

The Basics of Creating a
**CHRISTMAS
NOTEBOOK**

by Krisann Blair - Christmas Coach



HELLO!



Merry Christmas! I am Krisann Blair, Christmas Coach and author of "Creating a Christmas Notebook". In 1999 I launched a little email group called Christmas 99 to help myself and others stay motivated and focused on having a less stressful Christmas season for 1999. Little did I know how many people were on the same journey as myself! So I renamed the group Christmas Organizing, so the group would have a life beyond the 1999 Christmas season, and here we are today! Now let us start on our journey to creating a less stressful Christmas season by creating a Christmas Organizing Notebook!

Merry Christmas!
Krisann



CREATING A CHRISTMAS NOTEBOOK

OBJECTIVE

Creating a Christmas Notebook will help you to Calm the Christmas Chaos and organize your Christmas season, resulting in having a less stressful holiday season! By putting together a Christmas Notebook, you will create a central location for your Christmas related information, all at your fingertips and take your Christmas from stressed to blessed.

CREATING A CHRISTMAS NOTEBOOK

Your Christmas Notebook is the foundation of your organization plan for the holiday season. Writing lists and ideas down in a notebook may seem like a large task, but it can easily be overcome by breaking the task down into steps! In this workbook, I will guide you through the task of putting together the first phase of your notebook.

Come, take the leap and be on your way to a more organized Christmas, one small step at a time and CALM the Christmas Chaos!

By creating a Christmas notebook, you will have everything at your fingertips, and you can continuously reference it for reminders and directions concerning your holiday plans. Because most people do not have identical lives, your notebook will be unique to you and your family. Use your Christmas Notebook to create a personalized holiday organizing road map so you can celebrate Christmas YOUR way.

Step one: Gather your supplies.

The first item you need to put on your shopping list (or find around the house) is a three-ring binder. Your binder will need to be a minimum of one inch to have room to expand as you add items. You can use one larger binder or several smaller binders based on the amount of information you plan on having in your notebook. I start with a one-inch binder and expand out to additional binders as I populate my notebook. By creating different notebooks for different topics such as gift-giving and Christmas Kitchen, I do not become overwhelmed with one large notebook.

While your binder is an essential item, below is a list of other things that are helpful to have in your notebook. Highlight the items you need to purchase and put a check on the ones you already have. Don't forget to look around your house for things you may already have to save you some money! You may want to add other items to the list, as you need them.

Three-hole punch

This is useful for punching holes into pages of ideas, recipes, etc. that you print off to add to your notebook. They make a simple one that fits into a three-ring binder.

Dividers for a three-ring binder

Dividers for your notebook will allow you to find each section quickly. You should purchase the extra-wide ones, so they stick out past your page protectors.

Slash pocket folders

You will find these helpful in each section for keeping smaller and loose items in as you compile your notebook.

Page protectors

Page protectors are a must-have in your notebook to keep organized. Protectors are a great place to store magazine pages and last years Christmas card envelopes and everything in between! You will be surprised at how they help in so many ways.

Notebook paper

Helpful to write down notes in each section.

Zippered pouch to hold pens, pencils and other loose items

Calendar for the whole year

Pages designed with photo pockets on them (usually 4 to a page)

These pages are useful to hold smaller pictures, recipes, etc.

Colored Pencils (for marking on your calendar)

Business size envelopes (#10), with a Christmas theme for receipts

Step Two: Assemble your notebook.

Now that you have gathered all your supplies, it is time to start assembling your notebook. The first step is to mark on your calendar time each day over the next week to work on your Christmas Organizing Notebook assembly. Some steps take longer than others, so as you work, you may want to combine steps. Block out a realistic amount of time each day until you have your notebook assembled and do not overwhelm yourself.

Creating Your Christmas Notebook Tabs

When purchasing tab dividers for your notebook, consider ones that are easy to change as you progress with your notebook assembly. The reason for this is that you may change your mind about a particular tabbed section one year. The decision is up to you which tabs you use, based on what areas are the most important to you. It would be unfair of me to decide what tabs are best for you without your input.

Everyone's notebook will be different because everyone has their own traditions and celebrations during the holiday season. You can set up your tabs based on the topics you have more involvement in and combining several topics if you have limited involvement.

