

The Scholé Chronicle

DECEMBER ISSUE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

Dear Readers,

Joy to the World, the Lord is come! These words, often sung throughout the Christmas season, remind us that our Savior has arrived. He is Emmanuel—God with us. His coming as a baby brings immeasurable joy. I hope that everyone will experience such joy this Christmas.

“Advent” is the time leading up to Christmas and the anticipation of Christ’s birth. Everyone celebrates differently. Some read Scripture or light candles. Others may read Advent-related devotionals. There are a plethora of ways to enjoy Advent. I hope this Advent edition shows the Scholé students’ anticipation for Christ’s birth and the season that accompanies it.

I would love to thank Adalie Everitt, Sarah Greeb, Rebecca Anderson, Alannah Woizeschke, Mara McDonald, and Norah Wade for helping put together a fabulous Advent edition of the Chronicle. I would also like to thank Ms. White for the guidance she offered.



Christmas Spirit by: Alethea Steen

Bio: Howdy, I'm Alethea Steen. I'm in Writing + Rhetoric 2. I love horses, dogs, and the outdoors. I am 11.

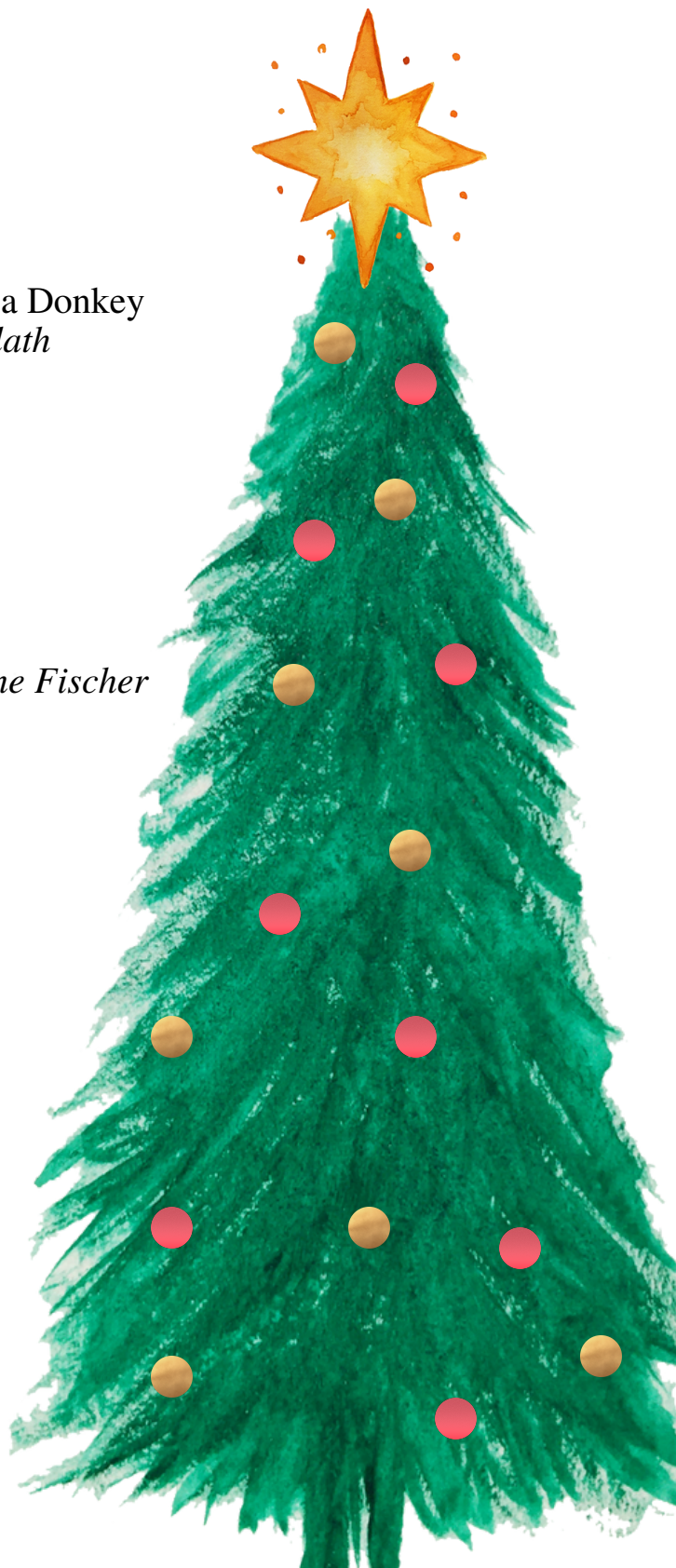
Without further ado, please enjoy the 9th installment of the Scholé Chronicle—the Advent Edition.

