

## Advent Devotional – Day 6

As Jeff said, the decorating has begun. At the core of our Christmas decorations is the tree, but before the tree can be decorated, it must be fluffed. If you are a real-tree person, you probably have no idea what I'm talking about. But if you have an artificial tree like we do, you know that fluffing the tree is a necessary first step to decorating. That's because last year, after all the ornaments were removed, the tree was folded up and smashed down to fit into a box or bag and has stayed like that for almost a year. It in no way resembles a tree.

I am the official tree-fluffer in our family! And, although it is not my favorite part of decorating, I do it well, because it's important. If the tree doesn't get fluffed our ornaments will not hang right, there will be big gaps with no ornaments (or branches), and there won't be room on the tree for half of our ornaments. Once the tree is fluffed, the ornaments and garland are hung, and the misshapen bunch of artificial greenery is transformed into a beautiful Christmas tree. And for the rest of the season that tree brings joy to all who see it and gather around it. It is a place for gifts to await the joyful celebrations to come. It is a place where memories of days gone by are shared. It is a place that reminds us of the joy Christ brings into our lives.

Without a life in Christ, we are like that flat, smashed bunch of fake greenery. Our feeble attempts to "be good" don't hang right, there are huge gaps between what we believe and how we live, and there's no room for Christ to transform us through his love. We in no way resemble the God who saves.

"...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

At Christmas, we celebrate that God sent his Son to save us. The preparatory season of Advent is about surrendering our misshapen, and sometimes artificial, lives to God, and letting the Christ enter in and transform us into something entirely new.

May you be fluffed by Christ today!  
Pastor Jannette