

# Christ

Advent



Isaiah 9:6

*“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”*

Luke 2:10-14

*“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”*

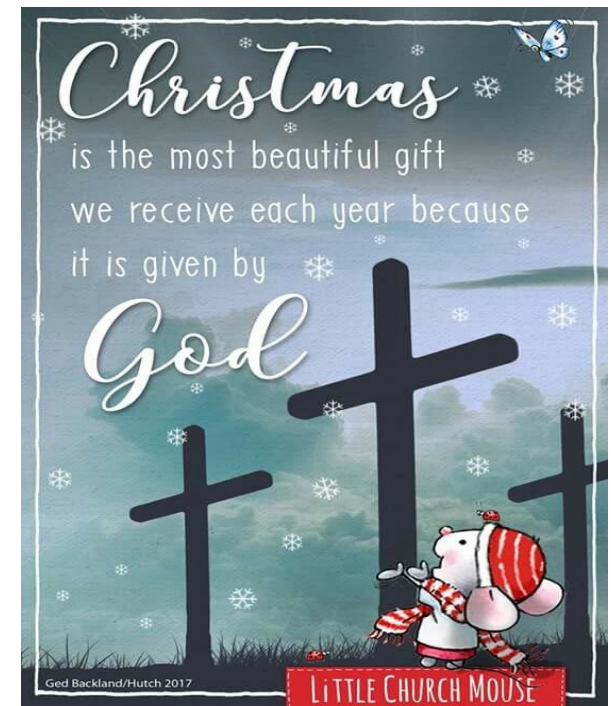
The Fifth Candle is an addition to the original Advent wreath and it is called the Christ Candle representing the birth of Christ. It is lit on Christmas Day or Christmas Eve. It is always white to represent Light and Purity. Christ is always pure and he is the Light of the World.

My thoughts go to those involved, who were fortunate enough to be there in person.

I think of Mary and Joseph and everything they had gone through and how their faith had to be so strong to accept that this was the will of God for their lives. Joseph could have had Mary put to death for infidelity, but Mary knew that was not true and God helped Joseph to accept his role as earthly father to a child that was not his. Mary had to accept that she had been given the gift of childbirth by a Holy Spirit. What did the people in town think? We think they stayed with family when they finally got to Bethlehem for the census but what did the family think? Did Mary and Joseph tell them this child was really not Joseph's child, but he was taking the responsibility and being talked to by angels. Did they believe Mary if she told them the baby had been conceived by the Holy Spirit?

I am reminded of a line from a Robert Frost poem as I think of the fact that they were family and so did the relatives in Bethlehem have to take them in? Frost wrote in *The Death of the Hired Man* “Home is the place where, when you have to go there, They have to take you in.”

What would the family think when a bunch of dirty shepherds appeared and started talking about seeing angels and



hearing singing? Was there any sign to confirm that this baby was actually a Savior of the world and King? We see many pictures with a halo around Mary and the baby, but was that actually there at the time? I don't think that Christ grew up as a boy with a halo. I think he fit in with mankind. It is a very difficult concept to accept if we don't have faith. They had the Old Testament prophecy, but we need to remember that was given hundreds of years earlier, and they had all waited and the ones that had been given that prophecy by Isaiah, Micah, and Jerimiah were no longer living.

In the census, who did they give as the father of the new baby? There is no way we can put ourselves in their shoes.

There is a very simple Christian folk hymn written by American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles that has a beautiful story behind it and as I read it I

thought about the dirty unkempt shepherds that went to the manger where a new baby had been born. Niles does not take complete credit for the lyrics.

He later wrote: *“I Wonder As I Wander”* grew out of three lines of music sung for me by a girl who called herself Annie Morgan. The place was Murphy, North Carolina, and the time was July 1933. The Morgan family, revivalists all, were about to be ejected by the police, after having camped in the town square for some little time, cooking, washing, hanging their wash from the Confederate monument and generally conducting themselves in such a way as to be classed a public nuisance. Preacher Morgan and his wife pled poverty; they had to hold one more meeting in order to buy enough gas to get out of town. It was then that Annie Morgan came out—a tousled, unwashed blond, and very lovely. She sang the first three lines of the verse of *“I Wonder As I Wander.”* At twenty-five cents a performance, I tried to get her to sing all the song. After eight tries, all of which are carefully recorded in my notes, I had only three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material—and a magnificent idea”.

One sentence haunted him and he took it and added another line and more lyrics. If you have heard the tune it is haunting. The words can cause us to wonder, but they also give us a wonderful assurance, *“But high from God’s heaven a star’s light did fall, And the promise of ages it then did recall.”* and *“He surely could have it, ‘cause he was the King.”* This had been promised for many years. Believe. Christ is King.

## ***I WONDER AS I WANDER***

***“I wonder as I wander out  
under the sky,  
How Jesus the Savior did  
come for to die.  
For poor on’ry people like  
you and like I...  
I wonder as I wander out  
under the sky.”***

His additional verses include:

***“When Mary birthed Jesus  
'twas in a cow’s stall,  
With wise men and farmers  
and shepherds and all.  
But high from God’s heaven a  
star’s light did fall,  
And the promise of ages it  
then did recall.***

***“If Jesus had wanted for any  
wee thing,  
A star in the sky, or a bird on  
the wing,  
Or all of God’s angels in  
heav’n for to sing,  
He surely could have it,  
'cause he was the King.”***

***“God’s in his heaven—  
All’s right with the world!”***

-Robert Browning

Prayer: Father, You have given us so much every day and we don’t stop to really thank you for coming to this earth and dying for our sins so that some day we will be with you in the place you have prepared for us. It has to be great because it will certainly be better than this earth you have given us and each day I marvel at all you have given us already. Please help us to try to comprehend how much you have given and try to do your will each day. Thank you. Amen

1. Have you ever stopped to try to comprehend what Mary and Joseph might have been going through?
2. Did Jesus have a halo when he was born?
3. How did the shepherds know exactly where to go?
4. How would you have felt as the relatives who had all this happening at their home? Would you have doubted at this new baby’s importance?
5. Will you take him in?

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***“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,”*** says the LORD, who has compassion on you.”

Isaiah 54:10

