



January 2019

Happy Xmas!

You might be thinking “I can’t believe the pastor just used Xmas instead of Christmas!” or something like “Doesn’t he know Christmas is over already?” Christmas is actually the 12 days from December 25 through January 5th. January 6th is the day of epiphany. Epiphany is the day in the Christian calendar that we celebrate the visitation of the three magi or wise men to the baby Jesus. It’s more like the toddler Jesus. Scholars believe it was actually two years after his birth that the magi visit the holy family. So, don’t be too quick to leave the joy, hope, peace and love of Advent behind. Take it on through the New Year.

Christmas is also sometimes written as Xmas. Some people don't think it's correct to write Christmas as 'Xmas'. They believe to do so takes the 'Christ' (Jesus) out of Christmas. I used to be adamant about this myself. But that is not quite right! In the Greek language and alphabet, the letter that looks like an X is the Greek letter chi / X (pronounced 'kye' - it rhymes with 'eye') which is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, Christos.

The early church used the first two letters of Christos in the Greek alphabet 'chi' and 'rho' to create a monogram (symbol) to represent the name of Jesus. This looks like an X with a small rho on the top: Ϟ



So, Xmas can also mean Christmas; but it should also be pronounced 'Christmas' rather than 'ex-mas'! I hope everyone has had a wonderful Xmas with family and friends. May the Lord bless you and keep you in 2019.

Rev. Wiley Gladney