



FIRST CHRISTAIN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
1233 Emerald Rd.
Paulding, Ohio 45879

DISCIPLE DIGEST

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
ISSUE NO. XII-2025
MINISTER: PASTOR RIC BEALS

PHONE 419 399-4576
WEBSITE:firstccpaulding.org
EMAIL: firstccpaulding@gmail.com

Coffee & Conversation 9:00 a.m.

Worship 10:00 a.m.

Adult Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Childrens Sunday School during worship

 **ECEMBER** 
2025

DISCIPLE DIGEST

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)



DECEMBER 2025

MISSION OF FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The mission of this Congregation shall be—

To lead people to faith in Jesus Christ.

To encourage their active commitment to His service.

To facilitate their growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.

Further, it shall be our mission to work for the unity of all Christians and to participate in the common task of building the Kingdom of God.



PASTOR'S PAGE

"...the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

During a recent trip to Walmart, while looking for a card, I saw a Christmas card that had a beautiful silhouette of the newborn Jesus along with Mary and Joseph in the manger and the bible verse above inscribed by the star. For some reason, this verse resonated with me and has stayed with me for the better part of a week. Yes, we have come to the end of another very challenging year in many ways, BUT the light of Christ still shines amidst the darkness of this world, and the darkness has not overcome this light. This is the cause of our joy as we get ready to celebrate Christmas. We will celebrate because no matter what may happen in the world, we will join the angels in song on Christmas Eve when we celebrate the birth of our Messiah.

We must learn to trust the Lord. We must learn to trust in his divine will for us. Last Christmas, none of us knew what this year would bring, but we have to see the hand of God at work in our lives especially in times of so much division and hate. Mary and Joseph had to trust God completely when they had to make the long trek to Bethlehem and then again when they had to flee into Egypt. We ask God to make us more like Mary and Joseph in order to help us trust God as they trusted him. May we be a people of faith and joy that rejoices in the light and hope that Christmas brings.

This light truly does shine in a world full of darkness, and this light must penetrate our hearts. We are called to be the light of Jesus to the world, so that one person at a time, one soul at a time, we can start bringing that light to a world that so desperately needs it. I pray that you and your family have a Blessed Christmas and a grace filled New Year.

**PEACE,
Pastor Ric**

Healing Prayers:

Paula Gutierrez
Michelle Reinhart
*Matt Strayer
Clarence Tullock

Continuing Concerns:

Tony Buchman
Dave Foltz
Elizabeth Miller
*Charlie Simpson
Hollie Simpson
*Denotes Members

First Scriptures

12/07 Isaiah 11: 1-4
12/14 Isaiah 35: 1-4
12/21 Isaiah 7: 14-16
12/28 Isaiah 63: 7-9

Sermons

If you would like to hear a specific sermon a 2nd time they are available on our website at firstcccpaulding.org or our facebook page.

Flowers For Worship:

12/07 Advent Blessings
12/14 Herm Guelde -In Memory of Jean
12/21 Merry Christmas
12/28 Have a Blessed New Year

Nursing Home Residents..

The Gardens

*Romaine Boundy
Rich English

Van Crest of Payne

Lorean McCollum
Veronica "Ronnie" Kromer

Military:

Cameron Cramer
Miranda E. Iler
Morgan R. Iler

Poinsettias



If you would like to bring in a poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary, please have them to the church by December 14th.

December Servers

Elders: Charlie Simpson & Larry Grace

Worship Leader: Advent Families

First Scripture: Corey Harris

Greeter: Linda Reinhart



12/01 Bruce Gunderman
12/03 Emma Hoover
12/06 Sandi Vance
12/07 Dokkota Clippinger
12/07 Amanda Harris
12/08 Lindsey Hormann
12/08 Peggy Yenser
12/10 Max Reinhart
12/12 Carlie Lero
12/15 Jessica Trickett
12/16 Tammy Boroff
12/17 Piper Pease
12/18 Marsha Adkins
12/18 Amanda Wilkinson
12/19 Emma Townley
12/20 Cindy Grace
12/26 Carter Cook
12/26 Aleigha Vance
12/28 Barrett Bandy
12/28 Janelle Lero
12/28 Lance Mawer
12/28 Taylor Mawer
12/31 Jennifer Lero

