

VOLUME 4

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

# GRATEFUL GIRL

a christian magazine celebrating faith, family, food & friendships

## HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

ELLA AUTREY

## TAMMY ANGLIN

A PLACE TO ABIDE

## SIMPLE GUIDE TO HOSPITALITY

SUE DONALDSON

*ALSO IN THIS  
ISSUE:*

*CHRISTIAN  
SPEAKER AND  
COMEDIENNE  
CHERIE NETTLES*

*FULL HOLIDAY  
MENU*

*FREE  
DOWNLOADS*

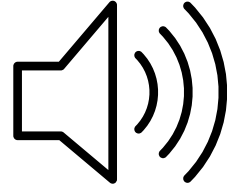


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# welcome



Hello friends!

Welcome to the Holiday issue of the Grateful Girl Magazine and our fourth edition of the magazine.

I am honored to be able to share this issue with you. We have some amazing Christian women sharing their thoughts and hearts in this issue. I think many of you will relate to their words and experiences.

The holidays can be such a stressful time. Busy schedules, tight budgets, family drama, sickness, loss of loved ones there are so many things that can steal the joy from our holidays. Our contributors in this issue remind us from their own experiences, that we can overcome many of the things that steal our joy by simply turning our focus to Jesus. He is the only one that can bring peace to our hearts and help us focus on the most important thing of the season rather than the things that try to turn our hearts and minds.

I pray that this holiday season your heart is filled with the full peace of Jesus and that all of your activities throughout the season begin from that place of peace. I pray for those of you who are hurting and struggling during this season and pray that you can find a place of peace and joy knowing that God is with you. You are never alone.

We are such fortunate people to know that we have been given the greatest gift that has ever been given when God gave His only Son to come and save us. To be our Prince of Peace, Our Wonderful Counselor, Our Mighty God, our Everlasting Father. If you are reading this magazine and have never accepted this gift, an amazing gift simply waiting for you to accept, I hope that during this season of giving, you will reach out and accept this gift of salvation. It's waiting for you and it's yours no matter what your past holds. (John 3:16).

Thank you for being one of our readers and supporters. Thank you to our wonderful magazine partners in this issue who are so supportive in wanting to help spread the good news of Jesus.

Merry Christmas Everyone!

