

Dec. 16-20: Christmas at Rucker Place. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Rucker Place, 1804 12th Avenue South. See the house decorated for Christmas and try out Chef Richard's food. \$25 per person. Email info@ruckerplace.com for reservations. Call 558-2485 or visit ruckerplace.com for more.

Dec. 20: Mythbusters. 8 p.m. BJCC. Popular

TV show comes to life on stage with hosts Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage performing experiments and more. \$38.10- \$96.75. Call 1-800-745-3000.

Dec. 30: Annual Community Kwanza. 6 p.m. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Free. Visit bcri.org or call 328-9696.

Homewood Public Library

Adults

Dec. 6: Friends of the Homewood Public Library Members Only Book Sale. 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Friends Bookstore,

Dec. 10: Oxmoor Page Turner's Book Club. 6:30 p.m. Lucretia M. Somers Boardroom. Explore Lisa Lutz's delicious debut, *The Spellman Files*.

Dec. 15: The Magic of Christmas. 3 p.m. Large Auditorium. The Seasoned Performers, Alabama's only professionally run senior theatre troupe, will present a collection of yuletide tales, tunes and reminiscences that the whole family will enjoy. Light refreshments will be served.

Dec. 17: The A, B, C's of Medicare. Noon & 6 p.m. Room 116, Lower Level. Karen Haiflich will answer all your questions about how Medicare benefits are currently computed, how to become insured, and how to file a claim.

Dec. 18: The Better Than Therapy Book Club. 2 p.m. Lucretia M. Somers Boardroom. Title to be announced.

Children

Tuesdays
Story Time. 10:30 a.m. All ages are welcome

Wednesdays
Story Time. 10:30 a.m. All ages are welcome

Thursdays
Mommy & Me. 10:30 a.m. This is a story time for younger patrons and their guest. This month it will be held Dec. 5 and 12.

Dec. 2 & 16 Monday Movie. 3:30 p.m. Full-length children's movie and hot popcorn!

Dec. 7 Say Hola to Spanish. 10:30 a.m. Saturday, 4 p.m. Thursday. Language learning storytime.

Dec. 12: Lego Christmas Build. 6:15 p.m. Ages 5 and older. Registration is required and begins Dec. 9 at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Dec. 13: After Schoolers Christmas Program. 3:30 p.m. Make a gingerbread house and enjoy sweet treats. Open to K5 and older. Registration is required and begins Dec. 9 at 10 a.m. Space is limited.

Ordinary Days By Lauren Denton

Back where we belong

For most of the 34 years of my life, much of the Christmas season took place at my parents' house in Mobile. As a kid, I didn't know anything different, but when I moved away to college, coming home felt different. I was returning to the place I belonged. After college when I lived with roommates then alone in my own apartment, returning home was even more meaningful. I spent those holidays soaking up as much family time and relaxation as I could. I looked forward to that respite every year, and I'd save up my vacation days to use for the holidays.

Fast forward a decade or so, and Christmas looks very different. Instead of looking forward to getting off work so I can hit the interstate and head for Mobile, I'm busy looking for a train set with a princess conductor (as requested by my 4 year old) and making sure the 18 month old doesn't try to climb the Christmas tree. Home looks very different than it once did, and while I love it, there are times when it feels like something isn't quite right, like some puzzle piece in my sense of home is still missing. It'll hit me out of the blue and perhaps even more often in the holiday season. I'll feel nostalgic for something I can't put my finger on. We'll sing a hymn at church, and my heart will clench for reasons I don't understand. I'll be in the middle of a typical day, and a sense of longing will come out of nowhere and flood my mind and heart.

Then I stumbled on this verse in



Philippians a few days ago: "Our citizenship is in Heaven, and we eagerly await a Savior from there." And another one in Hebrews: "This world is not our home; we are looking forward to our everlasting home in Heaven." Maybe that explains the mysterious longing that comes to me in unexpected times, the feeling

of waiting for something, although I'm not sure what.

Even though I've been blessed to have wonderful homes during my life, I don't belong here. I'm merely an exile, a stranger on earth. That missing puzzle piece in my life won't slip into place until Heaven. Deep down, I think most of us long for that true home, no matter how satisfying our home life here on earth may be. And if our earthly homes haven't been satisfying, we long for a Heavenly home even more.

So this month, instead of focusing on finding just the right gifts and a way to secure the tree to the wall, I'm trying to focus on the real meaning of home. Instead of all the glittery Christmas extras, I want to set my thoughts on the Savior who comes from Heaven. While our home may be a place of happy chaos, especially around Christmas, it's not everything. One day, a perfect sense of peace and belonging will replace all the longing and yearning, and I will be at home with my Savior.

Merry Christmas, friends!

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1.25.14



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