

# December 2024

## Why Christians Celebrate Christmas

Many people argue that Christians shouldn't need a special day to celebrate Christ, since we recognize Jesus every Sunday and should be reminded of God's love every day. Some even claim that Christmas is actually rooted in pagan traditions, adapted to increase Christian followers. They point out that symbols like the tree, lights, and celebrations have origins in pre-Christian customs, introduced during the Roman Empire's conversion to Christianity under Emperor Constantine. Furthermore, they note that there is no record of Jesus' disciples celebrating His birth. In fact, the only celebration Jesus directly commanded was communion. So why do Christians celebrate Christmas?

When Jesus was crucified, He fulfilled the Old Testament Law, which included the practice of observing specific holy days like Passover. God had instructed the Israelites not to adopt pagan practices of worship when they entered the promised land, and when they ignored these commands, it led to their exile. Even in exile, the Jewish people held to the promise of a coming Messiah who would rescue them. They continued celebrating the Passover, commemorating their deliverance from Egypt and maintaining hope that God would one day send a Redeemer.

When Jesus came, He fulfilled this promise and changed everything. Since early Christians weren't allowed to worship in Jewish synagogues, they began gathering in their homes, away from Jewish influence. Christianity began to develop a more Gentile character. Jesus didn't leave a detailed set of instructions on worship; He simply commanded His followers to "go into all the world, teach, and baptize." We see Paul putting this into practice in Athens, where he connected with people by referencing their altar to an "unknown god" (Acts 17:22-25). Paul used elements of their culture to introduce them to Christ. Early Christians, though they were often forced to worship underground, obeyed this command with great sacrifice.

When Constantine legalized Christianity and made it the state religion, it grew rapidly across the Roman Empire and beyond. Pagan cults, which had once been dominant, became outlawed, and the church found ways to repurpose some familiar symbols and practices to point to Jesus. The early church didn't adopt these symbols for their original meanings but transformed them to reflect Christ's light. This is why we celebrate Christmas today—not because we borrowed pagan customs but because we redeemed them, using them as reminders of Jesus' birth and mission.

Today, when people see Christmas trees, lights, and other symbols, they're reminded of Jesus. Christmas is the start of the Christian celebration, which culminates at Easter. It's a time of hope and light, celebrating Christ's first coming and anticipating His return. Even though we don't know the exact date of Jesus' birth, many people associate December 25 with that event, seeing it as a time to remember the greatest gift we've received. While Christians don't need a special day to worship, the world needs a reminder of who Jesus is and the hope He brings. That is why we celebrate Christmas.

In Christ, Brian

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### WEBSITE:

[www.NewLifeDaily.org](http://www.NewLifeDaily.org)

### FACEBOOK PAGE:

New Life Christian Church

### INSTAGRAM:

nlccalbertlea

### ADDRESS:

1705 SE Marshall ST  
Albert Lea, MN 56007

### MISSION STATEMENT:

To embrace all people, sharing the love, joy, faith, and truths that we have come to know in Christ Jesus.

### VISION STATEMENT:

Our vision is to provide encouragement, connection, and discipleship within Christ's church as we reach out in love to witness to the world around us.

## DECEMBER MEETINGS

**Deacon's Meeting:** 9:00 am Sunday, Dec 1  
**Family Fellowship:** 5:30 pm Dec  
**Elder's Meeting:** 12:00 pm Thursday Dec  
**Council Meeting:** Wed, Dec at 7:00 pm  
**Aim Hi:** 11:30am Thursday, Dec 19

## Important Dates and INFORMATION

**Dec 8**  
Youth Christmas Program

**Dec 13-14**  
Live Nativity

**Dec 24**  
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

**Dec 25**  
Christmas Day  
Offices Closed

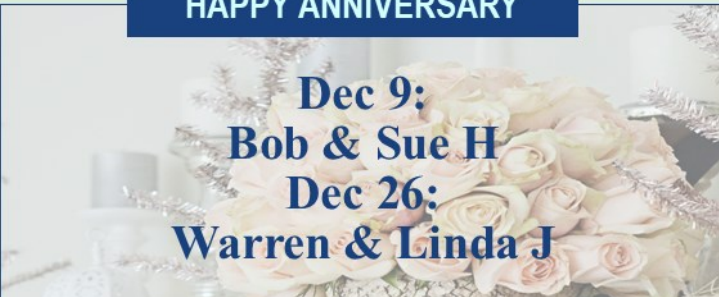
**Dec 31-Jan 1**  
New Year's Eve  
Offices Closed

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Dec 2: Zechariah S  
Dec 4: Emily H  
Dec 5: Melissa G  
Dec 14: Marcus H  
Dec 18: Scott S  
Dec 19: Lola F  
Dec 20: Bethany H  
Dec 26: Bob N  
Dec 30: Andrew H

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



**Dec 9:**  
**Bob & Sue H**  
**Dec 26:**  
**Warren & Linda J**



29<sup>th</sup>  
Annual  
Drive Thru  
Live Nativity

Friday, December 13, 2024  
and  
Saturday, December 14, 2024

6:30 ~ 8:30 pm

New Life Christian Church  
1705 SE Marshall ST  
Albert Lea, MN 56007  
(Between Napa & Advanced Auto)

Free Admission




## YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 8 at 10:30am

Come celebrate the Christmas season with us as the NLCC Youth present their Annual Christmas Service. All aspects of the mornings service will be presented by the youth.