*Patti Jensen*

EDITOR/CREATOR/GRATEFUL GIRL

04

An Open Letter from a Mother of Adult Children  
Cherie Nettles



9

Simple Guide to Hospitality:  
Simple 4 Week Planner  
Sue Donaldson

19

Hope for the Holidays  
Ella Autrey



25

A Place to Abide  
Tammy Anglin



32

Full Menu of Holiday Flavor



# Table of Contents

2-Welcome

4-An Open Letter From A Mother of Adult Children

9-Simple Guide to Hospitality

17-Free Download Hospitality Tips

18-Gift Tag Download

19- Hope for the Holidays Ella Autrey

24 Scripture Card Download

25 A Place to Abide Tammy Anglin

31 Joy to the World Printable

32 Full Menu of Holiday Flavor

38 Give Thanks Download

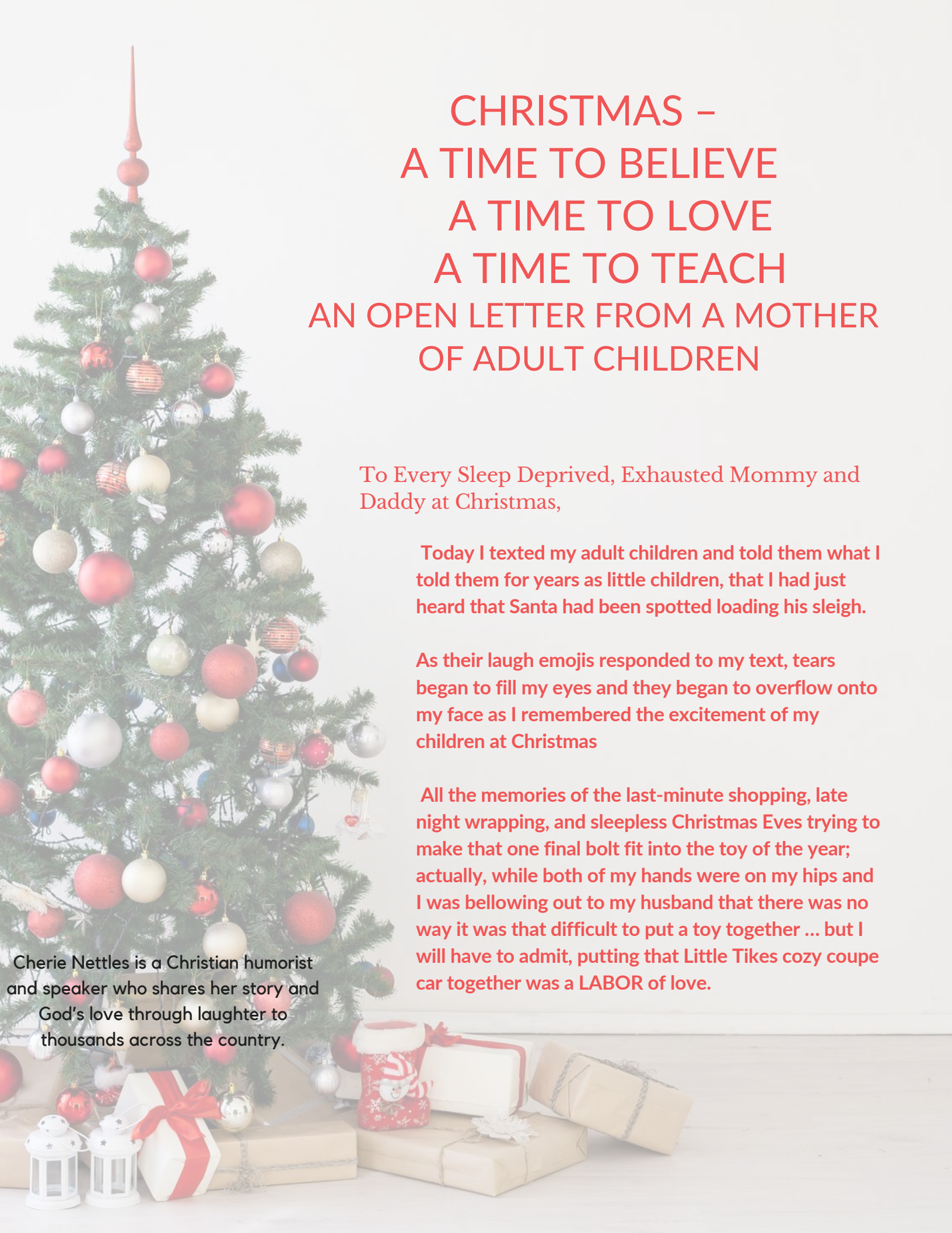
39 Partner Directory



**AN OPEN LETTER  
FROM A MOTHER OF  
ADULT CHILDREN**

**CHERIE NETTLES**





CHRISTMAS –  
A TIME TO BELIEVE  
A TIME TO LOVE  
A TIME TO TEACH  
AN OPEN LETTER FROM A MOTHER  
OF ADULT CHILDREN

To Every Sleep Deprived, Exhausted Mommy and  
Daddy at Christmas,

Today I texted my adult children and told them what I  
told them for years as little children, that I had just  
heard that Santa had been spotted loading his sleigh.

As their laugh emojis responded to my text, tears  
began to fill my eyes and they began to overflow onto  
my face as I remembered the excitement of my  
children at Christmas

All the memories of the last-minute shopping, late  
night wrapping, and sleepless Christmas Eves trying to  
make that one final bolt fit into the toy of the year;  
actually, while both of my hands were on my hips and  
I was bellowing out to my husband that there was no  
way it was that difficult to put a toy together ... but I  
will have to admit, putting that Little Tikes cozy coupe  
car together was a LABOR of love.

Cherie Nettles is a Christian humorist  
and speaker who shares her story and  
God's love through laughter to  
thousands across the country.

## **“I had to catch my breath, as I remembered why I believe so much in Christmas”.**

I had to catch my breath, as I remembered why I believe so much in Christmas. The memories of the love that poured out of our hearts and into our home is the very love that fills the homes of my adult children and their families today.

Yes, Christmas is a time to believe and a time to love but Christmas is also, a time to teach. Christmas teaches us that:

1-Sleepless nights putting toys together is a sacrifice of love

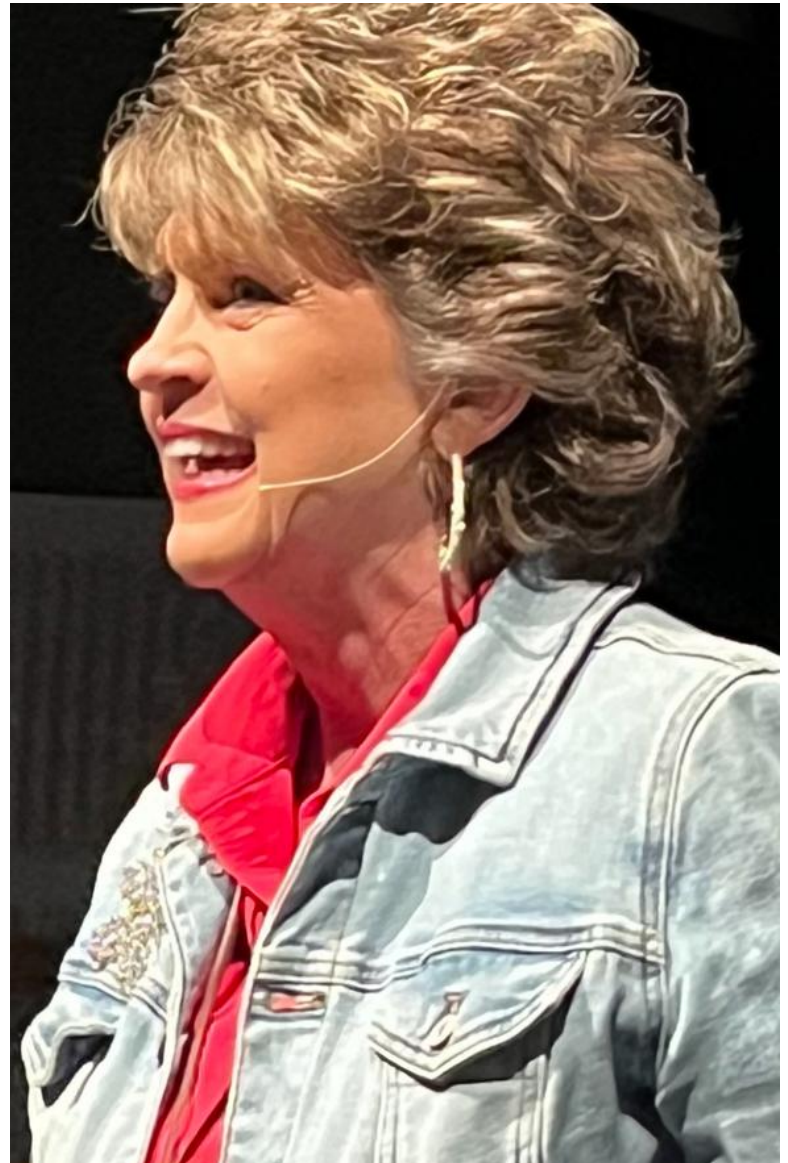
2-Late nights after Christmas programs are to be relished

3-Budgeting everything to the penny in the month of December and leaving gifts, your gifts, off is not a sacrifice but a blessings

4- The excitement and anticipation and even the 4:00 a m wake ups on Christmas morning are truly a gift to every parent.

5- Memories are the greatest gifts of all

6- And last-but-certainly-not least ...  
Christmas teaches us ...



“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

So, you better watch out, you better not pout,  
you better not cry  
I am telling you why ...  
I just heard today  
That Santa is loading his sleigh!



# 7 Biblical Habits to remember daily during the Holidays:

1- On Monday be encouraging.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.

2- On Tuesday be flexible ... helping others by rearranging your plans.

Hebrews 6:10

God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.

3- On Wednesday be grateful.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

4- On Thursday be kind. Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another,

5- On Friday be forgiving.

Colossians 3:13

Bear with each other and forgive one another ... Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

6- Saturday is for sweetness.

Proverbs 16:24 (Saturday is chocolate day; on Saturday, we are counting blessings and not calories)

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

7- Sunday is for Praise. Psalm 103:1

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His Holy Name.









