Christmas New Life

2024 Playbook

Let's get started...

This is the ultimate playbook for your Christmas season! We have everything to make sure you are prepared for the best Christmas at New Life to date. We have created four categories for you to follow...**Know**, **See**, **Feel**, and **Do**. These categories will help you answer what you want people to experience this Christmas season.

Your Christmas Planning Meeting

Schedule a Christmas Planning Meeting with your leadership team and review each section to see if you can answer all the questions. Review with your team to see what you do and don't have and work together to ensure a blissful and stress-free Christmas season.

Email your essential leaders and volunteers to this meeting. Invite your worship, tech, children's, welcome, hospitality, creative, and anyone who plays a big hand in making Sundays possible!

Action Steps

- □ Schedule your planning meeting date, time, and location
- Identify your Christmas team coordinators
- □ Invite your key leaders and volunteers

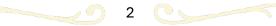
Sample Email (October 14)

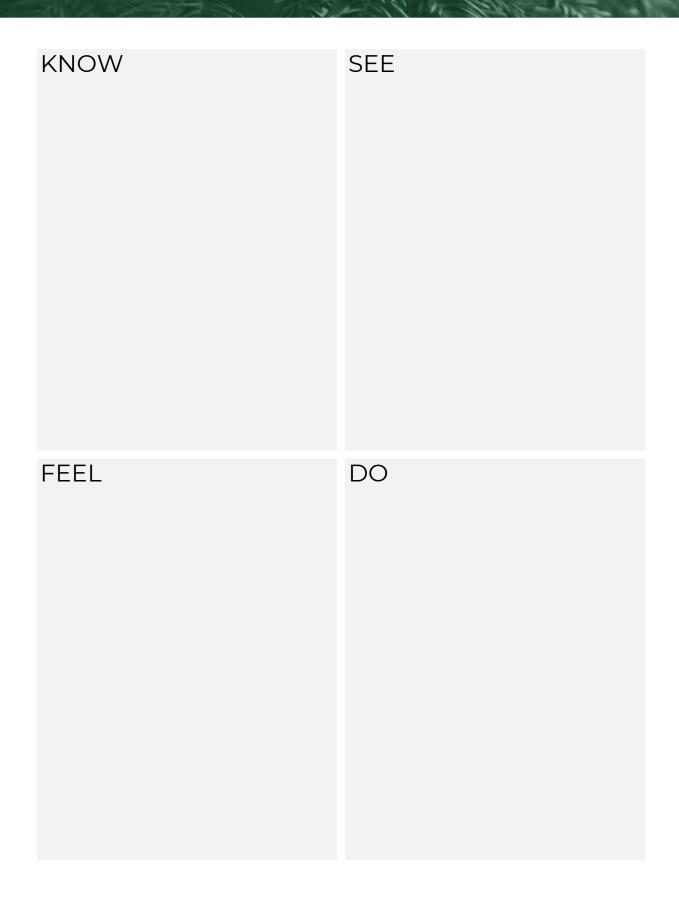
Christmas will be here before we know it! We want you to be a part of the prepping and planning for one of the best Christmas seasons at our location. We want people to know that God came down as a small child to save us all and to celebrate God's kindness and character this Christmas.

At New Life, our Christmas planning begins now, and we need your help! Will you be a part of our planning team and help us reach our community this Christmas? I want to invite you to join us for a Christmas planning meeting.

[Date] [Time] [Location]

Please let me know if you will attend and bring any ideas you have to make this our best Christmas season to date. So excited to see you!









3 WAYS TO INVITE SOMEONE TO CHURCH THIS CHRISTMAS

1.			
2.			
3.			

3 NEXT STEPS YOU WANT PEOPLE TO TAKE THIS CHRISTMAS

2.
3.

3 UPCOMING EVENTS TO BRING PEOPLE BACK AFTER CHRISTMAS

1.			
2.			
3.			

