



Seven
WAYS TO
CATCH
THE CHRISTMAS
Spirit

THE FLOURISH AND FESTIVITIES ARE FUN, BUT MERRY MINISTERING
IS THE KEY TO HAVING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

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Church Magazines



“It just doesn’t feel like Christmas.”

Have you ever thought something like that? Maybe you feel like that right now: No matter how loudly you blare Christmas songs or how many Christmas cookies you snarf down, you’re just not feeling the Christmas spirit.

If that sounds like you, or if you’re just looking to feel that Christmassy glow a bit more this year, read on!

President David O. McKay (1873–1970) made it pretty simple: “The Christmas spirit is the Christ spirit, that makes our hearts glow in brotherly love and friendship and prompts us to kind deeds of service.”¹ Bonnie L. Oscarson, former Young Women General President, agrees: “The way to increase the Christmas spirit is to reach out generously to those around us and give of ourselves.”²

Decorating trees and giving gifts are ways to celebrate Christmas, but the key to feeling the spirit of Christmas is to minister to others. (Check out the previous article, “Ministering as the Savior Did,” to learn more about ministering.)

And good news! There are many wonderful ways to minister to others at Christmastime. Try some of these out, and in no time you will feel the warmth of the Spirit and feel closer to the Savior—the true spirit of Christmas!

1. Visit the lonely.

Think about those you know who might not have family and friends to spend the holidays with. Consider visiting someone who is elderly or someone who just moved to your neighborhood. Reaching out to just one lonely person can be powerful. As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles pointed out, Christ “ministered to the ‘ones,’” by helping people one by one.³ We can do the same.

2. Go caroling.

Did you know that our prophet loves Christmas carols? Whether it’s belting out the “whimsical ditties about Santa” or reverently singing your favorite hymns about the Savior, President Russell M. Nelson believes that sharing music with others is a wonderful way to “truly feel the real spirit of Christmas.”⁴





3. Look around before you look at your phone.

You don't have to keep your phone in your pocket the whole day, but being present and focusing on those around you is a great way to get back in touch with the Christmas spirit.

"Instead of picking up your phone to see what your friends are doing, stop, look around, and ask yourself, 'Who needs me today?'" said Sister Oscarson. "You may be the key to reaching out and touching the life of a peer or to giving encouragement to a friend who is quietly struggling."⁵

4. Do some extra chores.

Can cleaning the house, offering to babysit, or doing any other extra housework really help you feel the Christmas spirit? If you do it with the right attitude, you bet it will! As you're scrubbing or tidying up, think about the person you're serving. Think about how much your family or friends will love the gift of your hard work!



5. Deliver some Christmas treats!

Speaking of those Christmas cookies you snarfed down earlier, why not whip up a batch of your favorite Christmas treats? You should probably taste a few (or more) yourself, but the key to feeling the Christmas spirit here is to give them away.



6. Share a Christmas video.

Share a Christmas message on social media. Check out the Christmas Mormon Messages for some ideas. You might also brighten someone’s day just by sharing the Church’s Christmas video on Mormon.org. You can send it to a friend or share it on your own page.

7. Be sneaky about it.

How much secret service can you do without getting caught? You could leave groceries or gifts on someone’s doorstep, slip a kind note into a coat pocket, shovel snow, or rake up leaves—but make sure no one knows it was you! Remember: let thine alms be done in secret (see Matthew 6:4).



Ministering at Christmas

Twinkling trimmings and festive fanfare can bring wonder and fun to your holidays, but when it comes to feeling the true Christmas spirit, merry ministering is the key.

“To truly honor [the Lord’s] coming into the world, we must do as He did and reach out in compassion and mercy to our fellowmen,” said Elder

Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “This we can do daily, by word and deed. Let this become our Christmas tradition, no matter where we are—to be a little kinder, more forgiving, less judging, more grateful, and more generous in sharing our abundance with those in need.”⁶ ■

NOTES

1. David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* (1953), 551.
2. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Christmas Is Christlike Love” (First Presidency Christmas Devotional, Dec. 7, 2014), broadcasts.lds.org.
3. David A. Bednar’s Facebook page, video posted on Jan. 22, 2017, [facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/videos](https://www.facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/videos).
4. Russell M. Nelson, in “Christmas Memories from Prophets and Apostles,” *New Era*, Dec. 2015, 10.
5. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “The Needs before Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 26.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Scatter Your Crumbs” (First Presidency Christmas Devotional, Dec. 3, 2017), broadcasts.lds.org.