# A SIMPLE GUIDE TO HOSPITALITY

Sue Donaldson



EXCLUSIVE

## A TASK-A-DAY PLAN FOR HOSTING A DINNER PARTY IN 4 WEEKS

### SUE DONALDSON

Speaker, Podcaster, and Author Sue Donaldson and her husband, Mark, live in San Luis Obispo, California. Sue taught high school English in Brazil with Wycliffe Bible Translators. She and her husband, Mark, have raised 3 daughters who keep them at the bank and on their knees. Sue loves connecting people to one another, to God, and to His Word. She blogs at [Welcome Heart](#), hosts a weekly [podcast](#), and has been speaking for women's retreats and conferences for the past 20 years with long pauses for babies, diapers and soccer pasta parties.

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LEGACY LIFE PODCAST. LISTEN  
HERE.](#)



To host a simple dinner party sounds daunting unless we tackle it one task at a time. When I think of all the work involved, I can feel like quitting before I even begin. I wonder—and maybe whine a little:





## dinner party plan

- How can I fit hosting guests into my already too-full schedule?
- I hate to cook and I don't want to make enemies (or make people sick!).
- I have house issues: My table is too small, I don't have enough chairs, my dining room is also the office, the homeschool room, and the playroom!
- My kids aren't very well behaved yet. I will need to wait until they are away at college.
- Who should I invite? Doesn't everyone already have their friends?
- Wouldn't it be easier to get a sitter and meet a couple at a restaurant? And since I don't have enough money for both those things, I guess we just won't go out until we win the lottery or some distant rich uncle leaves us an inheritance!

“  
But God doesn't call us to elaborate entertaining.

He says to “show hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:9).  
”

These arguments are legitimate, up to a point.

We are busy. It is easier to go out (if we had the money). Our homes may be under construction or not be 'the perfect home' for company.

But God doesn't call us to elaborate entertaining. He says to “show hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:9). Doing one task a day is the best tip for doing simple hospitality and helps keep me from grumbling or feeling that I'm totally out of my depth.

# simple guide to hospitality



## TAKING THE OVERWHELM OUT OF HOSTING A DINNER PARTY

If you desire to use your home for God and others, yet you don't know how to go about it, here's some sage advice: "How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

I don't recommend serving elephant stew, although I do know a delicious [recipe](#) for French Dip Beef Sandwiches which could pass for elephant, and would be, perhaps, more seemly for your guests.

Preparing for a dinner party is easier when we do one thing a day. Taking 'one bite at a time' transforms the host—you and me—from feeling overwhelmed to, "I can't wait to host again!" True story.

So here's a list of simple tasks, one to do each day of the week except for Sundays (a day of rest!). By the end of the four weeks, you will have guests around your table (or on your couch or floor, depending on your style).

.Start on a Monday, follow the task for that day (and then the day after that), and soon you'll be hosting with joy, confidence, and ease—one bite at a time.

Each preparation tip gets you closer to the goal of hosting a simple dinner party, and completing each task day-by-day will make it easier on you—the dinner party host. And, it will make it a lot more fun since you won't have a whole elephant to contend with on the day of the party!





# week 1 plan

## MONDAY

Pray for: Courage

Task #1: Discuss with your family: "Who should we invite?"

Verse: "Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You, That he may dwell in Your courts" (Psalm 65:4, NKJV).

Hospitality is a metaphor for how God welcomes us. So when we invite someone over, we invite them to God.

## TUESDAY

Pray for: Wisdom

Task #2: Ask a friend to host with you.

Verse: "And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19, NLT).

We sometimes feel like we don't have enough to offer someone else. God provides all we need and more to offer His hospitality.

## WEDNESDAY

Pray for: Joy

Task #3: Organize your recipes.

Verse: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13, NIV).

God is all about joy. Pray for it. Expect it. Even in the most mundane tasks.

## THURSDAY

Pray for: Creativity

Task #4: Try making a new dessert.

Verse: "Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people" (Philemon 1:7, NLT).

Love is the most important ingredient you can serve. My sister Lori said: "Be willing to have people see you as you are—they will feel more comfortable to be themselves in return."

## FRIDAY

Pray for: Grace

Task #5: Make a list of menus that are simple and have worked in the past.

Verse: "Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen to me, and you will eat what is good. You will enjoy the finest food" (Isaiah 55:2, NLT).

God serves us what is most sustaining. With God's help, our guests can leave our table blessed as well as fed, sustained in heart, soul, and body.

## SATURDAY

Pray for: Your Guests

Task #6: 'Invite' your immediate family to a practice dinner.

Verse: "I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13, NLT).

The more we practice hospitality, the easier it gets. When your doorbell rings, pray this verse all the way to the door. Walk slowly, and you can pray it more than once!

# week 2 plan



## MONDAY

Pray for: Courage

Task #7: Invite your guests for supper in three weeks so the date is on the calendar.

Verse: "Jesus said, 'I am the Road, also the Truth, also the Life. No one gets to the Father apart from me'" (John 14:6, The Message Paraphrase).

Jesus is God's beautiful invitation to come to His table. How wonderful to know that someone might find His invitation 'to come' when you welcome them to your home.

## TUESDAY

Pray for: Wisdom

Task #8: Create a simple dinner menu and gather any needed recipes.

Verse: "You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies" (Psalm 23:5a, NLT).

When we know that company's coming, we get prepared—maybe even bake a cake, set an extra place, get another chair. And if we don't have time to dust, we can just dim the lights and light a candle. God knew we were coming, and He got ready. He prepared a place for us right next to Him.

## WEDNESDAY

Pray for: Joy

Task #9: Make your To-Do lists and your shopping lists (include paper goods if needed).

Verse: "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:9).

God knows that opening our homes can be hard work. That's why He gave us this verse.

## THURSDAY

Pray for: Creativity

Task #10: Decide on conversation starters and/or a simple activity or icebreaker.

Verse: "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone" (Colossians 4:6, NIV).

Thinking about what to talk about may be intimidating. Ask God for what we need to put our guests at ease with loving attention and some good questions.

## FRIDAY

Pray for: Grace

Task #11: Try out a new main dish.

Verse: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:35, 40, NIV).

When we extend our welcome, we offer His welcoming heart. Sometimes a guest needs only a glass of water or a listening ear.

## SATURDAY

Pray for: Your Guests

Task #12: Work on one deep clean (for example: drapes, family room clutter, windows).

