

DECEMBER 2018

# THE **New Era**



THE BEST  
WORST  
CHRISTMAS  
EVER!

p. 6



CHRISTMAS  
AFTER THE  
HURRICANE

p. 16



FOLLOWING  
MARY'S  
EXAMPLE

p. 24

**TRUE GIFTS**  
*of Christmas*

p. 2

Celebrate  
**THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH**  
WITH A FRIEND!

On **Sunday, December 23, 2018**,  
sacrament meetings across the world will be  
focused on Jesus Christ's birth and mission.

Reach out and **invite your friends**  
to come celebrate the  
Savior's birth with  
you that day.



Cover Art: *For unto Us a Child Is Born*, by Lynne Millman Weidinger

**TO SUBMIT manuscripts or art:**

**ONLINE:** Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click "Submit Your Work."

**EMAIL:** [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)

**MAIL:** *New Era* Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2377, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. For return, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**The First Presidency:**

Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, Henry B. Eyring

**The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:**

M. Russell Ballard, Jeffrey R. Holland, Dieter F. Uchtdorf, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, Neil L. Andersen, Ronald A. Rasband, Gary E. Stevenson, Dale G. Renlund, Gerrit W. Gong, Ulisses Soares

**Editor:** Randy D. Funk

**Advisers:** Brian K. Ashton, Randall K. Bennett, Becky Craven, Sharon Eubank, Cristina B. Franco, Larry S. Kacher, Donald L. Hallstrom, Erich W. Kopschke, Lynn G. Robbins

**Managing Director:** Richard I. Heaton

**Director of Church Magazines:** Allan R. Loyborg

**Business Manager:** Garff Cannon

**Managing Editor:** Jon Ryan Jensen

**Assistant Managing Editor:** Joshua J. Perkey

**Copyeditor:** David A. Edwards

**Publications Assistant:** Sally Johnson Odekirk

**Writing and Editing:** Ryan Carr, Maryssa Dennis, David Dickson, Matthew Flitton, Charlotte Larcabal, Michael R. Morris, Eric B. Murdock, Richard M. Romney, Mindy Selu, Chakell Wardleigh

**Editorial Intern:** Breanna Call Herbert

**Managing Art Director:** J. Scott Knudsen

**Art Director:** Jeanette Andrews

**Design:** Fay P. Andrus, Mandie Bentley, C. Kimball Bott, K. Nicole Walkenhorst

**Intellectual Property Coordinator:**

Collette Nebeker Aune

**Production Manager:** Jane Ann Peters

**Prepress:** Joshua Dennis

**Printing Director:** Steven T. Lewis

**Distribution Director:** Troy R. Barker

© 2018 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.

The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah.

**To subscribe:**

**By phone:** Call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express.

**Online:** Go to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org)

**By mail:** Send \$8 U.S. check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

**To change address:**

Send old and new address information to:

Distribution Services

P.O. Box 26368

Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

**Copyright information:** Unless otherwise indicated, individuals may copy material from the *New Era* for their own personal, noncommercial use (including such use in connection with their calling in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints). This right can be revoked at any time and for any reason. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; email [cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org](mailto:cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org).

**POSTMASTER:** Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 507.1.5.2).

**NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY**

**FACILITIES:** Send address corrections to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

**Canada Post Information:** Publication Agreement #40017431.

PHOTOGRAPH AND ILLUSTRATION FROM GETTY IMAGES

# WHAT'S INSIDE

THE MONTHLY YOUTH MAGAZINE OF  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

December 2018 • Volume 48 • Number 12

## FEATURES

**2 True Gifts of Christmas**  
*May we always remember to bring gifts to Him who has given His all for us.*

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

**6 The Best Worst Christmas Ever!**  
*For one sister missionary, everything seemed to be going wrong one Christmas, but then her perspective changed.*

**8 7 Ways to Catch the Christmas Spirit**  
*See how ministering can enhance your Christmas festivities.*



**12 The First Noel**  
*Sheet music for a new arrangement of a Christmas hymn.*

**16 Christmas after the Hurricane**  
*Young people in Puerto Rico share what Christmas was like after a natural disaster.*



**21 Christmas Traditions around the World**  
*See how people celebrate in various countries.*

**22 Light the World**  
*Four areas where you can shine this Christmas.*

**24 COVER STORY**  
**Following Mary's Example**  
*Be like this highly favored daughter of God by showing the attributes she possessed.*  
Sister Becky Craven



**28 Adding Gifts of the Spirit to Your Christmas List**  
*Seek ye earnestly the best gifts.*

**30 "Ye Shall Have Peace in Me"**  
*Jesus Christ is not only the source of peace but also the source of all good things.*

**32 Ministering as the Savior Did**  
*As you do your best to help others, the Savior will open your eyes to see with love and compassion.*



## PLUS...

- 5 MORMONAD
- 36 @LDSYOUTH
- 38 LIFE PREP
- 40 FUN STOP
- 42 Q&A
- 44 FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH
- 46 FIRM FOUNDATIONS
- 48 LAST WORD
- 49 ABOUT AN APOSTLE

---

# TRUE GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

---



By Elder Dieter F.  
Uchtdorf

Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

*May we always remember to bring gifts to Him who has given His all for us.*

**W**hen I was very young I lived in Czechoslovakia, and the rich, centuries-old traditions of Christmas were everywhere around us. Although many years have passed, I still look back on those days with fondness and tenderness.

One year, when I was perhaps four years old, I was in the room where we kept our Christmas tree. It was decorated with lovely, shining ornaments. Silver tinsel draped over the branches, catching the light of real wax candles that flickered all around me. Nearby was a window that looked out onto the street; its curtains shimmered in the light, adding a certain mystery and magic to the scene.

It was on that day that I made two eventful discoveries.

The first was that if I held a lit wax candle behind the curtains, the light sparkled beautifully through the delicate fabric.

The second thing I discovered was that

curtains are flammable. As you might guess, the flame from the candle caught the fabric of the drapes and spread quickly, threatening the walls and ceiling of our home.

I screamed in fright. My parents ran in from the other room and quickly pulled down the drapes and stamped out the fire, preventing what could have been a terrible tragedy.

Once the danger was over, the charred remains of our once-beautiful window trimmings littered the floor; the now-bare window loomed behind me, cold and condemning; and I stood timidly in front of my mother and father without explanation or excuse.

I knew, with all the certainty of a four-year-old boy, that I had ruined Christmas!

## THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Nearly seven decades have passed since that fateful day. And as a result of my one and

only brush with arson, I have learned some important things.

First, don't ever play with fire—an important message with literal and figurative implications for everyone, not only children.

Second, even though I nearly turned our apartment into a pile of ash and smoke, I did not ruin Christmas. Looking back, I think my fear that I had ruined Christmas came from an incomplete understanding of what Christmas really is. And I've noticed that it's not only four-year-olds who have this misunderstanding.

If we are only willing to open our hearts and minds to the spirit of

Christmas, we will recognize wonderful things happening around us. It is usually something small—we read a verse of scripture; we hear a sacred carol and really listen, perhaps for the first time, to its words; or we witness a sincere expression of love. In one way or another, the Spirit touches our hearts, and we see that Christmas, in its essence, is much more sturdy and enduring than the many minor things of life we too often use to adorn it.

### OUR GIFTS TO CHRIST

Christmas and some of the cherished traditions of the season remind us that we, like the Wise Men of old, should

seek the Christ and lay before Him the most precious of gifts: a broken heart and a contrite spirit. We should offer Him our love. We should give Him our willingness to take upon ourselves His name and walk in the path of discipleship. We should promise to remember Him always, to emulate His example, and to go about doing good (see Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79; Acts 10:38).

We cannot offer Him the gift of perfection in all things because this is a gift beyond our capacity to give—at least for now. But He does require that we bring as gifts our best efforts to walk in the ways He has prepared and taught.





# “THE SAVIOR’S GIFTS TO US ARE BREATHTAKING.”

## CHRIST’S GIFTS TO US

And what are the Savior’s gifts to those who are willing to bring these gifts to Him?

This may be the most one-sided gift exchange in the history of the universe. The Savior’s gifts to us are breathtaking.

Let us begin with immortality. Because the Savior overcame death, all men and women—both the just

and the unjust—will live forever (see John 5:28–29; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Doctrine and Covenants 76:17).

Then, forgiveness—even though our sins and imperfections be as scarlet, they can become white as snow because of Him (see Isaiah 1:18).

And finally, eternal life—the greatest gift of all (see Doctrine and Covenants 14:7). Because of the Atonement of Christ, not only are we guaranteed an

infinite quantity of life, but He offers the possibility of an unimaginable quality of life as well (see 1 Corinthians 2:9).

Some of His divine gifts are reserved for that glorious future day when we return to His presence. But He extends many gifts and His grace to us every day. He promises to be with us, to come to us when we need comfort (see John 14:18; Doctrine and Covenants 88:63), to lift us when we stumble, to carry us, to mourn and rejoice with us. Every day He offers to take us by the hand and help transform ordinary life into extraordinary spiritual experiences.

