

- CHRISTMAS AT B4CHURCH -

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY *FOR ALL PEOPLE*

- OUR DECEMBER CALENDAR -

DECEMBER 06

B4CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY

We are kicking off the holiday season with a church wide Christmas party! Invite your family, friends & neighbors as we build community and lean into good old fashioned Christmas traditions. This event will take place at B4church at 5:30pm!

DECEMBER 17

KIDS CHRISTMAS CHOIR

We are so excited to have our B4 Kids Christmas Choir help lead worship on December 17th at both our 9am & 11am services. Elementary Kids will join us in service for this special & festive gathering. Don't miss it!

DECEMBER 24

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

Come celebrate Christmas Eve with us at any of our four candlelight services starting at 11am, 1pm, 3pm & 5pm. Kids services will be available for infants – Pre-k. We will also provide in-service translations. For more: B4church.com/Christmas

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WAITING FOR RESCUE

written by Steve Mitchell

I was once marooned on a deserted island. I was about twelve years old when it happened. Our family was on vacation, exploring the Thousand Islands area of the St. Lawrence River on a rented houseboat. The lazy days stitched together into a glorious pattern: find a small island, nestle into a secluded cove perfect for swimming, make anchor in the late morning, and while the day away exploring and fishing like a band of Robinson Crusoes.

One morning, as we bustled about the houseboat preparing to get underway, my dad told me, "Hop off and untie the bow line." Dutiful son that I was, I waded ashore, loosed the line, and tossed it back over the bow. I'm sure my father didn't think he needed to add, "And then, get back on board."

Apparently he did. As Captain Dad backed out into the river's current, I watched the blunt bow slip away from me. I was shocked. Then I began to yell, my pubescent voice no match for the boat's chugging engines. My heart sank as the hope and promise of the remaining days slipped further and further away.

100 feet. 100 yards. Further still my home and family sailed on. I was utterly alone. Should I try to swim my way aboard? What if I drowned, carried to Davy Jones' Locker by the swift Saint Lawrence? Would they hold a funeral for me with an empty coffin? Adolescent minds are prone to dramatic overstatement in these moments.

However, about a quarter mile offshore the boat stopped. I could make out the five remaining members of my family crawling all over the craft. They realized I was missing and before long the SS Mitchell was headed my way. Rescued!

I vividly recall the longing and anticipation watching my family approach. I remember wading into the river, preparing to board my floating home once again. Here it comes! It's almost here. Just a little further!

That's Advent. It's all about anticipation, longing, preparation. A promised rescue.

It's more than just getting into the Christmas spirit, as we prepare to welcome Jesus' arrival. Advent is full of interesting and deep spiritual questions. Do I welcome Him with the same enthusiasm as I did when we first met? Are there competing loves in my life that have chilled the affection I once held for Him? Are there places in my soul where he is still awaiting a welcome? Might this even be the Christmas that will mark my first year following Jesus?

There are as many questions as there are hearts and stories. However, they tend to orbit the state of our relationship with Jesus. He longs for a warm reception because he has good things for us and those are reflected in the successive themes of the Advent Sundays: hope, peace, joy, and love. This year, we encourage you to let anticipation, longing, and preparation add savor to the Christmas celebration we'll share together.



FUN FACT #1

Question: In what year did Christmas become a national holiday in the US?

Answer: 1870



FUN FACT #2

Question: What Christmas carol was the first song to be broadcast from the International Space Station?

Answer: Jingle Bells



FUN FACT #3

Question: From which country did the custom of Christmas trees originate?

Answer: Germany

DECEMBER

- AT A GLANCE -

DECEMBER 11

GRIEFSHARE

If you have lost someone close to you, please feel free to join us Mondays at 6:30pm. We meet weekly and provide a safe place where you can be with others on the grief journey.

DECEMBER 13

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON

Prime Timers is a ministry for those in their prime of life, 65 and over. We meet monthly to provide a place of connection and community. Wanna join? Meet us at 11am in the Gym/B4 Commons!

