

[00:00:00] <music>

Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to a very special and much-requested episode of the That Sound Fun podcast. I'm your host Annie F. Downs coming at you in the midst of our Advent series with a very special Christmas Party episode. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We have got a great show in store.

And hey, grownups, you saw the title of who was on the show today. It is a little tongue-in-cheek. I am not sure everyone in the family should listen to this episode on the first run. You can decide about that. But you see who the guest is because you see that in the title. You proceed with caution with everyone in your vehicle. Okay? Yeah? We're good? Okay.

Sponsor: Before we dive into this conversation I want to share about one of our amazing sponsors, [BetterHelp](#). Our guest today seems like he's got it all figured out. Like maybe he has some secret user's manual for life. Well, we'll get all that wisdom we can from him. But for the rest of us, visiting a therapist is another great option when life feels overwhelming.

Dealing with things like relationship challenges and work anxiety, grief, can make you feel stuck. Thankfully, therapists are trained to help you in moments like this. Y'all know this, but my therapist has been a godsend in my life. I get to see her today. I want that for you too. BetterHelp can help you find it.

As the world's largest therapy service, BetterHelp has matched 3 million people with professionally licensed and vetted therapists available 100% online. Plus, it's affordable. Just fill out a brief questionnaire to match with a therapist.

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Intro: Today on the show, I get to talk with a friend who honestly needs no introduction. He's been a repeat guest around this time of year for the last four years. They've written songs about him, you know the ones. Come to think of it, I think maybe he's written a few songs too. Anyway, back to give us an update on the North Pole, the reindeer, the missus, here is my 2022 conversation with the big guy himself, Santa Claus.

[00:02:36] <music>

- Annie:** I know I'm excited. It's December 22nd. It is so close to your big night, Santa, Santa Claus. Welcome back.
- Santa:** I'm glad to be here. Cutting you close this year. Once again, AFD, it's because I love you. I've bonded with so many listeners of the pod and they are always just chatting me down. Or is it up? Chatting me up. Living in-
- Annie:** Well, you live in the North Pole, so everything is down.
- Santa:** Thank you. I never get that right. I always say, "Hey, wanna hang up?" And they're like, "What's that mean?" Do we wanna hang down? Do we want to hang around?
- Annie:** Tell me what happens. December 22nd, we're two nights from your big night. You're really big night on your life is every-
- Santa:** That was, you know, they have my wedding. What a beautiful day and night and celebration. Our wedding at the North Pole last three and a half weeks. And it's just amazing. It goes through different color schemes, certain animals are celebrated, the reindeer gets-
- Annie:** Does everybody get that kind of wedding? Like the elves get that kind of wedding?
- Santa:** This is a week and a half.
- Annie:** Just the Clauses.
- Santa:** Just the Clauses.
- Annie:** It's a Claus only.
- Santa:** Hey, don't steal my jokes. You and your snappy wit.
- Annie:** Can I get married there? Can anybody rent it?
- Santa:** It's expensive. It costs quite a bit of coin.
- Annie:** And a lot of work probably.
- Santa:** No, it's just magic.
- Annie:** Oh.
- Santa:** It takes about 15 minutes.

Annie: To set up. That's it?

Santa: Including tent up. It's good. It's very good.

Annie: You just have all the pieces in your magical mind.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Sure. Okay. Okay. Besides that, it feels like... Christmas 2022 feels like we're kind of in a lot of ways back at it.

Santa: I mean, here we go.

Annie: Right.

Santa: Yeah.

Annie: And I saw that on Black Friday, which doesn't have anything to do with you, of course, on Black Friday there were a lot more purchases than they've seen since before 2020. Are you having that same experience that it feels like you're like back in the saddle?

Santa: It's frustrating because it's less work for us. The more things that are purchased, you know, the less things I can deliver. And so we found that, you know, as people get more button punchy, it's translated differently in the North Pole, which is loose transition. You know, I've had to lay off some elves and-

Annie: What happens when they get laid off?

Santa: They just sit outside and watch. There's not much to do.

Annie: They become like the beggars in the New Testament?

Santa: Well, hey, no. No.

Annie: I mean, they're just sitting outside?

Santa: But they're full. They have hot chocolate and candy canes until, you know... We still give them their vitals.

Annie: Just no coin.

Santa: There's no work.

Annie: There's no work.

Santa: I mean, Jeff Bezos, you know, auuugh.

Annie: Naughty list for sure.

Santa: Cold forever.

Annie: Sure.

Santa: Cold forever.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. I would imagine for a lot of-

Santa: A lot. Well before two. It's a long story.

Annie: Actually, since he was six. So this isn't an adult-onset non-list.

Santa: It was always there.

Annie: Wow. I remember the year I transitioned over from nice to naughty and then back.

Santa: We all do. It's a joke in the North Pole.

Annie: About the year I was on the naughty list?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Wow. Is it a rhyming joke? Is it like a riddle?

Santa: Well, okay, let's just don't hope that you get found in good as bad as Annie Downs.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Santa: And the elves would sing it in four-part harmony. It was gorgeous. They go, din din din. And you can imagine higher voice. And it really took and then there was sort of disappointment when you got good again. Because it was such a popular-

Annie: There was one time when I was falling asleep and I thought I heard that song.

