



#### Lantern Lights





## Dear Friends,

It's a fun and busy time of year! We hope you'll take some quiet time to think about the great gift of love that Heavenly Father has given each one of us—His own Son, Jesus Christ. On pages 23–39, you'll find a special activity to help your family celebrate that gift starting on December 14.

Watch for a special surprise in next month's Friend!

Merry Christmas!
The Friend

#### Matt and Mandy



I liked your Matt and Mandy from the December 2014 *Friend*. If that happened to me, I would be very lonely. It was good for Matt to take care of his family and make breakfast on Christmas Day. I had a warm feeling inside.

Gavin T., age 10, Virginia, USA

#### Christmas Crackers

y family and I made the Christmas crackers from the November 2014 *Friend* and filled them with our Halloween candy. Then we took them to a nursing home and gave them to the people who live there. I felt happy and warm inside.



Abigail C., age 5, Pennsylvania, USA

#### How I Read the Friend

I like to read the *Friend* early in the morning under the Christmas tree in December. I always pause to look up at the star and lights. In the December 2014 *Friend*, I read about Jesus and it told me that Jesus is the Light of the World.

Maci O., age 11, Idaho, USA







Primary Connection Find stories and activities to go with this month's sharing time theme and lessons.

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#### **Hidden CTR Rings**

**Level 1:** Sing a Christmas song. **Level 2:** Where's the manger?

Level 3: No hint!

#### Cover by G. Allen Garns

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**By President Henry B. Eyring**First Counselor in the First Presidency

## SINGING with ANGELS

hen I was a young boy, my family would gather around our piano, which is now more than a hundred years old. My mother had a beautiful soprano voice. At Christmas she played the piano as she led us in singing Christmas carols and hymns.

Even as a young boy, I felt joy in singing those songs. The music filled our small home with a spirit of peace. I could feel not only the love of my mother and father and two brothers, but of my Heavenly

Father and the Savior Jesus Christ. Now

love with my family and love from the Savior flood back over me.

Singing Christmas carols reminds us of our shouts of joy in the spirit world when we learned that we could come to this world and be given a Savior to redeem us. Someday we will sing those songs with the angels in heaven.

I testify that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. At this and every season, our Savior invites us to join with Him and others to give the priceless gift of joy. I pray that we will.



#### SONGS THAT TEACH OF CHRIST

Hymns and Primary songs teach us about Jesus Christ. Match each picture below with the words of a song. Then try singing each song.

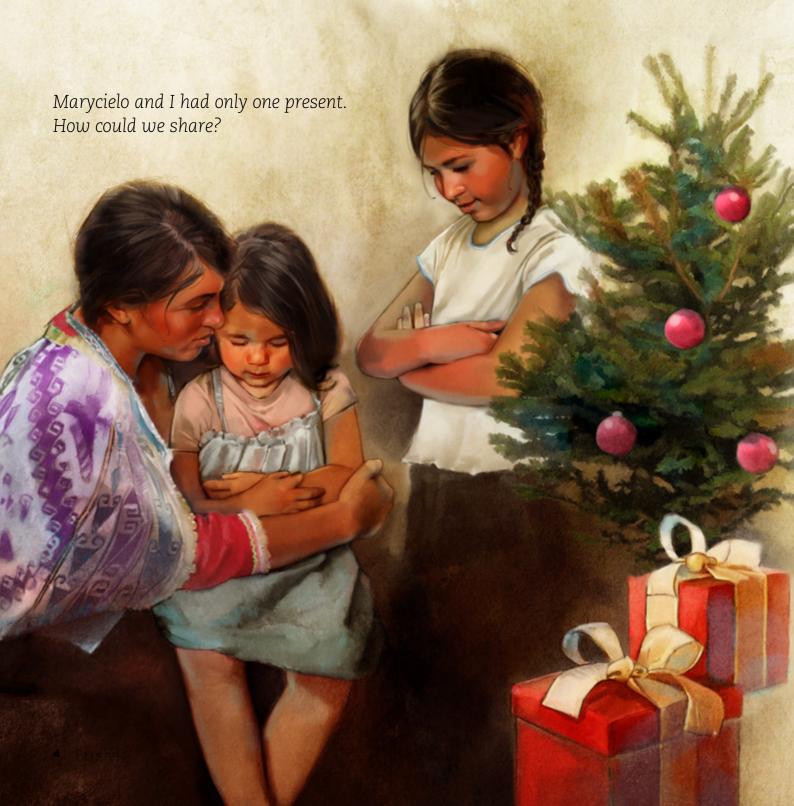
- "Away in a manger, no crib for His bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head" (Hymns, no. 206).
- "Jesus once was a little child, a little child like me" (Children's Sonabook, 55).
- "Jesus came to John the Baptist, in Judea long ago" (Children's Songbook, 100).
- "Jesus said love ev'ryone; treat them kindly too" (Children's Songbook, 61).
- "Our Savior, in Gethsemane, shrank not to drink the bitter cup" (Hymns, no. 190).
- "Upon the cross of Calvary they crucified our Lord" (Hymns, no. 184).
- "Did Jesus really live again? Yes, when the third day came" (Children's Songbook, 64).



#### **LISTEN UP**

Go to mormonchannel.org to listen to some beautiful Christmas music this season!

# Christmas Eve with the Córdobas





#### By Honney Thalia Cabel Losno

(Based on a true story)

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

On Christmas Eve there were only two presents under our little tree. One was for my two-year-old sister, Marycielo, and one was for me. Money was tight, Mama said, so it was all we would have.

That night Mama read a story from the *Liahona* about a Christmas without any presents. As she read, I felt happy and peaceful. Maybe having only one present wasn't so bad. Then Mama said, "Instead of playing games like we usually do for Christmas Eve, what if we bring gifts to a family in the ward?"

"But what can we give them?" I asked.

"Well, we have a bit to spare."

I glanced at our two presents, then at the picture of Jesus on the wall. "I guess Jesus would share what He had."

We prayed about which family to visit. Many of the families we knew didn't have much that year. After praying, we felt like we should visit the Córdoba family. They had three children, and their papa had lost his job.

We went to the store and bought *panetón* (a holiday bread), a baked chicken, and three little presents. We had fun picking them out. Mama spent all the money she had, about 30 Peruvian *soles* (about 10 U.S. dollars).

Once we were done, we drove to the Córdobas'. I held Marycielo's hand as we walked to the door.

Sister Córdoba saw us and came out to hug us. "What a nice surprise! Come in! Sit down," she said. As we walked inside, she squeezed Mama's hand and patted my shoulder. "Rolando and the girls will be so happy to see you," she told me.

The floor inside the house was made of dirt. There

was no electricity, just candles. I was a little sad for the Córdoba family. I wished we could do more to help them. But Mama didn't seem to notice the dirt or candles. She was just happy to be here with Sister Córdoba.

"We're glad we're friends." She gave the food and presents to Sister Córdoba, who gave a big smile and said thank you.

Rolando, Madeline, and Raquel ran in from the other room to say hello. Marycielo peeked around my leg and smiled. She laughed when Rolando made a funny face at her. Soon everyone was talking, telling jokes, and laughing.

This is better than playing games by ourselves, I thought. I was glad we had come. It didn't matter that we didn't have much to share. And it didn't matter if the floors were dirt. Christmas wasn't about what we had. It was about being together.

As we got ready to leave, Sister Córdoba hugged us again. "Thank you so much," she said. Her voice was shaking, and I could see tears in her eyes. I stood on my tiptoes and kissed Sister Córdoba on the cheek.

"Feliz Navidad," I said. 🔷

The author lives in Peru.

Turn the page for an activity to go with this story!

## Family Fun



## Time

Read "Christmas Eve with the Córdobas" (page 4). You don't need money to give good gifts to those you love!

#### **Priceless Gifts**

Here are some priceless gift ideas. Which of these can your family give this Christmas? Make a plan!

**Listening:** Talk to grandparents, neighbors, or friends. Ask them about themselves.



**Service:** Help with the dishes, leave a nice note, or make cookies for a neighbor.



Love: Give hugs, kisses, and compliments to your family! Tell someone you're sorry. Say something nice to someone you don't know yet.

#### Laughter:

Draw a silly picture, or play a fun game with someone. Smile at as many people as you can!

**Testimony:** Give someone a copy of the *Friend* or Book of Mormon, or share a favorite scripture on a card.

**Prayer:** Pray for your family and friends and let them know you're praying for them.

#### **Picarones**

Make this fun Peruvian dessert! Be sure to get an adult's help. (Makes about 12 *picarones*.)

