

“Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emanuel has come to Thee O Israel!

“...you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

Psalm 23:5b

- ☆ **Little Nathan**...was given the assignment to memorize the 23rd Psalm for recitation at the church’s annual Christmas program. He learned it quickly and knew it well, but when the time finally came for him to step up to the microphone and recite the verse...he froze. Looking out at the sea of faces was terrifying and he began to sweat profusely and even got a bit light headed. The teacher prompted, “*The Lord...*” and Nathan said, “*The Lord...*” The teacher said, “*The Lord is my...*” and Nathan said, “*The Lord is my...*” The teacher said, “*The Lord is my She...*” drawing out the short e sound. Finally Nathan blurted out, “*The Lord is my Shepherd. That’s all I need to know!*”
- ☆ **Let the World Fade Away**...In New York’s Hayden Planetarium a special Christmas holiday show was enhanced by an added feature. A giant lollipop tree was projected onto the planetarium dome, surrounded by a horizon filled with brilliantly colored toys which came to life and cavorted to the tune of “Jingle Bells.” At the climax a huge figure of Santa Claus faded out in a snow storm, and the star of Bethlehem broke through into a sky that produced exactly the Palestine sky on the night of the nativity. The designer of this show may not realize that he dramatically staged the supreme Christmas message our world needs to understand: The recovery of the lost meaning of Christmas. This is not said in any criticism of Santa Claus; the effect must have delighted the hearts of all the children who saw it, without doing violence to their love of Bethlehem. But for adults it is a tragic loss to substitute “Jingle Bells” for “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,” and a lollipop tree for the manger of Bethlehem. The instinct is right to fade out these things in the light of the Christmas star. It is about God’s incarnation that the angels sing--God with us. Robert E. Luccock
- ☆ **What do Americans say they believe about the Biblical Christmas narrative?**
 73% say they believe in the virgin birth.
 81% say they believe Jesus was placed in a manger.
 75% say they believe in the visit from the visit of the magi from the east.
[According to a 12/14 Pew poll of 1507 adults.]
- ☆ **To avoid offending anybody**, the school dropped religion altogether and started singing about the weather. At my son’s school, they now hold the winter program in February and sing increasingly non-memorable songs such as “Winter Wonderland,” “Frosty the Snowman” and--this is a real song--“Suzy Snowflake,” all of which is pretty funny because we live in Miami. A visitor from another planet would assume that the children belonged to the Church of Meteorology.
[Dave Barry in his “Notes on Western Civilization”, Chicago Tribune Magazine, July 28, 1991]
- ☆ **Did you hear the good news?** In December 1903, after many attempts, the Wright brothers were successful in getting their “flying machine” off the ground. Thrilled, they telegraphed this message to their sister Katherine: “We have actually flown 120 feet. Will be home for Christmas.” Katherine hurried to the editor of the local newspaper and showed him the message. He glanced at it and said, “How nice. The boys will be home for Christmas.” He totally missed the big news--man had flown!
[Daily Bread, December 23, 1991]
- ☆ **One glad morning when this life is o’er I’ll fly away**...Christ was content with a stable when he was born so that we could have a mansion when we die.
- ☆ **Trivia Question:** What phrase below best defines the word “Christ”?

A. Anointed One	C. Bringer of Peace
B. Day of atonement	D. Light of the World

For Prayer...

- ...Joan (Wayne) Francois (Karen Zimmerman's mother) – suffered a debilitating stroke and is hospitalized at St. Clare (Rm. 2931). We are praying for good and timely recovery on her left side.
- ...Nathan Sundsmo is ill and we are praying for a firm diagnosis and good prognosis for treatment.
- ...Adam Considine recovering for this week's reconstructive ACL surgery. This is his 3rd operation and we pray for a strong and good outcome.
- ...Jeff and Laurie Wavrunek are moving to Oregon. Jeff has secured employment there. Laurie (Ella and Hayden) Continue to heal from their Lyme disease. Continued prayer is appreciated.
- ...Melissa Burch – three kidney stone...painful. Surgery is necessary.
- ...Pastor Clark Peterson (AOG, Reedsburg) – in Baltimore with his wife for her cancer treatments. Will be there through Christmas as we continue to pray for healing.
- ...Tom Kuester Sr. – cancer of the esophagus. The fight continues.
- ...Janey Pace – recovering at SSHCC from total knee replacement on December 11.
- ...The Buzz – that the Lord, in His mercy and grace, would continue to use this outreach for His glory.
- ...Sale of Homes: Reidles, Gradalls, Greenwoods, Brandells
- ...Couples who are fighting serious physical illness together.
 - Daryl & LaVern Klicko
 - Christy (Mike) Moura
 - Cheryl (Deane) Fischer
 - Norm & Peg Miller
 - Lloyd (Karen) Byxbe
- ...Our Expectant Mothers
 - Anna (Nathan) Bauer
 - Sarah (Nathan) Sorenson
 - Katie (Brian) Heller
 - Christine (Ben) Higgins
 - Sarah (Beaner) Bresson
 - Daisy (Aaron) Wieland
 - Sarah (Kelly) Bryant
 - Paige (Matt) George*

Growing Up...

There is a stage in a child's life at which it cannot separate the religious from the merely festive character of Christmas or Easter. I have been told of a very small and very devout boy who was heard murmuring to himself on Easter morning a poem of his own composition which began 'Chocolate eggs and Jesus risen.' This seems to me, for his age, both admirable poetry and admirable piety. But of course the time will soon come when such a child can no longer effortlessly and spontaneously enjoy that unity. He will become able to distinguish the spiritual from the ritual and festive aspect of Easter; chocolate eggs will no longer seem sacramental. And once he has distinguished he must put one or the other first. If he puts the spiritual first he can still taste something of Easter in the chocolate eggs; if he puts the eggs first they will soon be no more than any other sweetmeat. They will have taken on an independent, and therefore a soon withering, life.

C. S. Lewis

Trivia Answer: A. Anointed One. Christ, from the Greek word "Xristo."