

REFLECTIONS

It's time to put away Christmas. You know the routine: get out the boxes to re-store the decorations, undecorate the tree and the various places in the house, remove the tree, bring in the outside stuff, and finally pack it all away. I should not have been surprised to learn that there is a social media controversy over when to undecorate a Christmas Tree. Social media is the birthing room of all controversies great and small. It is the playground of brats and bullies. Apparently, there is a specific date on which to undecorate a Christmas tree. Some people disagree. Those who call themselves Christmas Traditionalists view Epiphany as the sacred date. Their reasoning lies in that the Twelve Days of Christmas concludes on January 6, the 12th Day, Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day, the day Jesus is made known to the Gentile world. Those who are the true believers of Christmas, as the controversy seems to imply, are right because of a centuries-old tradition. Everyone else must be a pagan or heretic. All I want to do is put away the extra stuff.

I have known people who never took down their Christmas tree. Some moved fully decorated trees in and out of a special closet. I've known others who redecorated their tree every few weeks—Valentine's, St Patrick's, Easter, Mother's Day... throughout the whole year. Other people have trees with lights on them year-round because it makes them feel better. I have even known some people who do not always put up a Christmas tree. Who is the troublemaker?

Jesus never had a Christmas tree. His tree was a cross. Jesus never wrapped a Christmas present. His gift was the Word made flesh. Jesus never sang a Christmas carol or wished anyone a Merry Christmas. His salutation was "follow me." Jesus never signed a Christmas card. His love was written in red—*while we were yet enemies of God, Christ died for us.*

Keep healthy. Pray mightily. Enjoy your life today. Put away the stuff and Celebrate Jesus. And let's experience the love and power of God together.

Bro. Darryl

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The Evangel

Braden Park Baptist Church
4739 East Fifth Street (5th & Yale)
Tulsa, OK 74112-2716

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning

Continental Breakfast

Worship

Bible Study & Conversation

9:20 a.m.

10:00 a.m.

11:15 a.m.

Wednesday Evening

The People's Pantry

The Clothes Closet Ministry

Prayer Service

5:00 p.m.

6:30 p.m.

Dr. Darryl DeBorde, Minister
Bill Ess, Music Minister

Telephone (918) 834-3378

Fax (918) 834-3440

office@BradenPark.org

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The Evangel



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Braden Park Baptist Church
Tulsa, Oklahoma

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January 5, 2024

No. 1



Our Church Family

AT HOME

Kevin Avery	Paula McPherson
Alice Barrett	Georgia Metcalf
Elizabeth Burke	Bonnie Nutting
Marion Corbett	Annette Ford Parker
Lydia Ford	Margaret VanHorn

IN THE HOSPITAL

Georgia Metcalf	Ascension St John, Utica
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

January

5	Georgia Metcalf
6	Casey Gilmore
9	Sunni Wager
20	Nancy Holdt

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

January

19	Judy and Ray Martin	63 Years
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OUR LOVE AND SYMPATHY is extended to the family and friends of **Bill Shouse** in his passing on December 22, 2023. Bill was 98-years-old and served as our Minister of Music from 1970-73.

Looking Ahead

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

9:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
10:00 a.m. Promises, Great and Precious
—2 Peter 1:1-4

God's Word is filled with declarations of promises for God's people. Covenants and Promises draw us closer to the Lord and each other. Join with us as we begin a study of the *Promises, Great and Precious*. Invite your family and friends to church this week and be blessed.

11:15 a.m. Conversations with the Pastor
Ladies Bible Study
11:55 a.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

8:45 a.m. Monday Morning Prayers
Call (712) 832-8330, then access code: 887-7647

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

8:00 p.m. Prayer for the Nations
Kevin Avery's Facebook Zoom link

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

5:00 p.m. People's Pantry Ministry
Clothes Closet Ministry
6:30 p.m. Prayer Service

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

10:00 a.m. Kevin Avery, preaching

Behind the Scenes

THANK YOU TO OUR KITCHEN TEAM

A great big THANK YOU to *Russell Ford, Ben Shepard, Patty Hickman, Katy Cook and Jason Ford* who prepared from scratch our holiday breakfasts, which kicked off the Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve services in a beautiful—and delicious—way. You are gratefully appreciated!

Each of us who serve on the church staff would like to say "Thank You" for the sweet Christmas gifts and cards during this holiday season. Your prayers and kindness mean everything to us.

May the Lord richly bless you with the power of His Love.

Have a Blessed New Year!

AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER FOR 2024

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give (Name) the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that (he/she) may know Him better. I pray also that the eyes of () heart may be enlightened in order that () may know the hope to which He has called (), the riches of His glorious inheritance of the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. (Ephesians 1:17-19a)

FOR THE CHURCH RECORD

Weekly Budget Need	\$ 2,050.00
General Receipts December 31	\$ 508.00
Lottie Moon Global Missions Offerings To Date	\$ 1,430.00

Thank You to all who are providing sustaining tithes and offerings.