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

12/07 Dennis & Sandi Vance
12/08 Dan & Shirley Workman
12/28 Gary & Vicki McClure



December 24th 6 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

	Total	Member	Non Member	Child	Visitor	Online
10/26	71	42	11	16	2	172
11/02	94	51	12	22	9	165
11/09	71	41	10	16	4	153
11/16	74	48	7	16	2	102
11/23	92	49	15	18	10	

From the Elders

A devotion by Lisa M. Samra entitled

Winter Snow

In winter, I often wake to the beautiful surprise of a world blanketed in the peace and quiet of an early morning snow. Not loudly like a spring thunderstorm that announces its presence in the night, snow comes softly.

In "Winter Snow Song," Audrey Assad sings that Jesus could have come to earth in power like a hurricane, but instead He came quietly and slowly like the winter snow falling softly in the night outside my window.

Jesus's arrival took many by quiet surprise, Instead of being born in a palace, He was born in an unlikely place, a humble dwelling outside Bethlehem. And He slept in the only bed available, a manger (Luke 2:7). Instead of being attended by royalty and government officials, Jesus was welcomed by lowly shepherds (vv. 15-16) Instead of having wealth, Jesus's parents could only afford the inexpensive sacrifice of two birds when they presented Him at the temple (v. 24).

The unassuming way Jesus entered the world was foreshadowed by the prophet Isaiah, who prophesied the coming Savior would "not shout or cry out" (Isaiah 42:2) nor would He come in power that might break a damaged reed or extinguish a struggling flame (v. 3). Instead He came gently in order to draw us to Himself with His offer of peace with God—a peace still available to anyone who believes the unexpected story of a Savior born in a manger.

Lord Jesus, thank You for willingly giving up Your majesty and coming to earth in order to offer peace.



Christmas Program

December 14th

6 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate the season with a youth presentation along with music by our women and a performance by the bell choir.



Women's Ecumenical Potluck/Program

St. Paul Lutheran Church

December 4th

5:30 p.m.

Please bring a dish to share as we enjoy an evening of food and Christmas fellowship with women of the community.

Red Cross Blood Drive

December 4th

In the Fellowship Hall

Please contact the Red Cross at
<https://www.redcross.org/>
to schedule your appointment.



**American
Red Cross**



Disciples Women



We will not be meeting for a regular meeting in December.

The chicken pie/steak supper was well attended.

We made a profit just over \$1526.09.

Thank you so much for your donations and hard work. The bazaar profit was \$203.00. You are very much appreciated.

The Ecumenical Potluck and Program will be December 4th at the St. Paul Lutheran Church beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Our DWM will be celebrating the Christmas season on December 11th at the Pancake House.

We will leave the church at 5 p.m. We will be wearing our most festive Christmas sweaters, we will enjoy a spirited 5-10 dollar gift exchange. Please sign up on the bulletin board by December 7th if you are attending.

Reconsider the Rush

The Christmas rush leads to stress for many people. But author Burton Hills viewed the madness from another perspective:

"Eventually, the hour comes when the rushing ends and the race against the calendar mercifully comes to a close. It is only now, perhaps, that we truly recognize the spirit of Christmas. It is not a matter of days or weeks, but of centuries — [more than] twenty of them now since that holy night in Bethlehem. Regarded in this manner, the pre-Christmas rush may do us greater service than we realize. With all its temporal confusion, it may just help us to see that by contrast, Christmas itself is eternal."



DISCIPLES MEN'S GROUP



The Men's group meets the third Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m. All men of the church are invited to come. However they will not meet in December. See You in January.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

The children continue to meet following children's moment during worship.

Children's Bell Choir is meeting the 3rd Sunday of each month following children's moment.

The Sunday School class for adults meets every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. Everyone is invited to attend.