Verse: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17, NIV).

To offer our homes and tables to God is a concrete act of worship. Even as we peel potatoes and make up the guest bed (again)—when done for Him and by Him, we give Him honor.



# week 3 plan

## MONDAY

Pray for: Courage

Task #13: Assign family chores. (When we all invest, we all are blessed!)

Verse: "Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me, watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace...Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matthew 11:28-30, The Message Paraphrase).

The rest Jesus promises is a relationship with God. Your table may be the very rest that your friend needs.

## TUESDAY

Pray for: Wisdom

Task #14: Buy a welcome mat or make a welcome sign for the door or porch.

Verse: "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity" (Colossians 4:5, NIV).

God expects us to wear a 'hospitality antennae' so to speak, looking out for whoever may need an invitation to His table by coming to ours.

## WEDNESDAY

Pray for: Joy

Task #15: Buy pantry items for your menu. Compare your lists from Task #9 with what you have already on hand.

Verse: "May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God" (Ephesians 3:19, NLT).

Once we understand how much God loves being with us, it's easier to pass on His hospitality to another person.

## THURSDAY

Pray for: Creativity

Task #16: Make or buy name tags or place cards—utilize any young artists in your family.

Verse: "You have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy. Let me dwell in Your tent forever; Let me take refuge in the shelter of your wings" (Psalm 61:3-5, NASB).

God, our Ultimate Host, offers His tent and tower of strength to us at any time of day.

## FRIDAY

Pray for: Grace

Task #17: Refresh the front porch or entryway.

Verse: "Come close to God, and God will come close to you" (James 4:8, NLT).

God welcomes us to His table and we all get the best seat—right next to Him.

## SATURDAY

Pray for: Your guests

Task #18: Clean your refrigerator or your backyard.

Verse: "When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners... God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:6,8, NLT).

They say that timing is everything. If that's the case, God timed it just right when He got the table set for our coming. Ask Him for the right timing to prepare what is needed for your guests.

# week 4 plan



## MONDAY

Pray for: Courage

Task #19: Text your guests: "Looking forward to dinner with you this coming Saturday!"

Verse: "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels" (Hebrews 13:2, NKJV).

Hospitality can be a challenge, but think of the surprises God offers! Who knows who God wants you to bless?

## TUESDAY

Pray for: Wisdom

Task #20: Do a 10 minute house pick-up. Set the timer. (Reward yourself when finished!)

Verse: "And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts, living within you as you trust in Him" (Ephesians 3:17, The Living Bible Paraphrase).

Hospitality simply means making people comfortable and at home. And we want our guests to not only feel at home in our house, but to feel at home with God.

## WEDNESDAY

Pray for: Joy

Task #21: Shop for fresh food items to go in your newly-cleaned fridge. Defrost any frozen meat.

Verse: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28, NIV).

People may only discover true peace by finding God at your table. Invite someone today to find rest from their busy days and release from their burdens.

## THURSDAY

Pray for: Creativity

Task #22: Clean the guest bathroom.

Verse: "You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. . . Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14,16, The Message Paraphrase).

We live out God's purpose for our lives when we let His light shine through our homes. The more generous we live, the more brightly He shines.

## FRIDAY

Pray for: Grace

Task #23: Make dessert.

Verse: "He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us" (2 Corinthians 1:3,4, The Message Paraphrase).

True hospitality is simply coming alongside one who needs your company—in joy or sorrow.

## SATURDAY

## TODAY'S THE DAY!

Pray for: Your guests

Task #24: Set the table, prepare the dinner, and open the door!

Verse: "And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19, NLT).

We sometimes feel like we don't have enough to offer someone else. God provides all we need (and more!) to offer His hospitality. We just need to ask Him.






Doing one task a day helps us feel more at ease so we can concentrate more on our guests and help them feel loved and noticed just like God loves and notices us.

Feel free to email me any questions along the way. I can't wait to hear what happens around your table or in your yard or patio in four weeks' time!

I'll be cheering you on and saying a little prayer: "Lord, bless this home to make it Your welcoming home. Grant wisdom, strength and grace. Thank You and amen."



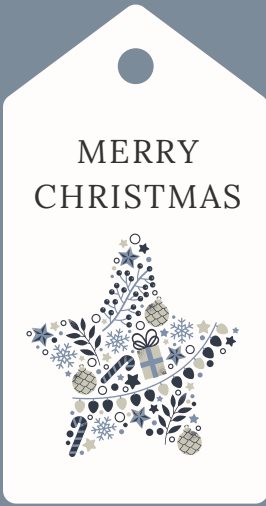
We WANT to be more hospitable at the holidays but it can be OVERWHELMING. (I know this) Try these tips to make it less stressful and more joyful all the way through.