1 cup flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

2 teaspoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
2 cups canned pumpkin purée
vegetable oil for frying
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

1/4 cup honey

1. Mix the flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a bowl. Stir in the pumpkin until just smooth.

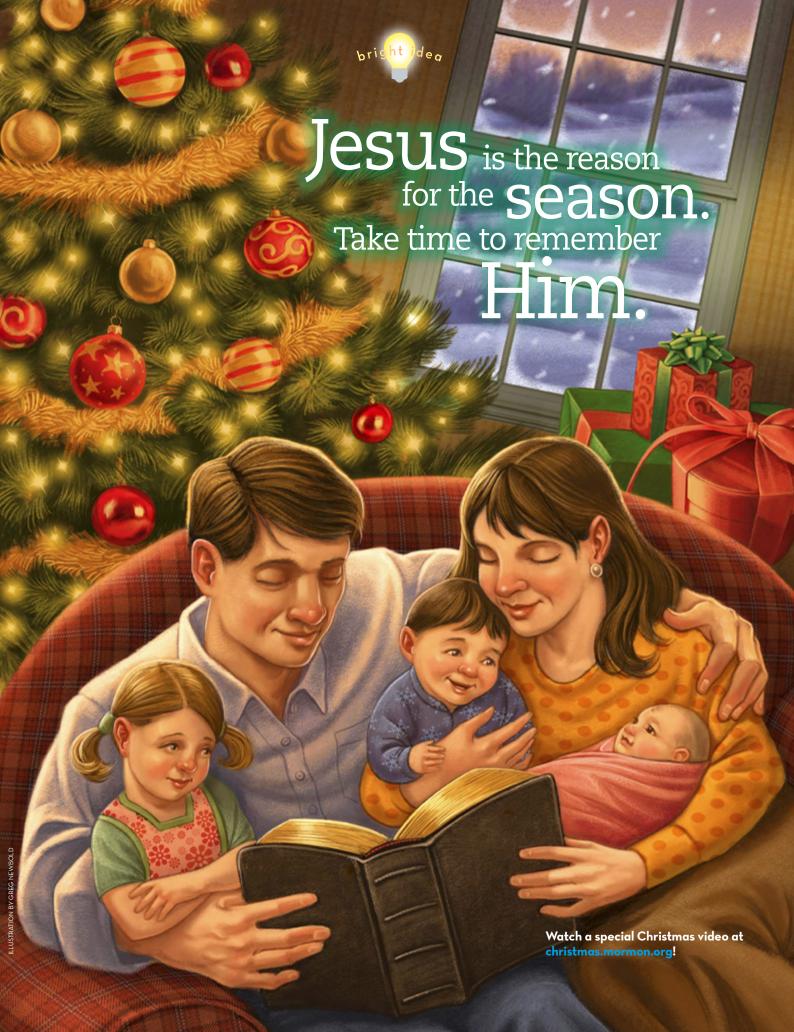
2. Put about 2 inches (5 cm) of oil in a heavy skillet. Heat over medium-high heat until about 350°F (180°C).

3. Use a spatula to scrape the dough into a large resealable plastic bag. Twist the top of the bag to push down the dough. Snip off one corner of the bag.

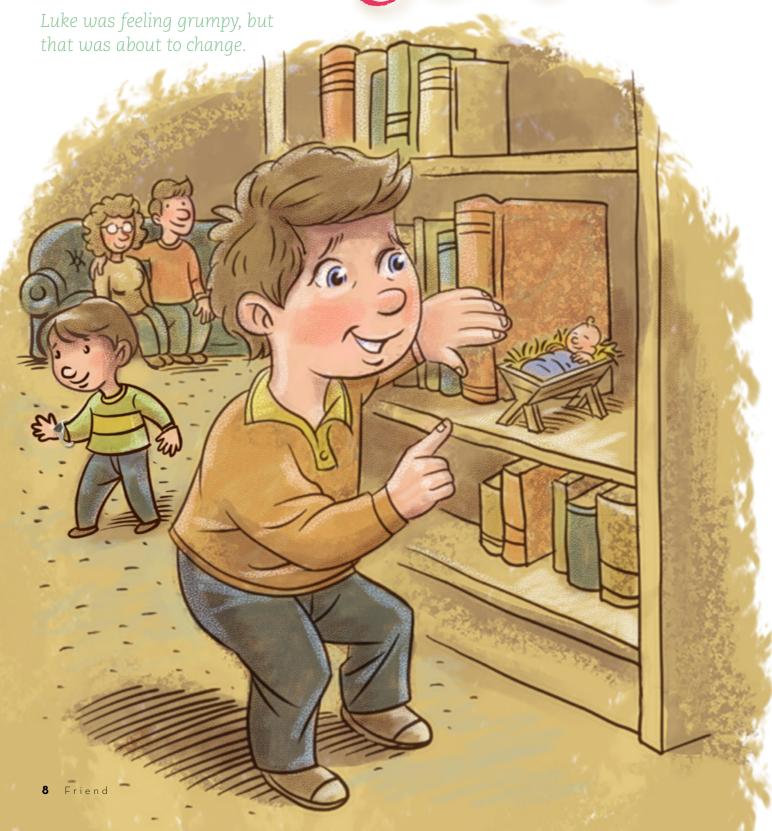
Squeeze the dough into circles in the heated oil.
 Fry the circles until golden brown, about 30 seconds, on each side. Drain on paper towels.

5. Mix the lime juice and honey. Drizzle it over the hot *picarones* and serve warm.





# Finding Jesus at



## Christmas

**By Emily Rittel-King** (Based on a true story)

"Picture the little baby Jesus. Think of His life and words so dear" (Children's Songbook, 50).

L uke looked forward to Christmas all year. He liked singing Christmas carols at church, going to the ward Christmas party, and decorating cookies to give to neighbors.

But this year Luke was having a hard time feeling merry. His dad had lost his job, so his parents couldn't afford some of their usual family traditions. Dad didn't put out all their decorations. Mom didn't bake as many holiday treats. And the Christmas tree was really small this year.

During family home evening, Luke's parents told him and his younger brothers, Cory and Ethan, that they had enough saved to buy them one Christmas present each. Luke knew he should be grateful, but mostly he was disappointed. This Christmas just wouldn't feel the same.

Luke couldn't figure out why, but Cory and Ethan were actually excited. They started guessing what their gifts might be.

"A baseball!"

"A video game!"

"A dog!"

Luke didn't make any guesses. And when Ethan said, "An elephant!" Luke was the only one who didn't laugh.

Mom noticed Luke's frown. "Why don't we play a game to help us get into the Christmas spirit?" she said.

His brothers cheered. Luke sighed. He was too old for silly games.

Mom took the baby Jesus from their nativity set. "Close your eyes," she said.

Ethan and Cory covered their eyes and giggled. Luke put his face in a pillow.

A moment later Mom said they could open their eyes. "I hid the baby Jesus somewhere in the room," she said. "Dad and I will help you find Him by saying you're warm when you're close to Him or cold when you're far away."

Cory and Ethan jumped up and began searching.

"Cory, you're cold," Mom said. "Ethan, you're colder. Ice cold. *Brrr*, you're freezing! Luke, your brothers need your help!"

Luke slowly stood up to help search.

"Luke's cold, but he's getting warmer," Dad said.

"Warmer. Hot. Hotter. He's on fire!"

Luke found the baby Jesus figure tucked behind a book on the shelf. Cory and Ethan ran over to look. "Me next! Me next!" they shouted.

"OK," Dad said. "But first, let's talk about what we learned."

"What do you mean?" Luke asked.

"Well," Mom said, "the more we look for Jesus in our lives and do things to get nearer to Him, the warmer we feel inside and the happier we are."

Dad nodded. "The things we do to grow closer to Jesus make us happy forever. That's the real Christmas spirit."

Warmth spread through Luke's chest. He looked down at the little baby Jesus figure in his hand. Christmas wasn't about presents or decorations or cookies. It was about celebrating the birth of the Savior of the world. As Luke thought about Jesus, the warmth inside him seemed to get bigger and bigger. And the smile on Luke's face got bigger too.

"Let's play again!" Cory said.

"Mom, can I hide baby Jesus this time?" Luke asked.

"I'm in the Christmas spirit now."

· · ·

The author lives in Utah, USA.



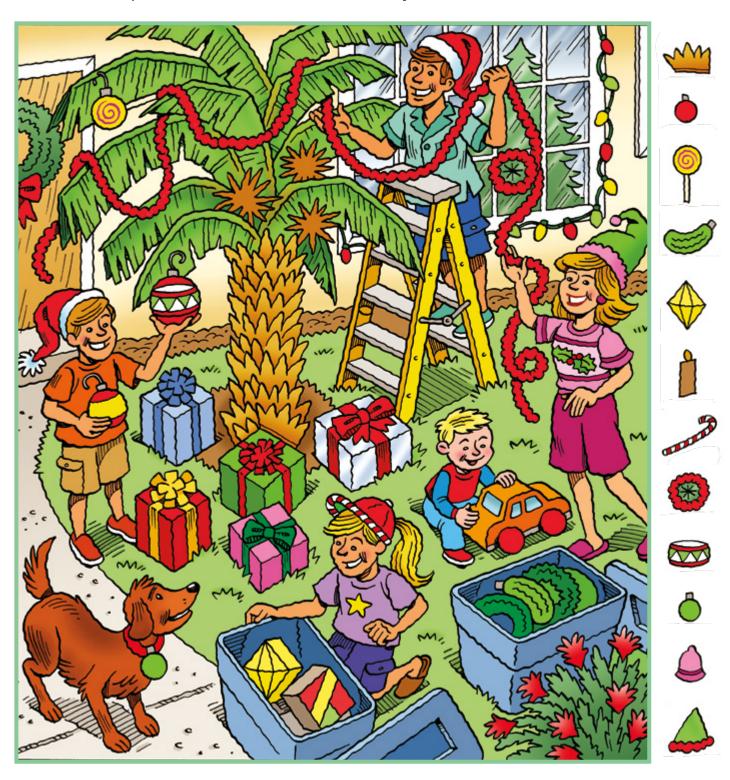
"As we seek Christ, as we find Him, as we follow Him, we shall have the Christmas spirit."