Think of all the things you do at Christmas and make a tab for each of them. Personally, I have found that the more divisions I have, even within the category itself, the better I work because it doesn't overwhelm me and it is a smaller goal to tackle and not this "big project" that can be discouraging.

Populating Your Christmas Notebook

Now that you have decided on how you are going to divide your notebook, it is time to populate your notebook with forms, pages, and useful information. While your dividers may be different, I am going to list out what I put behind each of my divided sections based on the forms I have created. The green wording is my divider label, and below it are the forms I use in that section.

Saving & Spending @ Christmas

Christmas Spending Breakdown

Christmas Money Savers

Ways to Save Money for Christmas

Christmas Spending Ledger

In this section, I also add several sheet protectors to keep all receipts that are related to the Christmas season.

Christmas Calendar

Current year calendar with room to write under each day

Just so it is clear, I do not use this as my primary calendar, but I want a calendar in my notebook. I use this calendar to write down things related to Christmas and events I am attending/hosting during the Christmas season. Once a week, I review the calendar and place any items that are FOR SURE into my planner/online calendar that I use everyday.

Gifts @ Christmas

My Christmas List (this is a place to write down YOUR list)

Most Remembered Gifts

Gift Ideas: What do they like? (Interview sheet)

Gifting Theme Ideas

Master Gift List

Gift List: Group

More Than One Gift

Stocking Gifts

Twelve Gifts of Christmas

Gift Box Inventory

Assigned Gift Box Inventory

Gift Wrapping Supplies

Christmas Card List

Newsletter Highlights

Gift Ideas for Christmas Cards

Crafting Form

This is one of the largest sections of my notebook. You will notice some forms could be placed in other sections also. An example is the crafting form. I have it in the gift section because that is where I use the form the most populating out my crafting gift ideas. I will also place copies of the crafting form into any sections I will be creating crafts for Christmas. Examples: decorating, entertaining, cards, etc.

Also, place page protectors in this section to keep gift ideas you find in magazines or on the internet. One idea is to create a "packet" for different people you purchase gifts for using a page protector and put all their information sheets, gifts ideas, etc. in the protector for easy reference.

Christmas @ Home - Decorating

- Decorating Inside
- Decorating Outside
- Decorating Shopping List

Keep page protectors in this section and as you see decorating ideas you would like to incorporate, print them out if online or tear them out of a magazine and place in the page protector to reference.

Christmas @ Home - Entertaining

- Party & Gathering List
- Party Planning Sheet
- Party Guest List
- Party Favor Ideas
- Party Food & Menu
- Party/Entertaining "Needed Items"

Add page protectors to this section to help organize all those great recipes and party ideas you find on the internet and in magazines.

Christmas @ Home -Kitchen

- Food Gifts
- Must-Have Christmas Foods
- Favorite Foods Interview Sheet
- Favorite Restaurants
- Quick & Easy Meal Ideas
- Slow Cooker/Freezer Meal Ideas
- Make-Ahead Christmas Foods
- 30 Meals We Like
- Master Food Shopping List
- Master Grocery Shopping List - Non-Perishable & Perishable
- Recipe Grocery Shopping List

Christmas @ Home & Away

Christmas Activities

Christmas Activity Wish List -Events
Event Planning Sheet
Christmas Get-Together Dishes/Food to Take
Hostess Gift Ideas
Christmas Activity Wish List -Home
Activity Interview Sheet
Activity Planning Sheet
Packages to Mail
Light Weight Gift Ideas
Traveling During Christmas
Christmas Travel To-Do List
Ways to Take Christmas With You While Traveling

Christ-Centered Christmas

Christ-Centered Activities Planning Sheet
Christ-Centered Decorating Room by Room Sheet
Christ-Centered Gifting Idea Sheet
Charitable Giving Ideas
Charity Information Sheet

NEXT STEPS

Click on the picture to visit the link.



Help take your Christmas from stressed to blessed with the Christmas Joy Podcast. I share tips with you all year long, not just right before Christmas, to help you create a Christmas planning notebook and stay on track for the upcoming Christmas season.

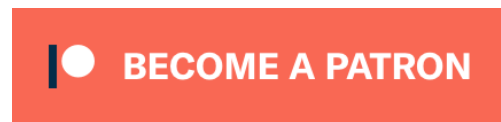
[CLICK here to listen!](#)



Visit Christmas Organizing's website to sign up for our newsletter, read blog posts, connect via social media and much more! Click on the logo above to visit the Christmas Organizing web site.



