

Adopt a Family for Christmas- This year we are sponsoring two families that the Refine Church in Brooklyn/downtown Cleveland have found to be in direct need of having a better Christmas.

Some of the families have members that were imprisoned during the recent ICE raids. Others have been struggling with limited resources.

Please consider providing a gift to the families. Some ideas include:

- **Winter Essentials:** Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and warm socks for all family members
- **Household Needs:** Cleaning products from the dollar store are incredibly helpful
- **Gift Baskets:** Consider creating themed baskets combining winter items (hats & gloves) with practical household supplies (cleaning products, paper goods, toiletries)
- **Children's Gifts:** Toys, books, games, school supplies
- **Grocery Items:** Non-perishable foods, holiday meal ingredients
- **Gift Cards:** Grocery stores, gas stations, or general retailers
- **Personal Care Items:** Shampoo, soap, toothpaste, diapers (if applicable)

Please wrap each gift and bring to the church by Sunday December 14. There will be a box in the narthex to collect the items.

On each gift please mark the family number (it is either 23 or 42) and also the child age and gender.

Family 23: 3-year-old boy Size 5 clothes, size 2 shoes, toys

Family 23: 1-year-old boy; Clothes for 24 months, toys

Family 23: 9-year-old girl - Size 10-12 clothes, Size 3.5 (adult) shoes, toys

Family 42: 1.5-year-old girl - Size 6 shoes, clothes for 18-24 months, toys

4:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

This year, after listening carefully to the congregation's input from our Christmas Eve survey and the thoughtful comments many of you shared, we will be trying something new: our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin at 4:00 pm.

The responses we received pointed us in this direction. While 5:00 pm was the strongest preference among the listed options, many people shared that an earlier time would make participation more accessible—because of evening gatherings, winter driving concerns, the needs of children, the pace of the day, or simply wanting space to breathe in the middle of a full season. Several also noted that gathering earlier helps more people of all ages and abilities arrive and return home safely.

Choosing 4:00 pm gives us the chance to worship together while there is still some light, and then move gently into candlelight as the day turns toward evening. It offers flexibility for those whose Christmas Eve traditions happen later in the night, and support for those whose schedules or responsibilities make a later service difficult. Just as importantly, it reflects our ongoing commitment to listen to one another and to choose practices that help the greatest number of us participate fully.

We recognize this is a change from our usual pattern, and we are treating this year as an opportunity to try something new—something shaped by the voices and needs of our community. We hope it creates room for many in our congregation and the wider community to pause, gather, sing, and receive the promise at the heart of the Christmas story: that Love draws near to us, meets each of us exactly where we are, and welcomes us with grace.

I look forward to sharing Christmas Eve with you.
Jeff

4:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

This year, after listening carefully to the congregation's input from our Christmas Eve survey and the thoughtful comments many of you shared, we will be trying something new: our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin at 4:00 pm.

The responses we received pointed us in this direction. While 5:00 pm was the strongest preference among the listed options, many people shared that an earlier time would make participation more accessible—because of evening gatherings, winter driving concerns, the needs of children, the pace of the day, or simply wanting space to breathe in the middle of a full season. Several also noted that gathering earlier helps more people of all ages and abilities arrive and return home safely.

Choosing 4:00 pm gives us the chance to worship together while there is still some light, and then move gently into candlelight as the day turns toward evening. It offers flexibility for those whose Christmas Eve traditions happen later in the night, and support for those whose schedules or responsibilities make a later service difficult. Just as importantly, it reflects our ongoing commitment to listen to one another and to choose practices that help the greatest number of us participate fully.

We recognize this is a change from our usual pattern, and we are treating this year as an opportunity to try something new—something shaped by the voices and needs of our community. We hope it creates room for many in our congregation and the wider community to pause, gather, sing, and receive the promise at the heart of the Christmas story: that Love draws near to us, meets each of us exactly where we are, and welcomes us with grace.

I look forward to sharing Christmas Eve with you.
Jeff

Adopt a Family for Christmas- This year we are sponsoring two families that the Refine Church in Brooklyn/downtown Cleveland have found to be in direct need of having a better Christmas.

Some of the families have members that were imprisoned during the recent ICE raids. Others have been struggling with limited resources.

Please consider providing a gift to the families. Some ideas include:

- **Winter Essentials:** Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and warm socks for all family members
- **Household Needs:** Cleaning products from the dollar store are incredibly helpful
- **Gift Baskets:** Consider creating themed baskets combining winter items (hats & gloves) with practical household supplies (cleaning products, paper goods, toiletries)
- **Children's Gifts:** Toys, books, games, school supplies
- **Grocery Items:** Non-perishable foods, holiday meal ingredients
- **Gift Cards:** Grocery stores, gas stations, or general retailers
- **Personal Care Items:** Shampoo, soap, toothpaste, diapers (if applicable)

Please wrap each gift and bring to the church by Sunday December 14. There will be a box in the narthex to collect the items.

On each gift please mark the family number (it is either 23 or 42) and also the child age and gender.

Family 23: 3-year-old boy Size 5 clothes, size 2 shoes, toys

Family 23: 1-year-old boy; Clothes for 24 months, toys

Family 23: 9-year-old girl - Size 10-12 clothes, Size 3.5 (adult) shoes, toys

Family 42: 1.5-year-old girl - Size 6 shoes, clothes for 18-24 months, toys