4 🔼 🗸

12 Ideas to Help Get You Started!

1. Mail a postcard to the surrounding community

- 2. Print invites for your congregation to handout to family and friends
- 3. Decorate the lobby, stage, and Kids Zone to create multiple photo ops
- 4. Plan a Christmas cookie exchange
- 5. Use the pre-made provided social media posts from series resources and post on your
- Instagram and Facebook pages to create excitement and engagement.
- 6. Host a family movie night with popcorn, cookies, and hot cocoa
- 7. Prepare the children's ministry to sing a special Christmas song
- 8. Plan a candlelight Christmas Eve service and sing Christmas carols
- 9. Give a special Christmas offering to local initiatives
- 10. Dress up your welcome team or have an ugly sweater Sunday
- 11. Have a family share a short testimony/story on video or live on Sunday
- 12. Host a Christmas bake-off and/or Tree-lighting and decorating night

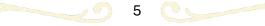
Communications Check List

For everything that deals with your website and app please fill out our updated Communications Request form, <u>linked here</u>.

Website and app:

- □ The basics: Dates, service times, address, website, events.
- Check your website: Google your church (CHECK ALL LINKS)
- □ Find a photo to use for your Instagram and Facebook ads.
- □ Identify who is taking photos and videos for your Christmas services.
- Remember to update the website if you are doing special times for Christmas Eve or Day.

Your Core Team	Name
Christmas Champion	
Deliver the weekly announcements,	
updates, and celebrations.	
Communications Coordinator	
Keep track of the weekly action steps	
and planning ahead.	
Social Media Coordinator	
Share weekly posts and engage with	
people online.	
Decoration Coordinator	
Who is helping to get the location	
ready for Christmas?	



Photography Shot List

Here is a quick and easy list of photos and videos for your social media volunteers to get photos of in the weeks to come before Christmas! (Quick tip!! You can also get some general winter photos since everyone will be wearing layers!)

□ Hugging (this is super easy to ask

people to pose for you!)

- Groups of People Smiling.
- □ Invite cards (a picture of different people holding them!)
- People waving at the camera.
- People walking into your building.
- People serving on Sunday Morning.
- People decorating for Christmas.
- 🛛 Signage



Visuals

Check out New Life Admin for all Christmas Graphics. There will be a Canva project that will have all of the graphics, invites, fonts, and colors selected for you! All you need to do is add your location details!

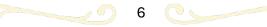
- □ Main screen/ slide
- Blanks to use for sermon points.
- $\hfill\square$ Lower thirds are an option for slides as well.
- □ Square Instagram/ social media blanks to share events on.
- **D** Thin header for Bulletins

Customization

Each pop sign, Instagram graphic, and postcard can be customized to your address and services on Canva... here is a list of assets we provide that need to be altered to your location.

- Mailers
- Post Cards
- 🗅 Invite Cards
- Outdoor Banner

Do you or your office manager not have access to New Life Social on Canva? Email Rachel to get added to the page. <u>Email her here.</u>



CHRISTMAS OFFERING CAMPAIGN

CLARIFY YOUR VISION

IDENTIFY YOUR TOP 3 INITIATIVES

1.			
2.			
3.			

DETERMINE YOUR OFFERING GOAL

Take your average Sunday offering for the year

Multiply a Single x 1, Double x 2, Triple x 3, Homerun x 4

Total Christmas Offering Goal =



CHRISTMAS INVITATIONS

Christmas is a great time of year to invite people to church. Many people are looking for a church to attend and are often more open to receiving an invitation from family and friends. There are several great ways to get the word out, equip your congregation, and reach the community!

ACTION STEPS

- □ Outline your Christmas service times and special events
- Determine your Christmas invites and budget
- □ Order your invites and materials at newlifeadmin.org

INVITE BUDGET (Pricing is subject to change)

MATERIALS	QUANTITIE	BUDGET				
Mailers	1000 = \$696	2500 = \$1098	5000 = \$1,770	10,000 = \$2,990		
🗆 3x3 Invites	100 = \$36	250 = \$48	500 = \$60	1000 = \$72		
🗆 4x8 Banners	1 = \$50	2 = \$100	3 = \$150	4 = \$200		
🗆 Digital Ads						
ALL ORDERS ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 1st! TOTAL						

Building and Digital Checklist

□ Keep details simple – Dates, times, address, and website.