President Thomas S. Monson
"In Search of the Christmas Spirit," *Ensign*, Dec. 1987, 5.

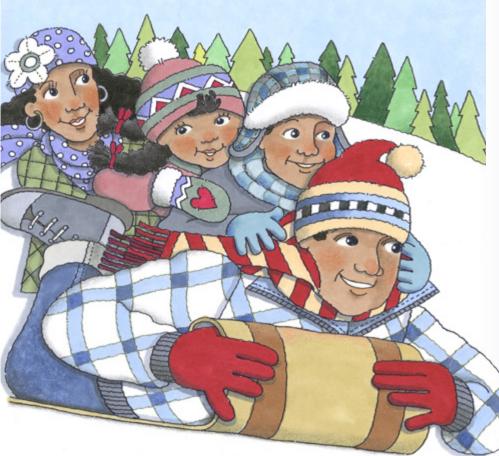


### Hidden Picture

Lots of places in the world don't have snow at Christmastime. This family loves decorating their own kind of Christmas tree. Can you find the 12 hidden ornaments for them to put on the tree?



## **Article of Faith 13**



"We believe in being honest, true, **chaste**, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to **endure** all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things."

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints try to choose the right and
invite good things into their lives. This means
we choose good friends and take part in
wholesome and fun activities. We serve other
people and we keep ourselves **chaste**, or
clean. We tell the truth and build our faith in
Jesus Christ. Choosing the right can be hard
sometimes, but we work hard to **endure**,
or continue on through tough times.

#### Articles of Faith in Action



There was a very popular book series I started reading. At first I liked it, but then it started getting scary and yucky. I felt uncomfortable. I did not feel the Holy Ghost. As I started the second book, it was the same and getting worse.

I talked with my mom about Article of Faith 13. These books weren't like the article of faith, and I want to live like it

says. Finally I stopped reading the books. I felt a lot better right away. I want to feel like that all the time, and I know I can if I use Article of Faith 13 as my guide.

Brooke B., age 10, Utah, USA

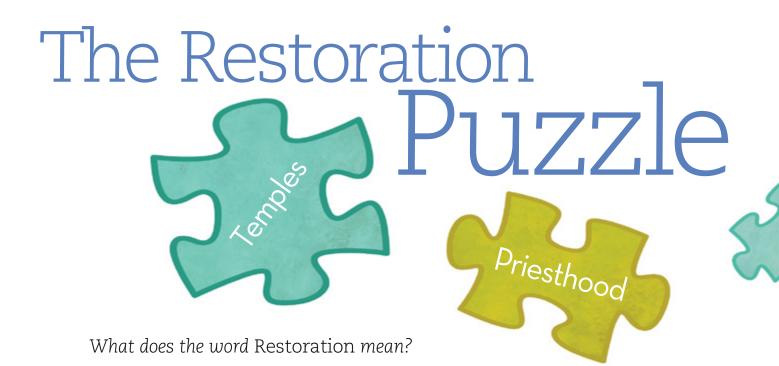
#### **Memorization Tip**

Joseph Smith wrote **13** Articles of Faith. Article of Faith **13** is the final one and the longest. It tells us how to be good examples of Jesus Christ.

## This Month's CHALLENGES

	Memorize Article of Faith 13.
	Make a list of praiseworthy things you would like to seek after. You could learn a musical instru- ment, join a club or team, make a friend, read a conference talk, or visit a museum.
	Think about what you read and watch. Is there anything you should change?

I challenge myself to...



#### By Heidi Poelman

(Based on a true story)

"For I have conferred upon you the keys and power of the priesthood, wherein I restore all things" (D&C 132:45).

n the way home from church, Anna remembered the little slip of paper her teacher had given her. "Mom, guess what! I'm giving a talk in Primary next Sunday."

"That's great," Mom said. "On what?"

"I have to talk about the Restoration. But I'm not sure what that is."

"Restoration means that God brought back, or restored, everything He wants His Church to have," Mom said. "Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, He brought back temples, the priesthood, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Without the Restoration, we wouldn't have the Church!"

Anna nodded. "I guess that makes sense. But I don't think I can explain it like you did."

"Hey, I have an idea," Mom said as they got home. "Come with me."

Anna followed Mom to the family room. They had started a puzzle last night, and the pieces were still spread out on a small table.

"Think of the gospel like a puzzle." Mom picked up a piece. "Many pieces of the picture were on the earth at different times. But after Jesus and the Apostles died, many gospel truths were lost or changed. Those pieces of truth needed to be brought back."

"So then what happened?" Anna shuffled some of the loose pieces.

"Many years later God called a young farm boy to bring the pieces back and put them together like when Jesus was on the earth. Who do you think that was?"

"Joseph Smith!" Anna said, smiling. "I think I'm starting to get it." She and Mom talked more about Joseph Smith and the different pieces of the gospel that God brought back through him.

The rest of the week, Anna wrote and practiced her talk. She prayed to Heavenly Father that she could be brave and share her message in Primary.

On Sunday, when it was time for Anna's talk, she stood up, took a deep breath, and held up a puzzle on a board so everyone could see. All the pieces were together in the puzzle.

"A long time ago, many of the important pieces of the gospel were on the earth. When Jesus and His Apostles died, some pieces got lost." Anna took some pieces out of the puzzle and set them down. "Then Heavenly Father and Jesus called Joseph Smith as a prophet to bring back the missing pieces of the gospel.



This is called the Restoration." She picked up a puzzle piece to show the Primary. On the back were the words "Priesthood power."

Then Anna showed the rest of the pieces. She read the back of each piece before she put it in its spot in the puzzle. "A living prophet . . . twelve Apostles . . . temple work for eternal families . . . baptism by immersion . . . laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Anna showed the finished puzzle. "Now we have all the pieces of the gospel. That means

we can see the big picture of how we can be happy and live with Heavenly Father again someday. I am grateful for the Restoration. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

The author lives in Utah, USA.



"Joseph Smith... was the instrument in God's hands in bringing forth sacred scripture, lost doctrine, and the restoration of the priesthood."

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
"Joseph Smith," Ensign, Nov. 2014, 28.



## Hi, we're Sam and Caleb!

We live in British Columbia, Canada, and we've been friends since preschool. We were born nine days apart, and a lot of people think we're twins! Last year we even got baptized on the same day. One thing we really love doing to-

gether is helping others.





#### Older Friends

Once a month we volunteer at a seniors' home. We've been doing this with our parents since we were really young. We play games, dance, and sing with the men and women who live there. Sometimes our friends from Primary and our neighborhood join us.

When we get there, some of the people look Bringing Smiles like they're sleeping. By the time we leave, their faces are smiling and happy.

#### Christmas Cheer

At Christmas we like singing carols and giving holiday treats.



Gifts from the Heart It's fun to make crafts and treats for our friends at the senior center!



#### A Great Feeling

Once we helped pick up garbage around our neighborhood. We've also helped at a farm that grows food for people in need. No matter how we serve, we always feel great afterward!

#### ONE WAY YOU CAN HELP

How do you feel when you read the Friend? You can help others by sharing that great feeling with them. Give the Friend as a gift to a friend! You can find out how to send a gift subscription for Christmas at store.lds.org.

#### **NEW NEXT YEAR**

Thanks for sending us more than 34,000 "helping hands" this year! Next year we'll be sharing stories about children who follow Jesus by courageously standing tall. Send us your footprint and tell us your story! Find out more in next month's issue.

#### Birthday Service

When we turned seven, we had a birthday party together. We called it a Toonie party. A Toonie is a \$2 Canadian coin. Everyone brought a Toonie to the party, and we donated half of the money to the Church's humanitarian aid fund.

# ramily History Nystery

Detective Case #11: The Mystery of the Family Christmas Tradition

#### Dear Detective,

A tradition can be an activity or event that happens every year. What are your family's Christmas traditions? Can you find out which tradition is the oldest? Write about it in your evidence file. How did it start? Include a picture or a drawing if you can!

#### SMART SLEUTH TIP

Good detectives take care of their evidence files. You can keep your evidence file in a safe place like on a bookshelf or in a desk. Keep it handy in case you come across any new mysteries to solve!

