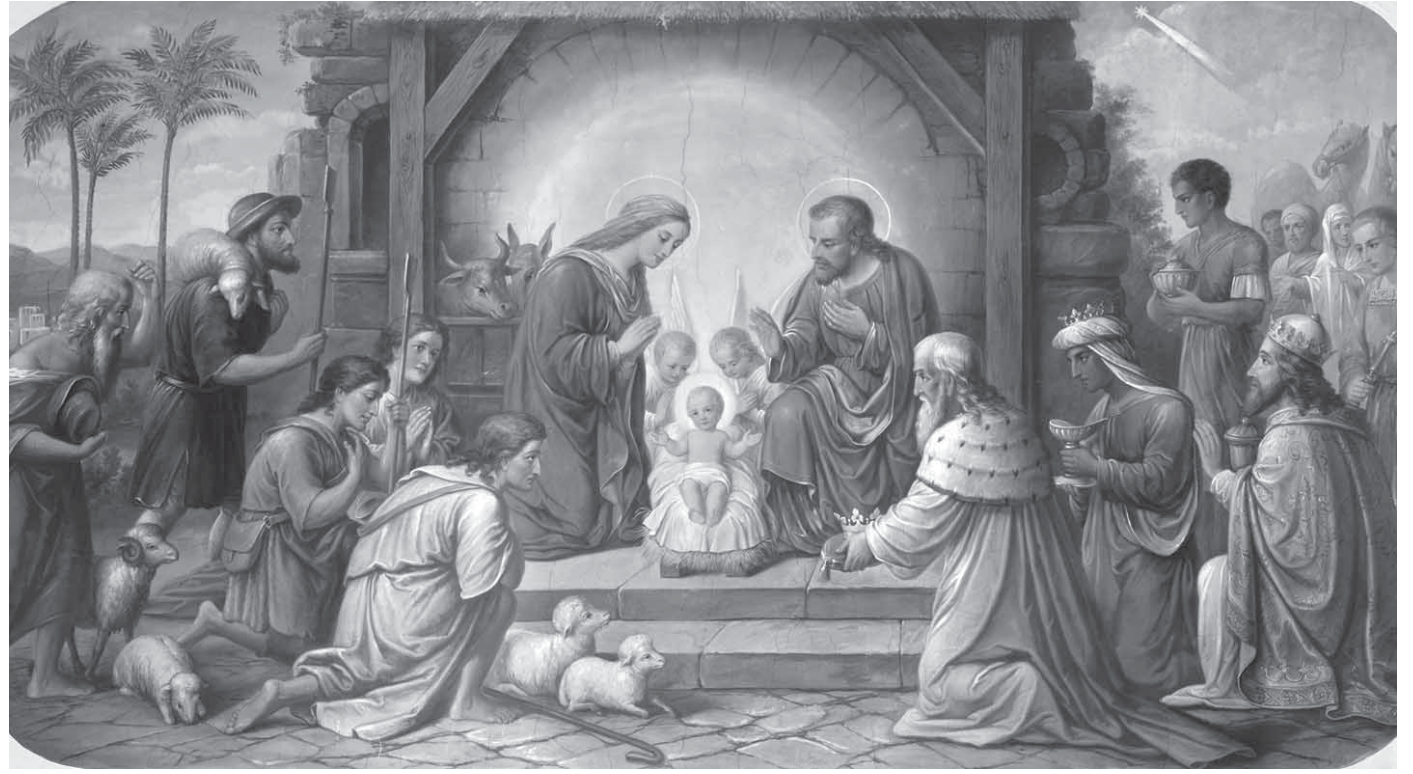
Christmas caroling

Caroling has a long history and was originally tied to winter solstice celebrations. Christians started singing carols to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Many of the songs carolers sing are traditional religious hymns. During Advent, carols will herald the coming of Jesus. After Christmas, carols are even more joyous in nature.

The three masses

Midnight Mass is a special celebration that takes place in the late hours of the evening on Christmas Eve. It is the first liturgy of Christmas that begins at midnight. It originated in 430 AD under Pope Sixtus III in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. The popularity of Midnight Mass grew by the 12th century, when the celebration of three Masses on Christmas day was granted to all priests. Midnight Mass is treated as a solemn High Mass, which involves singing and praying by the light of candles. A Mass at dawn is the second Christmas mass, followed by Mass of the Day, which is the mid-morning Mass of the Christmas celebration.

Christmas is steeped in



tradition. While the secular traditions are well known, Christians also embrace various religious traditions at this time of year.

Away in the Manger is one of the most popular Christian Christmas songs

"Away In a Manger" is a popular Christmas carol that has endured for well over a century. One of the first known appearances of the song was in the journal The Christian Cynosure in 1882, which indicates it is now more than 140 years old. That publication titled the hymn "Luther's Cradle Song," and a brief description of the song preceding the lyrics indicates it was written by the German religious reformer Martin

Luther.