Christmas Organizing has lots of boards on Pinterest to help you populate all the different areas of your Christmas Organizing Notebook.



Love the ideas here? There are lots more including books, podcasts, classes and more for our patrons. Some content is free while those who pledge a \$1 or more a month get PDF Forms included and other benefits throughout the month.

CHRISTMAS COACHING QUESTIONS

1. What areas would you most like to improve on for next Christmas?

2. How much do you plan on spending for the upcoming Christmas season?

3. Does your family help you with tasks at Christmas? Do you want them to help?


CHRISTMAS COACHING QUESTIONS

1. Write down 5 low cost ideas to reduce your budget this Christmas season.


2. Write down the top 3 activities you want to do with your family this Christmas.


CHECKLIST!

Christmas may still be months away but check your list and be on the road to taking your Christmas from Stressed to Blessed!

 Create your own Christmas Organizing Notebook by gathering your supplies and creating your sections and lists. Create your own forms or print off ones from Christmas Organizing.

 Join the Christmas Organizing email list for a monthly newsletter and other helpful emails. Click here: [Christmas Organizing Newsletters](#)

 Join Christmas Organizing T.I.P.S. (Teaching, Inspiring & Planning Strategies) and learn from our community about new ideas for a less stressful holiday season in this informative Facebook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChristmasOrganizingTIPS>

 Follow Christmas Organizing on Pinterest! I have boards dedicated to various topics related to Christmas and add more pins everyday! Visit: <https://www.pinterest.com/christmascoach/>

 Become a Patron. Support Christmas Organizing on different levels, starting at only \$1 per month and gain access to exclusive material, Facebook groups and much more! Enjoy lots of goodies PLUS the download of the PDF forms for this year and any new forms I create. To learn more, visit:
<https://www.patreon.com/christmascoach>