Santa: You did.

Annie: I did. Yeah. They were singing it. It just-

Santa: Oh, that was part of the dare was, you know-

Annie: Singing over.

Santa: Yes. Yes. You got extra points. It's a game.

Annie: It's a game. New technology this year seems like a thing too. There are a lot more, I don't know, I'm in a real cycle with my ring alarm and buttons on my door. Kids want more technology? Are you having to bring in training for your elves to go from making decks of cards to x box kind of things and the pods.

Santa: We see trends 50 to 60 years ahead of time.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Santa: So we can kind of prepare just because we kind of see that's our specialty is these things? We'll still let go. We need to be... But of course for me it's tricky because there's so many surveillance, there's so much surveillance.

Annie: Right.

Santa: And so we have to know exactly where to be and when.

Annie: Yeah. Because you see people slipping and falling on videos all the time.

Santa: Yes, spiritually and physically. I do a lot of bear crawling these days.

Annie: Spiritually and physically?

Santa: Well, you said it, not me. You know. For sure.

Annie: Will you tell that story? Before we got on on the microphones, you started to tell us just an incredible story about air tags and how they have changed some things for you when you got tagged.

Santa: Sure. Well, gosh-

Annie: We should explain what your tags are. Do you want to explain them?

Santa: No, go ahead.

- Annie:** Okay, so Apple makes a product that is just a little the size of a quarter. You put it in your bag and your phone is able to keep up with your bag wherever it is.
- Santa:** Cut to last year, I'm in a home in Cleveland, Ohio, that's the suburbs, Jacqueline Thompson, beautiful little three-year-old girl coming... she comes into the room.
- Annie:** Oh, boy.
- Santa:** And we have protocol, of course.
- Annie:** Certainly.
- Santa:** And you know, we do the mind wipe and the boop and button and she forgets. But what I didn't realize is that she had planted the air tag in my pocket.
- Annie:** Right. She just slipped it in when she walked over to hug you?
- Santa:** Yes.
- Annie:** She just slipped it in your pocket?
- Santa:** Slipped it in my pocket.
- Annie:** Wow.
- Santa:** So, we're going, all the sudden, red alarms across, doo doo doo. And I get a call from Herbert, my main elf and he's like "Hey Santa..." He's from New York.
- Annie:** You hire outside?
- Santa:** We do. Truthfully, the best work comes from outside. You get into some generational problems with people who just feel privileged.
- Annie:** Like foreign exchange students kind of thing and it works for you. Wow.
- Santa:** It does. Because you know, people at the pole they take it for granted, which is an interesting phrase left to itself, that I'm talking about the North Pole. And I have found that when we hire outside, they just do better work. Anyway, Herbie, as we call him, calls and says, "Hey, I think you're being tracked." And that's a joke. And so I laughed because it's a long backstory. And sure enough in my pocket... And she...

Now her family is sitting on their iPads. "Oh, we know where Santa is." Which is great because the belief comes back, you know and they can hear the bell-

Annie: Right. Right.

Santa: But we had to go to and wipe again. We don't-

Annie: And return the air tag.

Santa: Well, of course.

Annie: Right.

Santa: I jokingly put it on the squirrel that night and made him follow a couple of hours for that family.

Annie: And they thought you were everywhere.

Santa: And they were just like, "How does he climb trees so fast?" Which I can't do.

Annie: Well, sure.

Santa: The jumping is from tree to tree.

Annie: Have y'all come up...? I mean, I assumed that after that experience last year this year, you have come up with some sort of technological way to make sure you don't get air tagged again.

Santa: Mm, yes. That was Herbie's really job in the offseason was knowing that. And if you've known was now the phones will tell you.

Annie: Yes.

Santa: That was Herbies.

Annie: Wow. So he just implemented it globally.

Santa: Well, we have a deal with Apple. They don't know it's us.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: It's a different company name.

Annie: Shell company stuff. You're working in a shell company.

Santa: Norton antivirus. Oops.

Annie: I get their CDs in the mail every now and then.

Santa: We're trying to look relevant.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: And you know, this proprietary software we sell now. Thank you so much. But that was because of that. We can't have that happen again.

Annie: Wow. I saw an amazing thing at Dollywood that involved you that I've been dying to ask you about since I saw you last year.

Santa: Dolly, by the way, a longtime friend.

Annie: Has anyone come closer to being on the good...? I just imagine she doesn't even work her way down the good list.

Santa: She has her own list. It's like retiring a jersey. In the north pole when you have your list retired, you've been so good for so long we just put a list. But she's got one.

Annie: She's got her own. And just hangs in-

Santa: My office.

Annie: In your office.

Santa: You know, people don't know this. Dolly is actually 5,627 years old. She's been around long.

Annie: So you've been gifting...

Santa: Oh, yeah.

Annie: I mean, you've been gifting her youth.

Santa: Yes. Well, that's kind of the deal.

Annie: The world deserves.

Santa: She keeps giving the world good like she does. And then, you know, okay, oops, let's take the wrinkles away.

