

# HASTINGS Jingle & Mingle

The spirit of Christmas does not come in a box or a bag wrapped in shiny paper. Christmas is not about spending all your money to buy the most expensive gift for the people you love. Christmas is a holiday when you can be present with the people you love. The season of Christmas means to me spending time with family, listening to past stories of loved ones who watch over me. Opening dusty boxes from our basement and placing homemade decorations around our home. Many of our decorations my great-great-grandma made, and all have a story to tell. When I was around 5 or 6, I thought that Christmas was all about the presents, but now that I'm older, I know it's more about the spirit of caring, not just for my own family, but for the families around me. The spirit of Christmas is to be happy with what you have and to be excited to spend the extra time with your loved ones, making memories and traditions. Christmas traditions in my family are very special to me. Decorating the Christmas tree, drinking hot cocoa in my pajamas, looking at Christmas lights, singing Christmas carols, and watching the light show at Dewey's. Eating Grandma's Sherry's chexmix as a meal, sneaking fudge off the coffee table until my belly hurts. Picking stars of my church's tree to make sure other girls and boys feel the same love and warmth from Christmas as I do from my family. This is what Christmas means to me.