HASSLE  
FREE  
*Holiday*  
HOSPITALITY  
TIPS



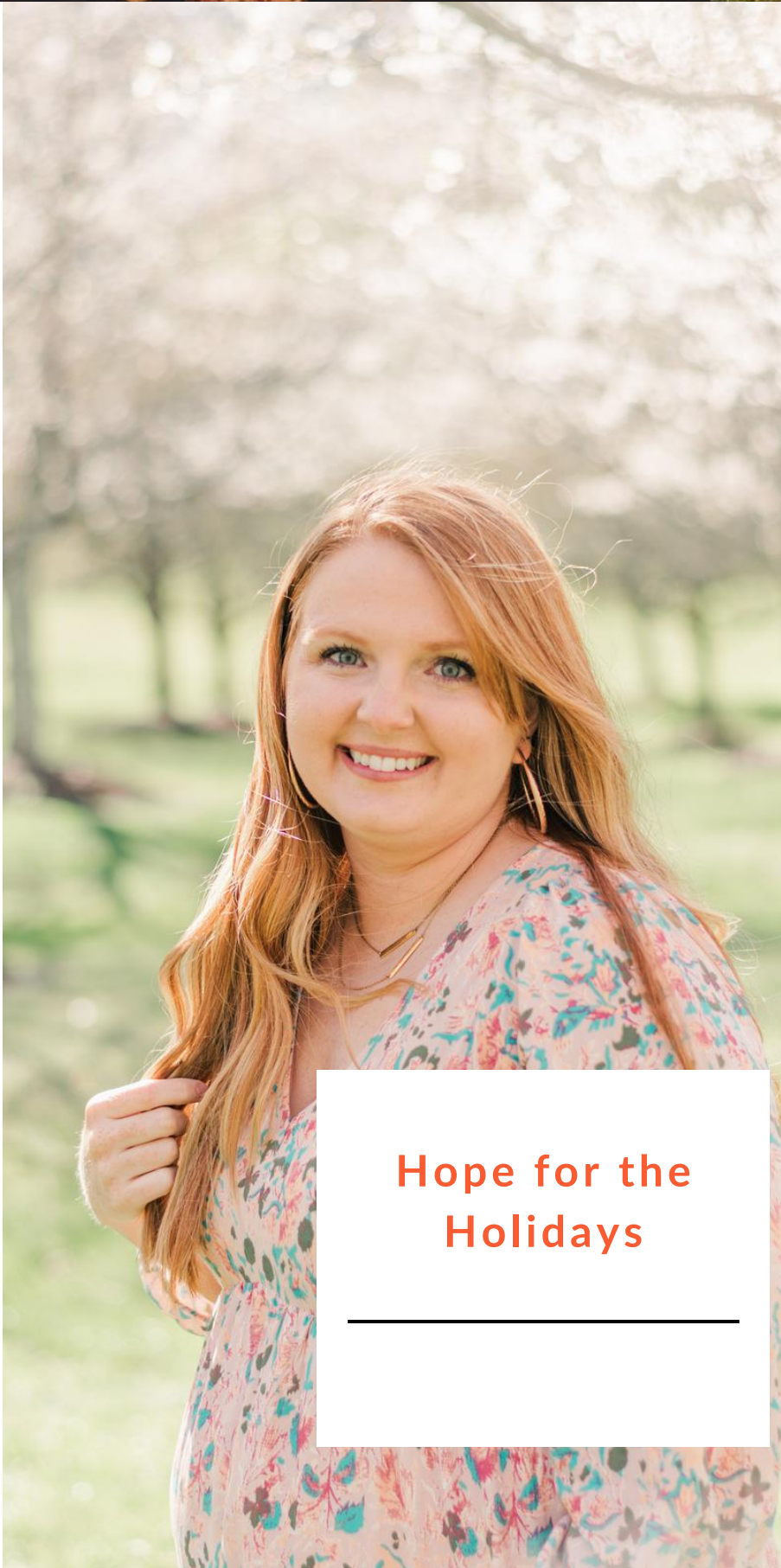
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**Ella Autrey**



**Hope for the  
Holidays**

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BY ELLA AUTREY

# hope for the holidays

Five years ago, I remember the sinking feeling of seeing the first red holiday Starbucks cup and thinking “I wish I could just skip over the holidays this year”.

Normally on November 1st the sight of the Starbucks holiday cups and Christmas decorations would make me smile and begin to look forward and plan for the upcoming holiday season.

However, that year on November 1st the change of the cups didn't make me smile, it made me sad, anxious and overwhelmed knowing the holiday season was officially coming and I couldn't do anything to change the fact everything in my life as I knew it the year before was completely different and I would be facing the holidays as a widow and single mom of a 3 year old.





# hope for the holidays

I knew I was going to have to decide what to do with my daughter, what we were going to keep the same, what we would need to do differently and ultimately what we would need to do to survive all in the process.

I remember thinking things like “How am I going to hold it together during family get-togethers? What if someone mentions him? What if nobody mentions him? How am I going to decorate our tree? Should I hang two stockings or three?” just to name a few.

I had thought about it before, however it was one of those things I chose to push out because it was too much to think about and I knew I would need to deal with it when it came time. The time was approaching that I felt like I needed to start making some decisions, and I was lost about what to do.

I began specifically thinking about decorating my Christmas tree. I didn't think I would be able to go down into the basement and get the boxes that basically showed all of our family's precious memories in ornament form, and I didn't feel like it was right to just totally disregard something sentimental because it felt like I would be forgetting my husband at Christmas which is what I absolutely did not want to do.



“

I remember thinking things like “How am I going to hold it together during family get-togethers?”

ELLA AUTREY

”





I never thought I would be at a place in my life that I was praying about what to do with a tree, ornaments and stockings, but that was where I was at.

While I know the meaning of Christmas and why we celebrate the holidays doesn't have anything to do with those things, I find it incredibly awesome and humbling at the fact I can go to the Creator of the universe with my problems day or night, big or small and know He listens to me.

Not only does He listen, but He cares with unconditional love and compassion- even if it is something as trivial as Christmas decorations.

I ended up deciding that year to get a new small tree from Hobby Lobby and put up decorations that reminded me of my husband. My daughter lovingly referred to it as her "Daddy Tree" and five years later it is still something so special to her.

When I think back to that time in my life, I am filled with all kinds of emotions but am reminded of the same truth that filled my heart then and cling to it now. Because of Jesus' birth, His death and His resurrection, I am able to live day by day knowing I have a Living Hope and an eternal promise.





# hope for the holidays



The Holidays can be such a lonely time; however, we are never alone no matter what we “feel” like. In John 16: 31-33, the Bible says “Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

There is no doubt we all know someone who is hurting going into this holiday season. It could be for a variety of reasons, but if there is one thing I know it is that the holidays tend to be a tender season for a lot of people even when we aren't aware.

Thankfully we serve a Heavenly Father who knows our every hurt and heartache. We serve a Heavenly Father who is so detailed and caring He will even help us get through the seemingly small things because His love for us is so great. I don't know what your story is going into this holiday season, but I do want to remind you no matter what your story is now, the God of the Universe loves you, He sees you and He wants you to live with a heart of hope in the midst of this holiday season.

Ella Autrey is a native of Western North Carolina. She loves spending time with her family, and is always ready for a travel adventure. Ella works with Summit Wellness Centers PLLC, as an LCHMCA counselor.



not consumed ministries

# Christmas

ENCOURAGEMENT SCRIPTURE CARDS



PRINTABLE



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**tammy  
anglin**

**a  
place  
to  
abide**

It was in my surrender to Him that I found a place in His presence, a place to abide (remain). He was there the whole time, but now I have found my place in His presence.



GRATEFUL GIRL

# tammy anglin

## a place to abide

I think most of us could agree that life often doesn't turn out the way we think. We have an idea of what we think our lives should look like, and we tend to want to hold on to that plan with everything in us.