Print more certificates and past Family History Mysteries at friend.lds.org.



### CONGRATULATIONS!

You are now an official

## Family History Detective!

REMEMBER, A good detective is always on the hunt for a new case. What other family history mysteries can you solve next year?

## Christmas Workshop



Be sure to get an adult's help with this recipe and craft.

#### **GREEK CHRISTMAS SOUP**

People from Greece eat this creamy soup, called *avgole-mono* (ahv-ga-lemon-o), for dinner on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Makes about 8 servings.

8 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup long-grain white rice
4 eggs
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
cooked chicken or cooked vegetables (optional)

- 1. Bring the chicken broth to a boil. Add the rice and cook on low for about 20-25 minutes, until the rice is cooked.
- 2. When the rice is done, mix the eggs and lemon juice in a separate bowl. Whisk until frothy.
- 3. Slowly stir 1 cup of the hot broth into the eggs and lemon. (You don't want the eggs to scramble!)
- 4. Slowly pour the egg mixture into the soup pot. Whisk while you pour, until the broth and eggs are mixed. Cook 2 more minutes, while stirring.
- 5. Add salt and pepper to taste. You can also add cooked chicken or cooked vegetables. Make sure they're hot before adding, and serve the soup right away.

#### WRAPPED-UP ORNAMENTS

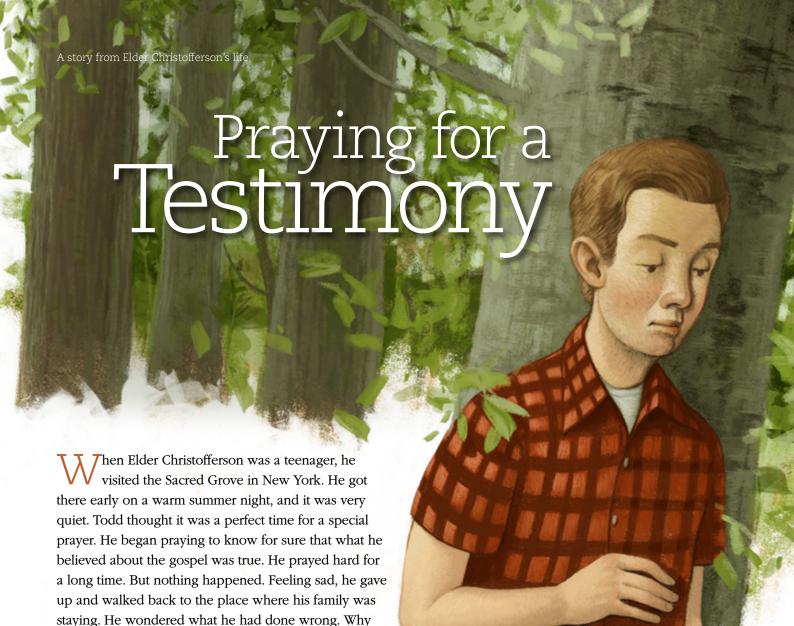
Hang these on your Christmas tree or make a string of them to hang on your wall!

- 1. Blow up a **balloon** to about the size of a baseball and tie a knot in it.
- 2. Pour some **craft glue** in a bowl and add a little water to thin it. Brush some glue on the bottom of the balloon and stick on the end of a long piece of **cotton string**. You can use colored string or paint the string after it's dry.
- 3. Wrap the string around the balloon in all directions until the balloon is covered, with spaces between the strings.
- 4. Brush the glue all over the string-covered balloon. Tie another string around the end of the balloon and hang it up to dry for several hours.
- 5. After drying completely, pop the balloon with a pin and carefully pull it out through the strings. Use tweezers if needed. Tie a loop of ribbon onto the ornament to hang it up.

As you think about Jesus, let His love warm you like a fire in winter. You don't have to be the best at anything to be with Him.

This is a perfect time of year to think about Jesus's birth. Take time to relax and feel peaceful.

I pray that you can feel how much Jesus loves you. He knows that you are trying to follow Him. Let that thought comfort you and give you confidence to go forward doing good.



The answer Todd was praying for came a month or two later when he was reading the Book of Mormon. "I was overcome with a very powerful spiritual witness of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and the calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith," Elder Christofferson said.

#### **5 FACTS ABOUT ELDER CHRISTOFFERSON**

Did you know Joseph Smith's birthday is December 23rd?

didn't he get an answer?



This was the answer he was hoping to receive in the Sacred Grove.

Todd learned that you don't have to be in any special place to receive an answer from Heavenly Father. He was at home, in his bedroom, and Heavenly Father spoke to him there.

He learned that we don't have to travel to Palmyra to find out that Joseph Smith was a prophet. We don't have to go to Jerusalem to know that Jesus is the Savior, the Son of God. Heavenly Father knows us, and He will find us wherever we are. Wherever we may be, He can speak to us if we seek Him in prayer.  $\blacklozenge$ 

Adapted from "Seeking Him in Prayer," Friend, Feb. 2006, 8-9.



## Show and tell



As part of my Faith in God goals, I made a Nativity set using materials from around my house. The angel and

shepherd are my favorites!

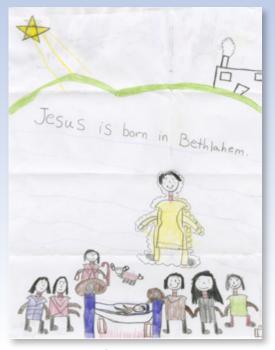
Emma W., age 11, Colorado, USA



ne way I like to serve is by shoveling snow from my neighbors' driveways. I have a warm feeling

inside after I'm done. I know that when we serve others, Heavenly Father will bless us.

Jonathan W., age 9, Illinois, USA



Tyler F., age 10, Virginia, USA

#### **Christmas**

Long ago the star shone bright,
Shepherds and Wise Men saw its light.
They came to see their Savior dear,
Who brought the world peace and good cheer!
Born in a manger, humble and mild—
Bringing salvation to each man, woman, and child.
Today we still follow His light,
Helping others to choose the right.
Leading us to our Savior so dear,
Doing our part to bring the world good cheer!

Trystan L., age 12, Utah, USA



was so excited to give my family the gifts I had sewn for them and to watch the smiles on their faces when they unwrapped their gifts. I learned the real meaning of Christmas. It's not about presents under the tree but about giving and feeling love. It is based on the gift Heavenly Father gave to each of us—the gift of Christ.

Parker L., age 10, Florida, USA

Primary children from the Hilton Head Ward, Georgia, USA, collected food for a local food bank for the holidays. For each item donated, the children put a picture on the wall in the Primary room to build a Nativity scene.







Alexis B., age 9, Utah, USA



Max A., age 6, Minnesota, USA



y favorite thing about Christmas is seeing other people in my family who live far away and celebrating Jesus's birth. I also like the Nativity scene, singing "Away in a Manger," and helping others.

Aubrey R., age 7, Missouri, USA



Olivia B., age 8, Arizona, USA



The Birmingham Alabama Primary, Alabama, USA, used the Nativity play from the December 2014 Friend to put on their first Christmas pageant. It helped them remember why we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.



Sam S., age 9, Washington, USA







"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying..."







"... and on earth peace, good will toward men."



I wish I could have been there!

Yeah, me too.

But I guess we didn't need to be there to know it's true.

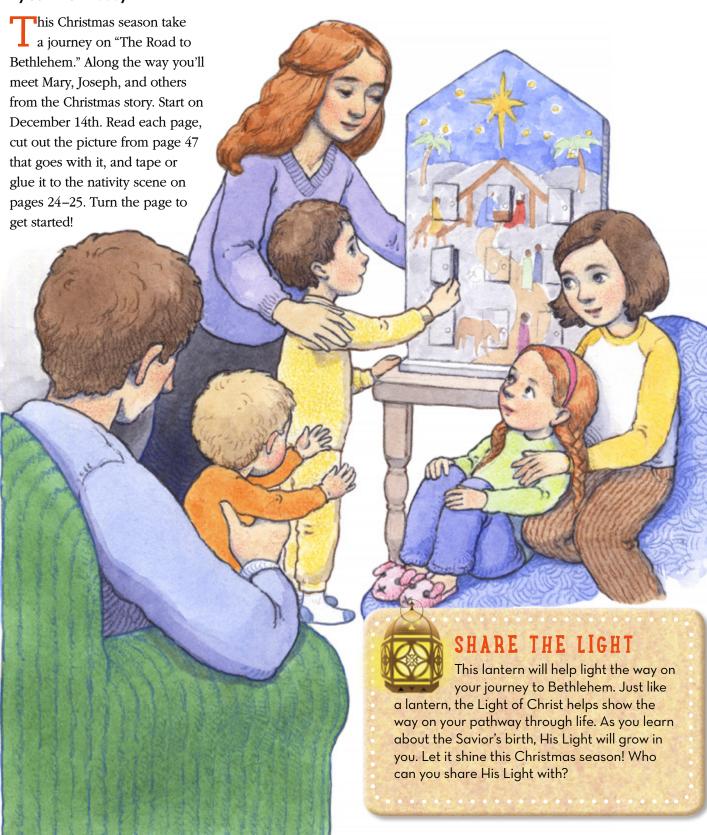
### MERRY CHRISTMAS

from the Coopers and the *Friend*!