Annie: Is there anybody else that you have retired their list?

Santa: Well, three, I think, more. You would know a couple of them just because they're normal.

Annie: They are not Dollys.

Santa: They're great chums. Just normal, wonderful chums.

Annie: Just great people.

Santa: Believe it or not Keanu Reeves...which got tentative around the first Bill & Ted's as we thought that is dangerous move.

Annie: But even the Speedier, he was fine. Matrix?

Santa: No. I mean, that's when we retired him.

Annie: He was getting better than us.

Santa: We called him Noonoo. And I called him and said, "Noonoo, you have your own list though." "Well, that's amazing." He's the other one and then a couple of pets.

Annie: Oh, okay. Here's what I learned at Dollywood. You do an amazing thing at Dollywood, where when the children write you a letter, they hand it to you, and then their name is like up on a screen. Like you have a full experience at Dollywood. Why do you make that deal?

Santa: Taxes. It was a nice little one, two shuffle to get around some things. And it worked, you know?

Annie: Yeah.

Santa: And the kids love it. I mean, that's what I should say first. The kids love it. Also little taxes.

Annie: To work in Tennessee.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: I mean, it's why the Timberlakes also own a house here. You and the Timberlakes-

Santa: Who do you think he called? He said, "I saw your Dollywood thing, what is that?"

Annie: Wow. He had your phone number?

Santa: It was a DM. I saw it was him verified. I didn't know who he was until I checked his-

Annie: Yeah, no, no. Then you checked the list.

Santa: Yes, twice.

Annie: And he's on the nice list?

Santa: Of course. Yeah.

Annie: And his wife?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: And the kids. All of them.

Santa: One of them.

Annie: Oh, don't tell me which one.

Santa: It's a rough patch. She will get through it.

Annie: They'll write a song about it, just like y'all write about me.

Santa: There we go.

Annie: And it'll be fine. They'll recover just fine. Justin Timberlake.

Santa: Yeah.

Annie: ...has your phone number.

Santa: Yeah. Yeah. With DM.

Annie: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. That's right. He DM'd you.

Santa: But then I gave him my phone number.

Annie: Immediately. Immediately.

[00:13:28] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners, [BEIS](#). Since we don't have a magical sleighing bag that inexplicably makes room for everything we need to pack for a big trip like Santa does, luggage from BEIS is the perfect request to move to the top of your Christmas list this year.

BEIS was created by the actress Shay Mitchell to make sleek and affordable bags, luggage and accessories designed to help you travel effortlessly while still looking fashionable. BEIS has thought of everything you could ever want in a piece of luggage. 360-degree gliding wheels, which I live for, a cushion handle built-in weight indicator, washable bags for your dirty clothes, that's brilliant and all the interior pockets you need to keep organized.

Their luggage comes in multiple sizes and colors and for shorter trips, The Weekender bag, y'all, it's gorgeous. It is super functional and has a place to store your shoes separately. I'm telling you, you know I prefer to bring my whole closet every time I travel, and this bag almost lets me. Whether you're packing for a quick trip or looking to breeze through the security line, BEIS has your personal items covered.

Every piece is made to look better with miles so you don't have to worry about it in cargo or overhead. And BEIS has over 30,000 five-star reviews.

Right now BEIS is offering our friends 15% off your first purchase by visiting beistravel.com/thatsoundsfun. So go to beistravel.com/thatsoundsfun for 15% off your first purchase. That's beistravel.com/thatsoundsfun.

Sponsor: And I want to say about another one of our incredible partners, [Athletic Greens](#). During this busy season full of travel and clouds and colds going around, we've got to do everything we can to take care of ourselves, right? It's what we are talking about at the office is everybody staying healthy?

Athletic Greens is a key to doing just that. It's a powder that you mix in a really cold water, and just one scoop deliver 75 high quality vitamins, minerals, Whole Foods source superfoods, probiotics, and adaptogens to help you start your day right. This special blend of ingredients supports your gut health, your nervous

system, and your immune system. And it helps you with energy recovery and focus. Yes, please.

Tons of people are taking some sort of multivitamin and it's important to choose one with quality ingredients that your body will actually absorb. This is one thing you can do every single day to be a really good friend to yourself. And your subscription comes with a year's supply of vitamin D, which is so important to add in, especially during this time of year when we don't get as much time out in the sun sadly.

Athletic Greens has over 7,000 five-star reviews. That is 7,000, you guys. And I love this: for every purchase they donate to organizations that help provide nutritious food to kids in need, including No Kid Hungry here in the US.

Right now it's time to reclaim your health and arm that immune system with convenient daily nutrition, especially smack in the middle of flu and cold season. It's just one scoop in cold water every day. That's it. No need for a million different pills and supplements to look out for your health.

To make it easy, Athletic Greens is gonna give you that free one-year supply of immune-supporting vitamin D and five free travel packs with your first purchase. You can put it in your new BEIS bag. You see what we're doing, you guys? We're getting you traveling and getting you healthy.

All you have to do is visit athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. Again, that's athleticgreens.com/soundsfun to take ownership over your health and pick up the ultimate daily nutritional insurance.

