

Christmas Traditions

TENNESSEE

At New Hope **WAC**, we host our annual Christmas party on the first Monday of December. Rather than exchanging gifts with each other, we choose to bless an organization or individual(s) with gifts instead. One year, we collected socks for the local Rescue Mission—and wore our “crazy” socks to the party. Another year, we each brought “bras” to donate to women in the Ivory Coast. One Christmas, we donated pajamas to

the Tennessee Children’s Center and Hope Center, and of course, we all showed up in our PJs! Another year, we asked for a list of needs from Cumberland Camp, and each of us brought an item from that list.

Each year, we come up with a theme and recipient and bring gifts to donate. As you can see, we have loads of fun!

Our **church**, New Hope Free Will Baptist, has participated in Operation Christmas Child for several years, and it’s something I look forward to each year. It’s not only a chance to give to children but also an opportunity to share the gospel around the world—two things I’m passionate about: giving to children and giving to missions!

New Hope is a generous church, and each year the

number of boxes we donate has increased. Families, Sunday School classes, and individuals really get into the spirit of Christmas giving, and we usually send several hundred boxes.

I help with this ministry, and I am always overwhelmed and excited to see the many “fluffy” boxes we pack. (We call them “fluffy” because the lids will not close all the way—we have to secure them with rubber bands!) This is a tradition that is truly close to my heart.

Family. I remember several special traditions from my childhood. On Christmas morning, we always got up early and were joined by my grandparents. Every year, I’d receive a box of fruit and some fireworks, and all my gifts would be waiting for me under the tree unwrapped.

I still remember walking into the room and being overwhelmed with everything I saw.

One of my favorite traditions began after I got married.

My mom started the tradition of our immediate family getting together early Christmas morning for breakfast. She would prepare a “feast,” and after eating





together, we'd open presents. Even as adults, my parents always spoiled us with special gifts.

As my parents grew older, my brother and I started a new tradition—giving them

“huge” stockings filled with gifts, snacks, and gift cards. They would get so excited to see what surprises were inside.

Christmas was a very celebrated holiday in our family. Now that my parents are no longer with us, remembering these traditions brings me great joy!

Pam Buck—New Hope FWB, Tennessee; WAC Board, TN

NORTH CAROLINA

One tradition that still brings me joy is how, while my children were growing up, we turned ornament shopping into a fun evening. Each year, we searched for the perfect ornament to represent a milestone or memorable event from that year. Our collection included everything from a school bus to celebrate the beginning of their school career, to a football-themed ornament when our son joined the team, and even a custom driver's license ornament. With each passing year, our Christmas tree became a reflection of their childhood—decorated with memories and reminders of their accomplishments.

Cindy Bird—Pastor's Wife: Marion First FWB Church in Marion, NC; Blue Ridge WAC Treasurer; NCWAC Treasurer

TEXAS

My favorite Christmas traditions are reading the Christmas story and singing on Christmas morning with my children. There is nothing better than starting Christmas with worshiping the Lord! At some point during the day, we have a birthday party for Jesus and share what He means to us. I want Christmas to be more than the latest gifts, cute pictures, or going to another event, but about celebrating the birth of our Savior!

Kim Herring—Shallowater, TX

MICHIGAN

Every year, beginning when my daughter was just old enough to stir, she and my mother-in-law would make a homemade red velvet cake—our special dessert for Christmas dinner! We would put candles on it and sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus.

Now that my mother-in-law is no longer able to help due to dementia, my 25-year-old daughter carries on the tradition. Each year, she bakes the cake for our family. A tradition that lives on through her hands!

Susan Newton—North Warren FWB, MI

TEXAS

Our WAC group at Fellowship hosts a Christmas banquet that has been a cherished tradition for over 20 years! Held annually on the first Friday evening in December, the event brings women together for a festive and meaningful celebration.

Each year, ladies volunteer to host a table—personally decorating it and inviting other ladies to join them. Every banquet table is different, and every guest receives a special table favor to take home.

There is also the opportunity to give to missions through our silent auction. Donated items of all kinds are available for bidding, with all proceeds going directly to support missions.

In addition to the auction, ladies enjoy a catered meal and are inspired by a special guest speaker. Tickets are sold to cover the cost of the meal. Our ladies and their friends look forward to this evening of fellowship every year—and it never disappoints!

—Sharon Dickey, Fellowship FWB, TX