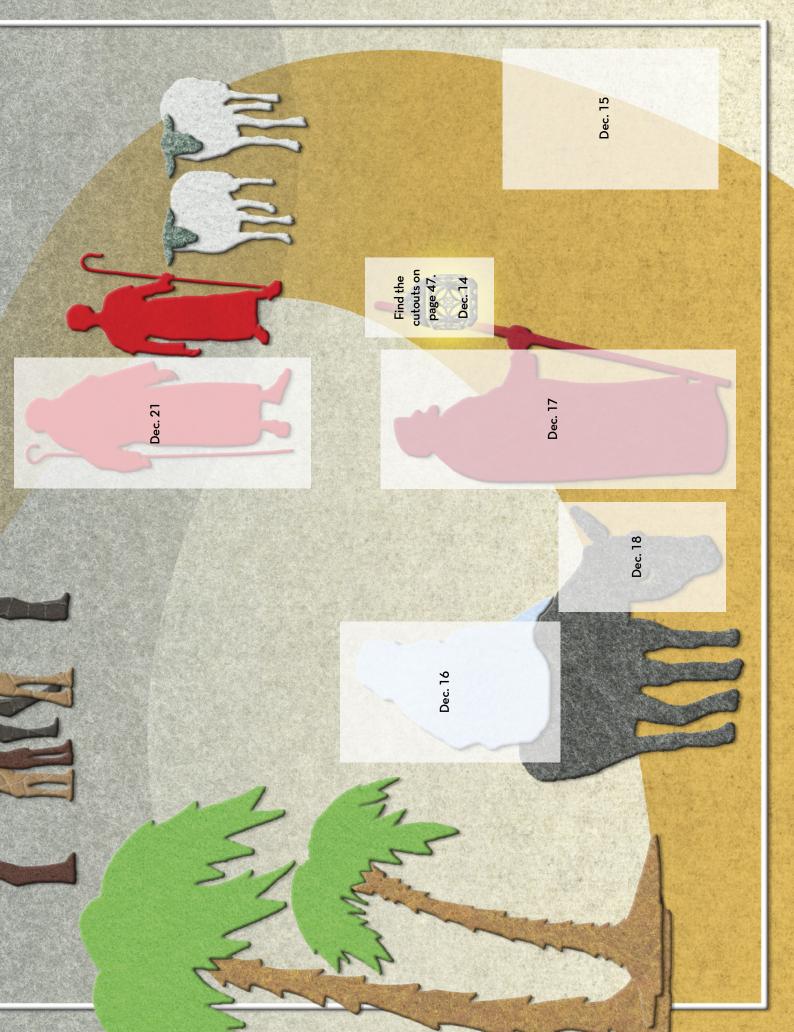
## The Road to Bethlehem



#### By Jennifer Maddy







## The Way to Bethlehem





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## Mary

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a **virgin**—espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26–27).

ary was a **righteous** young woman who lived long ago in a city called Nazareth. She was preparing to marry a good man named Joseph when, one day, the angel Gabriel appeared to her. The angel told Mary that she was blessed and **highly favored** of God. Then he told her that a wonderful thing would happen—she would have a baby who would be the Son of God! Mary was confused, but the angel told her to not fear and to have faith.

Mary had faith. She believed the angel, and she believed in God. Her baby would be named Jesus.

a virtuous young woman

following God and having faith in Him

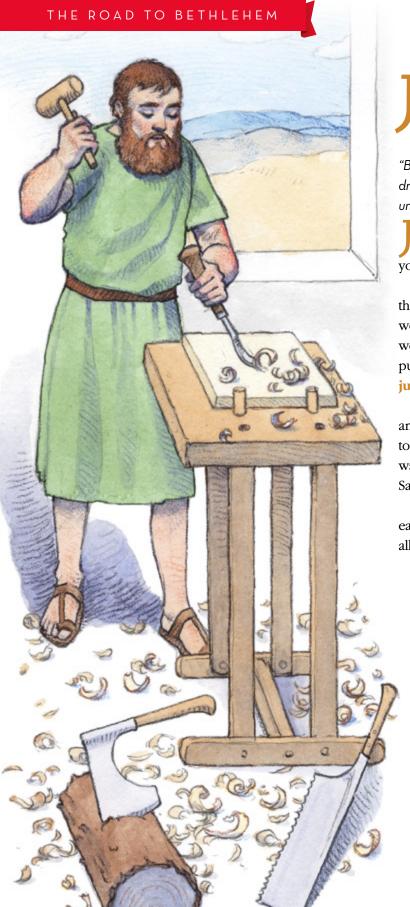
chosen because of obedience



#### SHARE THE LIGHT

Even though Mary was probably worried by what the angel told

her, she had the faith to accept God's will. She said, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:47). Have you ever been afraid because you thought something was too hard to do? Remember, God loves you and will help you! To read more about the angel's visit to Mary, read Luke 1:26–38.





## Joseph

"Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife" (Matthew 1:20).

Toseph was a good man. He was a carpenter. He worked hard. Soon he was going to be married to a young woman named Mary.

a person who builds things

But before the wedding, Joseph found out that Mary was going to have a baby. He was worried. People would be shocked because he and Mary weren't married yet. And the law said that Mary could be punished. Joseph didn't want that to happen. He was a just man.

As Joseph thought about what to do, an does what is fair and right angel came to him. The angel told him not to be afraid to have Mary be his wife. Joseph was amazed to hear that Mary's baby would become the Savior of the world.

Joseph knew Mary's baby would need a good father on earth. He trusted the angel. He knew everything would be all right.



#### SHARE THE LIGHT

Joseph might have worried about what people would think

about Mary. Sometimes you might worry about what people think or say about you. But what matters most are the things you say and think about others, and how you treat them. Try to be like Joseph and treat others the way Heavenly Father wants you to-with love and kindness. To read more about Joseph, read Matthew 1:18-24.



## The Journey

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.... and all went to be taxed, every one into his own city" (Luke 2:1, 3).

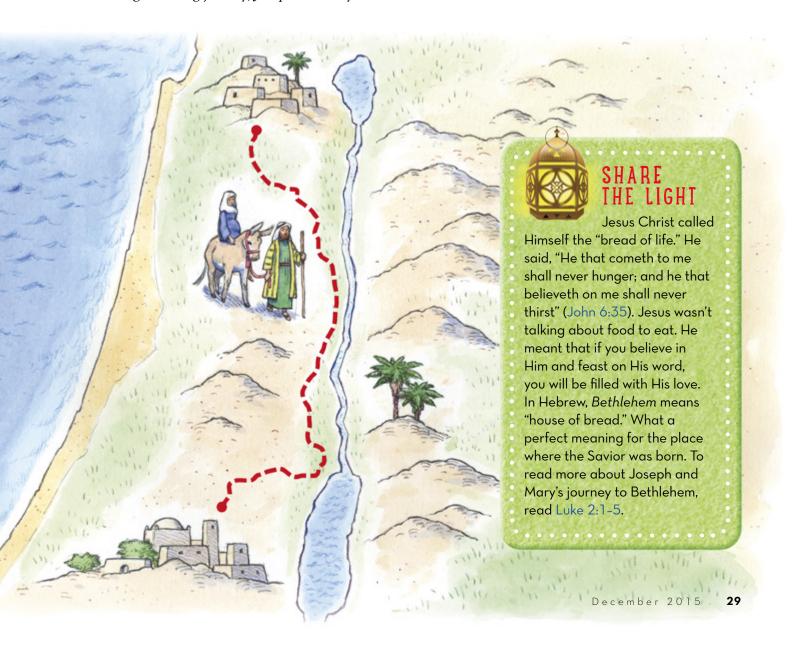
a royal order

Joseph and Mary lived in the city of Nazareth. The ruler of the land made a decree. He said that everyone needed to be counted in a census. To be counted, the people had to go to the city where their ancestors were from. Joseph's ancestors were from a town called Bethlehem.

counting the number of people

It was almost time for Mary to have her baby when she and Joseph prepared for the trip. Bethlehem was 70–80 miles (112–128 km) from Nazareth. It usually took four or five days to make the journey, but it might have taken Joseph and Mary longer so Mary could rest along the way.

After a long and tiring journey, Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem.







## The Inn

"And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And ... there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:6-7).

Toise echoed through the narrow streets of Bethlehem. Coins jangled as people shopped for food and supplies. Animals bleated and brayed as their owners led them along. Bethlehem was crowded! Many people had come to be counted for the census.