And listen, if you want to keep up with those links, if you want to know how to spell them, how to find these discounts, just go to the show notes below and everything is there for you. How to sign up for our AFD Week in Review email and all the links to our sponsors are right there.

[00:17:04] <music>

David: Hey, this is David Thomas from Raising Boys & Girls. What sounds fun to me this Christmas is having my three college kids home, staying in our PJs most of the day, and eating ridiculous amounts of sausage balls and monkey bread.

Sissy: Hi, I am Sissy Goff from Raising Boys & Girls. And what sounds fun to me is something I'm doing already, where I'm getting to have lots of time with my four-year-old nephew anticipating Christmas together, driving around, listening to Alvin and the Chipmunks, singing Christmas carols, looking at lights. Cannot wait

till Christmas morning seeing him come down the stairs and all the gifts spread out. Just the anticipation itself is already bringing me so much joy.

Hannah: Hey everyone, this is Hannah Love from the Unexpected Podcast. And what sounds fun to me this Christmas is watching my boys under the Christmas tree playing, hopefully not breaking ornaments. We've got a five-year-old and a two-year-old and I've got another little boy on the way, so mama wants to rest with Coco in her hand while watching the boys run around like crazy people because that is the joy of the season.

Annie: Now back to our conversation with Jolly Old Saint Nicholas.

[00:18:21] <music>

Annie: A big difference this year besides the technology is the World Cup is going on. Now by the time our friends get to hear this, by the magic of podcasting the World Cup will be in a different spot than it is right now. But so overarching though.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Go USA for me.

Santa: Of course.

Annie: You'll go world probably.

Santa: Still USA.

Annie: Okay. How did you feel when they put the World Cup on top of your big season?

Santa: How much time do we have? I had some hard conversations.

Annie: With?

Santa: With FIFA.

Annie: Ah, directly?

Santa: Yes. And a couple of the-

Annie: The idea of Santa Claus taking a meeting with FIFA executive.

Santa: You should have seen their faces when I came in. Because I kicked the door in, unlocked it, and then I had one of the elves kick it first and it opened. So I was like, "Move out of the way."

Annie: Right, right. Right. Right. Right. Right.

Santa: And apologized immediately. And you know, just was like, "What's the deal?" And they, you know, bunch of excuses and then tried to give me oil. Just a lot of oil in bags, ziploc. I don't know how they would have done that. But I said, "you know, what do I need oil for?" And they tried to give me all the reasons, "It's good investment," and all these things. It didn't matter.

But I lost, you know, and I was like, "Well..." Ultimately, it was a benevolence for me. I just said, "Hey, we can share it." And I love the sport. You know, I'm a big footie fan. So I said well, you know, it'll give me something to watch while I'm working.

Annie: Right. Which is how my co-workers have felt during the World Cup.

Santa: We know. We know.

Annie: Because it's given Annie something to watch while I was supposed to be working.

Santa: Oh, yes.

Annie: I need you to know there was a day where I slid off my chair onto the floor because the stress got high, high, high, high.

Santa: It is too much. Yes.

Annie: Is there anything that happens around the World Cup where if a team loses they moved to the naughty list? Is that up to-

Santa: It's yellow card accumulation.

Annie: Oh, so you just count their yellow cards?

Santa: His name is red. You're on the naughty is a red card. Granit Xhaka has been very frequently on the naughty list. But great heart. Great heart, but naughty.

Annie: But naughty altogether.

Santa: Very naughty.

Annie: What are people asking for this year?

Santa: Oooh, boy, you know, masks kind of off. Those were all the buzz. Man, we were on high production.

Annie: You made so many of them in '20 and '21?

Santa: Yes. And they're still about, but we've retired some of those machines and turned them into socks. They're making socks now.

Annie: Oh, great. People love Christmas socks.

Santa: Well, do they?

Annie: I heard dads love socks.

Santa: That's true. That's very true. Have you heard these two extraordinarily handsome, young men who have a podcast called Dadville?

Annie: Dadville? You know, it's funny, they're on the network. Dave Barnes-

Santa: Okay, of course.

Annie: ...and Jon McLaughlin. So they both love socks? Is that what you're...?

Santa: Well, they do and I'm pretty sure they may have talked about this in one of their podcasts. I haven't missed many of them. And their voices are handsome which is weird. You assume that they are-

Annie: You hear them and you think, "Those are good looking chap?"

Santa: I know, I do. It's a lot of the same. A lot of, you know... I wish it was more goodwill toward men and peace on earth. But it's-

Annie: That's a grown-up question.

Santa: ...playstations.

Annie: Bicycles? Are we getting back outside?

Santa: Only the ones built for two.

Annie: An uptick in bicycles built for two?

Santa: It's amazing. People have been lonely for so long. You know, COVID just kept everybody indoors until they... Not only would they be outside, they would be outside in tandem.

Annie: Together.

Santa: Yeah. With friends. That's been big. Pets are always really big on the list.

Annie: Yeah. The idea y'all have to run as many kennels up there as you do is just-

Santa: Ah, the smell is atrocious. It's really overwhelming.