D Review website for updates. Send in a Comm Request with updates.

□ Review Facebook ads. They are inexpensive. Choose a photo, write a friendly invitation, and link to your website.

 Listen/watch your service online and make any notes for improvement
 Do a walkthrough of the church and make a list of anything that needs to be changed, updated, or replaced before Christmas (signs, cards, stands, etc.)

Ask 3-4 people to complete a secret shopper evaluation of your service.



Secret Shopper Evaluation

1 – Immediate Attention Required 2 - Below Average 3 - Average 4 - Above Average 5 - Amazing job NA – Does not apply or did not evaluate

FACILITIES

- ____ Ease in finding the church
- ____ Curb Appeal
- ____ Parking (ease, accessibility, signage)
- _____ Exterior signs (condition, clarity, size)
- ____ Interior Signage

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ___)

HOSPITALITY

- _____ Greeting (by anyone, warmly/coolly, too gregarious)
- ____ Appearance of greeters
- ____ Offered bulletin or information
- ____ Knowledgeable of facility/class

locations/church

information

____ Did I feel comfortable as a newcomer (under a spotlight, just right, ignored)?

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

BABIES / TODDLERS AREA

- ____ Signage/directions
- ____ Cleanliness

_____ Staff (adequate number, competence, appearance)

- _____ Teacher there/organized environment
- ____ I met the teacher
- ____ Child was greeted, felt at home
- _____ Facility (size, appearance, equipment)
- ____ Check-in system
- ____ Security
- ____ Check-out system

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AREA

- _____ Signage/directions
- ____ Cleanliness

_____ Staff (adequate number, competence, appearance)

- _____ Teacher there/organized environment
- ____ I met the teacher
- ____ Child was greeted, felt at home
- _____ Facility (size, appearance, equipment)
- ____ Equipment
- ____ Decorations
- ____ Take-home materials
- ____ Check-in system
- ____ Security
- ____ Check-out system

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

STUDENT MINISTRY AREA

- _____ Signage/directions
- ____ Cleanliness
- _____ Staff (adequate number, competence, appearance)
- _____ Teacher there/organized environment
- ____ I met the teacher
- ____ Youth was greeted, made to feel
- welcome
- _____ Facility (size, appearance, equipment)
- ____ Equipment
- ____ Decorations
- ____ Check-in system
- ____ Security

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max __



9

Secret Shopper Evaluation

1 – Immediate Attention Required 2 - Below Average 3 - Average 4 - Above Average 5 - Amazing job NA – Does not apply or did not evaluate

WORSHIP SERVICE

- _____ Auditorium appearance
- _____ Seating (availability, comfort)
- _____ Help offered to find a seat
- ____ Could I see the screen(s)?
- _____ Was the music balanced (vocal versus instruments)?
- ____ Did the worship service flow freely?

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

Message/sermon

- ____ length
- ____ clarity
- ____ interest
- ____ relevance
- ____ notes
- ____ pastoral perceptions (attire,

friendliness, etc.)

- ____ content
- ____ takeaway
- ____ Audio mix
- ____ Friendliness (general feel, warmth)
- ____ Length of service
- ____ Did I feel informed about what I was to do/when?
- ____ Next Steps

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

RESTROOMS

- _____ Signage/directions _____ Lighting
- ____ Decor
- ____ Aroma
- ____ Cleanliness

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

FOLLOW-UP

_____ Appropriate amount (too much, too little)

_____ Type of follow-up received

____ Overall comfort (embarrassed, felt welcome, etc.)

- ____ Friendliness of people
- _____ Friendliness of pastor/staff

TOTAL SCORE _____ (Max ____)

MISCELLANEOUS

- What are your overall impressions of your visit? Strengths, things to work on, etc.?
- Is this a place where you would invite your friends/neighbors to attend? Why or why not?

EVALUATION

- Is this a place where you would invite your friends/neighbors to attend? Why or why not?
- If you could change one thing about your experience, what would it be?
- Is this a place where you would want to return? Why or why not?