Outreach

We are planning to collect mittens and gloves for the Christmas tree along with adopting 3 families. We will also be providing Christmas dinner for the families. The gift tags will be on the tree, you take a tag, buy and wrap the gift, place the tag on the outside of the package and return it under the tree. Thank you for supporting this ministry

Outreach Committee

Genelta, Vicki and Sue Simpson

Congratulations

Avalyn Rae-Ann Bates was welcomed by Jayden Daniels & Nathan Bates. Grandparents are Heather & Wally Daniels. Great Grandparents are Dave & Lori Clark and Wally & the late Teri Daniels.



Caring and Sharing Food Pantry

2026 Church Officers

Board Chair-Clint Reinhart

Board Vice Chair-Matt Strayer

Board Secretary-Donna Hibbard

Financial Secretary-Tracy Gunderman

Treasurer- Denise Renollet



COUNTERS

12/07 Matt Strayer, Tracy Gunderman, Cindy Grace

12/14 Jan Commers, Paul Long, Sandy Bandy

12/21 Max Hibbard, Corey Harris, Clint Reinhart

12/28 Nicole Harris, Angela Bowers, Gary McClure

One way you can help us do what we do: donate food. Here's a list of items that are very low in our warehouse.

Baking mixes for bread, cookies, muffins, cakes, etc.

Baking ingredients like small-sized oil, crisco, sugar, flour and more

Condiments

Potatoes -- raw or instant, canned, bagged or boxed

Canned tuna

Canned fruit

Garden produce

Drop off donations 9 am to noon Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Please ring the donations door doorbell on the north side of the building. Alternative drop off time can be arranged by contacting us in advance. DO NOT leave donations outside.

Contact information changes

Does the office have your current phone number or address? What about your birthdate? If not, please turn your correct info into the office.



QR Code Donation

The QR code has made it convenient for donations to the church to be made.

This is working very well. It is always available on the facebook page and the firstcccpaulding.org webpage. Your donations make continuing our ministry possible. Thank You!

CHURCH CHUCKLES

A preacher announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is" we have enough money to pay for our new roof. The bad news is: it's still out there in your pockets."

First Christian Church Fund Summary

	100 TITHES AND OFFERINGS	108 RECONCILIATION	118 Elavon Tithes/Offerings	200 BUILDING/MAINT.	700 MENS GROUP	Total
10/04/2025	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
10/05/2025	3,368.00	50.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	3,423.00
10/09/2025	0.00	0.00	350.00	0.00	0.00	350.00
10/12/2025	1,230.25	0.00	50.00	10.00	0.00	1,290.25
10/19/2025	1,182.00	25.00	65.00	5.00	30.00	1,307.00
10/25/2025	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
10/26/2025	1,297.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	1,797.00
Total	7,077.25	75.00	1,065.00	20.00	30.00	8,267.25

Tracy Gunderman

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL-9 A.M.

WORSHIP: SUNDAYS-10 A.M.

CHILDRENS SUNDAY SCHOOL FOLLOWING
CHILDRENS MOMENT

BELL CHOIR EVERY SUNDAY FOLLOWING
WORSHIP

PASTORS HOURS: TUES-THRU. 8 A.M. 12 P.M.

SECRETARY OFFICE HOURS: TUES.-FRIDAY 8 A.M.-12 P.M

"Jesus did not come to make God's love possible,
but to make God's love visible."
—Author unknown



DECEMBER 2025



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 WOR/MEM/TE CH MEETING- NOON	RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE ECUMENICAL POTLUCK 5:30	5	6
7	8	9	10 STEWARD/FIN. -6:30 P.M.	11 DWM CHRISTMAS GATHERING-5	12	13
14 CHRISTMAS PROGRAM-6 P.M.	15	16 NO BOARD MEETING	17	18	19	20 NO MENS MEETING
21	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE- 6 P.M.	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS	26	27
28	29	30	31 NEW YEARS EVE	HAPPY NEW YEAR		

www.calendaroptions.com

SERMONS

12/07 Take the Garbage Out! Matthew 3: 1-12
12/14 Life is Hard, Matthew 11: 2-11
12/21 Don't Be Afraid to be Happy, Matthew 18-25
12/28 Christmas Gifts for You, Luke 2: 15-21