Joy to the World and Merry Christmas!!
Grace V. Nelson
Chief Editor



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Trees and Hope: How the Biblical Theme of Trees Connects to the Hope of Eternity

BY: REBECCA RIZZOTTI

Christmas trees are a prevalent reminder in our culture of the hope of the birth of Jesus Christ. However, many people don't realize the deep-seated theme of trees in the Bible as a solid reminder of the hope of God's perfect plan.

The Bible maintains a running theme of trees, where trees are invariably connected to the human life. Many stories in the Bible that mention a major decision also mention a tree (Peterson and Mackie, "The Trees at the Heart of Creation"). In the Psalms and Proverbs, the righteous are often compared to flourishing trees. Moreover, a tree is employed as the ultimate symbol of life in Genesis, Revelation, and everywhere in between. In God's eyes, trees are perpetually a sign of hope.

God placed, among others, two distinctive trees in the Garden of Eden, each of which had lasting significance. The tree of life was just that: a tree whose fruit gave eternal life (Gen. 3:22). Conversely, the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil brought eternal death. The choice of trees was given to Adam and Eve as a test of their faithfulness towards God, which ultimately, they failed. While the tree of Life was lost as

a result of sin, the Fall at the tree of knowledge paved the way for a Savior, transforming it into a sign of hope.

In addition to Adam and Eve, there are many stories of biblical figures where trees are connected to hope. Gopherwood, which was "the process of using pitch or bitumen combined with wood" ("Gopherwood and the Ark", giveshare.org), provided salvation for Noah's family from the global Flood in the form of the Ark. One source explains that "gopherwood" was not a type of wood at all, but rather a process and a symbol:

"The word for gopherwood and the word for pitch are very similar. The word kopher comes from the root word kaphar; kaphar is often translated 'atonement' (Leviticus 16:6). This was similar to the effect that pitch or kopher could have on the surface of the material it covered. It would have a covering or purging effect, which is what atonement means in a spiritual sense." (Ibid.)

The article goes on to explain that "gopher" referred to wood covered thoroughly with pitch, and that the wood of the Ark would have been treated with pitch not only on the outer sides, but between the pieces and on the inside in addition. This completes the analogy of atonement, as atonement must not only be on the outside, but in the heart also. Thus, the hope of salvation from the Flood was directly tied to

the illustration of repentance conveyed in the gopherwood.

There are many other examples of the connection between trees and hope as well. Noah sent out a dove after the Flood to discern if “the waters had subsided”, and it brought back a leaf from an olive tree (Genesis 9), delivering the hope of dry land and therefore a new life. Abraham hosted his heavenly visitors under the oaks of Mamre, and there received the news that he was to have a son (Genesis 18), offering hope that God’s promise to Abraham would indeed be fulfilled. Elijah, during his flight from Queen Jezebel, rested and was supernaturally strengthened under a broom tree (I Kings 19:1-8), affording him the hope and strength to go on and to trust God for his life.

There are also many Psalms, Proverbs, and prophecies concerning trees. Psalm 1:3 compares the righteous man to “a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither”. Proverbs 3:18 compares wisdom to a tree of life. Isaiah 55:12-13 declares: “For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace...all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” One of the most well-known examples is Isaiah 11:1-3, 10:

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit [...]. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.”

These prophecies, while heavily incorporating arboreal language, clearly point to the coming of Jesus Christ, connecting trees with the hope of salvation.