Resources

This is a time to check your inventory! Here is a checklist to ensure you are ready for the Christmas Season....

□ Offering Envelopes (English/ Spanish)

Baptism Shirts (Blue Made New) (English/ Spanish)

□ Mentor Shirts (Black Raised to Life) (English/ Spanish)

November 5th is when all Christmas resources are due. We need time to update inventory and order more in time for Christmas.

Decorations

Did you love the photo setup in our Christmas photos?! Here is a list of some items to make an office space feel super cozy!

Gold Frame

- □ <u>Red Tree Skirt</u>
- Gold Candle Sticks
- □ Pine Branch Stems

□ <u>Wrapping Paper</u>

□ Keep some Amazon boxes and wrap them to put under the tree



Winter Events

Winter is the best time to have some community events! Helps get people out of the house while we are amid the blistering cold in Chicago. Sit down with your team and see what can be done to give the community a place besides home. Here are a few Winter event ideas:

□ Have a women's craft night.

□ Men's breakfast and bible study.

□ Create a family event with a kid's movie night and get other adults to help volunteer.

 $\hfill\square$ Have a meet and greet before Life Groups start back up so new people can meet others.

After Christmas is great time to start a new bible study. Sit down with your team and see what your Life Groups can study all together. It can allow new people to jump in and not feel like they need to catch up.



CHRISTMAS COMMUNICATIONS CALENDAR

Here are all of the dates to keep in mind and to help you stay ahead! Work with your leadership team to fill in events that will help lead up to Christmas!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				OCT 31	Nov 1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10		12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	²²	23
24	25	26	²⁷	28 Thanksgiving	29	30
Dec 1	2	3	Å	5	Ĝ	7
8	9 ()	10	ß	12		14
¹⁵ Christmas Offering	16	17	¹⁸	19	20	21
22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26	²⁷	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve	Jan 1 New Year's Day	2	3	4



Christmas Email Templates

7 WEEKS TIL Christmas

November 4 Subject: Will you help me?

Christmas is one of the busiest, most wonderful, and eventful times of the year. More than anything else, Christmas is a celebration of Jesus coming down as a baby and then living a perfect life for our sake and the new life we can have through Him.

Before we know it, Christmas decorations will be out, and we will all be thinking about the best Christmas songs. Christmas at New Life planning has begun, and you all are about to be filled in on all that we have in store for you this season.

At New Life, our Christmas planning begins now, and we need your help! Will you be a part of our planning team and help us reach our community this Christmas? I want to invite you to join us for a Christmas planning meeting.

[Date] [Time] [Location]

Please let me know if you will attend and bring any ideas you have to make this our biggest and best Christmas season ever. Looking forward to it!

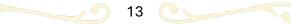
ACTION STEPS

Finish KNOW, SEE, DO, KNOW planning worksheet (see page 3)
 Meet with your leadership team to share the vision
 Pray together for the Christmas season ahead

Social Media This Week:

Happy November! What are you most excited about for this month?

"I will praise the Lord, and may everyone on earth bless his holy name forever and ever." (Psalm 145:21)



November 11

Subject: Life Change at New Life

It has been an incredible Fall season here at New Life, and today, we want to share with you a brief story of someone who has been impacted by our church family.

(Share story, interview, video)

Wow! Praise God for this story and life that has been changed. This is what it's all about, and we're looking forward to Christmas at New Life and hearing more powerful stories just like this.

ACTION STEPS

Contact leaders for potential stories
Meet or call the person to hear their story
Prepare them to share on Sunday or for a video for social media

Social Media This Week:

Share a photo of a fun Fall activity or share the video of your story!

"Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his." (Psalm 100:3)

No peeking! (post a photo of your team working on Christmas behind the scenes)



November 18 Subject: Serving this Christmas

With Thanksgiving around the corner, we want to take a moment to say thank you to the many people who serve here at New Life. Let's give it up for them! Everything that happens here at New Life is because of these faithful men and women who love Jesus and love people, and we couldn't do what we do without them. Thank you.