Some travelers stayed with relatives. Many travelers stayed at inns and guest rooms. These places had open areas that everyone shared. But they would not be the best place for a baby to be born. Besides, they were all full of people. There was no room for Mary and Joseph.

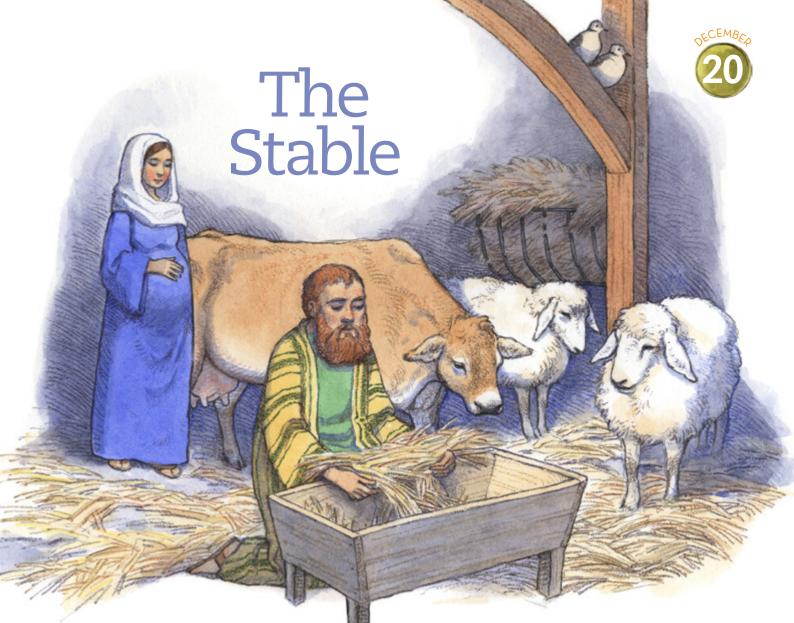
It was time for Mary to have her baby. Where could the baby be born?

the sound of sheep and donkeys



#### SHARE THE LIGHT

you busy-school, family time, sports, and music or dance lessons! Sometimes there doesn't seem to be enough time in the day to do everything. The inn was so crowded that there wasn't room inside for Jesus to be born. How can you make room in your day to feel close to Christ? Study the scriptures, pray, and serve others. Jesus Christ will always make room for you!



"Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12).

The stable was warm and quiet. A cow twitched its tail, shooing away a bug. A bell around a sheep's neck jingled softly. A donkey—perhaps

Joseph's—watched bright-eyed as Joseph helped Mary get comfortable. The animals around them added warmth to the cool night.

People in Bethlehem often brought their animals into a front room to help heat the house. An inn might have had a bigger area to keep the travelers' animals in. On this night in Bethlehem, all of the rooms for travelers were full. Someone suggested that Joseph and Mary could stay in the area with the

animals. It would give them warmth, quiet, and privacy.

Joseph filled a **manger** with clean, soft hay.

Everything was ready for a special baby to be born.

a feed box for animals

#### SHARE THE LIGHT

In some parts of the world, Christmas comes when it's cold. Then people keep warm with

blankets, sweaters, and hot cocoa! But what keeps you warm *inside*? Maybe it's feeling your family's love, or singing a favorite Primary song, or feeling the Holy Ghost. Knowing that Heavenly Father and Jesus love you will help keep your spirit warm on the coldest night. How can you help others feel this love too?

## The Shepherds

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8).

he shepherds waited and watched. Their flocks were nearby, grazing or dozing in the groups of sheep night. But the shepherds didn't sleep. They and lambs had an important job. They took care of their sheep and made sure the animals had food and water. They also kept the sheep safe. A shepherd always had to be wide awake and watching for danger.

Then the shepherds saw something that frightened them, but it wasn't a thief or a wolf. It was an angel! The angel told them not to be afraid. He had wonderful news for them. Jesus Christ, the Savior, had been born! The angel told the shepherds they would find the baby lying in a manger in the city of Bethlehem. Suddenly the sky was filled with angels singing and praising God. What an amazing sight!

The shepherds didn't wait. They hurried to Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus.

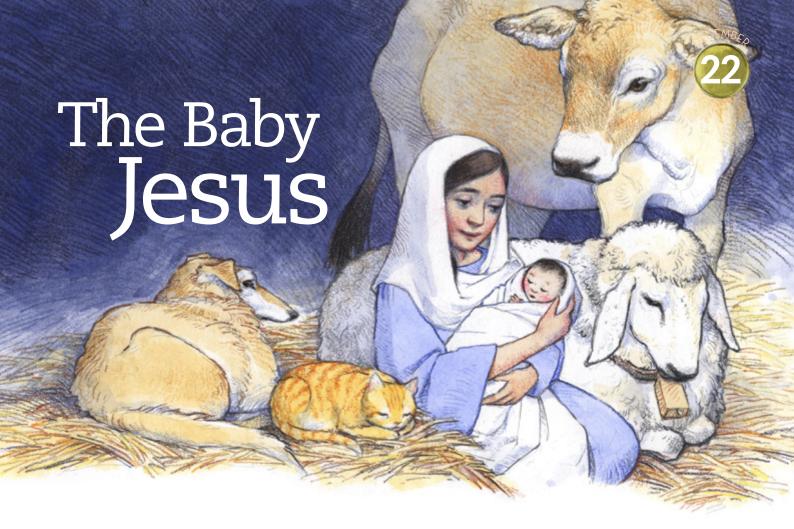


#### SHARE THE LIGHT

Sheep learn to trust their shepherd, and they go to him

when he calls. Each sheep is important to its shepherd. Jesus Christ called Himself the Good Shepherd. You are a sheep in His flock, and He loves you and wants to bless and protect you. Have you ever noticed that a candy cane is the same shape as a shepherd's crook? When you see candy canes this Christmas, think about how Jesus is the Good Shepherd. What can you do to follow Him? To read more about the shepherds, read Luke 2:8-18.





"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger" (Luke 2:7).

The baby cried out softly, and His mother, Mary, held Him close. She kissed His cheek and hummed a sweet song. The sleepy baby closed His eyes. Joseph and Mary watched the baby sleep, amazed at the miracle that He was. Months earlier an angel had told them that Mary's baby would be Jesus Christ—the Son of God. And now, here He was, a tiny baby asleep in Mary's arms.

Mary had wrapped baby Jesus in **swaddling clothes** to keep him warm and safe. Now she placed Him in the manger so she could rest.

strips of cloth wrapped snugly around a baby



#### SHARE THE LIGHT

The prophet Isaiah said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6).

Isaiah didn't say, "unto Mary and Joseph" or "unto the people in Bethlehem." He said, "unto *us.*" Jesus Christ was born to bless everyone. He was born to bless you. What does this mean to you?

When you see a Nativity scene this Christmas, look at the baby in the manger and remember that He was born for you. To read about the Savior's birth, read Luke 2:6–19 or see page 35.

Hundreds of years before this night, prophets of God had written of the birth of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah called Jesus "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). All of those important names describe the Savior. But on this night in Bethlehem, He was also a baby boy, loved by His mother and father.

someone who gives advice or guidance



## The Wise Men

"There came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1-2).

ne star shone more brightly than the rest, and the Wise Men followed it like a compass. They had been watching for the star, and they knew it would lead them to a new king.

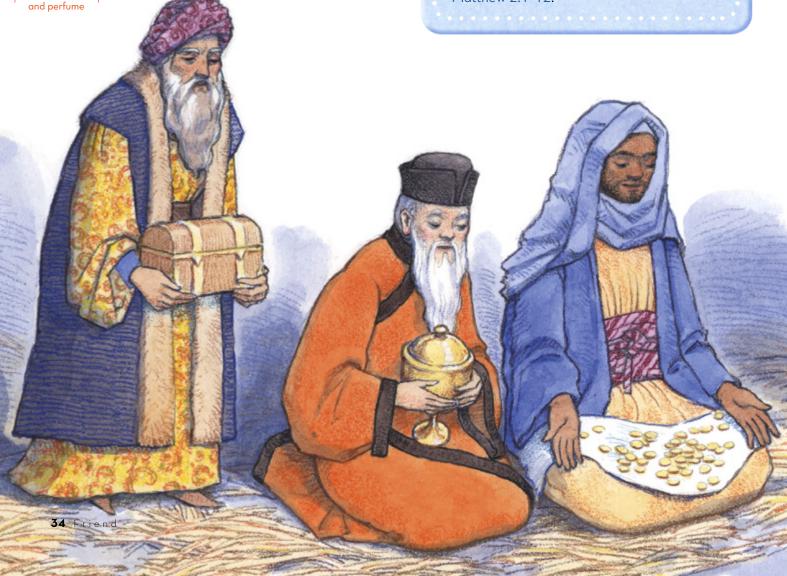
In Bethlehem they found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Here was the new king! The Wise Men knelt down to worship Jesus. They gave Him gifts of gold, <a href="frankincense">frankincense</a>, and <a href="mayerh">myrrh</a>—gifts fit for a king. The baby Jesus would grow up to be the Savior of the world.

used in medicine

#### SHARE THE LIGHT

Your journey to Bethlehem has almost come to an end, but your

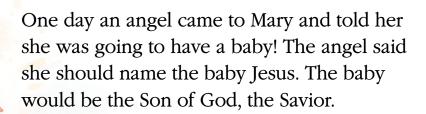
pathway through life is just beginning. You can be like one of the Wise Men, who followed the light of the star to Jesus. Even though you will have challenges along the way, following the Light of Christ will lead you to happiness. You can't give Jesus a present, like the Wise Men did, but what gifts can you give Jesus? As you follow Christ, your light will help brighten the way for others. To read more about the Wise Men, read Matthew 2:1–12.