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORTS



Year End reports for all NLCC committees and groups will be due **January 15, 2025**. Please submit to the Church office.

## DECEMBER SERVING SCHEDULE

SUNDAY SERVICE	1	8	15	22	29
COMMUNION	Adam H	Youth	Bob S	Jeremie B	Dave A
OFFERING PRAYER	Wayne G	Youth	Jeremie B	Dave A	Ryan S
COMMUNION PREP	Cindy C	Cindy C	Cindy C	Cindy C	Cindy C
GREETERS		Youth			
NURSERY ATTENDANTS	Grace G	Sue H	Cindy A	Grace G	Sue H
TECH TEAM (Sound, Slides, Camera)	Mason, Marlena, Troy/Brian	Mason/Brian, Sheila, Troy	Mason, Marlena, Anna	Brian, Sheila, Troy	Troy, Mason, Brian
CONGREGATIONAL EVENTS		LIVE NATIVITY Dec 13, 14			
WED NIGHT FELLOWSHIP	4	11	18	25	
MEAL	Cindy, Kathy	Jeff, Gary	Sue, Bob H	NO FELLOWSHIP	
DESSERTS	Sue, Beth, Diane	Linda, Gary Kelly R	Lu, Grace, Michelle	School Break 12/23-1/5	

### MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

BEGINS Thursday, January 9  
6:30 - 7:30pm (Weekly)  
Ages 16+

All men are encouraged to attend this bible study to be held Thursday evenings at the church. It will be held simultaneously with the women's study but in a separate room.

Please bring your bibles.  
(More details to follow prior to start of class).

Friends are welcome to attend.  
Coffee will be provided. Treats for all are welcome!

\*\*\*Child care will be provided

### New Member Class

6:30 - 7:30 pm

January 7, 14, 21, 28

We are excited to announce a new members class that will begin in January of 2025.

This class is designed to enhance your knowledge and understanding of the beliefs of NLCC that are founded in the restoration movement and will be required for all those wanting to place membership with NLCC. See Brian for details or questions.

We look forward to seeing you there!

### LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Begins Thursday, January 9

6:30 - 7:30 pm (Weekly)

Ages 16+

**Book:** (Book is not required for class).

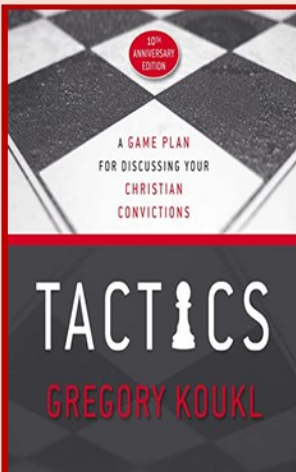
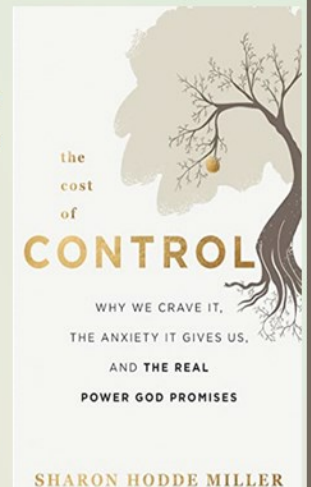
**The Cost of Control**

by Sharon Hodde Miller

#### Short Synopsis:

Why we crave control, the anxiety it gives us, and the real power God promises. Discover the real power God has given us is in Christ and learn about a better way to steward His influence over your life.

\*\*\*Child care will be provided



### Adult Sunday School Series

Sunday's at 9:15 am.

Learn the tactics of confidently and gracefully sharing our faith with others.

Based on Matthew 28:20.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <b>DEACONS</b> 9am	2	3	4 Wed Fellowship 5:30 pm	5 <b>ELDER'S MTG</b> 12 pm	6	7
8 <b>Youth Christmas Program</b> 1030am <b>Missions Mtg</b> 12 pm	9	10 <b>LIVE NATIVITY SET UP</b>	11 Wed Fellowship 5:30 pm <b>COUNCIL MTG</b> 7pm	12	13 <b>LIVE NATIVITY</b> 5:30 - 9 PM	14 <b>LIVE NATIVITY</b> 5:30 - 9 PM
15	16	17	18 Wed Fellowship 5:30 pm	19 <b>AIM HIGH</b> 11:30 an	20	21
22	23 <b>NO SCHOOL</b> <b>ISD 241</b> <b>12/23 - 1/3</b>	24 <b>Christmas Eve Service</b> 7:00 pm	25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26	27	28
29	30	31				

New Life Christian Church  
1705 SE Marshall  
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New Life Christian is a family of believers who love the Lord, one another, and do our best to live and reveal the love of Christ to the world around us. We are devoted to the Word of God and claim its joy, power and authority. We know that through Jesus Christ we have forgiveness, fellowship, friendship and peace. We know that we are far from perfect, but we also know that God is at work in our lives and forgives our failures. We know that there are few things that bring greater joy in life than sharing God's Good News of Salvation and making new friends as we come to know Christ better. We know that "church" is not about the things we say or ceremonies or traditions. Instead, we understand that church is all about growing, loving, learning and caring. We know that worship is not supposed to be stuffy and boring but is at its best when it is vital, relevant and even fun. We know that we would love to meet you and share the joy that we have found at New Life Christian Church.