



STATE OF ARKANSAS
SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS
GOVERNOR

December 19, 2025

Christopher Line
Legal Counsel
Freedom From Religion Foundation

Dear Christopher,

Earlier this week, I issued a proclamation closing state offices on Friday, December 26, to celebrate Christmas and offer state employees more time with their families. I am in receipt of a letter from your organization calling on me to rescind that proclamation because it "gives a detailed theological narrative presenting core Christian doctrines, including the divinity of Jesus Christ, his crucifixion for the sins of mankind, his resurrection, and his anticipated return 'in glory.'"

Please know that I will do no such thing.

You say that my communications as Governor must be neutral on matters of religion. I say that, even if I wanted to do that, it would be impossible. Christmas is not simply an "end-of-the-year holiday" with "broadly observed secular cultural aspects," as your letter states. It's not gifts, trees, and stockings that make this holiday special. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, and if we are to honor Him properly, we should tell His miraculous, world-changing story properly, too.

Ironically, I received your letter claiming I was alienating my non-Christian constituents as I was leaving a Menorah lighting celebration with people from all across Arkansas. I doubt they would say that my administration alienates non-Christians. In fact, many would say the opposite: that only by voicing our own faith and celebrating other faiths can we make our state's diverse religious communities feel seen and heard.

I will end by saying that you missed the point of my proclamation. It was not to browbeat readers with Christian doctrine, but rather to point to the humility of Christ's birth and to the amazing fact that the King of Kings was born not in a palace or temple, but in a humble manger attended only by poor shepherds. It is in that spirit of humility that I am reminded that Christ did not dine with wise Pharisees or rich men but rather with fishermen and outcasts.

Though you may enter this season with bitterness, know that Christ is with you, that He loves you, and that He died for your sins just the same as He did for mine and everyone else's.

Merry Christmas,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sarah Sanders", is positioned below the "Merry Christmas," text.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders