

## I Am the Gift

by Peter Covington

As some in the church may know, I'm starting a new relationship with a wonderful man. As a new couple we are starting to establish our traditions. This year, Luis will be coming here for Christmas and arrive only a few days before Christmas Day, so we've had the talk about what we're going to get and not get for each other as gifts.

In general, Luis is leading us toward being non-materialistic, and often talks about the lack of need for material possessions. Although agreement about what to throw away in our shared space will probably not be easy, and while I'm not quite a hoarder, I have already put down lines of things I want to keep.



However, we easily agreed that buying new things is not necessary to express our love for each other. In general, doing small things together, like going out for coffee seems to be the limit of our extravagance, and it seems our most important holiday event this year will be decorating and packing Christmas cookies to give away. That event developed organically as I said I would want to do some baking the first days he is in town and he jumped into the whole idea of decorating together.

I feel I already received the most valuable gift I could receive from him. As we were talking about presents, Luis said to me that he doesn't really need anything, because he has me. WOW! That was mind blowing to me that anyone could love and accept me that much and then

actually say it out loud. Of course I said the same thing, meant it, and then went on to promise many physical expressions of those feelings.

But that is the same thing that our bridegroom in heaven says to us: that we are deeply loved, that we are the gift and asks only relationship with us in return. God jumped in to join me in baking plans even before Luis did because Luis had to wait for me to tell him my idea. Since I like to bake, God prompts me to give the treats away rather than just getting fat. Most importantly, God wants me and wants to participate with me, just like God wants to participate with each one of us. We are the gift, as incredible as that might seem, that God wants most of all.