## POINT YOUR HEART TOWARD THE SAVIOR

Of course, we do not need a Christmas holiday to remember Jesus Christ, our Savior. But the celebrations of Christmas can help remind us of Him and be an opportunity to recommit to keep the fire of the Spirit and the glory of the Son of God burning in our hearts every day throughout the year.

This is a wonderful time of the year. It may not be perfect. But if Christmas can point our hearts toward our Savior, we can rejoice even in the imperfections of the season. May we always remember to bring gifts to Him who has given His all for us. And may each Christmas season remind us to lift up our voices and fill our hearts with joy and gratitude that Christ lives! He is real. He is our Redeemer at Christmas and always. **NE**

*From an address delivered at the 2011 First Presidency Christmas Devotional.*

# WHITE CHRISTMAS



“A person who has committed sin can become pure through faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and receiving the ordinances of the gospel.”

Guide to the Scriptures, “Pure, Purity,” [scriptures.lds.org](https://scriptures.lds.org)



By Jess Verzello

Every Christmas Eve, my mother reads us the Nativity account in the New Testament. Each family member dresses up and plays a character. I'm always the angel who proclaims the "good tidings of great joy" (Luke 2:10). Christmas has always been a special time to remember the Savior's birth and spend time with my family.

That's why my first Christmas as a missionary was really difficult. I'm not sure what I expected, but it definitely wasn't walking the streets in search of a place to eat and a way to call home.

I had been serving in the Dominican Republic for about five months. I loved everything about my mission. And I was so excited to video call my family and see their faces. But the light and joy of Christmas faded fast after our dinner plans fell through. Then the family who had offered to let us use their computer suddenly had to leave town. My companion and I were left with no food, no computer, and no idea what to do.

We didn't want to intrude on anyone else's Christmas, so we walked. And walked. I began to lose hope. Why was everything going wrong? I assumed that since we were missionaries, everything would work out. Weren't we sacrificing so much to be here? Shouldn't we at least have a decent Christmas?

I tried to hold on to the true meaning of Christmas. But it was getting harder. Heartbroken and humbled, we returned home only an hour before

the time to call our families. Together, we prayed that we would find a way to contact our families in time.

The thought came to my mind to go to the mission office. Maybe someone there could help us. Trusting the Spirit,

# THE BEST WORST CHRISTMAS EVER!

we got on a bus heading into the city. When we arrived, the gates were locked and the office was deserted. I slumped to the cement, my back against the gate's bars, exhausted and hungry.

Just then, a man passed by us with a snack stand. Food! My companion and I quickly jumped up and bought some snacks. We asked the man about his Christmas and shared a small message about the miracle of Christ's birth and the love Heavenly Father has for us to send His Only Begotten Son.

As I bore my testimony, I could feel a weight being lifted from my heart. The stress of the day had kept me from feeling the peace of Christmas—of Christ. As I testified of the Savior, I slowly felt that peace seep back into me.

After the man left, we sat back down, feeling much happier with a little food in our stomachs and the spirit of Christmas in our hearts. About 10 minutes later, the office gates opened and the office elders drove up in their white minivan.

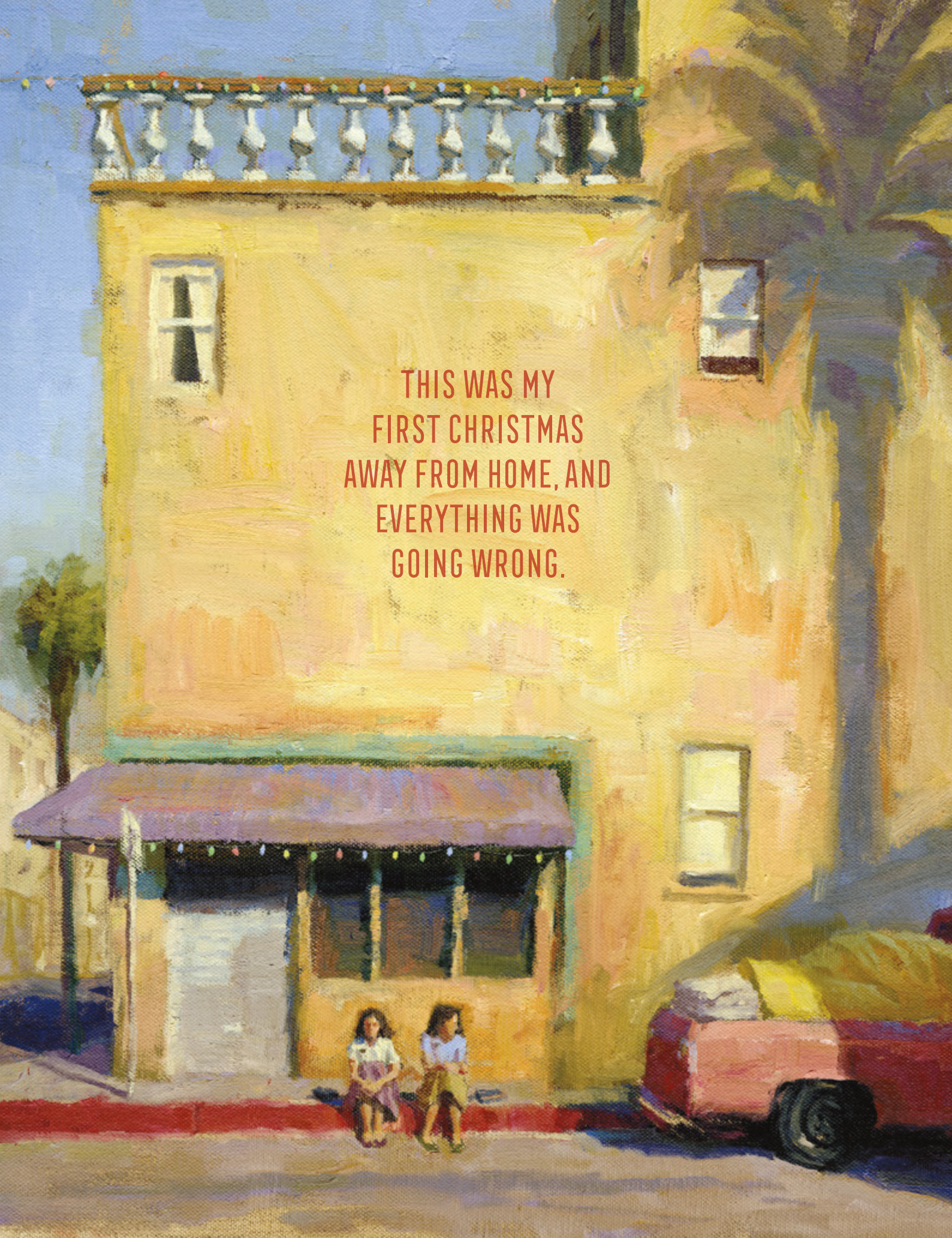
When they saw us, they knew something was wrong. We told them about our long day, and they called the mission president, who gave us permission to use the office computers to call our families!

Soon I was inside calling my family. Tears came to my eyes at the joy of seeing their faces. The awfulness of the day faded away as we talked.

Even better, the Christmas package my mom sent me was at the office, so I was able to open it with my family right there! The treats my mom sent became one of the best Christmas dinners I've ever had.

Cancelled dinner plans and hopeless street wanderings weren't what made me sad that Christmas—it was being away from my family and losing sight of the Savior. Acting on faith and sharing my testimony brought the peace of Christ back into my heart. And brought me closer to my family. None of the disappointments that day mattered when I finally got to see their smiling faces and feel their overwhelming love for me. It reminded me that our Savior made it possible for families to be together forever, and that's what truly matters. **NE**  
*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



A painting of a yellow building with a balcony and two girls sitting on the sidewalk. The building has a balcony with a decorative railing and a string of colorful lights. There are windows on the building, and a red car is parked on the street to the right. Two girls are sitting on the sidewalk in front of the building. The painting has a textured, painterly style.

THIS WAS MY  
FIRST CHRISTMAS  
AWAY FROM HOME, AND  
EVERYTHING WAS  
GOING WRONG.

**SEVEN**  
WAYS TO  
**CATCH**  
THE CHRISTMAS  
**SPIRIT**

THE FLOURISH AND FESTIVITIES ARE FUN, BUT MERRY MINISTERING IS THE KEY TO HAVING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

By Charlotte Larcabal  
Church Magazines

“It just doesn’t feel like Christmas.”

Have you ever thought something like that? Maybe you feel like that right now: No matter how loudly you blare Christmas songs or how many Christmas cookies you snarf down, you’re just not feeling the Christmas spirit.

If that sounds like you, or if you’re just looking to feel that Christmassy glow a bit more this year, read on!

