

Blue Camel Exchange: You may have heard of a "White Elephant" gift exchange, but you haven't heard of a "Blue Camel" exchange, until now! Advent season is right around the corner, beginning December 1st, and we are going to begin this Advent with some fun! The Blue Camel Exchange, created by Pastor Jaime, along with her coaches and colleagues, Pastor Meta Herrick Carlson and Deacon Michelle Walka, derives from a longstanding tradition on the Y.O.G.A. (Youth Of G.A.) Crow Wing River canoe trip. For over 30 years, it has been a tradition for youth and adult leaders on the canoe trip to draw names for a "secret pal." While on the trip (2 nights, 3 days), each person is asked to make a gift for their secret pal. Gifts are created by using items from nature they find along the river and/or at camp, along with craft and woodworking supplies provided by the leaders. At the end of the trip, we exchange our gifts with our secret pals.

The "Blue Camel" exchange will run a bit differently than the canoe trip. Every family unit or individual is **invited** to sign up to participate in this exchange. On Sunday, December 8th, we will draw names for our "secret pal/family" and begin creating our Blue Camel gifts during fellowship time (after worship service.) Craft and woodworking supplies will be provided.

How to participate in the Blue Camel Exchange:

1) Sign up! A sign up sheet will be posted in the church entry starting Sunday, November 3rd. Deadline to sign up will be Sunday, December 8th. *need to sign up to participate*

2) Think of a family tradition, whether it be a family recipe, prayer, or Christmas tradition that you would like to share with your secret pal/family. Write this tradition on a sheet of paper, notecard, or whatever creative item you prefer and use this to be the basis of your Blue Camel gift. *This is an option to help with creating your gift and not required.

3) Show up! Be present on Sunday, December 8th to draw the name of your secret pal/family and to begin creating your Blue Camel gift. *Remember to bring your tradition to share if you choose to use this as part of your gift idea.

4) Show up! Be present on Sunday, December 15th to exchange your Blue Camel gift with your secret pal/family.

5) Have fun! The Blue Camel Exchange is similar to the White Elephant exchange. The Blue Camel gift is meant to be inexpensive, yet memorable and fun. My hope is for us to notice our secret pal/family and create stronger relationships with each other. And as a bonus, we will delight in joy and laughter as we journey to the manger this Advent and Christmas season.

Pastor Jaime +