

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

JOY PEACE HOPE LOVE



THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS – JOSEPH OGBONNA

**OH WHAT A PLEASANT DAY TO BEHOLD!
A GLORIOUS EVENING IN DECEMBER,
A DAY WE ARE SURE TO REMEMBER
THE NOSTALGIC HAPPY DAYS OF OLD.**



**OH WHAT BEAUTIFUL MOMENTS UNFOLD!
THE GLADDENED CAROL VOICES RAISED,
SANTA'S DELIGHTS, CANDLE LIGHTS OF GOLD,
AND RELIVED MOMENTS HARDLY ERASED.**



**OH WHAT MOMENTOUS DELIGHTS ABOUND!
THE MERRIMENT FROM HEARTS WELL LADEN WITH JOY,
CHILDREN GETTING AMUSED WITH EACH NEW TOY,
THUS RESTORING BLISS ONCE LOST BUT FOUND.**

What are your favourite things about Christmas?



BUT IS IT ALL JOY?

THE OLD CHRISTMAS SONG SAYS, "IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR." YET FOR MANY, CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON TO SURVIVE. DEPRESSION, GRIEF AND LONELINESS ARE OFTEN EXACERBATED BY SHATTERED FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INCREASED DEBT LOADS

- 1. Why do people become homeless?**
- 2. Why is being homeless particularly hard at Christmas?**
- 3. What is done in this country to help homeless people at Christmas?**
- 4. Why is depression likely to be more common at Christmas time?**



CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS BORROWED £3.5 BILLION IN LOANS AND ON CREDIT CARDS IN DECEMBER 2018

- **WHY IS THERE SO MUCH PRESSURE TO SPEND MONEY AT CHRISTMAS**
- **WHAT PROBLEMS CAN THIS SORT OF DEBT CREATE FOR PEOPLE?**
- **WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS TO THIS PROBLEM – ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO ENJOY CHRISTMAS WITHOUT SPENDING SO MUCH MONEY?**



PEACE AT CHRISTMAS

- in the last few decades, two million people have been killed in war in Afghanistan. The war in Afghanistan was the longest in our own nation's history, but you don't hear much about it and folks don't seem that concerned. War is normal, permanent, institutionalized, taken for granted. In 2016, the U.S. launched over 330 drone attacks in Afghanistan, and over 1700 Afghan children have been killed or harmed in the conflict. We deliberately, systematically, intentionally wage war, kill children, and pursue "war on earth."
- The message of Christmas is "peace on earth," so we should try to welcome that great Christmas gift of peace. We should join to renounce violence, join the global peace movement and spend our lives making peace with everyone.
- Christmas invites us to reclaim our common imagination for peace, to herald a new future of peace, and so to resist the old paradigm of global war-making.

Prayer of Christmas Past, Present, and Future



*Gracious God,
We turn to you in wonder and praise as
we celebrate Christmas.*

*Remind us during this sacred season of our
collective story. May our roots extend deep
into the soil of faith and spread outwards to
share the Good News of Christ's coming.*

*Focus our attention so that we remain
attuned to the sights, sounds, and sensations
of the season. May the presence of Christ be
at the forefront of our thoughts and actions
as we enact each holiday ritual.*