Even the cross itself is connected to the theme of trees. When the Apostles brought the gospel to the Gentiles, they didn’t use the Greek word for cross—as in the execution process—when talking about Jesus’s crucifixion; they used the word for tree, dendron (Peterson and Mackie). This evoked the impression of a vessel of redemption and deliverance as opposed to the humiliation and despair normally associated with such a death.

The Christmas tree itself is a tradition born from an event of redemption. The Christmas tree was initiated by the monk Boniface when he was a missionary in Germany. The legend goes that every year, the Germans would sacrifice a person to their idol Thor at a designated oak tree. The year Boniface came to them, he walked in on them as they were about to perform the abhorrent ceremony and cut down Thor’s oak. He then explained the Gospel to them, and used a



small fir tree that had been hidden by the oak to conclude his account. His words, according to one source, were “This little tree, a young child of the forest, shall be your holy tree tonight. It is the wood of peace...It is the sign of an endless life, for its leaves are ever green. See how it points upward to heaven. Let this be called the tree of the Christ-child; gather about it, not in the wild wood, but in your own homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and rites of kindness.” (“St. Boniface and the Christmas Tree”) This instance of salvation was the origin of the custom we know as the Christmas-tree.

The theme of trees continues all the way into the glorious climax of Revelation, where our glimpse into the New Jerusalem reveals “the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit...The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev. 22:2). Trees play a crucial role in God’s perfect plan for humanity and the earth—so much so that the fulfilment of perhaps the most vibrant, radiant image of hope in all of history features a tree. The tree is not the center element, for that would be to usurp the place of God. Instead—along with the river connecting it with the throne of God—this symbol of life and hope stands, directing our attention towards the Creator and his encouragement to the weary soul that one day the promise of hope made at the tree in Eden,

and secured at the tree of Golgotha, will be ultimately fulfilled at the tree of Life.

With this in mind, Christmas trees become more than a decorative tradition—they take on the weight of the eternal hope of the Resurrection, and the celebration that is yet to come.



What Proverbs 3:11-12 Means to Me

BY FAITH CHIU

My child, don't reject the Lord's discipline, and don't be upset when he corrects you. For the Lord corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child whom he delights. -Proverbs 3:11-12 (NLT)

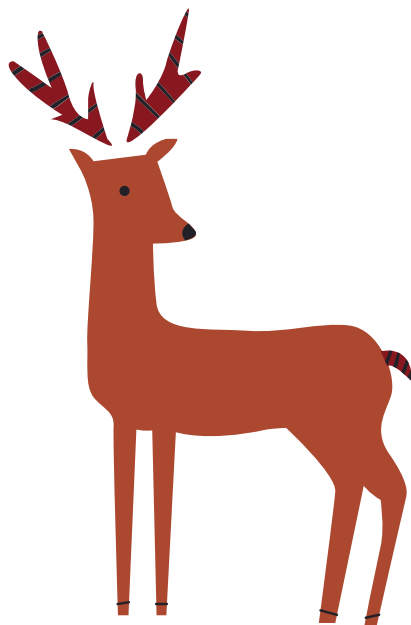
This verse means that we should love when God corrects us because when He does, it means He loves and cherishes us. Even when we make mistakes like David, God still continues to work on us so it will benefit us in the future.

This verse tells me that I should love the correction not only given by God, but by