DECEMBER 14

CHRISTIAN BUSINESS NETWORK

Is a monthly lunch meetup for business owners, entrepreneurs and C-level employees from various churches in the Portland metro area. All are welcome! If interested, meet us at 12pm at B4Church.

DECEMBER 18

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

If you would like to serve our community and help save a life, we invite you to participate in this Red Cross Blood Drive available 9am – 3pm. Interested? You can sign up on our website!

DECEMBER 19

HIGH SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PARTY

High Schoolers, you're invited to join us for a night full of fun, treats & games! Come dressed in your most festive sweater or outfit. Make sure to invite a friend & head to the B4 Gym at 7pm!

DECEMBER 20

YOUNG ADULTS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Young adults, join us for a fun & classy Christmas Party in the Loft at 7pm! We'll be sharing a meal together, hearing an encouraging word, worshiping & spending time in community. Hope to see you there!

DECEMBER 31

YEAR-END DONATIONS

Any donations to the church must be received or postmarked by December 31st in order to be included in your 2023 giving statement. A link to your 2023 giving statement will be emailed to you by January 31, 2024. Send address & email changes to givingstatements@b4church.org

DECEMBER 31

SPECIAL ONLINE CHURCH SERVICE

Stay cozy in the warmth of your home on Sunday, December 31st & tune in to our special online church service! But don't fret, in person services will be back the following Sunday, January 7! See you then!

FOR MORE EVENTS & UPDATES, CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT:

b4church.org/events



FUN FACT #4

Question: Instead of stockings, what do Dutch children leave out for Santa Claus to fill with presents?

Answer: Wooden Clogs



FUN FACT #5

Question: In what year did Hallmark introduce its first Christmas card?

Answer: 1915



FUN FACT #6

Question: There is a town in Arizona, called Santa Claus, True or False?

Answer: True

THE GOODEST THING

written by Jamie Robison

We laid on my five-year-old son's bed after his first day of kindergarten, unwrapping thoughts and noticing the impactful moments. Bedtime is the keeper of some of life's most precious stories. As Oliver reminisced of lunch lines, brave firsts and strangers who became friends, he said something about his little world that made mine grow three sizes: "The goodest thing we have in this world is to give love to each other." My grin stretched wide in his dark room. Goodest. Logging that away immediately, I thought to myself.

Christmas, at its birth, has always been about celebrating the gift of love. Not love bundled up in a predictable holiday movie, or an opulent gift. Not love charged by obligation or task, but the pure and intrinsic, miraculous Love that wrapped itself in flesh and came into the world to exemplify the greatest—or the goodest—offering of love there is.

But for better or worse, this season of wonder, in all its lights and magic and childhood glory, also has a way of freshly illuminating every sensitive corner and longing of our hearts. Whether we've hoped and received along the way or whether we've lost and been disappointed, we all have the capacity to reorient our hearts toward love.

Love comes in all shapes, sizes and intentions, and kids have such a way, a freedom really, of noticing our most deeply-rooted need for it. They have the ability to offer forgiveness without grudge and to give love without reservation. Not just a general "love for the world" sentiment, but a specific I-see-you kind of love. Much like the noticing love of Jesus. To give love to someone is to value them. To value them is to have noticed them.

Oh, what we can learn from the littlest among us—and the littlest within us.