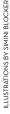




# The Nativity Story

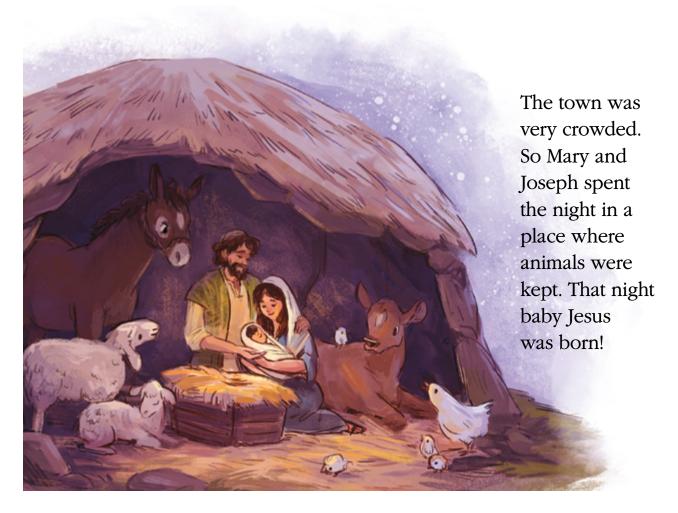
A long time ago, a woman named Mary and a man named Joseph were going to be married. Mary and Joseph were good people who did what God wanted them to do.





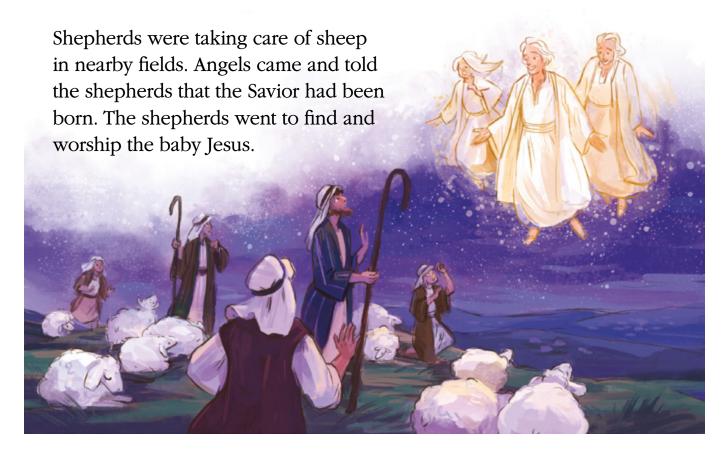


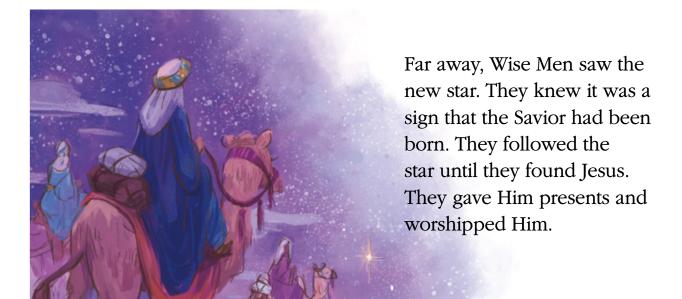
Mary and Joseph had to travel to a town called Bethlehem to pay taxes.





A new star appeared in the sky.





Jesus grew up in a town called Nazareth. He learned to be helpful, kind, and obedient. He learned everything that He needed to learn to be our Savior. He always followed God's plan for Him.



## I Can Follow Jesus



At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Point to the pictures of these people, who were part of the Nativity story.

We can be like Mary and Joseph by doing what God wants us to do.

We can be like the **shepherds** and **Wise Men** by following Jesus Christ.

We can be like the **angels** by telling others the real story of Christmas.

And we can be like Jesus by following His example!

FRIEND TO FRIEND



From an interview with Elder Christoffel Golden of the Seventy: by Katherine Nelson

# What the 3ible Taught

"The Spirit will guide, and deep inside, I'll know the scriptures are true" (Children's Songbook, 109).

Then I was a young boy growing up in South Africa. I was not a member of the Church. But I read the Bible and said my prayers often, like my parents had taught me to. Because of that, I always felt that the Lord was close to me. I especially liked reading stories about Jesus's life. I tried to be honest, hardworking, trustworthy, and kind, like Jesus. That's what the scriptures and Jesus's example taught me.

From reading the Bible, I also learned what the Church was like when Jesus was alive. And it made me wonder why none of the churches I knew about looked like Jesus's Church had. Why don't they have prophets and apostles? I wondered. Why isn't there revelation in our day?

One day when I was older, two missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints knocked on

messages or direction from Heavenly Father

our door. "We have a message for you," they said.

My mother, who was a very friendly person, said, "We'd like to hear it. Will you come back this evening?" When the missionaries came that evening, the room was full—my mother and father, my four siblings, and me. My parents had even invited our neighbors over to listen to the missionaries.

My family was amazed by what they taught. We were thrilled that Jesus's Church had been restored. It was a church with prophets and apostles! Over time, the

> Some of the words are hard, but reading scriptures makes me happy.





missionaries answered all the questions that I had from prayerfully reading the scriptures. Because my family and I were already familiar with the Bible, we

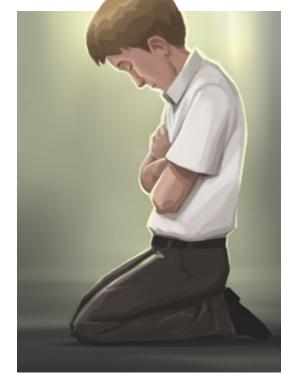
were ready to hear the missionaries' message. We were excited about the gospel. Our neighbors didn't feel the same excitement.

What truly converted me to the gospel was the Book of Mormon. I read some verses from it. Then one day I decided to follow Moroni's promise to "ask God . . . if these things are not true; and . . . he will manifest the truth of it unto you" (Moroni 10:4). So I said a prayer and started reading the very

first verse in the Book of Mormon. When I read it, the Holy Ghost witnessed to me in a wonderful way that the Book of Mormon truly is the word of God.

You're never too young to start reading the scriptures and praying every day. Doing those things will help you know what is true. It will give you faith and the courage to make right decisions.

God doesn't expect us to rely on anyone else's testimony of the gospel. He will tell us Himself that the gospel and the Book of Mormon are true. If we are sincere and pray with faith, He will answer our prayers to know the truth.





# Jesus Christ Will Come Again!

#### By Erin Sanderson

n Christmas, people all over the world celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Someday we will celebrate another wonderful day the Second Coming, when Jesus returns to the earth! Prophets have taught about what will happen before Jesus comes again. One of those things is that His gospel will be preached all over the world.

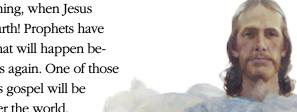
Having faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ helps us feel peaceful, even when things happening in the world seem scary. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you,

my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

As you think about Jesus this Christmas, remember that He will return again someday, not as a baby but as the King of kings. Then everyone will know that He is the

Son of God and the Savior of the world!

The author lives in Utah, USA.





#### LEARN MORE

When Jesus returns, He will reign on the earth for 1,000 years. This time will be called the Millennium. During the Millennium, people will be so righteous that Satan can't tempt them. There will be no sorrow, and people who follow Christ will feel peaceful and happy.





#### **FAMILY TALK**

A treasure is something special that is very valuable. Read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:36-37. Talk about how "treasuring up" Christ's words helps us prepare for His Second Coming. Where do we find His words?

**Song:** "When He Comes Again" (Children's Songbook, 82)

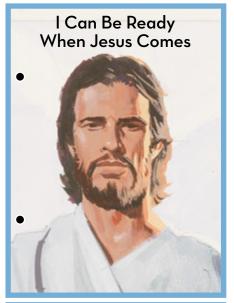
Scripture: John 14:27

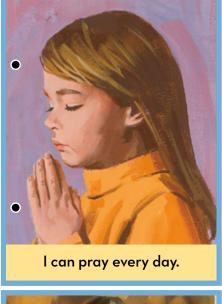
Video: Go to Biblevideos.org to watch "Glad Tidings of Great Joy: The Birth of Jesus Christ."