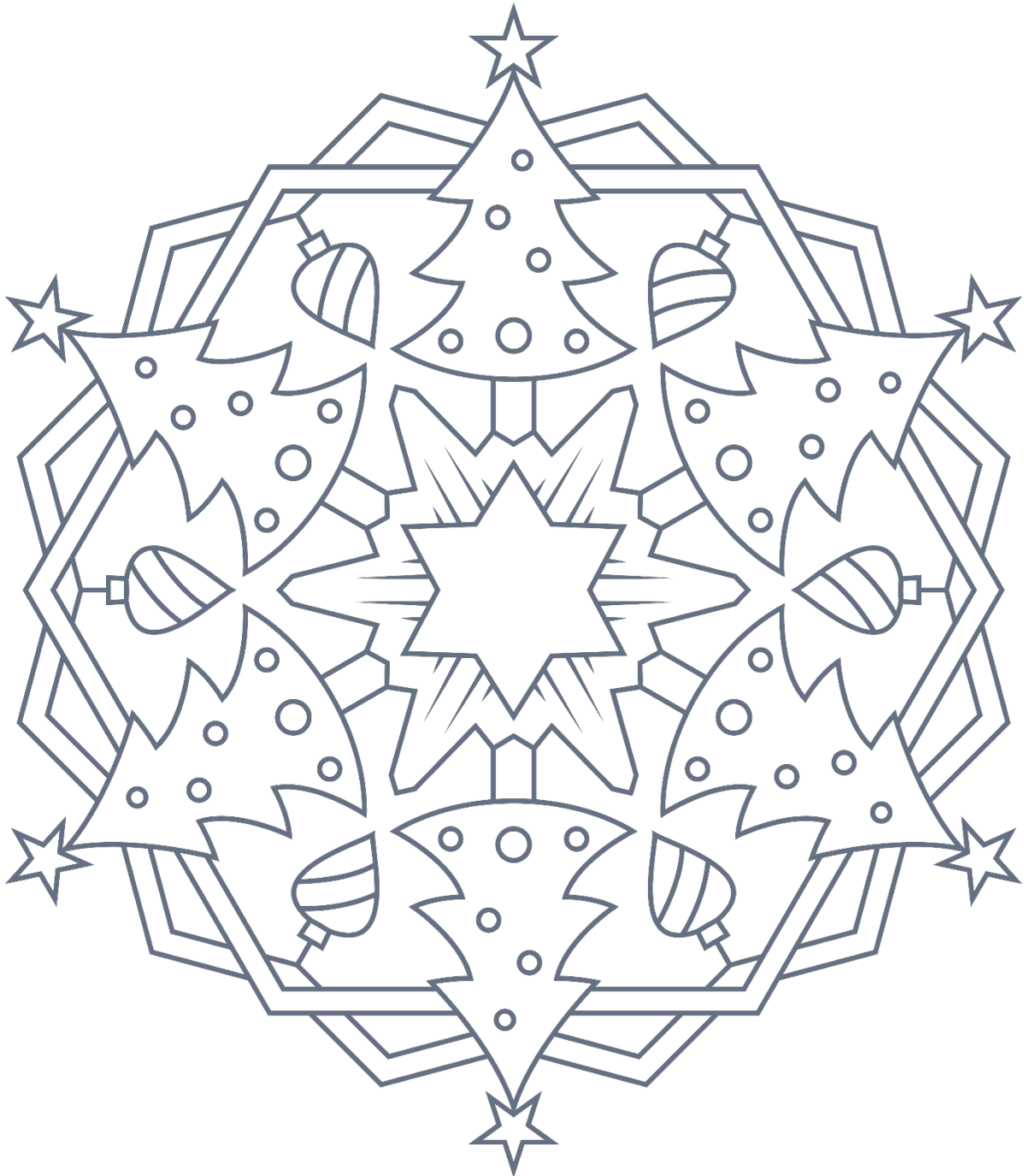
ALL THE NOTES



A series of horizontal red lines spanning the width of the page, providing a template for writing notes.

CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS & JOURNALING

Christmas Organizing Notebook



Reflecting and Journaling about Christmas

This section is filled with forms to help you write down your memories, ideas, and reflections to help you throughout this book.

Journaling is defined as “a record of experiences, ideas, or reflections regularly kept for private use” (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

Why do you need to journal about Christmas? Simply, when you write things down, it helps to put them in focus – the good and the bad. Christmas is a joyous season and should not be dreaded but CELEBRATED. Each family has their ways of celebrating Christmas. Symbols, activities, and traditions mean different things to different people during the season. Christmas is not about doing what the “world” tells us to do. It is about celebrating Christ’s birth in a way your family grasps the meaning the most.

As you complete the reflecting and journaling page, I challenge you to think about the topic as it relates to your Christmas planning and the Christmas you desire for you and your family. As we begin our journey to take Christmas from stressed to blessed, let’s reflect and journal about past Christmas seasons, as well as what we desire for our future Christmas seasons.

Remember to answer the questions truthfully. There is no right or wrong answer. You will be referring back to these pages at different times.

Reflecting on Christmas Past

Take time to think about the Christmas season! Many times, we do not think about Christmas; we just “do it,” which can lead to disappointments and many “I wish I had done this or done that” after the season. To help you decide what is important to you about Christmas, answer the following questions, being as open and honest as possible. Your answers will help shape your Christmas Organizing plan.

<p>Do you enjoy the Christmas season? Why or Why not? List out the main items that caused you stress.</p>	
<p>Does your Christmas seem out of control with things just happening without rhyme or reason, and do you spend more time looking for your lists, recipes, gifts, etc. than you spend with family during Christmas?</p>	
<p>Do you overspend during Christmas? If so, in what areas?</p>	
<p>Do you ask your family to help with preparations for the Christmas season?</p>	
<p>Do you buy gifts throughout the year, only to lose them when it comes time to wrap the gifts?</p>	
<p>Did you send Christmas cards this past year? Did it go as planned? If you did not send cards, did you want to?</p>	
<p>Do you purchase gifts with a purpose, with the recipient in mind? If not, do you want to?</p>	
<p>Would you like to entertain more (or even at all) during the holiday season?</p>	
<p>Are there activities you did not do this past year that you wanted to do? Are there activities that did not go as planned?</p>	
<p>Did you overbook yourself this past Christmas?</p>	
<p>What is one thing you would change about this past Christmas?</p>	
<p>What is one thing you would NOT change about this Christmas?</p>	

Most Remembered Gifts

Write in the gifts you received in the past that you remember. Remembering how certain gifts touched you can trigger ideas when deciding on gifts for others.