Annie: Because I haven't been to visit yet, are they far away from the toy-making area or are they...?

Santa: Yeah, in about.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: So the smell and the sound is just... January's got to be a dream because all the puppies are gone.

Santa: Yeah, it's dark.

Annie: They've been delivered.

Santa: Some.

Annie: Okay. There's some-

Santa: We get some returns.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: Then, you know, we have to build a whole thing. And we put them there and then you know, we... They are great. But they're just loud and they bark.

Annie: This is really good information I'm not sure people had and that's what we try to do here at That Sounds Fun. I don't know the system of returning something to Santa.

So, I mean, on Amazon, I have noticed I've been returning some things and I just drop it in a bag at Whole Foods.

Santa: Okay. I will say this once and never again because I'm gonna get into so much trouble. If you go on December 27th from 3:15 a.m. to 3:17 a.m. in all of the USPS mailboxes are magical return centers for two minutes.

Annie: Oh my gosh, people just drop puppies from 3:15 a.m. to 3:17?

Santa: Yes. And they'll just shove those little puppies in literally, and they just whoop right back. It's like an ATM, the cosmic ATM. It sort of sends it back to us and we get them back.

Annie: Wow. You mean ATM? Are you meaning at the bank, that tube?

Santa: It's like that. You know, it's little mailbox. You know, you push and you just drop what you don't want in there and then come back to me. But not many people know that.

Annie: Well, now many people know that.

Santa: Can you cut this out?

Annie: Yeah, well, I have to cut this out because just, dear everyone, just remember-

Santa: Yeah, just do.

Annie: ...who we're talking to.

Santa: That's exactly right.

Annie: But 3:15 to 3:17 on December 27th.

Santa: You gotta really want it... or not want it.

Annie: You got to really not want it.

Santa: That's gonna be on the post next year.

Annie: You got a really not-

Santa: That's right. That's right.

Annie: I have noticed and maybe it's just observing some of my friend's kids, I'm observing less dolls and more games. Is that true? Is that statistically true? Is that anecdotally true?

Santa: It's about every three years it's a cycle. You'll see adults kind of take a dip in the game, sort of raise their hand, and then, you know, it's kind of a back and forth.

Annie: Have you created any new games lately?

Santa: We tried-

Annie: You're a hero.

Santa: This was one that didn't go great. I loved it.

Annie: Oh, sure.

Santa: Me and Miss Claus were amazing at it. But it was a combination of Battleship and Horse Shoes... Battle Shoes and we...

Man: I thought it was gonna Horse Ship.

Annie: I thought it was gonna be Horse Ships.

Santa: Okay.

Annie: Okay. Again-

Santa: We thought we would call it Horse Ships but because of some of the slides of tongue it got misunderstood and-

Annie: Yeah, certainly.

Santa: ...it got unruly quickly. But Battle Shoes, Ms. Claus and I would put on blindfolds, and we learned quickly throwing horseshoes with blindfolds is not exactly smart.

Annie: Right. You kind of laid out the ships on the ground and then you had to throw blindfolded over like a battleship?

Santa: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, that's... I see how you got there. Battleshoes.

Santa: Yeah.

Annie: Battle Shoes.

Santa: Real talk I had. Do you know the little... Did they call them the haystacks here?

Annie: Yeah. The deserts?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Yeah, sure. They're like-

Santa: That's one of my weaknesses. And I had had about 300 of those until my brain was getting-

Annie: You were a haystack drunk?

Santa: I was haystack drunk.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: Which is my favorite Luke Bryan's song. It's like a jammer.

Annie: The real real is that one will be out next summer. Nichole [Garlin?]. Paging Nicole Garlin.

Santa: Totally. And we just came up with, you know, a bit of a fever dream night, and I came up with that idea. And it was really fun for about three minutes until we knocked Herbert out.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: Because he was on the other side and-

Annie: Oh, I'm now having a full vision. You mean to tell me that the elves are the ships?

Santa: That night.

Annie: When you're haystack drunk.

Santa: And they're trying to impress so they go, "I'll do it."

Annie: Yeah, yeah. And then they line up. Yeah. Wow. That's tough to hear. So we'll just stick with like, sorry, trouble and some of those games that we really enjoy. I have really found myself enjoying puzzles a lot. Are those popular or is that a no?

Santa: Just takes me back to my dating life. I figured it out in time. It takes a lot of patience. We give those out mostly to the smarter crowd-

Annie: Sure.

Santa: ...really loves a good puzzle. And that's great. I've never related to that-

Annie: Yeah, yeah, Certainly. Certainly.

Santa: You know, but sure, there's been a bit of uptake this year in puzzles.

Annie: Oh, good. I hope so.

[00:28:00] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just taking a quick break from this conversation to tell you about one of our other amazing shows on the That Sounds Fun Network, The Matthew West Podcast. Y'all, I love this guy. Matthew is an incredible songwriter and artist and author, a dad storyteller, great husband. You know Him and love Him from when he's been on the podcast with us and his wife, Emily. But y'all, if you have not checked out his podcast, this is your Christmas binge. I'm just saying. This is it.