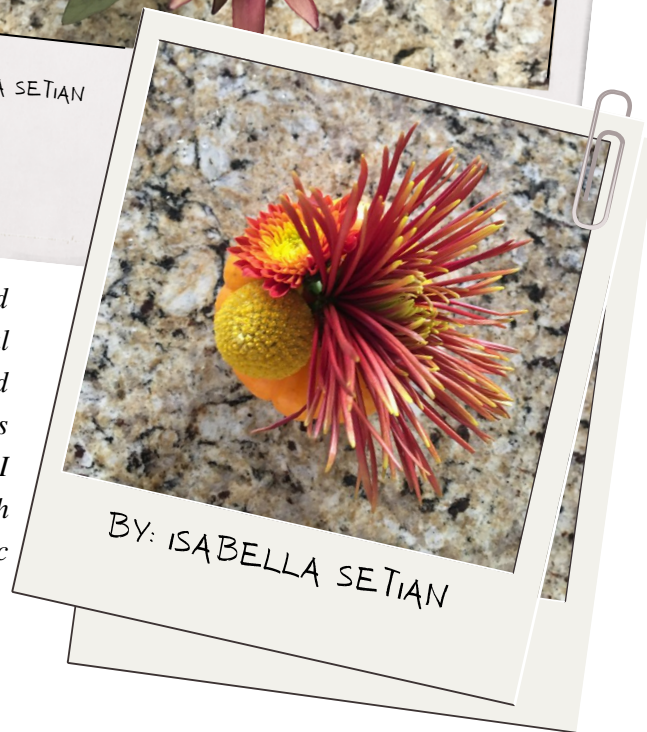
my parents and elders, who are trying to make me better.

I will use this verse to apply to my life by not making it hard for people to correct me because just like God, they want to help me. And I should take it seriously, not brush it off or get upset.

Bio: I am a native of Southern California. I love art, writing, and Latin.



Photography



Bio: My name is Isabella Setian, I am thirteen years old, in eighth grade, and I enjoy anything artistic. I love to design things, especially floral arrangements. I am a very organized person and enjoy matching and combining flowers together. When we get flowers, I am the one who makes the bouquets, combines them, and decorates the house. From a book I read, I found this idea of making pumpkin/gourd vases. I decided to try it out with these bouquets. When I grow up, I hope to be a designer and use my artistic talents for anything and for the glory of God.



Bio: Rebecca Anderson is sixteen years old and a junior in high school. She enjoys baking, reading, rock climbing, and hanging out with her friends, family, and two dogs.



A Perspective of Christmas from the Eyes of a Donkey

BY JENNA WITKEMPER AND LEAH CHERIAKALATH

I was on the road to Bethlehem,
Mary on my back,
Through desert, forest, sun and wind,
I trod the ancient track.
Joseph heaved a weary sigh,
And Mary was weak and frail,
I knew her precious child's birth
Was shortly to prevail.
I quickened then my heavy pace,
And lengthened then my stride,
Neglecting gnawing hunger pains,
My thirst I then denied.
At last I glimpsed great Bethlehem,
Lit like one bright star,
Joseph turned and whispered, sweetly,
"Mary, we are not far."
We entered there an endless line,
A throng of bustling strangers,
They likewise gave their humble name,
Then faced alone the dangers.
The night was sultry, as I trudged,
My hooves clicked on the stone,
I heard my master say, "not yet,"
And heard my mistress moan.
We sought out every inn in town,
With no change in reply,
"No more room, I'm sorry, sir,"
And again, poor Joseph would sigh.
Then once again we'd turn away,

Yet he said, "there's one more inn,"
I held my breath as Joseph said,
"Please, please let me in."
"Our inn is full, we've not one bed,
You could try the neighbor."
But Joseph persisted urgently,
"But my wife is now in labor!"
The man was startled when he heard
His strong determination,
He gazed at us quite thoughtfully,
In silent contemplation.
He looked at Joseph, weak and strained,
And Mary tired and worn,
And then at me, most miserable,
My donkey face forlorn.
"Follow me," he ordered,
And Joseph bade me start,
I followed where he led me,
Hope sparking in my heart.
When I saw his gesture, kind,
Oh, how my heart did beat!
How my tired legs rejoiced,
As I was taken off the street.
The pleasant scent of horses,
And sweet-smelling hay, so soft!
In the stable, I was lead,
The lantern hung aloft.
Then Mary slipped off my back,
And laid upon the straw,
I fell asleep quite instantly,
To wake up to a bawl.

