

## "West side story"

Ready or not Christmas is here!

Can you believe the year is almost over and Christmas is just a few days away? More importantly are you ready? Well, I'm not! My Christmas list is still long and unfinished. Maybe you are one of the organized people that I'm so jealous of and all your shopping and planning is completed. Well either way, whether you are super organized or "organizationally challenged" like me, Christmas can still be overwhelming. The parties, shopping, traveling, end of year business, relatives, etc. can leave us exhausted and emotionally depleted. Some of us hurt with memories of loved ones we won't see at Christmas or are disappointed with people we have to face again, and don't want to see. Some of us are financially strapped and wonder how we will pay for everything. Or you may be like me and love some parts of Christmas but dislike others. Well however you feel about Christmas let's remember what it all is really supposed to be about. Let's remember our Savior Jesus Christ. ***Luke 2:10-14 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ<sup>4</sup> the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."***



Take time to read the Christmas story with your family or by yourself and reflect upon God's greatest gift to us all, His Son Jesus Christ. Another thing you can do to truly celebrate Christmas and remember what God gave us is to serve and give to others. Our church does not have a large elaborate Christmas pageant. We will have some special Christmas music, a beautiful Christmas Eve Communion Service, and by the time you read this the children will have put on another Christmas play Sunday December 12th. They have been practicing for months so it should be wonderful. Also, once again we will be giving new shoes to about 150 orphans in three different orphanages in Juarez for Christmas. They will receive not only new shoes and other presents but hear the Christmas

story about the birth of Jesus.

However, probably the most special thing left to participate in is the Christmas Eve Communion Service. It is not long and elaborate, but short, simple, and beautiful. Once again, we will have a stage outside and let people sit in their cars or gather around fire pits and sip hot chocolate and eat cookies. We sing, light candles, have a very short message, and have a beautiful communion to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Those of you who want to come inside the building we have the sanctuary decorated and you can come in and just pray for a while, and then go home with your families to finish celebrating Christmas together.

So don't miss out on the fun as we celebrate Christmas together!

Love,

Joe