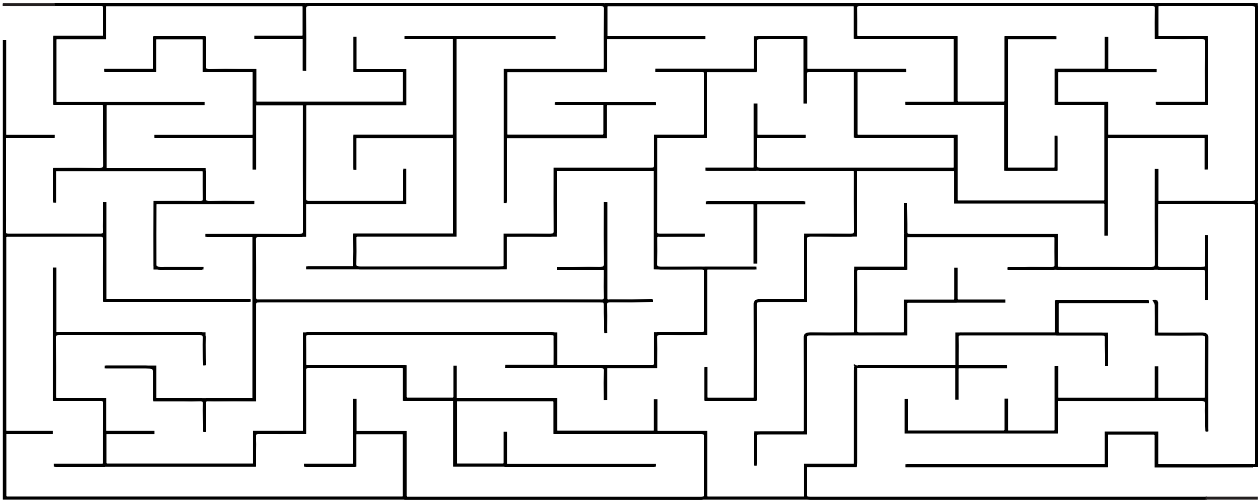
The child in each of us, the one who has always been worthy of love, is still there. It's the same me. It's the same you—the tender you who held up your handmade ornament of glitter and glue with pride. The you who sat in the backseat of the car noticing house after house pass by with glimmering lights. The same you who woke up, rubbing your wide, enchanted eyes to the first sight of snow. The same you who nervously dropped some change in the metal bucket as the bell ringer outside the store nodded and smiled.

When all the shine and the shuffle of Christmas is stripped away, the thing that remains is our ability to love and to be loved. Do we believe we're worthy of it? Do we resist it or hold it hostage? Or do we offer it as freely as Jesus has given it to us?

Tim Keller once wrote, "The only love that won't disappoint you is one that can't change, that can't be lost, that is not based on the ups and downs of life or of how well you live. It is something that not even death can take away from you. God's love is the only thing like that."

Is there a greater gift?

Open your eyes with child-like wonder this Christmas. Notice, see, and give away—without reservation—the goodest thing we have in this world.



CAN YOU HELP THE SNOWMAN FIND HIS PRESENT?

C O O K I E S T N I C K E N E Z T I L B V G E A
E P G V E O T E L T S I M G L B X K L I M L G M
K R K S H O P P I N G Y L L O H S U A L C S R M
A A S Y G C H R I S T M A S T R E E R I E W S G
L N N Y T H G U A N Y B O Q E C I N C L F T R I
F C O E G G N O G T W A C Z A S S I F S K E S N
W E W C K W N E R O F Y R A O L O A Q K E K N G
O R M O A K L A N V A Y E S H E T G N N A U Y E
N C A N K Y P S C Q M O F T O D H E H T D K S R
S S N O W M S F A D I J F R T Y G G E G A X L B
N O R T H P O L E A L R U O C E I O D O N N E R
H O L I D A Y S B N Y G T F H N N O K H Y D I E
L E N A C Y D N A C S V S W O M Y R Y A N E G A
L A C R E I N D E E R N G O C I L C I O J C H D
R I E S T N E S E R P I N N O H O S E A R O H S
E E P M N O I S A C C O I S L C H L C R U R U Y
K K Q O R T A M E N T S K P A C I K T E D A M O
C J I N G L E B E L L S C Y T N F B D H O T B T
A Z P O H S K R O W V W O T E R L L O S L E U Y
R N A M W O N S E H T Y T S O R F K L A P C G R
C P W F I R E W O O D M S S J M I S V D H I D R
T S T H G I L P K C C D T D R A Z Z I L B L E E
U P M G N I K C O T S N O I T I D A R T G Y R M
N A E C A L P E R I F W R A P P I N G P A P E R

HOLY NIGHT
TRADITION
STNICK
WORKSHOP
DONNER
HOLIDAYS
GINGERBREAD
WRAPPING PAPER
TOYS
STOCKING
MILK
NORTH POLE
OCCASION
PARTY
SKATE
PRANCER
DECORATE
MRS.CLAUS
SNOW
NOEL
PRESENTS
REINDEER
HUMBUG
STOCKINGSTUFFER
BLIZZARD
SLED
DANCER
HOT CHOCOLATE
MERRY
SNOWFLAKE
JINGLEBELLS
CHRISTMAS TREE
SCROOGE