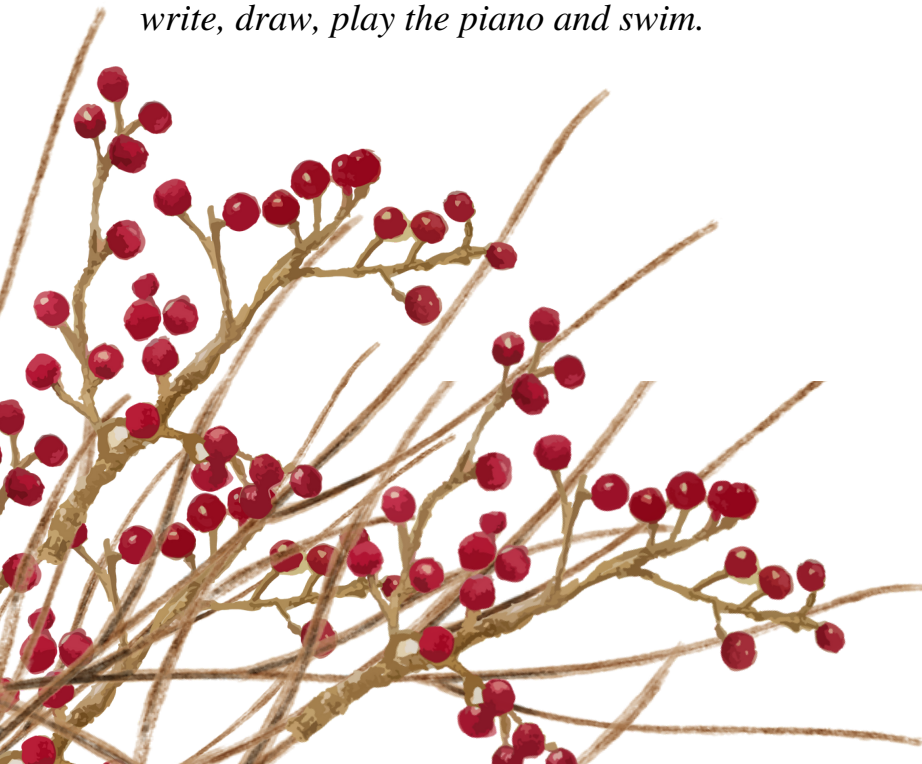


When I opened up my eyes,
A bundle Mary held.
I heard Joseph call it "Jesus,"
Through all the noise that meld.
Shepherds there were worshipping,
They knelt upon their knees,
And through the open stable door,
There stirred a cooling breeze.
The moment there was beautiful,
Yet weariness I fought,
I laid my head upon the hay,
And rested there in thought.
As I gazed at Baby Jesus,
And the reverent knees all bent,
I knew I was apart
Of a wonderful event.



Bio: Leah lives in Massachusetts with her parents and three crazy younger brothers. In her free time, she loves to write, draw, play the piano and swim.

Bio: Jenna lives in Tennessee with her family and three cats. The oldest of four, she loves to read, write, draw, knit, and play the piano.



Art Work



Katelyn Johansen, 9 years old



BY KATY JOHANSEN

Bio: Katy is in fourth grade and loves her SA and SRS classes. She also loves to draw! She has done a colored-pencil sketch of a Christmas ornament.