President David O. McKay (1873–1970) made it pretty simple: “The Christmas spirit is the Christ spirit, that makes our hearts glow in brotherly love and friendship and prompts us to kind deeds of service.”<sup>1</sup> Bonnie L. Oscarson, former Young Women General President, agrees: “The way to increase the Christmas spirit is to reach out generously to those around us and give of ourselves.”<sup>2</sup>

Decorating trees and giving gifts are ways to celebrate Christmas, but the key to feeling the spirit of Christmas is to minister to others. (Check out the article “Ministering as the Savior Did” on page 32 to learn more about ministering.)

And good news! There are many wonderful ways to minister to others at Christmastime. Try some of these out, and in no time you will feel the warmth of the Spirit and feel closer to the Savior—the true spirit of Christmas!



## 1. VISIT THE LONELY.

Think about those you know who might not have family and friends to spend the holidays with. Consider visiting someone who is elderly or someone who just moved to your neighborhood. Reaching out to just one lonely person can be powerful. As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles pointed out, Christ “ministered to the ‘ones,’” by helping people one by one.<sup>3</sup> We can do the same.

## 2. GO CAROLING.

Did you know that our prophet loves Christmas carols? Whether it’s belting out the “whimsical ditties about Santa” or reverently singing your favorite hymns about the Savior, President Russell M. Nelson believes that sharing music with others is a wonderful way to “truly feel the real spirit of Christmas.”<sup>4</sup>





### 3. LOOK AROUND BEFORE YOU LOOK AT YOUR PHONE.

You don't have to keep your phone in your pocket the whole day, but being present and focusing on those around you is a great way to get back in touch with the Christmas spirit.

"Instead of picking up your phone to see what your friends are doing, stop, look around, and ask yourself, 'Who needs me today?'" said Sister Oscarson. "You may be the key to reaching out and touching the life of a peer or to giving encouragement to a friend who is quietly struggling."<sup>5</sup>

### 4. DO SOME EXTRA CHORES.

Can cleaning the house, offering to babysit, or doing any other extra housework really help you feel the Christmas spirit? If you do it with the right attitude, you bet it will! As you're scrubbing or tidying up, think about the person you're serving. Think about how much your family or friends will love the gift of your hard work!



### 5. DELIVER SOME CHRISTMAS TREATS!

Speaking of those Christmas cookies you snarfed down earlier, why not whip up a batch of your favorite Christmas treats? You should probably taste a few (or more) yourself, but the key to feeling the Christmas spirit here is to give them away.



## 6. SHARE A CHRISTMAS VIDEO.

Share a Christmas message on social media. Check out the Christmas Mormon Messages for some ideas. You might also brighten someone's day just by sharing the Church's Christmas video on Mormon.org. You can send it to a friend or share it on your own page.

## 7. BE SNEAKY ABOUT IT.

How much secret service can you do without getting caught? You could leave groceries or gifts on someone's doorstep, slip a kind note into a coat pocket, shovel snow, or rake up leaves—but make sure no one knows it was you! Remember: let thine alms be done in secret (see Matthew 6:4).



### Ministering at Christmas

Twinkling trimmings and festive fanfare can bring wonder and fun to your holidays, but when it comes to feeling the true Christmas spirit, merry ministering is the key.

“To truly honor [the Lord’s] coming into the world, we must do as He did and reach out in compassion and mercy to our

fellowmen,” said Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “This we can do daily, by word and deed. Let this become our Christmas tradition, no matter where we are—to be a little kinder, more forgiving, less judging, more grateful, and more generous in sharing our abundance with those in need.”<sup>6</sup> NE

#### NOTES

1. David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* (1953), 551.
2. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Christmas Is Christlike Love” (First Presidency Christmas Devotional, Dec. 7, 2014), [broadcasts.lds.org](http://broadcasts.lds.org).
3. David A. Bednar’s Facebook page, video posted on Jan. 22, 2017, [facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/videos](https://www.facebook.com/lds.david.a.bednar/videos).
4. Russell M. Nelson, in “Christmas Memories from Prophets and Apostles,” *New Era*, Dec. 2015, 10.
5. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “The Needs before Us,” Oct. 2017 general conference.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Scatter Your Crumbs” (First Presidency Christmas Devotional, Dec. 3, 2017), [broadcasts.lds.org](http://broadcasts.lds.org).

# The FIRST NOEL

Traditional English carol  
Arr. by Katie Bastian

*Peacefully* ♩ = 96

Piano *mp*

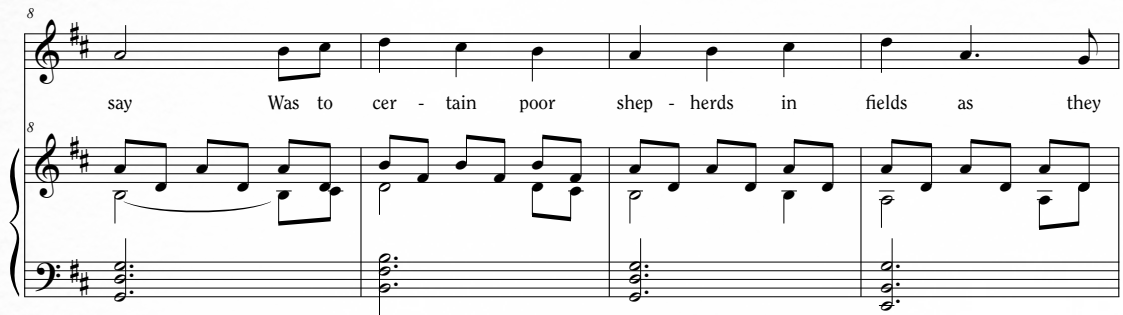


*mp*

The first No - el the an - gel did




say Was to cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they



lay, In fields where they lay keep - ing their



sheep On a cold win - ter's night that was so





20 *mf*

deep. No - el, No - el, No - el, No - el!

20 *mf*

25

Born is the King of Is - ra - el!

25

29 *mp*

They look - ed

29 *f* *mp*

34

up and saw a star Shin - ing in the

34

ILLUSTRATION BY LONI HARRIS



38 East — be - yond — them far, And to — the

42 earth it gave — great light, And so it con - tin - ued both day — and

48 *mf* night. No - el, No - el, No - el, No - el!

53 Born is the King — of Is - ra - el!



64 *p*  
No - el, No - el, No - el, No - el!

69 *rit.*  
Born is the King of Is - ra - el! No - el!

© 2018 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.  
 This song may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use.  
 This notice must appear on each copy made.

# CHRISTMAS AFTER

# THE



*Despite the devastation around them, Puerto Rican Saints found peace and joy in remembering Jesus Christ at Christmastime.*

By Breanna Call Herbert

**D**uring Christmastime, families and friends gather together, people celebrate traditions, all for the purpose of remembering the birth of our Savior. The merry Christmas spirit fills the air. But Christmastime can be hard too. It can remind people of lost loved ones and trying times. When challenges take up a big part of our lives, it's easy to lose sight of the Savior. But last year, Church members in Puerto Rico set a strong example of remembering our Savior's birth and His example in spite of devastating trials.

Hurricane Maria crashed through the island on September 20, 2017. With winds of up to 175 miles per hour (280 km/h), lashing the island for more than 30 hours, Maria caused massive damage. It knocked out the island's power grid, leaving 95% of the island without electricity or mobile phone service and a vast majority without access to the water system. This Category 5 hurricane was recorded as being the worst natural disaster to ever hit Puerto Rico.

Elder Hugo E. Martinez of the Seventy, who was born and raised in Puerto Rico, says, "It looked like someone had grabbed a rake and ran it through the land." There was debris everywhere, buildings had crumbled, and the streets were flooded. Elder Martinez's wife, Sister Nuria Merced Martinez, explains that because of the damage, "many people lost their jobs" and "a lot of businesses closed." But in spite of such devastation, members remembered to turn outward and to serve others during the Christmas season.



*Elder Hugo E. Martinez of the Seventy and his wife, Sister Nuria Merced Martinez*



# HURRICANE





Right: Children cut grass and put it in shoeboxes for Día de Reyes.



Arroz con dulce is a traditional Puerto Rican dessert.

## A TRADITIONAL PUERTO RICAN CHRISTMAS

In Puerto Rico, Christmas lasts much longer than December 25. In fact, Christmas starts as early as November and is celebrated through mid-January. Sister Martinez says, “Puerto Ricans love the Christmas holidays! If we could, we would have 365 days of them!”

Marking the beginning of the Christmas season, Christmas trees are decorated and lights are hung up. The people also prepare for Christmas carolers, who can come any night during the Christmas celebration. Normally the carolers come after 10:00 p.m., when families are asleep. When the family hears merry voices and jovial percussion, they open their door and invite the carolers inside for something to drink and eat. And when the carolers head out, the family joins them to spread Christmas cheer to the next house. The caroling party grows throughout the night as they go door to door.

There are also many parties held at work, in the neighborhood, or as families. Neighbors gather together to roast a pig over a spit and to eat *arroz con gandules* or rice and pigeon peas. It’s also normal to eat yummy coconut-flavored desserts and *arroz con dulce*, a kind of rice pudding with raisins and cinnamon. Nochebuena, or Christmas Eve, is when most families gather together to celebrate, eat, and remember the Savior. The festivities will last until Navidad, or Christmas.

