

ONE BLUE BULB

My mom and dad disagreed on how to decorate their home at Christmastime. My dad was color-blind, so to him red, green, and brown all looked similar and dull. However, the color blue looked bright and beautiful. He was also a big fan of Brigham Young University football, whose school colors include blue.

Since blue was his favorite color, he wanted to put up blue lights. But my mom said blue was not a Christmas color, so every year Dad neatly hung strings of red, green, and white Christmas lights along their roof. To tease Mom, he replaced one of the bulbs with a bright blue one. If you looked closely, you would see one

blue bulb among the red, green, and white lights.

Every year the blue bulb shone from a different location. Sometimes it hid around the corner where no one would notice it, but sometimes he put it over the garage or the front porch. It was a fun game between Mom and Dad.

One year, Dad unexpectedly passed away two days before Christmas. At his funeral, the story was told of the one blue bulb he would hang every year. The following night, my mom looked out the window. Across the street, shining among the white lights above her neighbor's porch, was one blue light. Within a few days, many neighbors and friends added blue bulbs to

their strings of Christmas lights. Some even decorated whole trees in blue.

I'm grateful that my mom's friends and neighbors showed their love for her by decorating with blue lights. They helped me know what it means to "mourn with those that mourn; . . . and comfort those that stand in need of comfort" (Mosiah 18:9). I'm grateful that Heavenly Father gave us the gift of His Son. Because of Jesus Christ, I will see my dad again. ■

Amy Brown, Utah, USA

If you looked closely, you would see one blue bulb among the red, green, and white lights.



As she walked away, we saw her hold the book against her heart.



ILLUSTRATION BY STAN FELLOWS

GIVING AWAY JOY

My husband and I were missionaries serving in Tarbes, France, in the Pyrenees Mountains. It was Christmas Eve, and we decided to go down to the city at Verdun Plaza to give away copies of the Book of Mormon. The street was deserted, and we started to ask ourselves what we were going to do with so many books. Suddenly, we saw a young man who seemed to not know where to go.

We approached him and offered him a Book of Mormon. He became joyful as he listened to us talk about

the gospel. He explained that he was alone that Christmas night and that he would read the Book of Mormon and not feel alone.

After he left, we looked around the street again and saw a woman walking slowly toward us in the cold night. A glimmer of happiness shone in her eyes when we presented her with a Book of Mormon. She told us that she had become a widow recently and was happy that we were concerned about her. She said she was extremely grateful to us. As she

walked away, we saw her hold the book against her heart.

That night we distributed every copy of the Book of Mormon that we had brought with us. Most of the people who we gave them to were alone, distressed, and very much in need of love. We went back home that night with the impression that we had received the greatest Christmas gift because of the joy that we were able to give to others. ■

Jeannine Denise Fabre,
Saint-André-les-Vergers, France

GREETING JESUS

After weeks of anticipation, it was finally Christmas Eve. Almost our whole family was with us—Grandma and Grandpa Fletcher, our three daughters and their husbands and children. It was getting dark and the streets were lighting up. Houses sparkled with beautiful decorations while Christmas trees twinkled happily in the windows.

We were getting ready to go to the Nativity Pageant, which the Church had presented for many years in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Every Christmas Eve we looked forward to going to the outdoor pageant that was complete with donkeys, sheep, Wise Men, shepherds, Roman soldiers,

angels, and a powerful sound system. It brought the spirit of peace, love, and the real meaning of Christmas to our hectic celebrations.

We arrived at Heritage Park, where the pageant took place, and were soon enjoying the beautiful music of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the story of the Savior's birth. Lauren, our oldest grandchild, was three at the time. She was captivated by the sights, the sounds, and the story unfolding before us. Our breath clouded the chilly air under clear, starlit skies. We watched as the people playing Joseph and Mary obeyed the decree of Caesar Augustus to go to Bethlehem to be taxed. The woman playing Mary was

“great with child” (see Luke 2:5), and the only place they could find to stay was a lowly stable. There, “she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger” (see Luke 2:7). The spotlights swept over the hill where we could see people as shepherds watching “over their flock by night” (see Luke 2:8). Suddenly, an actor dressed as an angel appeared dramatically in the air, a bright light shining on him. Lauren spontaneously cried out in love, “Jesus, it's me, Lauren!”

Everyone around us heard her greeting and laughed softly, enjoying the surprise. It was an innocent case of mistaken identity, but for us



it memorably enhanced the pageant that year. Lauren knew that Jesus knew her, and we were reminded of our knowledge that He does know each one of us. We wondered if Lauren had some memory of her Savior whom she had left three short years earlier. Lauren's spontaneous greeting gave us hope that we too will recognize Him when we meet Him. Her love for the Savior and His love for Lauren warmed our hearts on that icy Christmas Eve. ■

Greg Prince, Alberta, Canada

Suddenly, an actor dressed as an angel appeared dramatically in the air, a bright light shining on him.



A SACRAMENT MEETING OF ANGELS

A few days after Thanksgiving, my three-year-old son, Drew, started to get sick. He woke up every morning, ate breakfast, got dressed for the day and seemed fine, but as the day progressed, he became lethargic and wouldn't eat.

This continued for several weeks. Finally, on Friday, December 18th, I carried Drew into the doctor's office around 3:00 in the afternoon. Drew couldn't stand or walk and his skin was ashen.

I looked at the doctor and said, "This is how he has been every afternoon and evening for the past three weeks." The doctor took one look at Drew and immediately admitted him to the hospital. They ran tests but could not figure out what was wrong with him.

The next day, Drew was transferred to another hospital. That Sunday morning, I was feeling crestfallen. After two days of numerous tests from two different hospitals, no one knew what was wrong with my son. To top it all off, it was the Sunday before Christmas. My favorite sacrament meeting of the whole year is the Christmas program and I was going to miss all the beautiful songs and talks in our ward.

As my husband and I were walking with Drew toward the room in the hospital where a sacrament meeting was to be held, I was miserable. I approached the table where the programs were, picked one up, and was still walking forward and looking down when I bumped into someone.

I looked up and said, "I'm sorry," but no one was there. As I looked into the room where sacrament was to be held, it looked like an auditorium. On the stage there were chairs for the speakers, a piano, and a table set for the sacrament with a few chairs behind it. The room was sparsely filled with sick children and their parents, many hooked up to their portable IVs.

As I scanned the room, I felt the presence of angels. We took our seat and tears flowed down my face as I felt God's love for His children who were sick and suffering, stuck in a hospital with all manner of illnesses at the most wonderful time of the year.

It turned out to be the most beautiful sacrament meeting of my life.

The doctors never did find out what was wrong with Drew. He was given medicine to treat his symptoms and then released from the hospital the next day. He has had no repercussions since, but that Christmas sacrament meeting will stay with me forever. ■

Carrie Ketchum, Nevada, USA