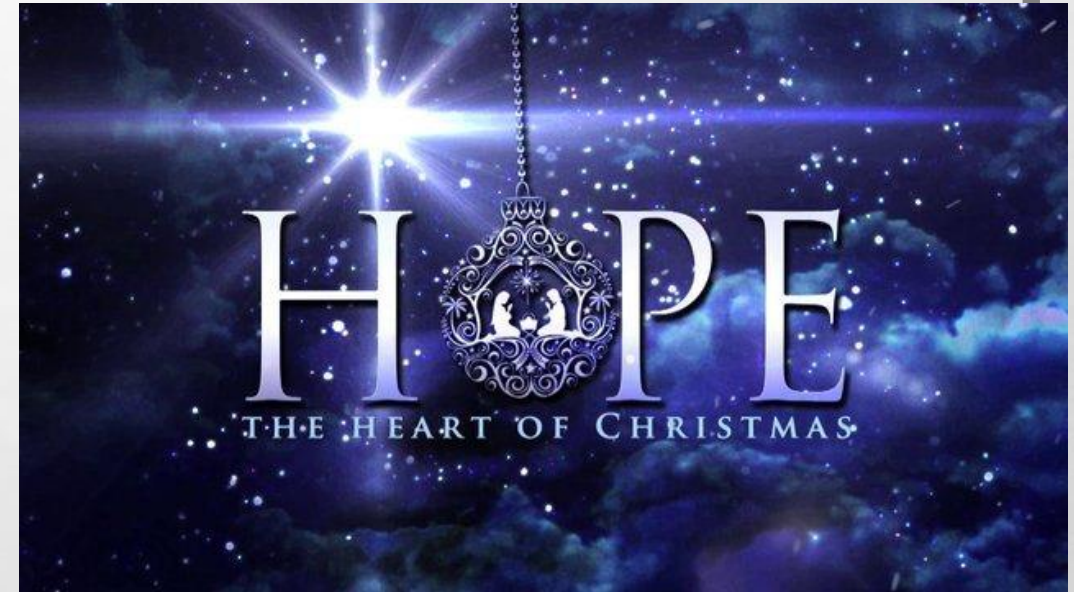
*Fill us with hope in the continuous birthing of
Christ in our world. May we never lose sight
of the promise of the Kingdom of peace and
compassion that is both present and yet to be.*

With gratitude in our hearts, we pray.

Amen.

HOPE AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a time for hope and joy to triumph over adversity. “Across the world people are fleeing persecution in record numbers, in Syria and Iraq, in the South Sudan and across Europe where more than three quarters of a million people are seeking refuge as winter sets in.”



LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS

FAMILIES MATTER

My grandmother died a week and a half away from her favorite holiday (Christmas) and we thought that things were at their worst. We were eating in complete silence and all of a sudden my grandfather said the simplest thing: that he was grateful for us being there. That week was the hardest week of my life and I still remember it vividly, but that Christmas when my Grandpa said those words I thought that things could go back to normal.

HELP THE HOMELESS

All throughout my childhood there was a homeless man who slept in our local Laundrette. Every Christmas my mum would cook a big spread and we would take him a heaping plate and I insisted on hugging him. It is one of my favorite memories, and probably one of the reasons I ended up in school studying for social work.

The Orange

When I was 6 years old or so I received an orange from my great-grandmother. I didn't understand why someone had given me fruit for Christmas, until I learned many years later that this was my great-grandma's favorite gift when she was a kid in the 1910s... It was her tradition and her way to remind us that small things could make us happy.



The story of the Magi (The 3 Wisemen) can be found in the New Testament – The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 2.

JOY PEACE HOPE LOVE

As a class discuss these 4 words:

JOY – what are the most exciting things about Christmas?

PEACE – is this about world peace or personal peace?

HOPE – What are you hoping for this Christmas?

LOVE – How will you show love over the Christmas holidays?

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

How do they celebrate Christmas in Bolivia?

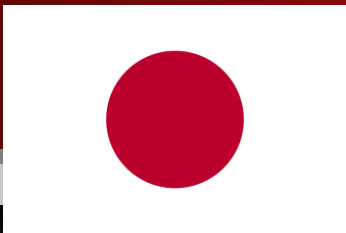
Christmas in Bolivia. In Bolivia, Christmas is celebrated from Christmas Eve until Epiphany (6th January). Most of the population of Bolivia is Catholic and many people go to a Midnight Mass service on Christmas Eve called the 'Misa de Gallo' (Mass of the rooster). At Midnight people like to let off fire-crackers!

CHRISTMAS IN JAPAN

Although Christmas is not a formal, nationally recognized holiday in Japan, the Japanese culture has adopted the season's traditions and spirit over time. Cities celebrate Christmas through festivals and special events, and citizens celebrate the season with sentiment, presents and, of course, food

How Christmas is celebrated in Malawi.

Christmas trees are common in Malawi. Most Malawians do not have the financial resources for an UK-style Christmas, full of gifts and family and feasting. A typical Christmas meal for a Malawian family is not far from their everyday fare, they might have rice instead and chicken. While most Malawians have a family meal at home, the lake is a popular holiday destination for those with resources. Generally speaking, Christmas in Malawi doesn't seem to be as big a deal as in the UK. A student from a college in Malawi told me he wasn't even going home because he had a lot of studying to do. Not bothering with the 4-hour bus trip home? Skipping Christmas to STUDY?



