



# A Favorite Christmas Song

By C. G. Lindstrom

I remember it was your typical ward Christmas party: tables covered with red and green butcher paper, dinner served on paper plates, little children running around, and the happy sound of ward members chatting. Somehow, someone had managed to quiet things down to give a blessing on the food, and then everyone ate. The program was about to start.

It wasn't my ward. I had gone with a friend to her ward party, so I didn't know many people. We had wanted to leave early, but her mom convinced us to stay for the program.

The first number on the program was by the Primary children, who walked onto the stage wearing gold-tinsel halos on their heads. They sang a song then bumped and giggled their way offstage, leaving a trail of gold tinsel in their wake.

Two pianists then played joyous songs. The first pianist played "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful" (*Hymns*, no. 202) without missing a note. The other, a young boy, sat down at the piano and looked mournfully over his shoulder at his mom, who began to quietly count the beat. The boy sighed, turned to the instrument, and played his best version of "Up on the Housetop."

Next on the program was one of my favorite songs—"C-h-r-i-s-t-m-a-s."

I looked up to see a sister with stooped shoulders and one hand held close to her body, walking with an awkward stride to stand beside the piano. She stood with one hip lower than the other and offered a lopsided smile before she began. I admit I wrongfully wondered if the song would be any good.

"When I was but a youngster, Christmas meant one thing," she sang. The song went on to tell how a child learns how to spell *Christmas* and discovers what the holiday is really about.

"*C* is for the Christ child born upon this day; *H* is for herald angels."

Her mouth was slack on one side, and she had difficulty forming the words.

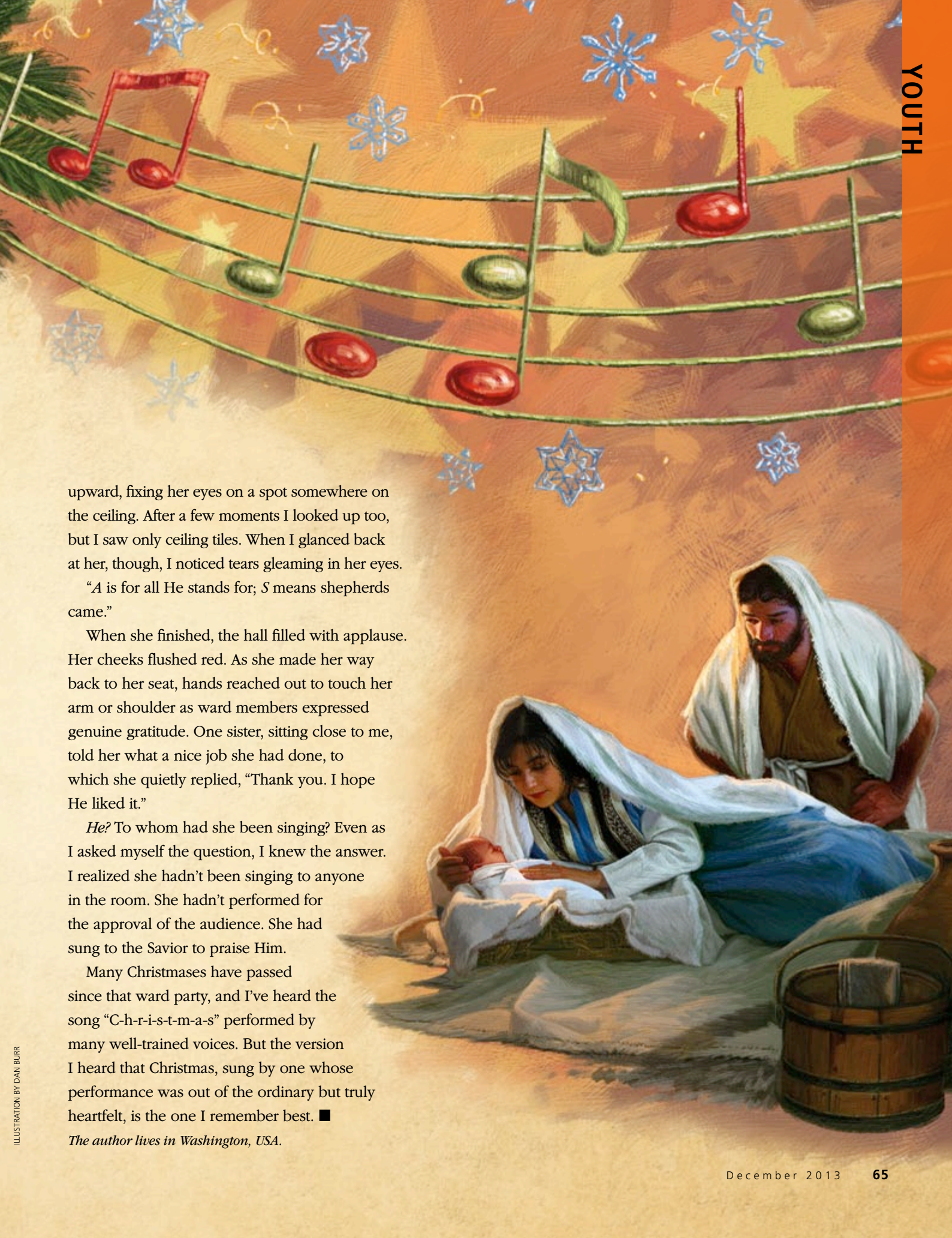
"*R* means our Redeemer; *I* means Israel; *S* is for the star."

Cautiously I looked around the room and studied the faces of her ward members. No one seemed embarrassed. In fact, they sat smiling and listening contentedly.

"*T* is for three wise men . . . ; *M* is for the manger."

She continued singing and turned her face

*I didn't appreciate her song until I realized who she was really singing to.*



upward, fixing her eyes on a spot somewhere on the ceiling. After a few moments I looked up too, but I saw only ceiling tiles. When I glanced back at her, though, I noticed tears gleaming in her eyes.

“A is for all He stands for; S means shepherds came.”

When she finished, the hall filled with applause. Her cheeks flushed red. As she made her way back to her seat, hands reached out to touch her arm or shoulder as ward members expressed genuine gratitude. One sister, sitting close to me, told her what a nice job she had done, to which she quietly replied, “Thank you. I hope He liked it.”

*He?* To whom had she been singing? Even as I asked myself the question, I knew the answer. I realized she hadn’t been singing to anyone in the room. She hadn’t performed for the approval of the audience. She had sung to the Savior to praise Him.

Many Christmases have passed since that ward party, and I’ve heard the song “C-h-r-i-s-t-m-a-s” performed by many well-trained voices. But the version I heard that Christmas, sung by one whose performance was out of the ordinary but truly heartfelt, is the one I remember best. ■

*The author lives in Washington, USA.*