However, in our walk with God, we also find ourselves praying, "God, you can do anything you want with me and my life." In these moments, we mean it, until God says, "Ok, let's change it up."

Then reality sets in, and we begin to realize that our life in Jesus is a journey of surrender that often involves times of change and transition.

This was the very prayer that changed everything for me not too long ago. We were pastoring our home church and serving in ministry with our grown sons and their wives. We loved it, and we felt at home. But after some time, we began to feel restless. We didn't quite understand the shift that was happening in our hearts. We had the vision for the church we were leading, and we were with our family. We were in a place that our roots ran deep, but where was our peace?



“

—

**We were in a place that  
our roots ran deep, but  
where was our peace?**

—

# We began to pray and seek the Lord. Then the most unbelievable thing happened.



We began to pray and seek the Lord. Then the most unbelievable thing happened. My husband said, "I think our time here is coming to a close, and God has something new for us to do."

I responded, "What? No, this can't be, 7 of our 10 grandkids are here!" This is the place we have poured so much into. I said to him, "What kind of parents and grandparents leave their kids and grandkids to just up and move away?"

He so confidently replied, "Obedient ones." Obedient ones echoed through my mind, but really shouted in my heart. A realization took hold of me. Our lives are not our own. We belong to Him.

In the last 40 years walking with the Lord and in ministry, I have many times told Him I would serve Him and do whatever He wanted, but this time really hurt deep.

At this point in life, I was almost 60 years old. I was dealing with extreme pain in my right hip and needing a hip replacement. I also had a good job that I loved. But more than all of that, I loved being near my kids and grandkids. I had it set in my mind that I wanted to be with them and not miss a thing. Talk about an untimely, overwhelming, and heart-wrenching time to move again. To start, again.

As I faced this moment of yet another transition, I was reminded about a time when my twenties had come and gone. A time that was totally devoted to birthing our 4 kids and giving myself to them. I also thought about my thirties, remembering how I said to myself, "I think I know what I like and what I don't like." I no longer liked my hair short, that dress in my closet, or the way I did my make-up. It was a decade of rediscovering myself and becoming more settled in my identity.



# a place to abide



Now here I am 30 years later facing another rediscovery of me. This meant a move to another state with no kids or grandkids to come along with us. This would be a move to a large geographic area with 1 million people, traffic, and all the hustle and bustle of life.

Yet, we made the move to our new place and then reality set in. Things got busy quick. We started pastoring our new church, scheduled my hip surgery, and began to adjust to our new home. I was feeling a little lost and pretty lonely. I did what only I knew to do and that was to pray. The question of why seemed very unnecessary and not called for, I just needed Jesus.

He spoke to my heart one day, and said He was going to take care of me in a personal way. If I would trust Him, He would send blessing and a renewing to my soul. During these times, I would sit at my table almost daily, and I would say, "God you said you would take care of me. Please sit with me and fix me!"

Then holidays, Mother's day, and all the special events that I would love to attend, all came and went. I was not with my kids or my grandkids. My table was not full and the seats were empty. Days were sad and some were harder than others. I continued to sit at my table, making an intentional place for Him to come, and I would say, "God you said you would take care of me. I believe you can fix this." It was more than knowing that he never leaves us, it was also making an intentional place for Him to come! His presence is with us in our every struggle, disappointment, and loneliness. Whatever the need may be, if we intentionally ask him, He will come!

See thirty years may have passed since I was thirty. And the rediscovery of me this time was all wrapped up in the discovery of a Jesus who would love and protect a hurting heart that would simply say yes and be obedient even when it hurts. It's not about who I am and what I like or don't like, but about a Savior who takes care of everything if we will let him.



Set Him a place at your table,  
and give Him the honored seat  
that He so rightly deserves.

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John 15: 7-11 says, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” 11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

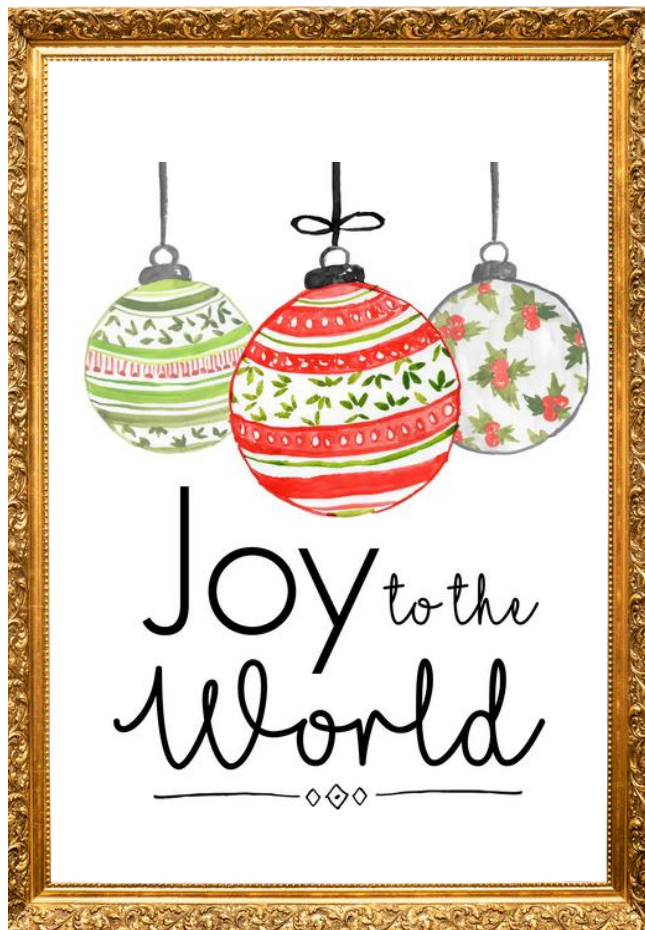
It was in my surrender to Him that I found a place in His presence, a place to abide (remain). He was there the whole time, but now I have found my place in His presence. It’s my responsibility to remain there and take my place. To Abide. It’s our only safe place. Proverbs 18:10, it says, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.”

Soon, we will set our tables for the Holidays. Some tables may look the same as always, same people, wonderful food, and the joy that makes our hearts leap. But other tables are set looking different than usual, where the chairs are empty, and there might be loss, loneliness, sickness, and pain. I have been at all of these tables, but there is one thing I know, and that is Jesus will meet us at our table. He will take care of everything if we will just ask Him. Jesus is the only one who can take care of every need.