As we get ready for the Christmas season, we want to prepare our teams to be ready to welcome, care for, and love the people who will be coming through these doors this next month. So today, we want to encourage you to sign up and get involved with one of our Sunday ministry teams.

(Highlight a few opportunities available)

ACTION STEPS

Highlight ministry teams and volunteer opportunities
 Send a personal thank you to key ministry leaders
 Host a volunteer appreciation lunch/dinner

Social Media This Week:

Post a photo of your volunteers in action and say thank you!

"May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands." (Psalm 90:17)

Please help us get ready for Christmas! Sign up to serve with one of our ministry teams this Sunday!



November 25

Subject: Would you pray for us?

I love this time of year...holiday parties, Christmas trees, hot chocolate, and the spirit of generosity that swells in our hearts. There's something about celebrating the greatest gift ever given, Jesus Christ, that makes me think about other people a little more than usual.

This Christmas, we have a special opportunity to give and make a difference in our church and community. On Sunday, December ____, I want to invite you to participate in a special Christmas Offering.

(Share the vision for your Christmas Offering and highlight the initiatives).

Please join us in praying for God's vision to be done through our giving and generosity. Learn more and connect online at christmasatnewlife.org.

ACTION STEPS

□ Review your current guest follow-up process and each person involved. Find any steps that are getting missed and fill them in

□ Test your email, phone, voicemail, and website to make sure everything is working and going to the correct person

□ Perform a Google search for your location and make sure all information is up to date. Email website@newlifechicago.org for help.

Hand out invites for Christmas

□ Announce Christmas Offering Date

Social Media This Week:

Share your invite on social media! Create a short carousel with the Christmas Brand Kit for this year! (Reach out to Rachel if you need help)



December 2

Subject: 3 things to do before Christmas

We are counting down just a little over three weeks til Christmas morning! As we prepare for one of our busiest seasons of the year, YOU have an important part to play. I'm asking everyone in our church to do three things...

1. Pray! Only God can change a person's heart. Pray for people to be open and ready to receive the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

2. Invite! We've created invites for you to hand out, but don't stop there! A phone call or text message can be just the thing someone needs to take the step to come to church.

3. Share! We've created some social media invites for you to download and share with friends. It's easy, free, and fun! Visit Christmasatnewlife.com to learn more!

I'd love to hear about who you are inviting and how I can pray for you this Christmas. Simply reply to this email and let me know!

ACTION STEPS

Decorate for Christmas! Create a photo station and make your space feel festive, fun, and inviting!

Continue to hand out invites.

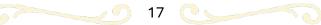
 Stock up on resources like coffee mugs, offering envelopes, and First Steps books. Make sure you have plenty to get you through the season.
 Highlight Christmas Offering initiatives.

Social Media This Week:

Christmas at New Life is here, and now all we need is you! (Post a photo before Sunday showing your Christmas decorations)

"But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3: 21-23)

Highlight your Christmas initiatives.



December 9

Subject: Christmas is almost here!

Christmas is almost here, and the year is already coming to a close - I can't believe it! God has done so much for us this year and I can't wait to see what is just around the corner. This week, we held our annual Christmas Offering.

(Share the vision for your Christmas Offering and highlight the initiatives).

It's not too late to contribute! As you review your giving this year, please consider supporting our Christmas Offering. To make a donation now, click the link below and follow the instructions on the page. All online contributions made this week will go toward the Christmas Offering.

You can give online at christmasatnewlife.org.

P.S. Don't miss out on our special Candlelight Christmas Service this upcoming Sunday! It's the perfect time to invite friends and family to join in the celebration.

ACTION STEPS

□ Take time in each of your small groups to pray for people by name.

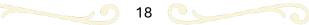
- □ Write a press release and send it out to any local news outlets or contacts.
- □ Record a video with your pastor giving people a behind the scenes tour.
- □ Prepare Christmas Offering envelopes for Sunday
- L Highlight Christmas Offering and initiatives
- Receive the Christmas Offering

Social Media This Week:

Post photos from Sunday's service

"But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, so that those who love your name may exult in you." (Psalm 5:11)

This Sunday is our Christmas at New Life offering! It's an opportunity for each of us to give a special offering and make a positive impact in our community.