He has conversations that are both deep and fun, compelling and hilarious with some of our favorite artists and authors and athletes and influencers like Mark Hall from Casting Crowns, Sadie and Corey Robertson and NBA star Cody Zeller, who y'all know we love, and many more friends.

Y'all, you know how much we love to talk about prayer around here. And Matthew's episode with Priscilla Shirer about her prayer life, that is your go-to. That's the one you don't want to miss. And I was so moved and inspired by the honesty in Matthew's show with Emmanuel Acho and the one with Jonathan Steingard about doubt. Oh my gosh, you guys!

He also does a segment that is so much fun and each show where he takes you behind the scenes to experience some of the powerful stories behind his music. It's so cool. So episodes of the Matthew West Podcasts are released every Wednesday. So be sure that you're subscribed wherever you love to listen to this show. Listen to Matthew too.

Sponsor: And I want to tell you about one last incredible partner, [Liquid I.V.](#). I have it on good authority that one of the key parts of Santa and the elves' morning routines leading up to Christmas season and especially on the big night include staying hydrated with Liquid I.V..

We've got that in common because I always have a couple of packets of Liquid I.V. tucked into my BEIS Weekender my carry on anytime I travel. I love the lemon-lime for a refreshing addition to my water bottle and there's conversations around the office about the strawberry being the actual best flavor although I truly love them all.

In just one stick you get five essential vitamins, B3, B5, B6, B12, and vitamin C and you're hydrating two times faster than water. It's got three times the electrolytes of traditional sports drinks. And Liquid I.V. is made with premium non-GMO ingredients that are free from gluten and dairy and soy. No pesky allergies to worry about, no fatigue or headaches, thank the Lord from dehydration. Just the fuel you need to feel great when enjoying the rest of your Advent season.

Grab your Liquid I.V. in bulk nationwide at Costco or get 20% off when you shop better hydration at [liquidiv.com](#) and use the code THATSOUNDSFUN at checkout. That's 20% off everything with a code THATSOUNDSFUN at liquidiv.com.

[00:30:32] <music>

Matthew: Hey, it's Matthew West from The Matthew West Podcast, and here's what sounds fun to me this Christmas. Getting off the tour bus after the last show of the year, walking into the front door of my home, putting my suitcase away for a few weeks, cuddling up on the couch with my wife, my two daughters, and our two insane dogs, watching every Christmas movie. We love eating every Christmas cookie in sight. Being home and being together with my family, that sounds like fun.

I spend a lot of time of the year on the road away from the ones who are closest to me. And so nothing sounds more fun than being physically close with my family this year. Merry Christmas to you and yours.

Melissa: Hey everybody, this is Melissa from the Wear We Are Podcast. And what sounds fun to me this Christmas is the Baltimore Christmas market. I love a good German Christmas market and the one in Baltimore is super cute, super quaint, and full of good fun. That's what sounds fun to me this Christmas.

Michael: Hey, this Michael Wear from the Wear We Are Podcast. And what sounds fun to me this Christmas is taking... I have two daughters, one is four, the other is one. They just look so cute when they're bundled up in, you know, jackets and scarves and

winter hats. And so taking them out, getting their faces all red, their noses a little runny, and playing with them out the snow, that sounds fun to me this Christmas.

Annie: And now we gotta go finish up this conversation with Santa so he can get on the road.

[00:32:16] <music>

Annie: Something I was hoping we could do—you can tell me if this is too personal—I was just gonna buzz through some of our podcast guests this year and you can just naughty or nice them and let us know who and where people are. Father Mike Schmitz?

Santa: Oh, nice. Very nice.

Annie: Yeah, great. He's such a nice guy. So let's see. I'm seeing pastor Andy Stanley.

Santa: Oh, nice.

Annie: Yeah. Great. Jenna Claire Mason?

Santa: Naughty. Yeah, she stole a horse.

Annie: She stole a horse?

Santa: Yeah, two days ago.

Annie: Whoa, wow, fresh. So all her gifts just got shifted?

Santa: Oh, yes.

Annie: Brandon Lake? Worship leader Brandon Lake?

Santa: He's right on the verge.

Annie: Is he?

Santa: Oh, yes.

Annie: Just tipping back and forth?

Santa: Yes, always. He's a wild one.

Annie: Yeah. Okay, great.

Santa: You can't write those kinds of songs without having a little bit of a toe in the dirty water.

Annie: That's it. That's it. Raising Boys & Girls Podcast, Sissi Goff, David?

Santa: They are very close to being retired themselves.

Annie: Really?

Santa: They are eternally nice.

Annie: Some of the best people. That's for sure. Jon Acuff?

Santa: I mean, he's never seen this side of a nice list. Some of it's because of these ridiculous center wars.

Annie: What?

Santa: How do you think I feel when he blows up the Santas in his front yard?

Annie: Him versus the Smiths, Angie, and Todd. Yeah, it gives us a bad view of you.

Santa: Right?

Annie: Right.

Santa: And they're so puffy and huge. I'm like-

Annie: I hear you.

Santa: I look like I've been on a binder.