SERVERS:

ELDERS: Charlie Simpson & Larry Grace
WORSHIP LEADER: Advent Families
FIRST SCRIPTURE: Corey Harris
GREETER: Linda Reinhart

Candles That Tell a Story



Lighting its candles each Sunday is a treasured tradition during the four weeks of Advent. Depending on denomination, churches use different color combinations for the candles. Some place four blue candles around the wreath with a white one in the center, while others use all white. Many light purple candles on the first two Sundays, pink on the third, purple again on the fourth, and then a large white candle on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Each part of the wreath carries symbolic meaning:

- **The wreath:** Its circular shape represents the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. The green symbolizes eternal life.
- **The four candles:** Mark the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents 1,000 years, totaling 4,000 years from Adam and Eve to Christ's birth.
- **Purple candles:** in ancient times, was expensive and was considered the color of royalty and kings. On Christmas, Christ is proclaimed King of Kings. Purple also symbolizes humility and penitence. The first purple candle represents Hope; the second, Peace; and the final purple candle, Love.
- **Blue candles:** Blue is another color often used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use blue candles to symbolize the night sky and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.
- **The pink candle:** Lit on the third Sunday, it represents Joy and marks the halfway point of Advent.
- **The white candle:** The large white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ the Savior — "the light of the world."

The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people — "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5, NRSV).

The Advent wreath is more than just greenery and candles—it's a symbol of watchfulness and growing joy as Christmas draws near.

Christian symbol



POINSETTIA — This shrub, native to Mexico, is at the heart of legend about a poor girl who wanted to bring Baby Jesus a gift one Christmas Eve. As she walked to church, she gathered a bouquet of weeds — which Jesus miraculously transformed into lovely red flowers. Thus the poinsettia (named for Joel Poinsett, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico who first brought the plant to America) is known in Mexico as la flor de la Nochebuena (flower of the Holy Night). The poinsettia is also an ideal Christmas symbol because its leaves turn red when deprived of sunlight and its flowers (the red inner buds) bloom in December.

Bible Scavenger Hunt

FOR ADVENT



Prepare for Christmas with this Bible-based Advent activity. Each day in December, look up the answer to one question.

1

What will God's Son be called?
(Isaiah 7:14)

2

Where will Jesus reign?
(Isaiah 9:7)

3

Where will Jesus be born?
(Micah 5:2)

How many generations are between Abraham and the Christ?
(Matthew 1:17)

5

Who tells Mary she is having a baby?
(Luke 1:26-31)

Who issues the decree about a census?
(Luke 2:1)

9

What does Jesus' name mean?
(Matthew 1:21)

Until his son John the Baptist is born, what can Zechariah not do?
(Luke 1:20, 64)

8

4

What does Mary say that God has done for her?
(Luke 1:49)

Which relative of Mary is also having a baby?
(Luke 1:41)

6

10

From where do Joseph and Mary start their journey to Bethlehem?
(Luke 2:4)

What does Mary use to wrap up baby Jesus?
(Luke 2:7)

13

What serves as Jesus' first bed?
(Luke 2:7)

Who tells the shepherds the good news about Jesus' birth?
(Luke 2:8-12)

When the shepherds tell others about Jesus, how do people react?
(Luke 2:8-12)

15



18

Who is upset to hear about a newborn King?
(Matthew 2:3)

From what direction do the wise men (or Magi) come to worship Jesus?
(Matthew 2:1-2)

16

On what day is Jesus presented in the temple?
(Luke 2:21)

Where does Joseph flee with his family for safety?
(Matthew 2:14)

What three gifts does Jesus receive from the wise men?
(Matthew 2:11)

17

Where do all our gifts come from?
(James 1:17)



24

When does Jesus' family return to Israel?
(Matthew 2:19-21)

In what district does Jesus grow up?
(Matthew 2:22)

What free gift does God give us through Jesus, his Son?
(1 John 5:11)

23

How should we respond to our gifts?
(2 Corinthians 9:15)