Another Puerto Rican Christmas tradition is Día de Reyes, or Three Kings’ Day. Children will cut grass and put it in shoeboxes under their bed or under the Christmas tree. Then while the children are sleeping, the Three Kings searching for baby Jesus will stop by and feed their camels with the grass the children have gathered. To show gratitude for the grass, the Three Kings will leave behind gifts.

## CHRISTMAS AFTER HURRICANE MARIA

But after Hurricane Maria hit the island, the people of Puerto Rico had to celebrate Christmas traditions differently. Sister Martinez says, “There weren’t very big parties or celebrations, but people still visited family members and had some sort of celebration.” Instead of decorating Christmas trees, people decorated the trees and gardens in their yards. “There was some scarcity of food, but Puerto Ricans made do with whatever there was.”

Christmas lights weren’t hung up, but other decorations were put in their place. Not as many traditional gifts were given, but people shared more time and more meals together. Elder Martinez says: “There was a sense of togetherness as a community.” Even though the Puerto Rican people were still suffering from effects of the hurricane, they still remembered Christmas and the birth of the Savior.

People across the country began to serve one another. Elder Martinez says, “Of the few things that you can say are positive after a hurricane, people helping each other is one of them. It brings out the best in people.” Neighbors and friends looked out for one another. Some brought clean water to drink. Some shared the gas they had so that others could run generators. And many others helped clear debris from homes and yards.

Sister Martinez explains: “Christmas is not the trappings. It’s not the look of Christmas that you have to seek. You have to look to the reason for the season—Jesus Christ and what He offers us that is not in the world. And that will help you through anything.”



Members in Puerto Rico support one another by serving one another and sharing water, food, and gasoline.

To the people, and especially the youth, of Puerto Rico, Elder Martinez says, “You are very much loved by the Lord. The Lord has your families in mind. He has Puerto Rico in His sights. I know that the





Left: Pasteles are typically eaten around Christmastime in Puerto Rico.

Right: Sister missionaries help clear debris.

Below: President Henry B. Eyring and Bishop Dean M. Davies minister to people in Puerto Rico.



First Presidency and Apostles that have visited Puerto Rico have promised blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those blessings will indeed come about.”

During trials it can be difficult to find hope and happiness—and especially to serve others. But the Puerto Rican people did just that. Though they were enduring many hardships, they served one another in the spirit of Christmas. We can remember their example as we go through our own challenges. This Christmas as we come together, serve one another, and remember the birth of our Savior, we will be blessed to withstand our trials and to feel His love.

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

## FEELING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AFTER A HURRICANE

After Hurricane Maria, there was no light, no water, no phone service, and no Wi-Fi across much of Puerto Rico. Many power lines had been knocked down, and parts of the island were flooded. Recovery was slow and took months. Two brothers, Diego, 14, and Isaac, 12, share how they kept the Christmas spirit while living through the aftereffects of the hurricane.

Isaac says, “I felt the Spirit by praying that the light would come back on, that water and phone service would come back—everything.”

Diego adds, “We also sang to feel the Spirit. We sang Church hymns and Christmas songs. And we prayed that everything would turn out OK.”

At Diego and Isaac’s house, floodwaters skirted the family’s windows, but water didn’t go



inside. That was a blessing. But a tree had fallen and blocked the only road to and from their home. This meant the family couldn’t drive to get supplies. They had to either walk to the tree and find someone to give them a ride or rely on others to bring them supplies. Fortunately, the family was prepared with food storage, including water. The tree was moved a few weeks later, but there was still a lot of work to do and there were still a lot of people in need.

As Elder Martinez pointed out, Hurricane Maria brought out the best in many people.

Diego and Isaac’s family spread the Christmas spirit by helping others. Isaac says, “We passed out food that was donated to people who really needed it. We also passed out clothes, games, and school supplies.”

“Christmas was different,” Diego says.

“Before Hurricane Maria there was more money to buy presents, but after there was little money to buy essential items like water, food, and gasoline.”

Even though Diego and Isaac couldn’t celebrate Christmas the way they were used to, they noticed something positive: “We spent more time together as a family. We were more united than before. This is a blessing we appreciate because we love our family.”

Diego says, “We didn’t feel upset that there weren’t as many gifts or that we couldn’t celebrate Christmas like we normally do. We knew that gifts aren’t Christmas. Christmas is the birth of Christ. That’s what’s important.” **NE**

# Christmas Traditions

## AROUND THE WORLD



### Philippines

One of the most popular Christmas decorations in the Philippines is a parol. This is a bamboo pole or frame with a lighted star on top. It represents the star that guided the wise men to baby Jesus.



### Australia

Because Australia is in the Southern Hemisphere, Christmas is celebrated during their summer break.

### Ukraine

Christmas is celebrated January 7 because the Eastern Orthodox Church there uses the Julian calendar instead of the Gregorian calendar.



### United Kingdom

In the U.K., Christmas crackers are popular. These crackers are cardboard tubes loaded with a small amount of explosive and wrapped in colored foil that are pulled apart to reveal toys, jokes, and a paper crown inside.



### Italy

Most families have a nativity scene in their home. But baby Jesus isn't added until Christmas Eve.



### Ethiopia

A traditional Christmas food in Ethiopia is wat, a thick and spicy stew with meat, eggs, and vegetables. It's eaten on flatbread.



### Mozambique

In Mozambique, Christians celebrate Christmas, but December 25th is officially called Family Day.



### Colombia

Many people in Colombia decorate their balconies and windows with red and white candles and lights.



### United States

In the United States, it's common to decorate gingerbread men or gingerbread houses with icing and candy.



# LIGHT THE WORLD

*You don't need a vending machine to light the world around you.*

**LAST DECEMBER**, Temple Square was packed with visitors during the Christmas season. That wasn't unusual. But thousands of those visitors were lined up for one reason: vending machines.

People lined up for hours to buy things like baby wipes, first aid kits, water, food, eyeglasses, and even chickens and goats for people in need. The "purchase" of these items was actually a donation to various charitable organizations. In less than a month, these vending machines generated more than a half-million dollars in donations.

What did these donations do?

Eyeglasses! With the support of some of these donations, eye exams and eyeglasses were provided to nearly 2,000 children.

Goats! Donations bought more than 2,400 of them.

Chickens! How about 7,800 of them?

The generosity of Temple Square's visitors went a long way. But you don't have to visit Temple Square or wait for a vending machine to appear in order to help others. There are many other things you can do now to help light the world, light the community, light your family, or light your faith that don't require you to spend a penny.

Check out some of these ideas:

NEXT PAGE



"Sometimes we think we have to do something grand and heroic to 'count' as serving our neighbors. Yet simple acts of service can have profound effects on others—as well as on ourselves."

Jean B. Bingham, Relief Society General President,  
Apr. 2018 general conference.







ILLUSTRATION BY KELLAN STOVER

## FOUR AREAS WHERE YOU CAN LIGHT THE WORLD

*No vending machine required*

1

### **Inside Your Front Door**

Surprise your parents by doing a chore without being asked or expecting a reward. Prepare a meal for your family. Wash some clothes. Clean the bathroom. Help a sibling with homework. There are always service opportunities at home.

2

### **Over the Fence**

Neighbors come in all sorts of varieties. Old or young, kind or grouchy. Some don't speak your language; others don't share your beliefs. The Savior also served people who didn't share His beliefs! Do something helpful for your neighbor. Serve in a shelter or soup kitchen. Volunteer at a hospital. Help with an after-school program.

3

### **Around the World**

The humanitarian arm of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is called LDS Charities. This organization sponsors projects in 189 countries. Visit [LDScharities.org](http://LDScharities.org) to learn about different projects you can support.

4

### **On the Other Side of the Veil**

Help others receive salvation by doing family history, attending the temple, and preserving memories through interviews. Visit [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org) or download the **FamilySearch Memories** and **FamilySearch Tree** apps.

*What have you done to help light the world? Send your stories and photos to [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org), and we may share it with other youth who are looking for great ideas.*



# FOLLOWING *Mary's* EXAMPLE



**T**he Christmas season is undoubtedly my favorite time of year. I love singing carols, baking all kinds of treats, and just taking in the beauty of a glowing Christmas tree. I could spend hours just sitting by a Christmas tree. But the best part for me is enjoying time with my husband and family as we reflect on the gifts we have received from our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lately, however, I've been thinking about Mary, His mother.

Based on the tradition and culture in the Savior's day, some scholars have suggested that Mary may have been between 14 and

16 years old when the angel delivered the message that she would be the mother of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Her husband-to-be, Joseph, may have only been a few years older than that. Imagine how they felt as the course of their lives was altered by this sacred call.

The painting on the right hangs in our home during the Christmas season. Although in reality they were young parents, I like that this image depicts an older Joseph and Mary, symbolizing to me a spiritual maturity beyond their years.