Annie: Haystack binder.

Santa: Haystack binder.

Annie: Maybe you have. Carlos Whittaker?

Santa: He vacillates... and quickly. Even since I said this, He went from naughty to nice to nice to naughty.

Annie: Not even nice to almost retired.

Santa: Exactly.

Annie: Zach Levi?

Santa: Nice.

Annie: Nice. Great. Everybody loved him being on the show.

Santa: Everybody loved him.

Annie: Oh, everybody loves Zach. Of course they do. Well done. John Elderidge?

Santa: Nice.

Annie: Oh, good. Sometimes I think the more we grow into our maturity, like some of these are the generation above me that are thousands of year younger than you, and that seems to help.

Santa: Yeah, it does.

Annie: A lot. Beth Moore?

Santa: Naughty. I have a beef with her so...

Annie: Oh, wow. Do you? Well, I have to see what she says about that when she's... she'll be on in just a couple of weeks.

Santa: Just ask her about a certain... I don't want to give too much away but we had above the board bet and she might have cheated on it.

Annie: Wow. Y'all had a wager?

Santa: Well, you know, a good Christian wager.

Annie: I mean, y'all are friends.

Santa: More or less.

Annie: Tim Tebow?

Santa: No, nice.

Annie: Nice. I mean, Florida Gators though. That's tough for me, but I love him.

Santa: Yes. Yes. The Gators are naughty as a team.

Annie: Great, got it. Got it.

Santa: Tebow is nice.

Annie: A friend of yours, a friend of mine, Angela Johnson.

Santa: Ah, so funny but naughty.

Annie: Has she ever crossed over?

Santa: No, no, no.

Annie: No.

Santa: You can't be that funny and be nice. She's got to be naughty.

Annie: Lauren Alaina?

Santa: Nice. So nice.

Annie: Nice. So nice. Freshly engaged. I hope you're giving them great things that they're stocking.

Santa: So many great things.

Annie: Oh, love her.

Santa: She loves a LAFCO candle.

Annie: Really?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Who knew? Wow, I didn't even know you're gonna give away stuff like that.

Santa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Annie: Wow, wow, wow. Last but not least, Eddie Kaufholz?

Santa: Naughty.

Annie: Yeah. Really?

Santa: No, wait. Nice.

Annie: He's switched over?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Wow. Wow.

Santa: He just helped an older woman at Kroger grab a bag of chips from a little out of her reach. I call them crisps. But chips. And now he's back.

Annie: Pulled him down?

Santa: Nope, naughty. No, I'm sorry. He just tried to steal m&ms, and she caught him.

Annie: Oh, wow. She's fast but short.

Santa: That was me in high school in more ways than one.

Annie: That's Horse Ships.

Santa: It is, right?

Annie: That's what that is. That is what you just did right there.

Santa: Hey now. Hey now.

Annie: What do you need from us this year?

Santa: More time. No, I'm kidding. We're right on schedule. I'm carb-loading. You know, that's what I do three days before. I do about a week of nothing but carbs.

Annie: Pastas?

Santa: I mean, that's the first three days and then we dip into things that... it's not pretty. They feed me while I sleep. It's all really-

Annie: Oh, it just keeps going. Your mouth is just open and-

Santa: Yeah, it's going.

Annie: ...it's just carbs.

Santa: Yeah, carbs.

Annie: Wow. So you can stay up for over 24 hours?

Santa: Yes. I burned a lot of calories that night.

Annie: Yes. And now you're hiding from air tags and bear crawling?

Santa: Yeah, well. Right. Made an autobiography.

Annie: Yeah. You know, I don't think so. I mean, I think we had a good place. We had to take on a few extra hands this year. But I feel like we're in a good place. You know, a social media presence is what I wish it was. I'd love to see the numbers go high.

Annie: Do you ever worry about getting canceled?

Santa: You know, it's tricky. Because there's a part of me that people don't know. I wish they did. But I'm just so nervous. The images... It's so warm and cuddly. And I have opinions on things, how the world should be and the treatment of reindeer. There's things like this that I have strong feelings on, but it's just risky. It's the kids.

Annie: Right.

Santa: It's the kids.

Annie: Right. So you're hoping to build your social media platform?

Santa: I would love to. We're looking to hire.

Annie: Oh.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: You're telling everyone that they can apply for a job?

Santa: Yes, yes.

Annie: Okay. You need a social media manager in the North Pole? Wow.

Santa: Who really understands my voice, you know, can communicate as me, knows what I'm trying to say.

Annie: Yeah. You know, a lot of us just do that for ourselves. I do that. You know, Dadville Jon and Dave both do their own social media.

Santa: What does it mean to do for yourself? What does that mean? I don't know what that means.

Annie: That's a longer... I mean, it just means you handle it versus having-

Santa: Oh, you literally do it yourself.

Annie: Yes.

Santa: You do something yourself?

Annie: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Santa: You don't have a lot of little elves do it for you.

Annie: No, you do it yourself. But also you can hire a social media manager. I'm just telling there's a lot of people that are public figure-

Santa: That's illegal in North Pole. That's people losing jobs.