Gift Received	Why You Remember This Gift

Christmas Event Wish List

Write in the name of the activity you wish to participate in and mark if you have done this activity in the past (yes means you have done the activity before, no means you have not done the activity before.)

	Activity Name	Yes	No
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Christmas Activity Wish List - Home

Write in the name of the activity you wish to participate in and mark if you have done this activity in the past (yes means you have done the activity before, no means you have not done the activity before.)

	Activity Name	Yes	No
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

FOUNDATIONS: CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

Christmas Organizing Notebook



Christmas Calendar

Preparing a Christmas Calendar may seem like a basic thing to do, but it is a very important step in your Christmas planning. Even if Christmas is still months away, you need to start thinking about your holiday calendar now because it is an important way of reducing holiday stress. Your calendar will serve as your road map for the upcoming season.

There are many online and software programs available to print out customized calendars, and I highly suggest using one. Using a computer-based calendar will allow you to input reoccurring things like your sister's birthday (and some programs can even tell you how old she will be that year!) as well as when lay-a-way payments are due and when the kids get out for the holiday break. Calendars with personalized dates on them also make great gifts that everyone loves! Even though I love the computer calendars that I can print out, whatever type of calendar you have will work as long as there is space to add your events.

You can also use the Christmas Planning calendar page included and fill it in for August through December. Using these calendar sheets is a great way to start recording things you know will come up before placing them into your everyday calendar.

Christmas Calendar Dates

Use this form for family member events scheduled in December so you can add it to your calendar. Ask your family to alert you to dates of events or activities as soon as they know them. If you have an event you know will happen, but do not know the date yet, go ahead and list it on this form.

Date of Event & Name of Submitter	Event Information Time, Place, Gift Needed, etc.