25



The
Season
of

Advent

READING PLAN

Hope

- ◇ Day 1: Jeremiah 29:10-14
- ◇ Day 2: Romans 15:8-13
- ◇ Day 3: 1 Peter 1:3-12
- ◇ Day 4: Hebrews 10:19-39
- ◇ Day 5: Psalm 33
- ◇ Day 6: Titus 2:11- 3:8

Peace

- ◇ Day 7: Isaiah 9:1-7
- ◇ Day 8: John 14:1-7, 25-31
- ◇ Day 9: John 16:25-33
- ◇ Day 10: Romans 5:1-11
- ◇ Day 11: Ephesians 2:11-22
- ◇ Day 12: Colossians 3:1-17

Joy

- ◇ Day 13: Philippians 4:4-9
- ◇ Day 14: Psalm 16
- ◇ Day 15: James 1:2-18
- ◇ Day 16: Psalm 30
- ◇ Day 17: Luke 2:8-20
- ◇ Day 18: John 15:1-11

Love

- ◇ Day 19: Micah 7:18-20
- ◇ Day 20: Romans 8:31-39
- ◇ Day 21: John 3:16-21
- ◇ Day 22: 1 John 4:7-21
- ◇ Day 23: Philippians 2:1-11
- ◇ Day 24: 2 Thessalonians 2:13 – 3:5
- ◇ Day 25: Ephesians 2:1-10



12 Christmas PRAYERS

1.Expectation

Fill us with hope, knowing that God kept his promise to send his Son to earth. (See Isaiah 9:6-7.)

2.Wonder

Just as the angel's message left Mary in awe, remind us of the joyful news of Jesus' coming. (See Luke 1:31-33.)

3.Humility

Like Joseph, make us willing to trust God and humbly care for others. (See Matthew 1:20-21.)

4.Obedience

On our earthly journey, teach us to follow your commands, just as Joseph and Mary obediently traveled to Bethlehem. (See Luke 2:4-5.)

5.Provision

Thank you for meeting all our needs, as you provided a stable and manger bed for Baby Jesus. (See Luke 2:6-7.)

6.Peace

Fill us with your perfect peace, which the angels proclaimed when Jesus was born. (See Luke 2:13-14.)

7.Praising

Remind us to follow the shepherds' example of celebrating and sharing the good news of Jesus' birth. (See Luke 2:16-18.)

8.Grateful

Keep us thankful for God's greatest gift, which Mary treasured on the first Christmas. (See Luke 2:19.)

9.Saved

May Jesus' precious name remind us of his power to save us from our sins. (See Matthew 1:21.)

