

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Have you ever heard the words, "Christmas in July?" I have, but I didn't really know what they meant until I looked them up online a few days ago. I had thought that they were the creation of a marketing person who was trying to promote buying Christmas presents in July! While the words are used for that purpose at times, there is more to them.

According to an online article, "Christmas in July," is an unofficial holiday. Those who live in the Southern Hemisphere celebrate Christmas on December 25, as we do. However, December in New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, and other places in the Southern Hemisphere, is in the midst of their summer season! So, "Christmas in July," is celebrated in some locations, because the month of July is during their winter season. Celebrating on July 25, allows them to "have Christmas with a winter feel." (Wikipedia online)

But, if we return to the most important word, "Christmas," we are reminded about the true reason for the celebration: Jesus' birth! We celebrate Jesus' birth throughout the world on December 25, even though we do not know the exact date of Jesus' birth. Jesus was born in Nazareth, in the Middle East, so we do know that Jesus was not born in the snow and cold that is sometimes depicted on Christmas cards, in songs, etc... As we focus on the word, "Christmas," here is a different question for your consideration...

Have you ever heard the words, "Let us celebrate Christmas every day!" Rather than to focus on December 25, July 25, or any single date, we can celebrate Jesus' birth every day! If we focus our minds and hearts on Jesus, and look to his teachings, we can celebrate Jesus' birth 365 days-a-year! Each and every day can be filled with Christmas joy, as we celebrate Jesus' birth and all that his coming to earth meant for the world. Christmas joy, every day! Thanks be to God!

Peace,

Pastor Cathy