Annie: Oh, wow, that's a great point.

Santa: The minute Santa does something... How do you say it? For yourself?

Annie: Yes, for yourself.

Santa: You know, I'm in the slammer.

Annie: Okay, okay. Yeah. You need a social media manager.

Santa: Yeah.

Annie: With some experience? Is there anybody that they could have already worked for that would be a leg up a little bit?

Santa: I feel like TSF has a great presence.

Annie: Oh, sure.

Santa: Yeah, they've had some time here. I actually tried to hire some of your people. Just today I was here a little early.

Annie: Wow.

Santa: And it didn't work. So they do like you.

Annie: It's because we have benefits now.

Santa: We don't. We do not. Heads up to anyone applying: zero benefit.

Annie: Hey, handle your own health insurance.

Santa: Unless you love hot chocolate, then you will be benefited.

Annie: That's a huge benefit. The hot chocolate and candy canes when you are not working, it's a huge benefit.

Santa: It is.

Annie: And really having nine months off.

Santa: It works for some people.

Annie: Okay, so what do you tell people to apply? What is your new email for...?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: That's how they can-

Santa: What is that?

Annie: Email?

Santa: Mm-hmm.

Annie: You don't have it?

Santa: Mm.

Annie: Oh. It's where people can write you letters on a computer or on your phone.

Santa: They write on the computer?

Annie: They type.

Santa: And they send you the computer? Oh, I love that.

Annie: Oh my gosh, what if emails were people writing on computers and sending the computer?

Santa: I love it. It sounds like a fun idea for me.

Annie: For all the technology upgrades you've done, the surprise is that you don't have-

Santa: I'm not great at technology as you can tell. I leave that to... Mm-mm.

Annie: We're hearing that. We're hearing that, that you thought email might be someone mailing your computer. Santa, is there anything we left out you want to make sure we include?

Santa: Yes.

Annie: Oh.

Santa: I'm so glad you brought this up. For the food this year, the little snacks-

Annie: Oh, yeah, what people leave out for you?

Santa: Could we just do almond milk? This is people... I don't know if we've talked about this, but I'm lactose intolerant.

Annie: Right.

Santa: And so... Oh, boy, just-

Annie: Almond over oat?

Santa: I'll take either.

Annie: Any milk alternative?

Santa: Yes. It just gets a little gassy. Whoopsy. I blame it on the reindeer.

Annie: That's a long day. Yeah, it's a long day for you.

Santa: It's usually me. And in fireplaces, it's a bad scene.

Annie: Little dumb and dumber-ish?

Santa: Yes. So, you know, just maybe those instead of allergy.

Annie: That's a great thing for people to know. Still up for the cookies and the carrots for the reindeer?

Santa: Yes. Just for the reindeer. I've had enough carrots, give me the cookies. You know what I'm saying?

Annie: Carrots are gassy for a lot of people, I've heard.

Santa: Yes.

Annie: I don't know. That's what I've heard.

Santa: For the elf and the reindeer. Everything will fly so quickly. That's a north pole joke.

Annie: All right, Santa, the last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you this year.

Santa: Oh my goodness, I want to jump off the side of one of those buildings with the squirrel suits. With the flying squirrel's suits.

Annie: You do?

Santa: Yeah. Because when I fly I'm with the reindeer, I'm not just flying.

Annie: And you just want to fly. So why a building versus like plain climbing?

Santa: No. Maybe a mountain. You know, the Red Bull guys, they do the wings under their arms and they swoosh and they swoosh.

Annie: That sounds terrifying to me.

Santa: Well, I'm just so used to being in the air. But I'm always tethered to the reindeer. And I just love to see what it feels like to be free.

Annie: Okay. I hope you survive that.

Santa: Also I do want to make Battleshoes game. So [Matel?], if you're listening, call me.

Annie: Yes, Battleshoes.

Santa: Or send me a computer email and let's chat it up.

Annie: Mail me your computer.

Santa: Mail me your computer and let's chat it up. Okay.

[00:42:57] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't he just the best? Be sure you lay out the good cookies on Christmas Eve for our favorite guy. I love when Santa comes on.

And completely unrelated, have you checked out Dave Barnes' music? Have you checked out the Danville podcast? Dave Barnes is the best. I mean, just if you wanted to follow Dave Barnes' music on Instagram and just like thank him for being a great guy, I don't know. Just whatever is in your heart, you get it.

And remember, make sure you are subscribed to the Let's Read the Gospels Podcast. The link to that and to the Let's Read the Gospel guidebook, all those links you need are in our show notes.

And if you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is tacos with our team. We are all having dinner tonight. And I cannot wait starting our team celebration with some tacos. I am ready.

Y'all have a great day. I hope it is a beautiful last couple of days and our Advent series. Let's finish strong with our week of love. We have got a special Christmas Eve episode for y'all. And I sincerely hope that you and your people have a very Merry Christmas filled with hope and peace and joy and love.

And after Advent wraps up and after Christmas Eve, we'll see you back here on Thursday the 29th for our Year in Review with our good buddy Eddie Kaufholz. We'll see y'all tomorrow for day five of love.