Much like Mary and Joseph, you youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

today are extraordinary. President Russell M. Nelson declared that you are among our Heavenly Father's most noble spirits ("Hope of Israel" [worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018], [HopeofIsraellds.org](http://HopeofIsraellds.org)). You follow the examples of Mary and Joseph: You are committed to living the covenants you've made. You face difficult challenges, but you are obedient and courageous.

Let's look at some of the qualities and characteristics of Mary. Can you see some attributes you have in common?



**By Becky Craven**  
Second Counselor in the  
Young Women General  
Presidency



YOU CAN BE LIKE THIS HIGHLY FAVORED DAUGHTER OF  
GOD BY SHOWING THE ATTRIBUTES SHE POSSESSED.



## WILLING AND OBEDIENT

At a young age, Mary was ready to accept the responsibilities that would be placed upon her. When Gabriel told her of her mission, Mary answered,

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord” (Luke 1:38), showing her willing and obedient nature.



## FAVORED AND CHOSEN

The angel Gabriel told Mary that she had “found favour with God” (Luke 1:30). We learn in the Book of Mormon that she was the precious and chosen vessel who would “bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God” (Alma 7:10). To be “highly favoured” (Luke 1:28), she must have been a clean and virtuous young woman. She understood that she was a covenant daughter of God.



## COURAGEOUS AND FILLED WITH FAITH

Mary was not yet married to Joseph when she was first expecting Jesus. Can you imagine the fear and uncertainty she must have experienced? By law, she could have been stoned to death for what others may have thought of her situation. When the angel told her to “fear not” (Luke 1:30), she courageously placed her trust in God and moved forward in faith.



## HUMBLE AND SUBMISSIVE

From the very beginning, Mary knew of her Son’s mission as Savior of the world. Even though she was His mother, she understood that she could not be saved without Him. She heard His teachings and kept them in her heart (see Luke 2:51). She devoted her whole life to serving Him, and you can do the same thing.

You too are a favored child of God. You can follow Mary’s example by humbly following the Savior and keeping His commandments, even when it’s not easy. You can courageously move forward in faith, even when facing fear and uncertainty. This Christmas, consider how you can follow Mary’s example in honoring the Savior. **NE**



----- ADDING -----  
**GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**  
----- TO YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST -----



By David Dickson  
Church Magazines

I've always made an impressive grilled cheese sandwich. Between that delectable dish and a handful of other recipes, I kept myself alive and functioning throughout my mission and well into adulthood. But then I got married and had kids, all of whom have different tastes. I needed to expand my menu!

However, on nights when it was my turn to cook, attempting new meals proved to be a challenge. For starters, my evening time was usually limited. Even though I wanted to cook a variety of meals, I kept hitting snags. I couldn't find ingredients fast enough, or we'd be missing some. More often than not, I'd scrap my planned dinner and instead go for quick and easy.

And yet I kept wanting to improve in this area. So I decided to do something I had never done. I prayed for a spiritual gift by name.

## ONE GIFT, MANY USES

Specifically, I prayed for the gift of organization. Yes, organization! We already had a spice cupboard. We also had cooking utensils drawers. Yet even with those in place, I seemed to spend more time looking for supplies than cooking.

As I consistently prayed for this gift, I began receiving specific ideas. A wall-mounted spice rack would organize spices and keep them handy. A magnetic kitchen bar (also wall-mounted) could store knives and other metal cooking utensils. These and other ideas, once put in motion, made a big difference in my cooking efforts. Need some thyme? Garlic salt? Garlic *powder*? I'm your guy!

But then a funny thing happened. Little ideas continued popping into my mind for small ways to better organize other areas of my life. For example, my three-level home-made laundry tower won't carry my family to the promised land, but even Nephi would've appreciated the way in which I built it—by following promptings that came to me one piece at a time.

The spiritual gift of organization has improved my life and the lives of my family more than I would've ever guessed.

And it all came because I asked for it.

## MANY GIFTS, FEW ASKERS

The Apostle Paul taught the Corinthians about some of the many different spiritual gifts available, such as faith or healing (see 1 Corinthians 12:5–11). And then he instructed them to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31).

It might be hard to wrap your brain around the idea that coveting can be a *good* thing, but in this case it can be. We're instructed to look at some of the spiritual gifts we see in others and then ask God to bless us with that same gift. Our hope in doing so should be to better serve others and build God's kingdom (see Doctrine and Covenants 46:26–29).

There are so many gifts—many more than you'll find in the scriptures. Patience is a spiritual gift. So is optimism. And courage. And being a peacemaker. Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy taught: “I sometimes visualize a large storehouse up in heaven, completely filled with spiritual gifts, available to all Saints who have the faith to ask for them. Unfortunately, not too many are asking, so the storehouse is always overstocked.”<sup>1</sup>

Elder Lawrence described a friend who decided to pray for the gift of charity. He related her experience: “She wrote: ‘I have been praying specifically for an increase of charity for several months. . . . Gradually my perception of others has changed. . . . I have begun to not just love the people around me but to enjoy them. Before, I may have kept my distance, but now I am genuinely interested in everyone.’”<sup>2</sup>

## YOUR GIFTS, READY AND WAITING

Spiritual gifts are so much more valuable than physical ones! They are, in fact, the *best* gifts. We're commanded in scripture, “Seek ye earnestly the best gifts” (Doctrine and Covenants 46:8).

Whatever else you hope to open Christmas morning, try and imagine a few of the “best gifts” waiting for you as well. They're already “wrapped” and ready to bless you and those around you.

So go ahead and ask. **NE**

### NOTES

1. Larry R. Lawrence, “Why Not Ask?” (Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional, June 13, 2017), [byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches](http://byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches).
2. Larry R. Lawrence, “Why Not Ask?”



# "YE SHALL HAVE Peace IN ME"

JESUS CHRIST IS NOT ONLY THE SOURCE OF PEACE  
BUT ALSO THE SOURCE OF ALL GOOD THINGS.

By Chakell Wardleigh  
Church Magazines

**T**hroughout 2018, the world has seen some heartbreaking, confusing, and downright terrifying situations happening all around the world. And along with all this, we've also been faced with individual trials, worries, decisions, and temptations every day. Luckily for us, this year's Mutual theme has been a constant reminder of how we can find peace. It contains the Savior's promise in Doctrine and Covenants 19:23: "Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me."

It's true! But Jesus Christ is not only the source of peace in this loud and unstable world—He is the source of all things good! President Russell M. Nelson has taught, "Just as the Savior offers peace that 'passeth all understanding' [Phillippians 4:7], He also offers an intensity, depth, and breadth of joy that defy human logic or mortal comprehension. . . . His joy is constant, assuring us that our 'afflictions shall be but a small moment' [Doctrine and Covenants 121:7] and be consecrated to our gain [see 2 Nephi 2:2]."

With that in mind, take a moment to look back on the past 12 months. Can you think of any moments when the Savior brought you peace when you were anxious? When He filled you with joy when you were in the middle of a difficult challenge? Or when you were feeling lonely and were reminded that He is always with you and aware of you? If you look closely, you will truly see how often the Savior and Heavenly Father direct your life.

No matter what your circumstances may be, you can always turn to Heavenly Father and the Savior for help. Here is an experience a young woman from Minnesota, USA, shared about how the Savior continues to bring her peace:

"When I'm worried, I take my fears and concerns to Heavenly Father in prayer, just like the Savior did. I share everything with Him, and I am comforted because I know that He and Jesus Christ both understand what I am going through and will do everything they can to help me. I don't have the best home life, so when I pray about my troubles, it brings the Spirit into my room and creates a peaceful sanctuary away from the arguing and instability. Because I have spiritual





experiences in my room, it is a holy place I can go to when I don't feel peace anywhere else in my home."

The promise in Doctrine and Covenants 19:23 can be a constant guide in your life when you're feeling overwhelmed. Regardless of the trials you may be facing, if you continue to learn more about the Savior, listen to His words, walk in meekness as He did, and reach for Him in both good times and bad, He will turn your trials into triumphs. He will turn your attitude to gratitude. He will bring you hope when things feel hopeless. He will change your weaknesses to strengths. And lastly, He will bring you true peace.

## 2019 MUTUAL THEME

Yes, 2018 is coming to a close, but if you continue following the pattern of finding peace in Christ, you will be bet-



ter able to keep His commandments and become more like Him! Which brings us to the Mutual theme for 2019, which is: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

What better way to show your love and gratitude for the Savior than by following His example and keeping His commandments? I can't think of anything more powerful than that! There are specific promises and blessings you can receive from each commandment you keep, but one thing is for sure: when you choose to follow and obey the Savior, His promised blessings to you will be fulfilled.

There are so many blessings Heavenly Father has in store for each of us—some so glorious that we can't even imagine them! And they can be yours if you do your best to keep His commandments and love and trust Him with all your heart. By doing so, you will find greater freedom, direction, strength, joy, hope, and peace in your life. **NE**

### NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, Oct. 2016 general conference.



# MINISTERING

## AS THE SAVIOR DID

*As you do your best to help others,  
the Savior will open your eyes  
to see with love and compassion.*

By Eric B. Murdock

Church Magazines

**W**e've all noticed a friend having a rough day or someone who's lonely or being made fun of at school. Maybe you've heard about someone in your ward or branch going through a serious challenge. At times like these, what can you do?