December 16

Subject: Thank you!

This week, celebrate the Christmas offering and share the total that was received to date. Encourage people that they may still give a Christmas offering.

ACTION STEPS

L Highlight the total Christmas offering given last week

- □ Send thank you notes to those who gave a Christmas offering
- □ Remind people that they can still give today or before the end of the year

WEEKLY SCRIPT

We are so thankful to God for the many blessings He gives to us. Last Sunday was our Christmas Offering, and as a church, we gave \$_____ to this special offering.

(Share the vision for your Christmas Offering and highlight the initiatives)

We want to thank everyone who gave last week and let you know that there is still time to give before Christmas. You may give using the designated Christmas Offering envelope or go to <u>christmasatnewlife.org</u> to give online.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Post photos from your Christmas events.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who gave to our Christmas offering! Together, we raised \$_____.



Looking Forward to 2025

December 30th

Subject: Here's to a New Year!

It's the final week of the year. Celebrate, give thanks, and worship God for what He has done! Build off the momentum from this past season to launch into the next year. Remind people of the big vision they are a part of and commit the year ahead to the Lord.

ACTION STEPS

Highlight the total Christmas offering given to date
 Send thank you notes to those who gave a Christmas offering
 Remind people that they can still give before the end of the year
 Consider making a year-end video/slideshow to highlight the past season/year

WEEKLY SCRIPT

We hope you had a wonderful Christmas celebration with your family and friends! On this final day of the year, we want to say thank you to everyone who participated in our Christmas at New Life initiatives. Together as a church, we were able to give \$_____ for our Christmas offering and support these important initiatives.

(Celebrate the vision for your Christmas Offering and highlight the initiatives).

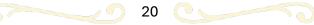
(Play year-end video/slideshow).

SOCIAL MEDIA

What was your favorite memory from this year? (Share your year-end video/slideshow online).

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:36-39)

We have received <u>%</u> of our Christmas offering! Help us reach our goal before the end of the year. You can give online at (your website link).



BONUS: 10 IDEAS FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

First off, thank you! Your ministry to children is so important, and though often unnoticed, God sees your work. It's amazing how a simple word of encouragement, a big smile and high five, or a small toy or snack can make a difference in a child's week. Here are some ideas to prepare your children's ministry for Christmas.

- 1. Start a Christmas highlight wall where everyone can see all the crafts and what the kids are learning.
- 2. Plan a training time for your volunteers and show your appreciation by including a special lunch and thank you gift.
- 3. Recruit extra volunteers. Extra people around Christmas means you need extra hands and people available to welcome and assist your teachers.
- Download some fun crafts for your kids to take home or hang up in Kids Zone! A few ideas...a sticky wreath, handprint Christmas trees, and sticker nativity scene.
- 5. Plan a lesson series that they need to come back to hear more about the Christmas Season. Part 1 on Hope, Part 2 on Peace, Part 3 Joy, and Part 4 Love.
- 6. Have a special day where the kids can start worship by singing a short Christmas song.
- 7. Make it fun! The first question parents will ask their kids is, "Did you have fun today?"
- 8. Snacks! Get the good stuff and be sensitive to allergies.
- 9. Give new children a gift bag. Order some drawstring backpacks, water bottles, stickers, etc.
- 10. Have a prize box that children can pick a prize from when completing all four weeks of Christmas.



Congrats you finished the playbook!

We hope you feel excited and ready for this Christmas season! We pray that God will use your location to make a difference this Christmas to whoever walks into your doors.

What is great about this playbook is that if you filled it out or took notes, this is the perfect outline for all your Christmas meetings! No need to stress that you are missing anything! This would also be great to fill out again with your team to align your goals for this Christmas season!

We hope this tool is a nice fresh breath of air and you don't feel like all the weight is on you. Please reach out if you have any questions, and we are happy to help you or just point you in the right direction.

Blessings,

The Communications



Christmas New Life