10.Fulfilled

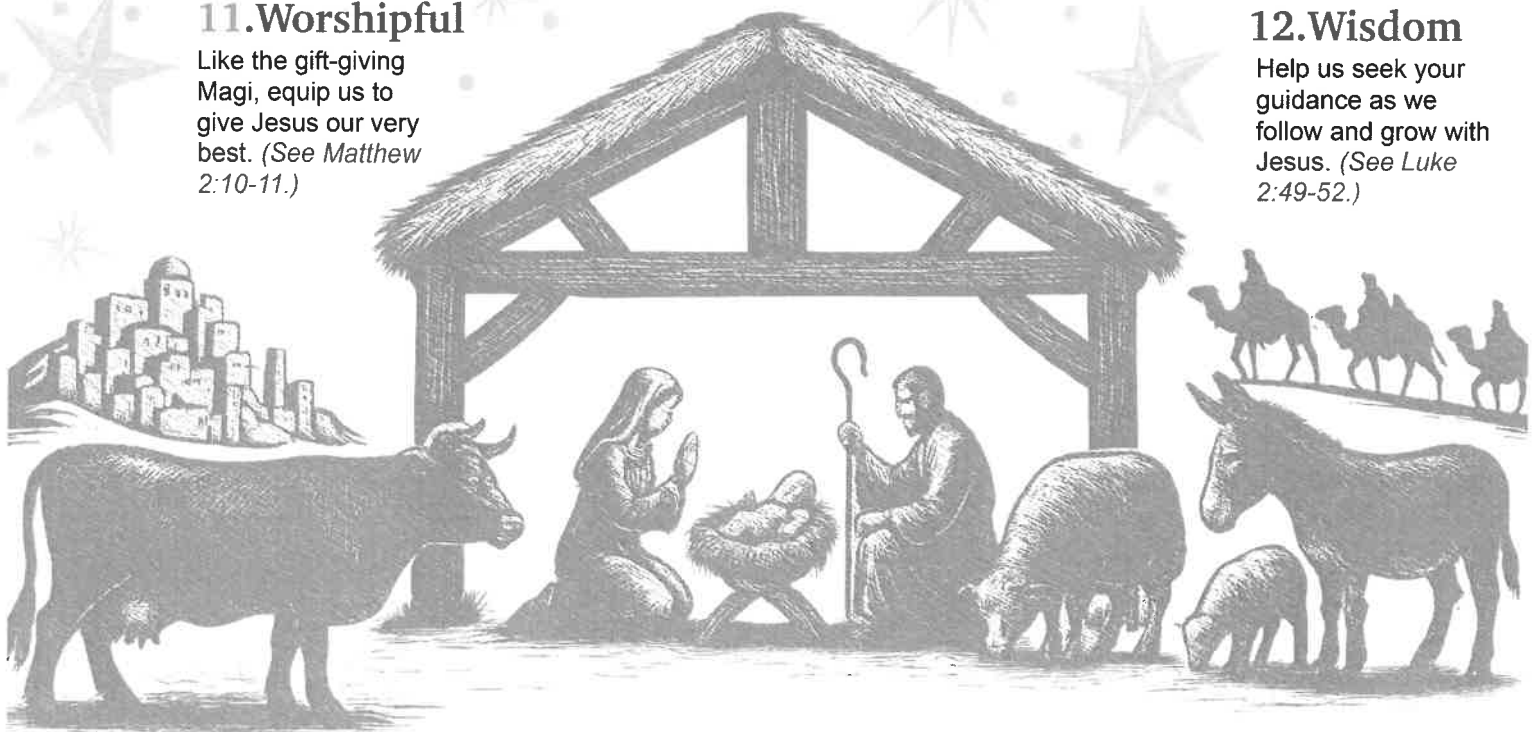
Give us content hearts, just as Simeon and Anna found fulfillment in the promised Savior. (See Luke 2:28-32.)

11.Worshipful

Like the gift-giving Magi, equip us to give Jesus our very best. (See Matthew 2:10-11.)

12.Wisdom

Help us seek your guidance as we follow and grow with Jesus. (See Luke 2:49-52.)



Puzzle!

The Christmas Story

Unscramble each set of letters to form a word from the Christmas story. One letter in each set doesn't belong. Write each extra letter below, on the line above the correct number. Then answer the question: What did we all receive at Christmas?

- (1) TGLBEHHEME _____
- (2) NEAGLO _____
- (3) NRMEDAG _____
- (4) ODEKSNY _____
- (5) AMGYR _____
- (6) OHESJIP _____
- (7) EFJSUS _____
- (8) ITEENMSW _____
- (9) SPHDSREEO _____
- (10) EMCFAL _____
- (11) TLSRA _____
- (12) CSSNUEO _____
- (13) HEVSPE _____
- (14) ENIN _____



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14

Answers: Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E), God's gift of love (N)

Bible Quiz



Who told Mary that her child would be called "the Son of the Most High"?

- A. Zechariah
- B. Gabriel
- C. Simeon
- D. Joseph

Christmas Card treasures



Turn old Christmas cards into beautiful keepsake ornaments! It's a fun, simple way to give new life to cards you've received and add a handmade touch to your tree.



What you need:

- Christmas cards
- Scissors
- Glue
- Circle pattern (cut from cardboard or trace around object)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or ribbon
- Glitter (optional)

What you do:

1. Trace a circle onto two Christmas cards.
2. Cut out the circles and glue the backs together.
3. Decorate the edges with glitter or ribbon for extra sparkle.
4. Punch a hole at the top and thread yarn or ribbon through to hang.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.
— James 1:17 (NIV)