MERRY CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS TRIVIA QUIZ

CRACKER OR PUDDING, WHICH ARE YOU?

Q1: The X at the beginning of Xmas, stands for which of the following?

- 1. A kiss
- 2. The apple Eve gave to Adam
- 3. An abbreviation of Christ



Q2: To complete all his deliveries on Christmas Eve, how many homes does Santa Claus deliver to, per second?

- 1. 24
- 2. 822
- 3. 8,369



DID YOU KNOW?

The first song to be sung in space was Jingle Bells. In 1965 two astronauts reported seeing a UFO with one main command module & a pilot wearing a red suit! The cheeky astronauts then sang Jingle Bells to NASA - Ho Ho Ho!

Q3: How many gifts are given in the song "Twelve Days of Christmas"?

- 1. 12
- 2. 144
- 3. 364



How well do you know Christmas? Using the amazing powers that Santa left in your stocking last year, answer the 12 festive questions below to find out if you're a...

CHRISTMAS CRACKER

OR

CHRISTMAS PUDDING

ANOTHER 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS TRIVIA PRODUCTION LOVINGLY PROVIDED BY SOME JOLY FOLKS IN CORNWALL - IDEAL FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES, AFTER DINNER GAMES & THE ODD PUB QUIZ

Q4: Santa will get letters if posted to which address?

- 1. Santa Claus, Santa's Grotto, Reindeerland, SAN TA1
- 2. Santa Claus, South Pole, HOH OHO Canada
- 3. Santa Claus, Santa's Grotto, Looe, Cornwall HOH OHO

DID YOU KNOW? It's estimated that 400,000 people become sick each year from eating tainted Christmas leftovers!

Q5: Who are Gully Gawk, Sausage-Swiper, Window Peeper, Meat Hook and Doorway Sniffer?

- 1. Ancient Celtic Deities
- 2. Santa's reindeer
- 3. The Icelandic Yule Lads



Q6: On Christmas cards you often see Angels singing. How many Angels are singing in the bible?

- 1. None
- 2. Five
- 3. Seven



Q7: Boxing Day is traditionally known as what?

- 1. Christmas Sales' Day
- 2. Thank God It's Over Day
- 3. St Stephen's Day



Q8: How often does NORAD, (North American Aerospace Defense Command) track Santa's route on Christmas Eve?

- 1. Every year
- 2. Every other year
- 3. Never - don't be silly



DID YOU KNOW? THE LARGEST CHRISTMAS PUDDING EVER RECORDED, WEIGHED IN AT 3.28 TONS!

Q9: Who is also known as Sion Corn, Joulupukki & Gwiazdor?

- 1. Father Christmas
- 2. Santa's head Elf
- 3. The Angel Gabriel



Q10: Tradition says that Christmas puddings should always..?

- 1. Be made in a pair of old tights
- 2. Have Holly on top
- 3. Contain 13 ingredients



Q11: Which of these bands has had the most Christmas number 1 hit records?

- 1. The Bee Gees
- 2. The Beatles
- 3. Abba



Did You Know? Xmas crackers were invented by Thomas Smith when he wrapped some French novelties and added a snapper!

Q12: The largest Christmas tree Angel is over 18ft high! What was it made out of?

- 1. 2,946 tin cans
- 2. 2,946 Xmas decorations
- 3. 2,946 beer bottles



WISHING YOU & YOURS A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR ~ CHRIS, SAMANTHA, PHIL & GANG

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

• THE FIRST 3 FORMS TO EMAIL ME THE CORRECT ANSWERS TO THIS CHRISTMAS QUIZ WILL WIN PRIZES

• EMAIL - tDOBBS@chacademy.co.uk

**I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.**

**I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.**

**And in despair I bowed my head:
'There is no peace on earth,' I said
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'**

**Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.'**

**Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.**

A CHRISTMAS POEM FOR REFLECTION

I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY BY HENRY LONGFELLOW

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and a
happy new year**