FIREWOOD
JACK FROST
SHOPPING
DASHER
HOLLY
NUTCRACKER
CHIMNEY
FAMILY
CANDYCANE
SANTA
SNOWFORTS
FIREPLACE
ICICLE
MISTLETOE
NAUGHTY
GREEN
SNOWMAN
JOY
SLEIGH
RUDOLPH
SNOWBALL
MEAL
COAL
ELF
BLITZEN
NICE
LIGHTS
RED
ORTAMENTS
EGGNOG
COOKIES
FROSTY THE SNOWMAN

10

WAYS YOU CAN
GIVE BACK THIS
CHRISTMAS

1

DONATE TOYS AT A TOY DRIVE
[EX. UGM WOMEN'S SHELTER]

3

DONATE WINTER CLOTHES TO
HOMELESS SHELTERS [UNION
GOSPEL OR SALVATION ARMY]

5

WRITE CARDS FOR SENIORS
IN NURSING HOMES

7

OFFER TO BABYSIT YOUR
FRIEND'S KIDS SO THEY CAN
HAVE A DATE NIGHT

9

DONATE DIAPERS & WIPES
TO A MATERNITY HOME
[ROAD2HOPE]

2

DONATE GIFT CARDS TO LOCAL
SCHOOLS TO GIVE TO FAMILIES
IN NEED [EX. BARNES & WIL-
LIAM WALKER]

4

SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS
WORKING WITH REFUGEES
[REFUGEE CARE COLLECTIVE,
PDX FRIENDS OF REFUGEES]

6

BRING A HOT BEVERAGE TO A
COWORKER OR CLASSMATE

8

SUPPORT OUR FOR
THE CITY INITIATIVE

10

BRING GROCERIES TO A FRIEND
OR NEIGHBOR IN NEED

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

READ ALL
ABOUT IT

JOIN US AS WE GO THROUGH AN
ADVENT DEVOTIONAL THROUGH THE
BIBLE APP TOGETHER! LEARN MORE
BY SCANNING THE QR CODE BELOW:



HOLIDAY
BRUSSEL
RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

FEEDS 10 – 15 PEOPLE

- 5-6lbs Brussels
- Olive Oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- Nonna Pia's balsamic glaze
[or your brand of choice]

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Take a sheet pan or two, cover with foil and throw the sheet pans in the oven as it's preheating.

Cut the end off the brussels and then cut them in half. Remove any leaves that look brown or black. Place into a large mixing bowl.

After the brussels are in the bowl, pour 2 cups of olive oil over them and season generously with salt. They can take a ton of salt, then season with black pepper. Using a mixing spoon or your hands, mix until every brussel is coated in salt, pepper and oil.

Once the oven is preheated , take baking sheets out and dump the brussels on them. Spread them out so they are in a single layer. An extra step to achieve crispiness is turn them all cut side down on the baking sheet. (a nice touch but not neces- sary)

Throw them back in the oven and shove them to the back of the oven and cook until charred and tender. Shoving them back gets the majority of the heat to hit them. A fork should easily go into them. Cook for 15-25 minutes. After 15 minutes, keep a close eye on them

Take out and drizzle with balsamic glaze if you would like, if not, taste for salt and add more if necessary. Another great addition to these is pickled onions.

WHAT'S YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE?

