

= Christmas Wishes (The Office) =

" Christmas Wishes " is the tenth episode of the eighth season of the American comedy television series The Office , and the show 's 162nd episode overall . The episode originally aired on NBC in the United States on December 8 , 2011 . It was written by executive producer Mindy Kaling and was directed by Ed Helms in his directorial debut . The episode guest starred Lindsey Broad , Ameenah Kaplan , and Eleanor Seigler .

The series ? presented as if it were a real documentary ? depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania , branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In this episode , Andy Bernard (Ed Helms) attempts to make everyone 's Christmas wishes come true , including those of a drunken Erin Hannon (Ellie Kemper) . Meanwhile , Dwight Schrute (Rainn Wilson) and Jim Halpert (John Krasinski) are entangled in an escalating prank war wherein one attempts to frame the other .

" Christmas Wishes " received mostly positive reviews from critics . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Christmas Wishes " drew 5 @. @ 79 million viewers and received a 2 @. @ 9 rating / 8 % share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , staying even with the previous two episode , " Gettysburg " and " Mrs. California . " It ranked first in its timeslot , and was the highest ranked NBC series of the night .

= = Plot = =

Andy (Ed Helms) attempts to make everyone 's Christmas wishes come true . At a conference meeting , he vows to keep his promise to make wishes and asks the office members to also be nice to his new girlfriend Jessica . An emotionally confused Erin (Ellie Kemper) tries to be nice to Jessica , but ends up drinking too much at the party . In a drunken stupor , she tells Andy that her Christmas wish is for Jessica to die . Offended , he tells her to get over their breakup before storming off . Kelly does her part as a friend of Erin 's by being mean to Jessica . Andy becomes concerned about Erin 's behavior , not least because Robert California (James Spader) has revealed that his marriage is ending , spends a good deal of the party hanging out with Erin and pressures her into drinking shots . When Andy has to drive a drunken Meredith home , he sees Erin getting into Robert 's car and he follows them with a look of panic on his face . However , he covertly witnesses Robert being a gentleman and sending Erin off to her apartment with a hug and words of encouragement . Andy subsequently drives away with a smile on his face .

Meanwhile , Dwight (Rainn Wilson) and Jim 's (John Krasinski) pranking has caused Cathy to ask Andy to move her to a different desk . In turn , Andy orders Dwight and Jim to quit their childish behavior . He tells them that the next one to pull a prank will lose their Christmas bonus , and the target of the prank will get the prankster 's share . Wanting to double their bonuses , both Dwight and Jim attempt to frame the other . Jim loudly releases his credit card information hoping Dwight will steal it and buy something ridiculous . However , Dwight orders a \$ 200 bouquet of flowers for Pam . Dwight then puts a porcupine in his desk and blames Jim . However , a verbal slip @-@ up causes him to inadvertently reveal his intentions . Jim , in retaliation , defaces a picture of his daughter CeCe , and blames Dwight . After Andy says such vandalism is grounds for termination , Jim admits he staged the crime . Acknowledging that his plan has backfired , Andy tells Jim that he won 't touch their bonuses , and just wants their behavior to not interfere with their job performances . Jim assures him he will tell Dwight , but purposefully neglects to do so . Dwight thus continues to pull pranks on himself , to Jim 's amusement .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by executive producer Mindy Kaling , who also portrays Kelly Kapoor on the series , her 24th writing credit for the series . This marks her first writing credit as an executive producer . Before this , it was speculated that she might not return to the series as a writer , before she confirmed that she would be writing the Christmas episode . She has also written the previous

two Christmas episodes : " Secret Santa " and " Classy Christmas " . The episode was directed by cast member Ed Helms , making his directorial debut . The episode also marks the fourth appearance of Lindsey Broad who plays Cathy , Pam 's replacement during her maternity leave . She appeared in a recurring role for the season and she initially appeared in " Pam 's Replacement " . Due to Jenna Fischer 's actual pregnancy , Pam did not appear in the episode . The Season Eight DVD contains a number of deleted scenes from this episode . Notable cut scenes include shoots of several of the staff member 's Christmas wishes being revealed , Dwight and Jim 's pranks start turning on Cathy , and Meredith hitting on a newly single Robert .

= = Cultural references = =

Midway through the party , Dwight enters the conference room and sets up his own speaker system to play Christmas Eve / Sarajevo 12 / 24 , a heavy metal medley of traditional Christmas songs performed by Savatage and the Trans @-@ Siberian Orchestra . The song acts as a backdrop to a brief montage of various scenes of members of the office exchanging gifts while shots of Dwight , Nate , Creed , and Gabe air @-@ guitar along are interspersed .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Christmas Wishes " originally aired on NBC in the United States on December 8 , 2011 . The episode was viewed by an estimated 5 @.@ 79 million viewers and received a 2 @.@ 9 rating / 8 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 2 @.@ 9 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 8 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . The episode matched the ratings with the previous episode , " Mrs. California . " Despite this , the episode ranked first in its timeslot , beating CBS drama Person of Interest which received a 2 @.@ 8 rating / 7 % share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , Fox drama series Bones which received a 2 @.@ 4 rating / 6 % share , and ABC reality series America 's Funniest Home Videos which received a 1 @.@ 9 rating / 5 % share . Despite place third , all three of these shows received more total viewers than " Christmas Wishes " . For the week of November 5 ? December 11 , 2011 , " Christmas Wishes " placed twenty @-@ third in the ratings among all prime @-@ time broadcasts in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Christmas Wishes " received mostly positive reviews from critics . Hollywood writer Hannah Lawrence enjoyed the episode , writing , " as an episode , [' Christmas Wishes '] had that certain ' spirit ' that I enjoy from Office episodes . " She also complimented the Erin @-@ Andy relationship arc . IGN writer Cindy White , although noting that the episode " had some big obstacles to overcome " with the absences of both Michael Scott and Pam Halpert , " concluded that the episode had a " high rewatch factor . " She wrote , " If my Christmas wish was to watch an episode of The Office that made me laugh a lot , consider that wish granted . " She ultimately gave the episode 8 @.@ 0 / 10 . M. Giant of Television without Pity gave the episode a " B + " . Margaret Lyons from New York wrote a mostly positively review , saying " ' Christmas Wishes ' filled me with holiday cheer , proving that there 's still some juice left in this show , " before noting that " There are still some issues left , too , though . " What Culture ! reviewer Joseph Kratzer praised Mindy Kaling and Ed Helms ' writing and directing work , and said , " If this is what happens when cast members [?] take the reins then the writing and directing duties should be kept in house much more often . "

The A.V. Club reviewer Myles McNutt wrote a slightly more critical review , noting the episode 's lack of structure . He wrote that " [' Christmas Wishes '] is not a terrible episode of television , but it 's formless to the point where it avoids having to make any sort of statement . " He did , however ,

positively comment on the Andy and Erin subplot and suggested that the episode was "positioned as a transition point," featuring an Andy @-@ Erin @-@ Jessica love triangle and a darker Robert California. He ultimately gave the episode a "B+." Many reviews considered "Christmas Wishes" to be the best episode of the first part of the season.