A table is a meeting place, a place to gather. Set Him a place at your table, and give Him the honored seat that He so rightly deserves. You can count on Him! I encourage you to make room for Him, and to set an intentional place just for Him. He will meet you every time!

**Tammy Anglin has been married to her husband Tom for 43 years and has been in Pastoral Ministry for 40 years. They have 4 Children, with their wonderful spouses and 10 grandchildren. They are now serving at a Church on the Gulf Coast of Florida.**





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A festive holiday dinner table featuring a large roasted turkey on a silver platter, garnished with bread slices, orange slices, and red berries. The background is softly blurred, showing a lit candle and a glass of red wine. The text "A FULL MENU OF FESTIVE HOLIDAY FLAVOR" is overlaid in white serif font.

A FULL  
MENU OF  
FESTIVE  
HOLIDAY  
FLAVOR





FULL FLEDGED MENU OF

# Flavor

Cooking up a successful holiday gathering calls for everyone's favorite recipes. From the centerpiece main dish to fresh salads and appetizers, roasted sides and baked sweets, you can take seasonal get-togethers up a notch by mixing traditional classics with newfound favorites.

Consider this full-fledged menu of flavor to give guests a memorable holiday experience from beginning to end and find more festive recipe ideas at [Culinary.net](https://www.culinary.net).





# holiday menu

Fresh Flavors for Holiday Festivities

With the festive season arriving, bring together family and friends for a delicious feast you can feel good about serving. One standout recipe is this Cornish Game Hen with Kale Sweet Potato Salad that pairs fresh, leafy kale with roasted sweet potatoes and tender Cornish game hens for a truly elegant meal.

Elevate your cooking during the holidays with inspiration from Fresh Express and its more than 100 varieties of fresh, healthy and convenient ready-to-eat salads like the Sweet Kale Chopped Kit. It's a perfect blend of a nutrient-dense salad mix of leafy kale, green cabbage, shredded broccoli and Brussels sprouts, as well as crunchy pumpkin seeds and dried cranberries, topped with a tasty poppyseed dressing.

Visit [FreshExpress.com](https://www.freshexpress.com) to discover more fresh, easy and healthy recipes for the holiday season.



# Cornish Game Hen with Kale Sweet Potato Salad

Prep time: 20 minutes  
Cook time: 1 hour, 10 minutes  
Servings: 4

- 1 package (6 ounces) stovetop stuffing
- 2 cups chopped apples, divided
- 4 Cornish game hens (20 ounces each)
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning, divided
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus additional, to taste, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 package (10.9 ounces) Fresh Express Sweet Kale Chopped Kit



Heat oven to 350 F.

Prepare stuffing according to package directions.  
Add 1 cup apples and fluff stuffing with fork; cool 15 minutes.

Remove anything inside hens, rinse cavity with cold water and pat dry.

In small saucepan, melt butter over low heat.  
Add 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning, paprika,  
1 teaspoon salt, garlic powder and pepper; mix well. Remove from heat.

Fill cavity of each hen with apple stuffing.

Place hens in 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish.  
Tie legs together and tuck wings under. Baste with butter mixture.

Bake 50-60 minutes, or until thermometer inserted in thickest part of thigh reads 165 F and stuffing temperature reads 165 F.  
Baste with butter mixture every 15-20 minutes.

In bowl, toss sweet potatoes with remaining Italian seasoning and olive oil. Arrange in single layer on sheet pan. Sprinkle with salt, to taste.

Bake with hens 25 minutes, or until tender.  
Remove from oven and cool. Tent hens with foil and let rest 10 minutes.

Place greens from salad kit in large bowl.  
Add remaining apples and sweet potatoes; mix well. Toss with salad dressing. Add toppings; toss to combine.

Serve Cornish game hens with sweet potato kale salad.

# Perfect Roasted Little Potatoes

A Festive, Everyday Side Dish

While the busy holiday season can be loads of fun, you still need to get dinner on the table between parties. When you find yourself in a pinch this holiday season, squeezed for time and searching for a quick solution for dinner, turn to an easy side dish that can appease everyone. Potatoes are a nearly unanimous favorite.

Make putting dinner on the table a breeze with a solution like little potatoes from The Little Potato Company, which can help bring holiday happiness to mealtime. Ready in as little as 5 minutes, they come pre-washed and require no peeling or cutting, making them the perfect time-saving solution for the holiday season.

Ideal for this Perfect Roasted Little Potatoes recipe, these little potatoes are a tasty, fresh whole food that you can feel good about serving. Ready in half an hour with minimal prep and a few simple ingredients, it's a perfect side dish for any occasion.

Visit [littlepotatoes.com](http://littlepotatoes.com) for more information and holiday inspiration.



Prep time: 5 minutes  
Cook time: 30 minutes  
Servings: 6

1 1/2 pounds The Little Potato Company Little Potatoes  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1-2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

Preheat oven to 400 F.

In large bowl, toss little potatoes with oil, salt and pepper until coated.

Spread potatoes in single layer on rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake 30 minutes, or until tender.

Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Tip: For extra holiday flavor, add paprika, garlic and fresh herbs.



## Get Creative with Delicious, Decorative Cookies

A decadent holiday meal isn't complete without a sweet dessert to cap off the evening. When in doubt, go with a traditional treat that's perfect for sharing: cookies.

These Ornament Cookies can be shaped any way you like to celebrate the holidays. The royal icing adorning these festive favorites is made with powdered sugar and meringue powder; just use food coloring to add a personal touch.

For more than 120 years, Domino Sugar has helped millions bake special recipes like these cookies made with non-GMO, vegan, kosher and gluten-free Golden Sugar that's free flowing and easy to scoop, spoon and pour. The sugar retains a hint of molasses flavor, giving it a golden color and providing a perfect way to add less processed sweetness to your loved ones' favorite desserts.

Find holiday recipes, baking tips and more at [dominosugar.com](http://dominosugar.com).