Sometimes it's hard to know how you can help. It can seem a lot easier to wait for someone else to take action, but there's a lot *you* can do, even if it's just to let those around you know you care. The opportunities are all around us, and any time you show love, concern, and interest for others, you are *ministering*.

### A Personal Ministry

*Ministering.* You've probably heard that word a lot at church lately. In the past, we usually talked about the Savior or the prophets and apostles having a ministry, but have you ever

wondered if *you* have a personal ministry?

To minister means to love and care for others and to do the kinds of things the Savior would do if He were living among us today. Ministering is a way to help others feel Heavenly Father's love and meet their spiritual and temporal needs.

Jesus "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matthew 20:28). He ministered as He "went about

*To minister  
means to love and care  
for others.*

doing good" (Acts 10:38). As His disciples, we've been asked to follow His example. We *do* have a personal ministry!

But you don't have to organize a huge service project to minister.

President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: "Some service opportunities are formal—in our family, our Church callings, and our participation in community service organizations. . . .

"[But] many opportunities to serve are informal—without assignment—and come as we reach out to others we meet in life's journey."<sup>1</sup>

Often, Christlike ministering takes place in the small, sincere acts you do every day.

### One by One

When the Savior appeared to the Nephites, He told everyone to come and feel the marks in His side and in His hands and feet. "And this they did do, going forth *one by one* until they had *all* gone forth" (3 Nephi 11:15; emphasis added).

Then He invited them to bring

everyone who was sick, hurt, or “afflicted in any manner . . . and he did heal them *every one* as they were brought forth unto him” (3 Nephi 17:7, 9; emphasis added). After this, He “took their little children, *one by one*, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them” (3 Nephi 17:21; emphasis added).



**The love  
Jesus shows to the one is  
what ministering  
is all about.**

This wasn't a small group of people. The scriptures tell us that about 2,500 people were there (see 3 Nephi 17:25). But the Savior *still* took time to heal, comfort, encourage, and show love to each individual.

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “There is a very profound and tender personal message here. Jesus Christ ministers to, and loves us all, one by one.”<sup>2</sup> The love Jesus shows to the one is what ministering is all about.

### Eyes to See

The Savior helped those around Him. Jean B. Bingham, Relief Society General President, has said that He “smiled at, talked with, walked with, listened to, made time for, encouraged, taught, fed, and forgave. He served family and friends, neighbors and strangers alike, and He invited acquaintances and loved ones to enjoy the rich blessings of His gospel.”<sup>3</sup>

Jesus Christ had eyes to see the needs of everyone around Him, and He reached out to all of them! We can follow His example and reach out to those who need our help too.

But the Savior is perfect. How can we see the needs of others and minister as He does? President Ballard has said: “In your morning prayer each new day, ask Heavenly Father

to guide you to recognize an opportunity to serve one of His precious children. Then go throughout the day with your heart full of faith and love, looking for someone to help. . . . If you do this, your spiritual sensitivities will be enlarged and you will discover opportunities to serve that you never before realized were possible.”<sup>4</sup>

### Act on Promptings

Imagine this scenario: You see your friend at school, and she looks like she's a little down. You feel that you should do something for her, but you worry if you'll bug her or embarrass her or yourself. Then you start to worry if it was a spiritual prompting or just you.

Sometimes it's hard to know if you're receiving a spiritual prompting to minister or just having your own

thought, but Mormon teaches us how to recognize spiritual promptings: “That which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God” (Moroni 7:13).

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) said, “If we are observant and aware, and if we act on the promptings which come to us, we can accomplish much good.”<sup>5</sup>

### Ministering Is for Everyone

During the April 2018 general conference, President Russell M. Nelson announced: “The Lord has made important adjustments in the way we care for each other. Sisters and brothers—old and young—will serve one another in a new, holier way.”<sup>6</sup> This includes opportunities to serve in ministering companionships, but ministering isn’t just something we do

on Sunday or during Mutual activities. It’s not just a responsibility that comes with certain callings. Ministering is for everyone. It’s for all the time.

*If we act  
on the promptings which  
come to us, we can  
accomplish much good.*

When we’re baptized, we promise to be “willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; yea, and [be] willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:8–9). Ministering to others is a part of what we have promised to do.

Bonnie L. Oscarson, former Young Women General President, said, “The Lord desires for you to look around at your peers and then minister as He would.”<sup>7</sup> As you do so, He will open

your eyes to see with love and compassion how to serve others. He won’t leave you guessing about what you should do. He will guide you in how you can best minister to them.

### Ministering Brings Blessings

President Nelson has said, “We as [the Lord’s] servants will minister to the one, just as He did.”<sup>8</sup> This not only blesses others; it blesses us as well.

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “As we extend our hands and hearts toward others in Christlike love, something wonderful happens to us. Our own spirits become healed, more refined, and stronger. We become happier, more peaceful, and more receptive to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>9</sup>

Jesus Christ has shown the way to a richer, more fulfilling life. Ministering as He does will bring true happiness and a sense of peace and joy into your life. **NE**

#### NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, Apr. 2018 general conference.
2. Ronald A. Rasband, Oct. 2000 general conference.
3. Jean B. Bingham, Apr. 2018 general conference.
4. M. Russell Ballard, Oct. 2012 general conference.
5. Thomas S. Monson, “Three Goals to Guide You,” Oct 2007 general conference.
6. Russell M. Nelson, “Let Us All Press On,” Apr. 2018 general conference.
7. Bonnie L. Oscarson, Oct. 2017 general conference.
8. Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering with the Power and Authority of God,” Apr. 2018 general conference.
9. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “You Are My Hands,” Apr. 2010 general conference.



@LDSYOUTH



## “Savior of the World”

To say that participating in *Savior of the World*\* has changed my life is an incredible understatement. Every single night, without fail, I learned something new. I would be offstage and another cast member would say something that helped me understand a certain gospel principle. Other times, I'd be on stage singing, and the Spirit would confirm what I'm singing is true.

And the scene when the Savior arrives in the upper room to visit Thomas and says, “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:29)—every single time I hear that line, I just can't deny the truth of it.

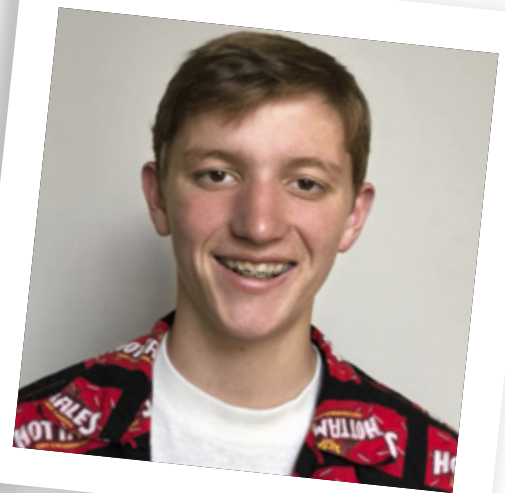
The Lord knows us personally. He knew exactly what I needed each night. Without a doubt, the Spirit was present every single night.

**Parker W.,** 18, Utah, USA



**Olivia W.,** 17, Missouri, USA

I was born in India and have 19 siblings, and I love them all like crazy! In *Savior of the World*, I had lots of fun wearing unique and interesting clothes along with the pounds of stage makeup. I played a resurrected being in the Resurrection scene, which was special for me since I lost two little brothers and thought about how great it will be when we get to see them again when they are resurrected. Being in *Savior of the World* broadened my understanding of the Savior, His life and what He did for us.



**Mitchell B.,** 16, California, USA

I am really excited to share my testimony through *Savior of the World*. It's reassuring to me that this is not a technical musical production but a vehicle where anyone, even a teenager like me, can bear witness of the Savior. I am looking forward to building my own testimony through this experience.

\**Savior of the World* is a musical drama produced by the Church that testifies of Jesus Christ. Wards and stakes who are interested in sponsoring a production of *Savior of the World* can find the script, music, and production information at [lds.org/callings/music/savior-of-the-world](https://www.lds.org/callings/music/savior-of-the-world).

# GIFTS That Don't Break the Bank

By Breanna Call Herbert

As Christmas approaches, we begin to think about gifts we can give. We want others to know that we love and appreciate them. Sometimes we might not be able to buy gifts—but that doesn't mean you can't *give* gifts! Here are some Christmas gifts that won't break the bank.

No money?  
No problem! You  
can still give great  
Christmas gifts.

## Memory Keeper

Think of some great memories you share with your loved ones. Memories of your childhood, family traditions, funny stories, or memories of them. Write them down on strips of paper, popsicle sticks, or even in a notebook. You can also find photos, draw something, or cut pictures out of a magazine to go along with the memories. Once you've got your memories and pictures, gather them together in a jar or in a notebook. Copy or cut out this label and attach it to your jar or notebook. Your family member or friend will love reading those memories!



