

# Many Reasons to Thank God

When we think of Christmas, we often think of gifts or presents. Each of us gets gifts, and we also give them. Gifts are something given without payment, or expecting something back in return. They make us happy.

At Christmastime, God gave the greatest gift. He gave His Son Jesus to save us from our sins. No one can pay anything for this gift! God sent Jesus to this world to die for our sins. When we believe this and believe our sins forgiven, God then gives us the gift of heaven, where we can be with Him forever. Could anything compare with these gifts?

In song of Zion 463, we sing: “All gifts from God, our Father, come. He gives His gifts to everyone.” No person is without gifts. We use these to serve our families and neighbors. Some examples of the gifts God gives are: singing, playing music, being kind to others, helping at home and church, writing, and many others. Can you think of other examples? How can you help others with your gifts?

We enjoy many other blessings from God. One example is the camps we can go to with other believers. In Arizona recently, about 60 people, many between ages 9 and 14, went to the first Music Camp at Kamp Kipa. This camp is in a pine forest on top of a mountain. There, away from worldly temptations, we learned more about faith and enjoyed time with friends. We sang songs that praised and thanked God. Many played instruments, such as cello, flute, trumpet, and violin. Have you gone to a camp with other believers? What especially made you thankful for being at camp?

At Music Camp, some of the people shared thoughts about gifts and thankfulness. You can see their pictures on these pages.

**Lila Valli** (not in the picture) looks forward at Christmas to visiting friends and relatives who come from far away. **Thane** thinks of the good food and treats—yum! **Elias** said that they have special Finnish goodies at Christmastime. **Connor** and **Derek** talked about the visits with friends who are on the same journey to heaven. **Aliisa** said she enjoys special songs and music at home and church. **Aubrey** is thankful for all of God’s blessings and wants to pray for unbelieving friends and family. **Megan** is thankful for daily needs, like food, water, and clothes.

What things are you thankful for, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas? Do we remember to thank God for His many gifts? Could we make a list of things we are thankful for every day? How long would your list be?

Text and photos: Jim Moll

## Things to visit about:

1. This writing gives examples of gifts that God gives, like singing, playing music, being kind to others, helping at home and church, and writing. Can you think of other examples? How can you help others with your gifts?
2. Have you gone to camp with other believers? What were you thankful for at camp?
3. What are you thankful for in your life? Can you write these down?