**1 I FEEL MOST LOVED WHEN
SOMEONE SPECIAL TO ME...**

- (A) Directly tells me how much they care about me
- (B) Physically holds me close
- (C) Goes out of their way to do things for me
- (D) Wants to spend a lot of time with me
- (E) Surprises me with thoughtful gifts that take time & effort

2 THE BEST FRIENDSHIPS ARE THE ONES WHERE...

- (A) You talk all the time
- (B) They give you intentional hugs
- (C) They go out of their way to help you
- (D) They make plans & come through
- (E) They think of the little things

3 WHICH WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL MORE VALUED?

- (A) Receiving a heartfelt handwritten letter
- (B) A shoulder massage after a long day
- (C) Help around the house
- (D) Being invited to a gathering
- (E) Going to a nice restaurant & being paid for

4 WHAT SWEET GESTURES DO YOU LOVE MOST?

- (A) Intentional texts from a loved one
- (B) A tap on the shoulder that makes you feel seen
- (C) Someone you care for making you breakfast
- (D) A planned picnic & long chats with friends
- (E) A gift from a friend that said, "This made me think of you"

5 ON CHRISTMAS, I LOVE...

- (A) Reading thoughtful cards
- (B) Cozying up to loved ones
- (C) Help wrapping presents
- (D) Spending time with loved ones
- (E) Opening presents

6 I FEEL SAFE WHEN A LOVED ONE...

- (A) Encourages me & makes me feel seen
- (B) Embraces me
- (C) Helps me with my to do list without asking
- (D) Makes space to spend time with me
- (E) Brings a comforting snack on a tough day

RESULTS

If you answered 4 or more questions with the letter: (A) Your love language is more likely to be Words of Affirmation (B) Your love language is more likely to be Physical Touch (C) Your love language is more likely to be Acts of Service (D) Your love language is more likely to be Quality Time (E) Your love language is more likely to be Gifts

- DID YOU ENJOY THE QUIZ ABOVE? IF SO, CHECK OUT THESE MINISTRIES BELOW -

ENGAGE PREMARITAL COURSE

Calling all premarital couples! If you're planning to be engaged or married in 2024 then the upcoming Winter/Spring Engage Premarital Course is designed for you! Please email us to get acquainted and get on the list of couples who want to participate at Engage@b4church.org.

REUNION MARRIAGE COURSE

This course is designed for all couples who want to refresh, restore or resurrect their marriage relationship. We are currently meeting with couples to explain the course and get acquainted. Our next cohort starts in January! If you're interested, please email us as soon as possible at Reunion@b4church.org.

IN THE SPACE BELOW, DRAW ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT CHRISTMAS



COMING SOON

NEW SHELTER WORSHIP

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THE NEW SHELTER
CHRISTMAS SONG: *ANGLES WE HAVE HEARD
ON HIGH (GLORIA) LIVE [FEAT. TJ CLEMENTS]*

STREAMING ON ALL PLATFORMS **DECEMBER 15**

WE'LL BE BACK

**SEE YOU IN
THE NEW YEAR!**

JOIN US FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES
STARTING **JANUARY 7, 2024!** WITH
SERVICE TIMES AT 9AM + 11AM.

O HOLY NIGHT

(Musical notation continues with lyrics)

O Ho-ly Night! The stars are bright-ly shi - ning, It is the night of our
Led by the light of faith se-rene-ly beam - ing, With glow-ing hearts by His
Tru- ly He taught us love for one a-noth - er, His law is love and His

dear Sav-iour's birth. Long lay the world in sin and er-ror pin -
cra-dle we stand. O-ver the world a star is sweet-ly gleam -
gos-pel is peace. Chains He shall break, the slave. is ourbroth -

ning. Till He ap-peared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the
ing, Now come the wise-men from O-ri-ent land. The King of kings lay
er, And in His name all op-pres-sion shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in

wea-ry world re-joi-ves, For yon-der breaks a new and glor-ious morn. Fall
thus in low-ly man-ger; In all our tri-als born to be our friend. He
grate-ful chor-us raise we, With all our hearts we praise His ho-ly name. Christ.

— on your knees! Oh, hear — the an-gel voi-ces! O night—
— knows our need, — our weak-ness is no strang-er! Be-hold—
— is the Lord! — Oh, praise — His name for-ev-er! His pow'r—

— di-vine, — O night — when Christ was born; — O
— your King! — Be-fore — him low-ly bend! — Be-
— and glo-ry — ev-er-more pro-claim! — His

night, — O Ho-ly Night, — O night di-vine!
hold — your King! — Be-fore Him low-ly bend!
pow'r — and glo-ry — ev-er-more pro-claim!