### Ornament Cookies

Prep time: 25 minutes plus 1 hour to decorate

Cook time: 20 minutes

Yield: 2 dozen cookies

#### Cookies:

- 1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup Domino Golden Sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

#### Royal Icing:

- 4 cups Domino Powdered Sugar
- 3 tablespoons meringue powder
- 1/3 cup, plus 2-3 tablespoons, warm water, divided
- desired food coloring

To prepare cookies: In large bowl, beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and egg; beat until well combined. Scrape sides of bowl as needed. Add flour and salt; beat until just combined.

Dump mixture onto lightly floured surface and divide in half. Shape each half into disks and wrap with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 30 minutes.

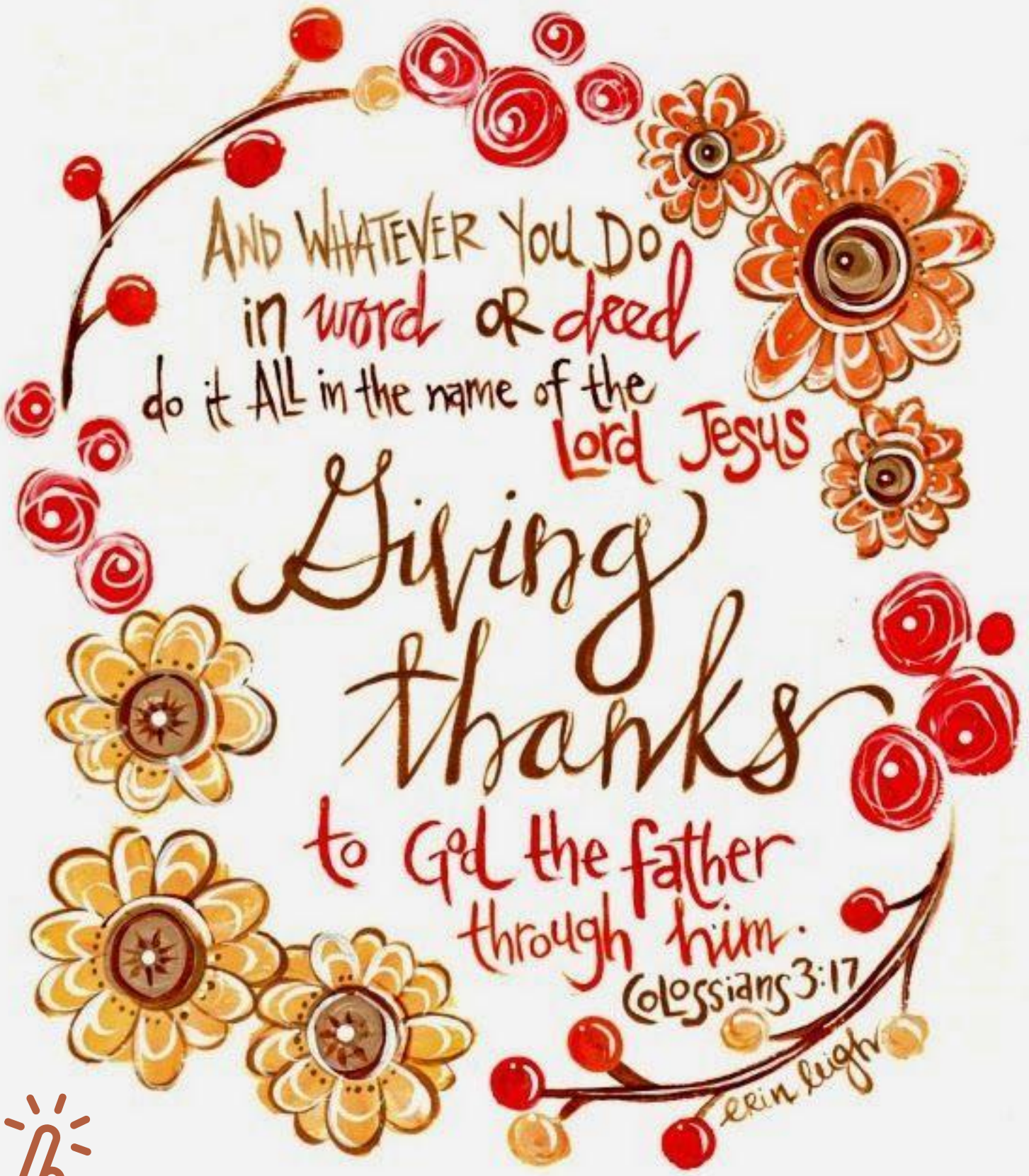
Preheat oven to 350 F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

Working on lightly floured surface, roll dough to 1/2-inch thick. Cut cookies using ornament-shaped cookie cutter. Place cookies on prepared pans and bake 18-20 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool at room temperature.

To make royal icing: In large mixing bowl, combine powdered sugar, meringue powder and 1/3 cup water. Beat on low speed until combined. Increase speed to medium-high and beat 8-10 minutes, adding 2-3 tablespoons warm water, as necessary. Icing should be stiff enough to hold peak when tested.

Color royal icing with food coloring and decorate cookies.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images (ham)



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Colossians 3:17

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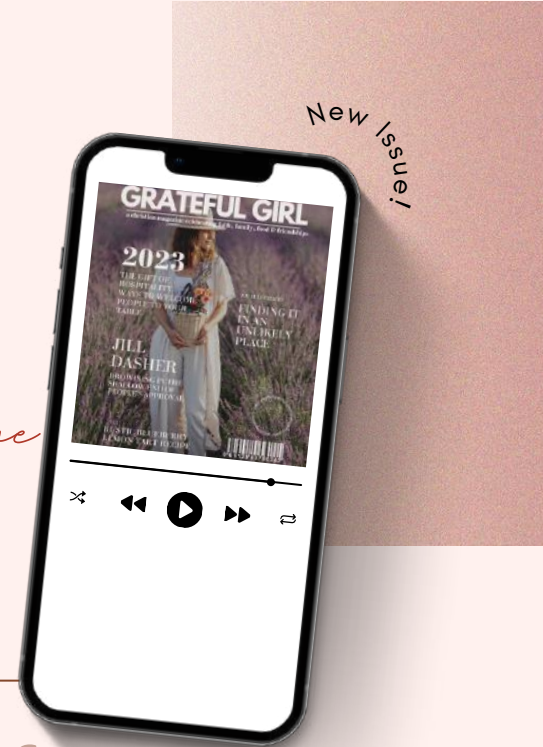
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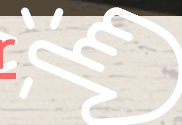
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