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# Christmas Messages



## Why I Celebrate Christmas

Some of the hardest questions to answer are the "Why" questions. Why do you live in Heppner? Why do you drive a Ford? Why do you like black coffee? Why are you a Seahawks fan?

On the other hand, sometimes, they are the easiest questions to answer. Why do you love your grandchildren? Why have you stayed married for 45 years? Why are you going to Hawaii in December? Why do you celebrate Christmas?

The fact is without Christmas there would be no reason to celebrate any day or event because without Christmas there would be no hope. Christmas is the start of the culmination of the promise God has made to all mankind. Christmas is the beginning of the end of the tyranny of sins hold on God's ultimate creation, man.

Or, we could spend time discussing and arguing about whether Jesus was actually born in a stable. Or if it was actually December 25<sup>th</sup> when He was born. We could spend time complaining about the addition of lights, trees and gifts and how they take away from the real meaning of Christmas. However, in doing so we miss the point and maybe emphasis even more why I celebrate Christmas.

You see, Christmas is about hope in a world that at the birth of Jesus was a dark and hopeless place, especially for the Jewish people who were ruled by the Roman Empire. Life was hard and filled with hopelessness save for the promise they held onto that a Messiah was to come. What they did not understand was that the Messiah was not just for them but for all of mankind to release us all from the bondage of sin.

Jesus, the Son of God, The Messiah, conquered that which mankind did not believe could be conquered. He was born, died on a cross, was buried in a borrowed tomb, and rose from the dead on the third day. That is why I celebrate Christmas, because I am free from the punishment of my sin by the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the baby in a manger.

So yes, I will put lights on my house, decorate a tree, hang stockings on the fireplace and give gifts to people whom I love. But that is not why I celebrate Christmas. I celebrate Christmas because of what the scripture tells us in Luke 2:11.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"

*Merry Christmas*

*Ray DeLoe, minister, Heppner Christian Church*

## Hope for Christmas

In the midst of all the lights, gifts, and glimmer of the season it can seem impossible not to have a little bit of joy rub off on you this time of year. Children singing, bells are ringing as the refrain goes. However, at times, Christmas can be a time of regret, disappointment, and fading memories of traditions past.

Compiled on top of the grief that can creep upon us are dead fingers of winter's trees reaching skyward, absent of green and blooms, weary in the ice and wind. The early setting sun bringing darkness and delayed dawn can seem impossibly permanent. How can this be endured? One word...hope.

The message of Christmas is a message of hope. What if our sufferings and disappointments are not pointless and meaningless? What if there really is a God in control of all things? And what if that God really is a good and loving person who sees our pain and does something about it? What if the fix is the birth of a baby 2,000 years ago, in an obscure cattle cave, in a backward little town called Bethlehem? As long as the possibility exists that there is a course correction to our broken world, there is hope.

The author, George Iles once said, "Hope is faith holding its hand out in the dark." It can be hard to see in the dark no matter how hard you squint, but never lose hope. And in the darkness, let hope be the fuel that propels you to grasp the hand of faith, the hand that pulls you out of the muck and mire, and believe that sorrow is temporary. As long as there is hope, there is life, and as long as there is life, victory is possible.

This Christmas, no matter what circumstances you find yourself in, whether good, bad, or indifferent, open the gift of hope, unpack it, embrace it, and live.

Willow Creek Baptist Church will hold a special Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24.

*Tripp Finch*

*Willow Creek Baptist Church  
560 Minor St, Heppner*

## Don't live in the shadows

One special part of the Christmas Season for me is all the extra decorative lights. The daylight hours are so short, and by 4 p.m. in the afternoon it is beginning to get dark. The added lights are a big help in chasing away the shadows. Instead of uninviting grays, the little colorful decorative lights seem to add a smile to the world. They never go unnoticed. They chase away the uncertainties that shadows bring, as the natural light of the day fades away. They remove doubt about where to step, increase secure feelings, and warm the heart. Lights just seem to help us to live better.

Daily living can cast many shadows over our lives too. But these shadows do not mean that the light of a good life is totally gone. Shadows might mean we are simply standing in the wrong place.

The message that comes to us at Christmas is that you can step out of the shadows. You can find hope, friendship, good news, joy, smiles and light if you take even a few small steps closer to the celebration of the birthday of Jesus. Three of the Heppner Churches: All Saints Episcopal, Hope Lutheran and Heppner United Methodist, invite you, your family and your loved ones, to join with us on Christmas Eve. We will gather at the All Saints Episcopal Church at the corner of Gale and Church Street at 7 p.m. You will be most welcome.

Don't live in the shadows. Dare to step out into some light. We'll keep a candle lit for you.

*Sincerely, Pastor Keith Brudevold  
Heppner United Methodist Church*



**MORROW COUNTY TRANSFER STATIONS. SOUTH END 57185 HWY 74, LEXINGTON AND NORTH END 69900 FRONTAGE LN, BOARDMAN. WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS SUNDAY DECEMBER 24, 2017 SUNDAY DECEMBER 31, 2017**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IT ALLOWS OUR ATTENDANTS TO BE WITH THEIR FAMILIES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON. MORROW COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS 541-989-9500.

**LA ESTACION DE TRANSFERENCIA DE EL CONDADO DE MORROW EN LAS SIGUIENTES LOCALIDADES, 57185 HWY 74, LEXINGTON, Y 69900 FRONTAGE LN EN BOARDMAN ESTARON CERRADOS DOMINGO DICIEMBRE 24, 2017 Y TAMBIEN DOMINGO DICIEMBRE 31, 2017 GRACIAS POR SU COOPERACION, ESTO LES DA TIEMPO PARA QUE LOS EMPLEADOS TAMBIEN PASEN TIEMPO CON SUS FAMILIAS DURANTED LAS VACACIONES. CONDADO DE MORROW SERVICIOS PUBLICOS 541-989-9500**



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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