However, the University Libraries at The Ohio State University note that historians have since dispelled that notion, with some suggesting the song was written to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth (the reformer was born in 1483).

Regardless of its authorship, the song remains a popular and moving hymn that can be heard far and wide during the holiday season.

"Away In a Manger"

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleap

in the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.

I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle til morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.

Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.

Did you know?

Christmas trees are a key component of many people's holiday season. It's a family tradition to choose (or take

out) the tree each year and then adorn it with ornaments, tinsel, family mementos, and a beautiful tree topper. In regard to tree toppers, most people fasten the top bough with an angel or a star. The first tree toppers were the infant Jesus, but toppers are now available in other options symbolic of the Nativity of Jesus. The star refers to the Star of Bethlehem, which guided the Magi to the birthplace of Jesus. The angel represents the messengers of God as well as the Angel Gabriel, who visited Mary to share the news that she would be giving birth to the Son of God. People can choose whichever topper they prefer, but many refer to the religious significance of Christmas.

Eldon Aglow winners



First place - Jay and Stacey Dunham with Eldon Aglow chairman Barb Pearson



Second place - Jennifer Beard with Eldon Aglow chairman Barb Pearson



Third place - Mike Parrent with Eldon Aglow chairman Barb Pearson



Honorable mention - Kim Bopp and grandson Tyler Robinett with Eldon Aglow chairman Barb Pearson



Holiday happenin's

~ Christmas events calendar ~

Wednesday, Dec. 20 –
Eldon Church of the Nazarene live nativity scene, 6 to 8 p.m. on Manor Drive in Eldon. Also a showing of the movie "The Nativity Story" at 6:15 p.m. in church gym.

Thursday, Dec. 21 –
Eldon Church of the Nazarene live nativity scene, 6 to 8 p.m. on Manor Drive in Eldon. Also a showing of the movie "The Nativity Story" at 6:15 p.m. in church gym.

Monday, Dec. 25 –
Free community Christmas dinner, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Eldon First Christian Church.



Sharing hope – Georgia Hendrickson makes a donation to the Salvation Army Saturday, Dec. 16 at the Eldon Wal-Mart. At right are ROAR Children's Ministries members Adeline, Eleanor and Jackson Oellerich.



Sharing smiles – Amanda and Matthew Patrickson from ROAR Children's Ministries at New Life Assembly of God ring the bells for the Salvation Army Saturday, Dec. 16 at the Eldon Wal-Mart.





Christmas story in song – Members of the Eldon community joined hearts and voices to present the Christmas cantata “The Greatest Story Ever Told” Thursday evening, Dec. 14 at First Baptist Church. Pictured are, from left, front row: Mary Jo Engle, Nancy Frampton, Dana Burkle, Rev. Amanda Gastreich, Debbie Leffert; second row: Carolyn Cardwell, Sherri Harvey, Sharon Taylor, Janet Looten, Jim Schupp, Dr. John Gambill; back row: Johnnie Briggs-Taylor, MarthaDee Branson, Debbie Hees, Stephanie McIntosh, Rose Adams and Rev. Bill Foglesong. The choir was under the direction of Melody Hannah.



Welcome – Rev. Amanda Gastreich, pastor of Eldon United Methodist Church, welcomes community members to last Thursday’s Christmas cantata at First Baptist Church.



Songs of the season – Members of the Eldon community choir perform during last Thursday’s Christmas cantata at the First Baptist Church. Pictured are, from left, front: Jim Schupp, Dr. John Gambill; back: Stephanie McIntosh, Rose Adams and Rev. Bill Foglesong.



Christmas rock! Tuscumbia second and third graders rock it out for Christmas during last week’s elementary Christmas program. (Photo by Connie Wyrick)



Oh Tannenbaum – Tuscumbia first graders, dressed as trees, sing about the Christmas tree during last Thursday’s elementary Christmas program. (Photo by Connie Wyrick)

T-town Christmas, elementary style



Recorder reverberation – Tuscumbia fifth graders play their recorders during last week’s elementary Christmas program. (Photo by Connie Wyrick)



Up on the rooftop, reindeer paws – Tuscumbia fourth graders hear something on the rooftop while sleeping during last Thursday’s elementary Christmas program. (Photo by Connie Wyrick)

Living nativity, movie at Nazarene church

The Christmas story will again come to life in December at Eldon Church of the Nazarene.

Members of the church, located at 1024 E. Lawson off of Manor Drive, will present a living nativity scene this Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 20 and 21.

The living nativity is from 6 to 8 p.m. both nights.

The church will also offer a free showing of the movie “The Nativity Story” at 6:15 p.m. in the church gym.

Refreshments will be served.

Merry CHRISTmas

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