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NATIVITIES FROM EVERY CONTINENT

CHURCH MEMBERS HAVE A PASSION FOR NATIVITIES

Raleigh, NC September 15 -- The Community Christmas Celebration started 11 years ago with only a few nativities on display, but it now features over 300 nativities from around the world, as well as live performances each evening. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Six Forks Road hosts the annual event the first weekend in December. It also includes a live outdoor nativity, a children's room with hands-on nativities and a Life of Christ room depicting Christ's life through art. "We wanted to create a place where people could come and enjoy the true meaning of Christmas," said Tracy Whitt, the event Director.

Nativities come from as far away as Ethiopia and Australia and as near as Topsail Beach. Some are an inch high and others are life size. "We have a very diverse collection since so many of our members bring nativities back from the countries where they have served missions," explains Whitt. Nativities also come from people in the Triangle community, not just church members.

The event is called The Community Christmas Celebration because so many groups from the community are involved in putting on the events, especially the live music. This year there will be choirs from Sanderson High School, Enloe High School, the Riley Hill Missionary Baptist Church and the Millbrook High School Madrigal Choir. A list of all performers and schedules can be found on the event's web site, raleighnativity.org.

The Community Christmas Celebration is free of charge and held Thursday through Saturday, December 1-3 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is located at 5060 Six Forks Road in Raleigh. Event details can be found at raleighnativity.org.

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