## Christmas Kindness

Perform small acts of kindness. Showing your appreciation for someone else can be as simple as making your mom's bed or dropping off a few holiday snacks to a neighbor. You can leave this tag as well to encourage them to pass it on.



## Coupon Book

Give a book full of “coupons” for gifts such as one free hug or a night of dish duty. Or give a coupon for a 15-minute walk or to play two games or to finish one of your brother’s chores. The possibilities are endless. Whatever you decide, it’ll be great! Copy this coupon as many times as you want, and fill in the blank. You can punch holes along the edge and tie the book together with some ribbon or string, or just staple it.



▼ You can also download the label, tag, coupon, and art for cards at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).

## Christmas Cards

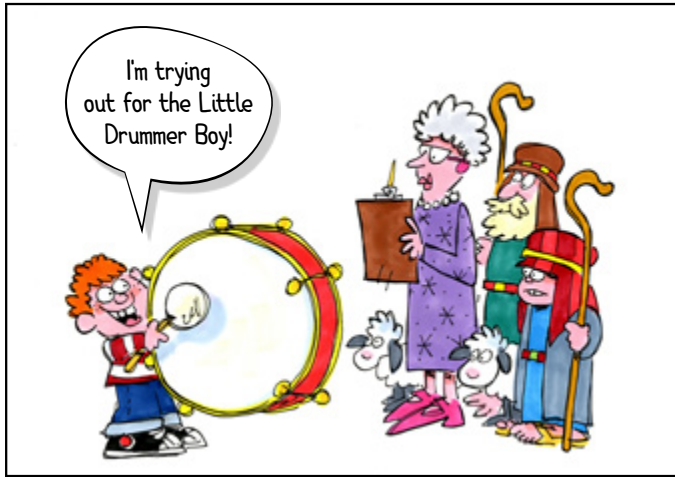
Make a homemade Christmas card. To get you started, here are a few shapes to cut out. You can copy the shapes first or just cut them out and add them to your cards (see samples at right):



Make sure to write a heartfelt note inside. Your cards can be as personal or as creative as you want. All that matters is that they come from you. **NE**

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

# FUN STOP



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY



SUMMER BIRD



sb.lds

## Creative Christmas Tree

These enterprising youth have managed to assemble themselves a Christmas tree out of nothing but hard work, creativity, and donated branch clippings from around the neighborhood. Can you find the four matching pairs of homemade ornaments?

## Brit Bits

You know what they say about England and America—separated by a common language and all. We realize that some of the Hink Pinks we've done in the past may not have rolled off the British tongue in quite the same way they would in the States. So, here are a few just for those who speak an English of a different flavour. **See if you can figure out these rhyming pairs based on these clues.**

*Example: A conversation held in a rented living space. flat chat*

1. The area outside the front door of your home where you shine handheld lights into the dark.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. A birthday present in the form of a small room that takes you from one floor of the building to another.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Where you wait behind a number of people to buy the latest trainers.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. A place where you can tie the knot and store a car.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. A tale about a large vehicle for carrying things.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. A computer program that gives one access to the internet—but only to sites that sell blue jeans.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The compartment in the back of a car where one stores one's plunder.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. A speech impediment whereby one utters *th*- sounds instead of *s*- sounds because one has put too many crunchy potato snacks in one's mouth.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. The baked treat that may harm you, but you'll take a chance and eat it anyway because it's worth it.  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. A Shakespearean poem about the cover for a car's engine.  
\_\_\_\_\_



KEVIN BECKSTROM

## Number Chain

Use the numbers below to solve the following math problem that will help you figure out what age Joseph Smith was when he was martyred.

$$\frac{A}{B} = \frac{\quad}{C} = \frac{\quad}{\quad} + D + E - F =$$

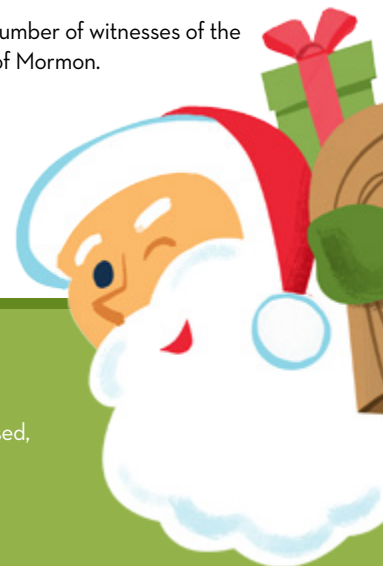
$$\frac{\quad}{C} = \frac{\quad}{\quad} \times B + E = \frac{\quad}{\quad} - C = \bigcirc$$

Final Answer

- A. Number of sections in the Doctrine and Covenants.
- B. Number of Official Declarations in the Doctrine and Covenants.
- C. Number of kingdoms of glory in the afterlife.
- D. Number of tribes of Israel.
- E. Number of books in the Book of Mormon.
- F. Total number of witnesses of the Book of Mormon.

## Random Riddle

What do you call the fear of meeting a red-and-white-dressed, toy-bringing personage in closed or confined spaces?



# “I don’t feel worthy to be loved by the Savior. How can I overcome this feeling and recognize my self-worth?”



*“God’s love is there for you whether or not you feel you deserve love. It is simply always there.*

*“As we seek our Heavenly Father through fervent, sincere prayer and earnest, dedicated scripture study, our testimonies will become strong and deeply rooted. We will know of God’s love for us.”*

President Thomas S. Monson (1927-2018), “We Never Walk Alone,” Oct. 2013 general conference.



## Pray to Feel His Love

We are all sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. His love for us is infinite.

If we ever feel like we are unworthy of His love, we should pray to Him. Pray to feel His love. Pray that you will feel worthy of His love for you and that you can see yourself as He sees you. In His time and His way, He will always answer our prayers with an affirmation of His perfect love. Whenever I have felt down or lonely, praying for His love has always lifted me up.

*Julia M., 16, Virginia, USA*



## Draw Close to the Savior

Recently in a mission preparation class, we had a discussion about

how to open our eyes to God’s love for us. We discussed various things that we could do to feel more self-worth; some of these things are serving your neighbor, praying for help in things that matter to you, reading the scriptures, and being a missionary. All these things are meant to bring us closer to Jesus Christ and help us see our potential to become like Him.

*Santiago Z., 17, Arizona, USA*



### Keep the Commandments

Sometimes I do not feel worthy to be loved by the Savior because I am not totally obedient to the Lord's commandments. I can overcome these feelings

by repenting, sometimes with the help of my bishop, who teaches me that the Lord loves all of His children.

*Jacques D., 15, Abidjan, Ivory Coast*

### Repentance Is Key

We all commit sin, and because of that, we may feel unworthy of the Savior's love. But He gave His life for us—He sacrificed for us. That selfless act was done because of love. The only thing we need to do to feel worthy of His love is use the power of His Atonement by repenting of our sins. Repentance is the key in recognizing our self-worth and the love of the Savior.

*Sister Custan, 23, Philippines Cebu Mission*

### Love Others

One way to recognize our self-worth is to recognize the self-worth of those around us. Focusing on others helps us feel good about ourselves because we are building others up. It's a win-win! When I struggled with self-confidence, I decided I would serve someone around me who needed help. Every day for a month I gave a compliment to a friend who was struggling. Focusing on others helped me feel worthy and needed. When we strive to love others for who they are, it becomes easier to see how much God loves us. Helping others feel worthy of love will help us feel worthy of love ourselves.

*Jayme W., 15, Minnesota, USA*

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.*

### Tell Us What You Think?

## “How do I decide whether to serve a mission?”

**Send your answer and photo by January 15, 2019.**

## I've repented, but I still feel so much guilt. How can I have peace?

**Because of** Jesus Christ's infinite Atonement, your guilt can be swept away if you fully repent. But people sometimes still feel flashes of guilt over the memory of their sins even though they've repented.

Guilt, or “godly sorrow” (2 Corinthians 7:10), can be helpful. It can center our thoughts on Jesus Christ and lead us to real repentance and change. Shame, on the other hand, centers our thoughts on ourselves and hinders our progress.

The Book of Mormon gives us good examples of how we can repent and then enjoy peace in Jesus Christ:

- Remembering his past sins caused Ammon to praise the Savior and His mercy, bringing him joy instead of suffering (see Alma 26:17–20).<sup>1</sup>
- After Alma's “mind caught hold upon [the] thought” of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, he “was harrowed up by the memory of [his] sins no more” (Alma 36:17–19). Though the memory was there, he was no longer tortured by it.<sup>2</sup>

#### NOTES

1. See Richard G. Scott, Oct. 2004 general conference.
2. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Apr. 2007 general conference.

Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click “Submit Your Work.” Sign in with your LDS Account and then select “New Era” under “Choose Magazine.” Click “Add File” to select your file and photos, and then click “Submit” to upload and send us your file.

*Responses may be edited for length or clarity.*

# THE NEW KID

Illustrated by Cam Kendall  
Written by David Dickson



I GUESS NO SNOWMEN  
THIS CHRISTMAS...



