

## *My 2019 Christmas Story*

### [Matthew 1:22-25](#)

Good morning church, my name is Dickson Beckley, and a member of the CUMC. It is with honor under the leadership of pastor Oak – Yean for inviting me to share my Christmas story with church family. As we all know, Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. We say wonderful because people commemorate to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. The Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus is our Lord and personal Savior.

History states billions of people from all over the world celebrate Christmas in diverse cultures. History also states both believers, and unbelievers do celebrate Christmas, the Muslims are also excited to celebrate Christmas in a grand style and in their own contextual way.

This 2019, I honestly figured out why everyone celebrates the birth of Christ in various culture. Regardless of race, religion, nationality, we all recognize Christmas. As the saying goes, “society without culture is insecure”. The birth of Christ is a unique tradition to the fact that Jesus is the light of the world.

In my country Sierra Leone, we have a special festival during Christmas called the “Tangase” Festival.” This festival has lots of similarities to other countries celebrations of Christmas but do have its unique culture values. Women will dress up in traditional attires like Kabaslot and Kotoku, stockings, Christmas hat otherwise called (Koro symbol) canvas shoes, masquerades, drumming, wearing masks, drumming, singing traditional songs, goombay, boo-boo-music and many more. 2019 Christmas was a spectacular one for me because I saw that “BRIGHT LIGHT” This Christmas I was so blessed that I was able to teach my kids about the birth of Jesus Christ and they learned a lot. They learned about Jesus’s birth, and some cultures and traditions of Christmas. I specifically educated them on Krio culture of Sierra Leone which I belong to. I also prepared one of our main krio Christmas dish (foo-foo and Betas) and they do enjoy it and appreciated my gift of cooking.

I will also like to share that I empowered individuals of the population that I work with. I work in a Mental Health/Behavioral Health Crisis setting. These are mentally Dx. and some of them have lost HOPE. Some of them can be danger to self and to others and can be gravely disabled. I felt so proud that I was able to transform some of their negativity to positivity, particularly during this time of the year. One week prior to Christmas, I facilitated a community meeting based on the significance of Christmas. I rendered Christmas songs to them, did Christmas project, and we all sing carols together. I also took my client to other Christmas activities in the community and they were very appreciative of my Gift of intervention and support.

Finally, prayers! This Christmas I spent most of my time praying than any others Christmas. I want to close by saying, Christmas is giving. I gave out many gifts than I received. This Christmas I saw the light, and because of that bright light, I want to say I have brighter hope for 2020, and it shall be well with all of us as we transition into another era.

Amen!