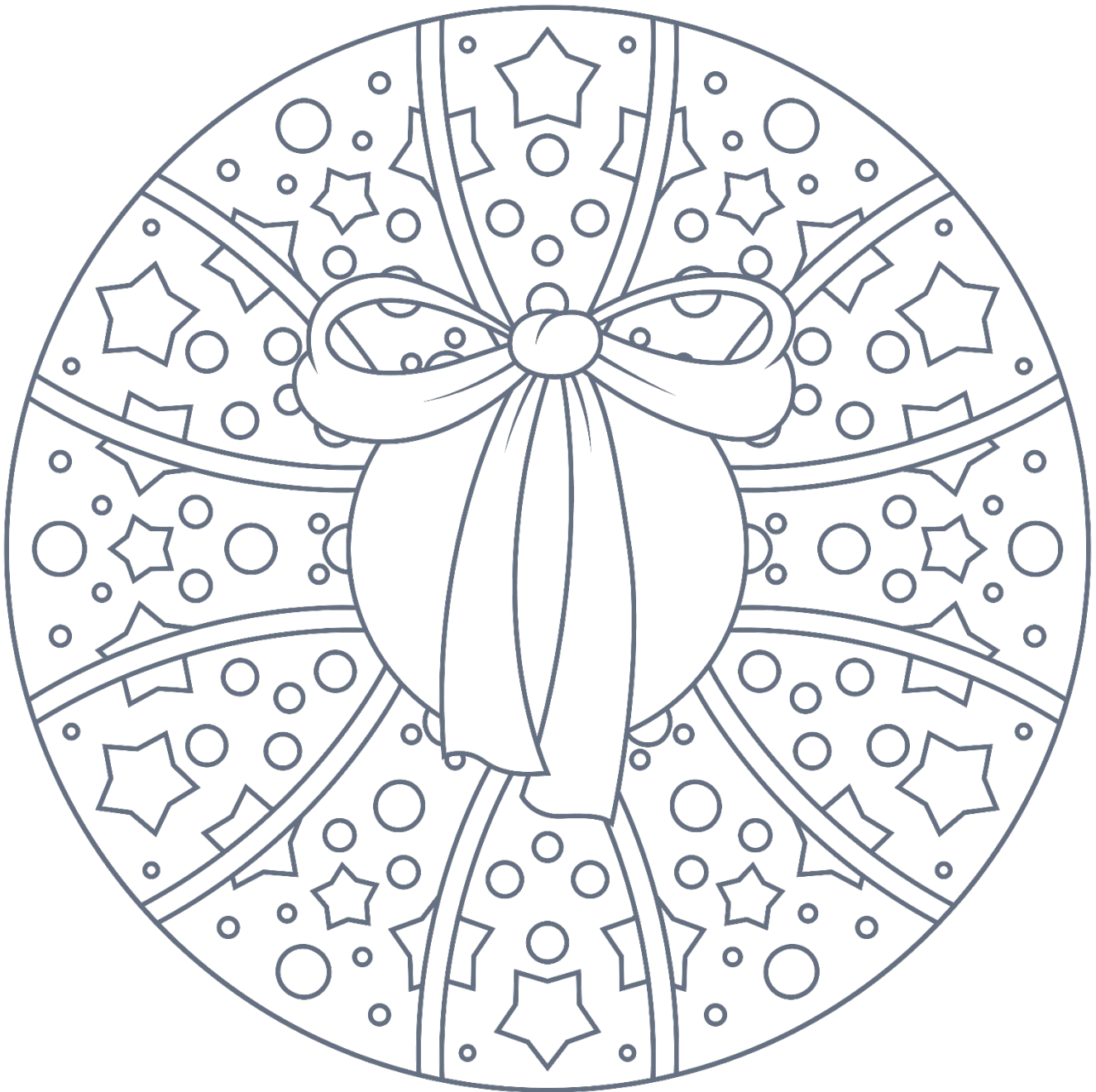
Christmas Planning

Month _____ Year _____

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

FOUNDATIONS: SAVING & SPENDING @ CHRISTMAS

Christmas Organizing Notebook



Saving & Spending @ Christmas

Christmas is a time when many people throw caution to the wind and buy what they think will make everyone else happy—often charging the purchases, to deal with the outcome in January. This is not a good strategy because it only causes more stress. With planning, you can map out your expected expenses and put back money throughout the year to help with expenses in December.

Christmas Expenses

Use this page to write down and budget out different items you spend money on at Christmas.

	Christmas Category	Budget Amount
1	Christmas Offering at Church	
2	Charity Donations	
3	Decorations	
4	Gifts for Family	
5	Gifts for Friends	
6	Entertaining	
7	Baking	
8	Christmas Cards	
9	Dinners Out in December	
10	Postage (for shipping packages and mailing cards)	
11	Christmas Pictures	
12	Cleaning Services	
13	Travel (gas, hotel, food, etc.)	
14		
15		
16		

Christmas Expenses

	Christmas Category	Budget Amount
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		

Christmas Money Savers

Use this page to write down ways to save money in different categories at Christmas.

Christmas Category	Low-Cost Idea
Decorating	
Gifts	
Entertaining	
Baking	
Christmas Cards	
Dinners at Home	
Dinners Out	
Postage/Shipping	
Pictures	
Cleaning Services	
Travel	

FOUNDATIONS: CHRIST-CENTERED CHRISTMAS

Christmas Organizing Notebook



Christ-Centered Christmas

Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Christ. When I first started on my journey of Christmas Organizing, I soon realized that I lived in a bubble because I would often have people offended on my site because I talked about Jesus and his birth in relation to Christmas. This threw me for a loop because, to me, Christmas was about celebrating the birth of Jesus. Yes, I grew up with Santa and so did my children, but the reason for the season has and always will be celebrating the birth of Jesus.

While Christmas is celebrated by believers and non-believers alike, this line taken from Joshua 24:15 (King James Bible) sums up the reason I celebrate Christmas: “. . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

I refuse to put aside Christ when talking about celebrating Christmas, so my writings have Christian aspects of the seasons of Advent and Christmas, but I felt a need to make a separate section to concentrate on how we can each have a Christ-Centered Christmas.

Christ-Centered Decorating

List ideas for Christ-Centered decorating at Christmas.

Idea	Room/Area

Charity Information Sheet

Name of Charity

What type of programs do they have?	
Is the charity a 501C3?	
Mailing Address	
Phone Number	
Do they send cards for donations in Memory/Honor?	
Do they have a local chapter or office?	
How are the donated funds used?	
Do they need supplies, money, or time donated?	
Do they have any special programs at Christmas?	
Ages allowed to volunteer?	
What are the times that volunteers are needed?	