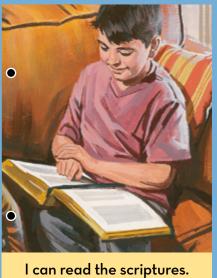
#### I CAN BE READY

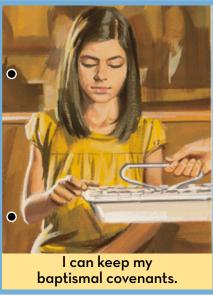
Make a booklet to remind you of the ways you can prepare now for when Jesus comes again.

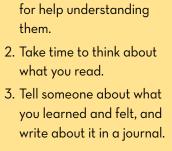
Cut out and stack the cards. Thread and tie a string through the two holes.







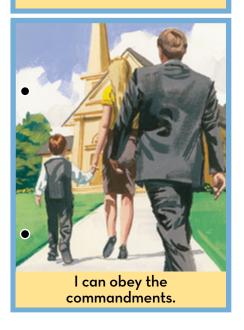




 Before you begin reading the scriptures, pray to Heavenly Father to ask

SCRIPTURE TIP
Here are three ways
you can understand the

scriptures better:





# Making Room for

#### By Jane McBride Choate

(Based on a true story)

"Picture the little baby Jesus.... Remember Him, as you picture Christmas this year" (Children's Songbook, 50-51).

an your family come caroling with us on Thursday night?" Sarah asked. "We'll sing at a nursing home and have hot chocolate and cookies afterward."

Caitlyn shook her head. "I wish we could! But our family's going to an ice-skating party that night."

Caitlyn liked ice-skating, but she was tired of having every night in December filled. After school she talked to Mom about it. "I really want to go caroling with Sarah, but every night is so busy. I feel like there's not even time to think about Christmas!"

Mom nodded. "I know what you mean." She ticked off items on her fingers. "Ice-skating party. School program. Service project."

"All those things are good," Caitlyn said with a frown. "How do we decide which ones to do?"

"I'll talk to Dad," Mom said. "Maybe we should have a family meeting about this."

After dinner that night, Mom brought the family calendar to the table. "Caitlyn and I have been talking about how busy December is," Mom said. "We've decided that we're going to unschedule Christmas!"

"But we have to have *Christmas*!" sevenyear-old Ben said. "That's when we celebrate Jesus's birth."

"I don't mean getting rid of Christmas,"

Mom said with a smile. "We just need to
clear out some of the things leading up to it.

We're so busy these next few weeks that we
haven't made time to focus on Christ and family."

Dad opened up the family calendar. "So let's talk about what will really help us focus on Christ this Christmas season. First off, the ice-skating party or caroling with Sarah's family?"

"Skating sounds fun," Caitlyn said, "but I'd rather go caroling. I bet singing at the nursing home would really help us all focus on Christ."

"Sounds like a good choice to me," Dad said with a smile. "We can go ice-skating another time."

"Yay! I love caroling!" Ben said.

"OK," Mom said. "That's four votes for going with Sarah's family." She put an *X* through the skating party and wrote in "caroling."

One by one, the family went through each item on the calendar, crossing off some and writing in others. They marked some nights as family nights to stay home and do



## Christmas

#### Caitlyn was tired of being so busy every night.

things together. Other nights they made sure that what they had planned would focus on Christ.

"Can we make a gingerbread house?" Ben asked. "The old-fashioned kind?"

"I think that can be arranged," Mom said.

"And let's act out the Nativity! We can't forget that," Caitlyn said.

Mom wrote it on the calendar. "This way we'll be sure we made room for it."

Thursday night, Caitlyn and her family went caroling with Sarah's family. "This is so neat," Caitlyn said to Sarah as the families sang song after song at the nursing home. "Everyone looks so happy to see us."

The families made a plan to come sing next month. And maybe next Christmas too!

The author lives in Colorado, USA.





#### Grant H., age 11, Idaho, USA

ne beautiful morning my family and I passed our bishop's home. We noticed two enormous trees had been chopped down and the wood was in a huge pile. We have a fire pit at home, and we were almost out of wood. So we asked our bishop if we could have it. He told us, "You can have all of the wood you want."

I was so excited. We would finally have more wood! When the day arrived to get the wood, we got right to work.

After a long day, our trailers were overflowing with wood. Then our bishop came outside and told us that a less-active family in our ward heated their home with a fireplace and they were out of wood. Mom and Dad decided to give the wood to them. That made me very upset. We had worked hard without any breaks.

I wasn't quite sure if I should complain and ask if we could keep the wood. If I help give it away, all the work we did would be for nothing. We wouldn't have the wood, I thought. What should I do?

It took us over an hour to unload all our precious wood. When we finally finished, we went home. We were very exhausted. When we got home, I went to check how much wood we had left. Guess what I saw? No wood at all. I thought we were giving some wood away, not all of it. I

started pacing back and forth, thinking about how much work we did for nothina!

Then I remembered how the family heated their home with a fireplace. We just liked to have fires. It would have been really, really nice to have a surplus of wood. But the other family absolutely needed it. We just wanted it to do things like cook hot dogs and s'mores.

Giving the wood to the other family was hard, but I knew it was the right thing to do. After all, what would the Savior do?

#### THANKS FOR GIVING US A HAND!

This year thousands of you have followed Jesus by helping others. Thank you for sharing your great stories-and your handprints—with us. We loved reading them all!

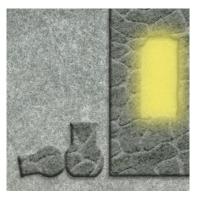
## The Road to Bethlehem







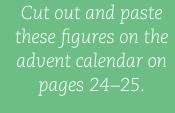
Dec. 14



Dec. 19



Dec. 17





Dec. 22



Dec. 24



Dec. 20





Dec. 18



Dec. 15



#### How to Write to the Friend

To send us a letter, drawing, poem, or photograph . . .

 Fill out the form below and include it with your submission.

Include a school photo or high-quality snapshot.

> 3. We might edit your submission for length or clarity, and we can't return it to you.

4. You must be at least three years old to send us a submission.



Please send your submission to:

Friend Magazine
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2432
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024
Or email: friend@ldschurch.org

The following information and permission must be included:

First and last name

Age

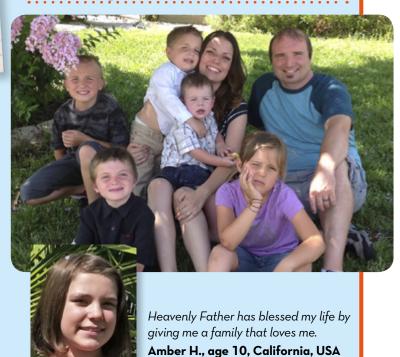
State/Province, Country

I give my permission to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to use my child's submission and photo on the Church websites and social media platforms as well as for Church reports, print products, video, publications, and training materials.

Signature of parent or legal guardian

Email of parent or legal guardian

#### Through Your Eyes



#### The Last Laugh



Yup, that's pretty much how Captain Moroni built his defenses. We should be all set.

# VISIT friend.lds.org!

- Play games and watch videos
- Read the *Friend*

Did you find the rings? Look on pages 2 and 8! The November Level 3 ring was on page 23.



### JESUS CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN

Acts 1:9-11

Glue this page to heavy paper or cardboard. Then cut out the figures and attach them to craft sticks or paper bags. Store in an envelope with the scripture reference attached to the front.







Print more copies at friend.lds.org.

### Dear Parents and Jeachers,

We wanted to give your family something beautiful to help you focus on Jesus Christ this Christmas season. So we designed pages 23–39 of the magazine to be an advent activity that you could use year after year. On pages 35–39, you'll find a retelling of the Nativity that you could use to act out the story as a family. We hope this season is a delightful and Christ-centered one for you and those you love!

Happy Christmas,

The Friend

Order the Friend at store.lds.org!

## PRIMARY .....

Look for the colored diamonds on the table of contents to find stories and activities that support Primary this month!

Find more teaching resources at lessonhelps.lds.org.



#### Family Home Evening Ideas

**FOCUSING ON JESUS CHRIST AT CHRISTMAS:** The more we focus on Jesus in our lives and do things to get closer to Him, the happier we are. Read "Finding Jesus at Christmas" on page 8. You can play the same activity that Luke's family does! What can your family do to keep this Christmas focused on Christ? Use "Priceless Gifts" on page 6 for some ideas.

**FAMILY HISTORY:** Solve the last "Family History Mystery" (page 16) and become a Family History Detective! What have you learned about your family this year? What do you want to learn next year?

**MUSIC:** Read "Singing with Angels" on page 2. Create your own family choir! You can print a booklet of Christmas songs at **friend.lds.org.** You could even make some holiday treats for your neighbors and sing for them.

**ARTICLE OF FAITH 13:** Memorize Article of Faith 13 together as a family. How do the shows, movies, and books you enjoy measure up? Make a list of praiseworthy things your family would like to seek after. Use the challenges on page 11 to set some goals!

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