TRUE, BUT NO  
THICK COATS EITHER.

WHAT A TIME  
TO MOVE.



A BIG  
WELCOME TO THE  
PARKER FAMILY.



ALSO, PLEASE  
CHECK OUT THE  
SERVICE WISHING  
TREE IN THE  
HALL.



HEY, I  
COULD DO THAT.

MANUEL  
& MARIA  
want to build  
the world's  
largest sand  
Castle.



WOAH!  
I'VE NEVER  
BUILT A SNOWMAN  
BEFORE!





**How can I spread the Christmas spirit?**

1. Reach out to others. Show others you love them by smiling, sending a text, or spending time with them (Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 10:24).
2. Perform small acts of service. Little things like shoveling snow and baking cookies for someone can go a long way (Acts 20:35; Hebrews 12:12).
3. Write a letter. Take some time to write a thoughtful, heartfelt letter for a loved one.

## SEVEN GOLDFISH A-SWIMMING

**MY FAMILY WANTED TO FOCUS** on the Christmas spirit during the Christmas season, so we decided to do a secret “12 Days of Christmas.” We chose a family in our stake who were good friends of ours and had been going through a rough time. On each night of the 12 days leading up to Christmas, my four younger siblings and I prepared a gift with that day’s theme. For example, on the second day we used turtle chocolates for “two turtle doves,” and on the seventh day for “seven

swans-a-swimming,” we used goldfish crackers and bubbles. We dropped off the nightly treats on the family’s doorstep, rang the doorbell, and ran and hid so they couldn’t find us.

On Christmas Eve, the 12th day of Christmas with “12 drummers drumming,” we brought the family a box of Drumstick ice-cream-cone treats and let them know who we were. They were so happy and thanked us for helping them feel love during the Christmas season.

Because that family felt loved they decided that they also wanted to show love to other families. My family also had such a positive experience spreading the Christmas spirit that we still continue this tradition. I’m grateful my family could focus on the true spirit of Christmas and help others feel it as well. Those nightly treat drop-offs have become some of my favorite Christmas memories.

*Sydney J., Alabama, USA*

“There are many words one might use to describe [the Christmas spirit]: joy, hope, anticipation, good cheer. . . . One word best describes the feelings we experience at Christmastime. That word is *love*.”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Scatter Your Crumbs,” 2017 First Presidency’s Christmas Devotional, [broadcasts.lds.org](http://broadcasts.lds.org).



# MY UPSIDE-DOWN CHRISTMAS

**WHEN I WAS 12**, I had pretty much the worst Christmas ever.

I missed two weeks of school with strep and mono. When Christmas break came, I was still tired and sore. I barely had strength to get out of bed, and my brain felt so drained that I couldn't even read a book.

Finally Christmas Day came, but I was so sick that I didn't even want to get up to open gifts. My parents realized there must be something seriously wrong, so they took me to the hospital. There I learned that on top of everything else, I had type 1 diabetes.

My body felt weak, my mind was cloudy, and my emotions jumped from feeling bad for myself to frustration to not caring about anything. But after several confusing, miserable days, a large group of visitors came to see me—parents and siblings, grandparents from both sides, aunts and uncles and cousins.

There was a spirit in that room unlike anything I'd ever felt, a sure feeling of God's love through the ministering angels he'd sent to comfort me. I knew then that I could cope with this trial. I learned that even when everything seems to be going wrong, even when all my expectations for the holidays were turned upside-down, one thing will always be right: I will always know how much I am loved. And that gives me strength to deal with whatever challenges life sends my way.

*Alex H., Oregon, USA*



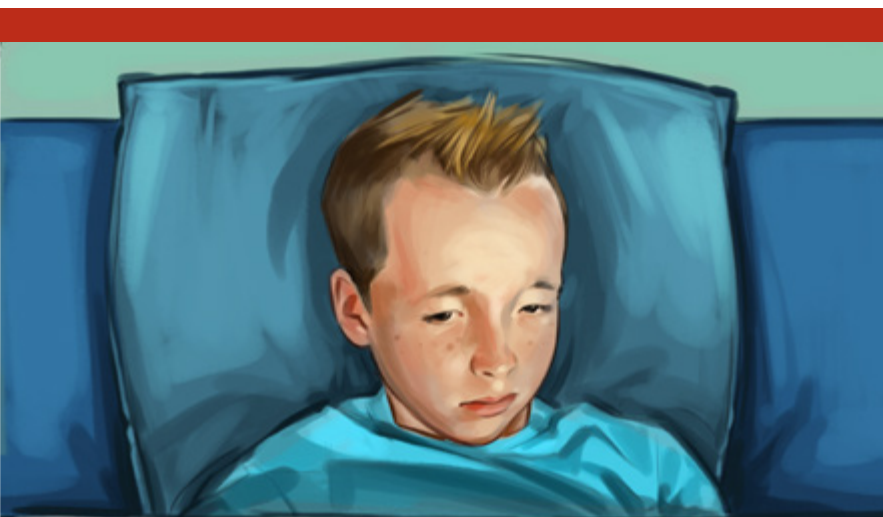
## I'LL SEE GRANDPA AGAIN

**"IT'S CHRISTMAS!"** my sister and I screamed, running into our parents' bedroom. Every Christmas we set an alarm and woke our parents up at 5:00 a.m. on the dot. That year, we tried to act like everything was normal, but Christmas felt very different. It was different because my grandpa was dying. He had been fighting brain cancer for two years, and in the last couple of days, he had gone downhill.

We were still opening presents when Grandma called to say that Grandpa wasn't doing well. My mom and dad went to say goodbye to him, and my sister and I were taken to a relative's house. Later that Christmas evening, Grandpa died. We were heartbroken.

I was sad that Grandpa had died and upset that it was on Christmas. But his death helped me remember why Christmas is important in the first place. It is a day to remember Jesus Christ's birth. He was born so that death could be overcome. And so, even though Christmas that year was a day of mourning, it was also a day of rejoicing because I knew that through Jesus Christ's birth, life, and Atonement, I would see Grandpa again.

*Jessica S., Utah, USA*



# Promises of Peace

By President Henry B. Eyring

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

*From the 2016 First Presidency Christmas Devotional.*

**O**ur hope is to capture the true spirit of Christmas for ourselves and for those we love. That spirit is characterized by peace—not political peace, for the Savior was born at a time of fear and unrest so great that His family had to flee as refugees into Egypt; not economic peace, for He was born in a stable and laid in a humble manger; and not even the peace that comes when all the packages are wrapped, the trees decorated, and the table set, because that peace is only momentary. The peace of Christmas is “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). It is the peace that the Apostle Paul promised would “keep [our] hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7). And Paul was right. That peace we seek is only through and because of Jesus Christ.

To all who have come into mortality, the Savior said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33). Yet He gave this wonderful promise to His disciples during His mortal ministry:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” (John 14:27). It is a comfort to know that this promise of personal peace continues for all of His covenant disciples today.

It is a promise given even on the very night of His birth. When heavenly messengers heralded the birth of the Savior, they declared, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14).

The Savior’s birth is the gift that makes it possible for the Father to give us “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (Doctrine and Covenants 59:23). We shouted for joy in the spirit world when we heard of that promise. Peace and joy come to us again when we hear words sung proclaiming that God’s loving promise was kept:

All is calm, all is bright. . . .

Glories stream from heaven afar;

Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia!

Christ, the Savior, is born!<sup>1</sup> **NE**

**NOTE**

1. “Silent Night,” *Hymns*, no. 204.

Received the call to be a member of the **First Presidency** while bringing in the trash can.



As a young man, he **worked with a contractor** building footings and foundations.



Born in **Princeton, New Jersey**, on May 31, 1933.



**Pres.**

# HENRY B. EYRING



Because of **gas restrictions during WWII**, the Eyrings held Church services in their home.

He was **Commissioner of Church Education** for 18 years.



Has **6 children**.

His hobbies include **painting with watercolor** and **wood carving**.



Sustained to the **Quorum of the Twelve Apostles** on April 7, 1995.



He received **master's and doctoral degrees** in business from Harvard University.



Married Kathleen Johnson in the **Logan Utah Temple** in July 1962.



His **first date** with his wife, Kathy, was **playing a tennis match**.



He has **served as a Counselor** to three Church Presidents:

**2nd** Counselor to President Gordon B. Hinckley

**2** **1st** Counselor to President Thomas S. Monson

**3** **2nd** Counselor to President Russell M. Nelson



Played **high school basketball**.



Served two years in the **United States Air Force**.

# MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Keep your spirits high by focusing your Christmas celebration on Jesus Christ.



WHERE ARE YOU ON THE

## CHRISTMAS ENTHUSIASM SCALE?

O Holy Night

HO! HO! HO!

Ho-Hum

HUMBUG!

Increase Your Christmas Spirit at [LIGHTTHEWORLD.ORG](http://LIGHTTHEWORLD.ORG)

ILLUSTRATION BY BETH JEPSON

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

ENGLISH



14964 Dec 18