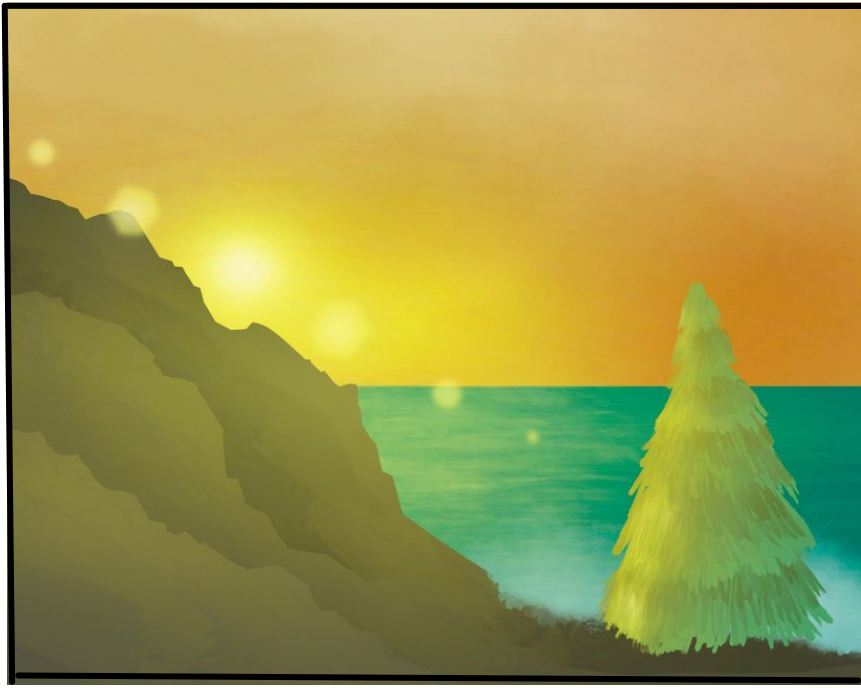
DRACONIC CHRISTMAS

BY GRETCHEN DIEDERICH

In my image, these dragons are having their first Christmas party together. They are still trying to understand it, so there is quite a bit of chaos. They are learning about it together

Bio: Gretchen Diederich is obsessed with dragons, Percy Jackson, Avatar, and Minecraft. Her favorite color is blue, and she likes to make stories and draw.





CHRISTMAS ON THE BEACH

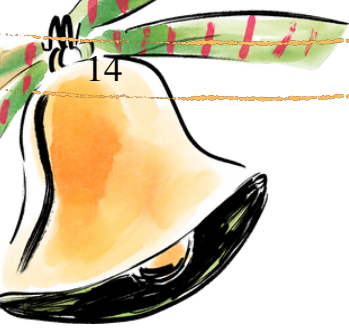
BY SAMUEL WOIZESCHKE

Bio: My name is Samuel Woizeschke, I'm thirteen years old and live in San Diego. Some of my hobbies are swimming, computer drawing, reading, coding, and traveling. Here in California, it does not snow, so my artwork was created to reflect the warm climate in which my family celebrates Christmas.

BY KATY JOHANSEN

This is a sketch of her great aunt's homemade clay nativity set.





Christmas Day

BY IMOGEN CAMPBELL

Fiona threw her pillow over her head as a shriek echoed through the house. In less than three seconds, her younger sister, Posy, raced into her room. “Wake up, Fiona! It’s Christmas!” Fiona kicked her covers off, sending Posy onto the floor. “What time is it?” Fiona checked her clock. “Posy! It’s five a.m!” “Ohhh... So what?” Posy dragged her big sister down the stairs and into the living room, where the illuminated Christmas tree glowed softly. “Ok, you wait here. I’ll go get Mom and Dad.” Posy dashed up the stairs. Fiona settled herself on the couch. She loved being alone with the Christmas tree. Once, five years ago, when she was six, a few months before Posy the nuisance came along, she’d gotten scared and crept down the stairs. Her dad was in the shower and her mom was studying, so Fiona had sat in the living room, looking at the tree until her dad got out of the shower. Then, that March, Posy was born, and she had the ears of a panther, so there were no more quiet moments with her parents. Posy bounced down the stairs, with their parents following along sleepily. “Did our daughter really drag us out of bed at 5:05?” Fiona’s dad said. “Shhhhh,” Her mom said. Posy raced toward the Christmas tree and tore at the first present she could reach. Fiona tugged the package out of Posy’s hand. “Posy! That’s not yours!” Fiona looked at the name on the present. It said,

Fiona

Fiona carefully peeled off the paper, and inside was the one thing she’d been wanting since Easter. It was a hoverboard! Fiona tried it out immediately. “You’re a natural!” Her mom cheered. She nudged Fiona’s dad, and then looked over at him. He was asleep. Mom shook him, then shook him harder. But what really woke him up was Posy leaping on his stomach,

clutching a stuffed rabbit. “I named him Cutie! I love him, I love him, I love him!” Fiona’s dad snorted, and woke up. “Wha-what?” Fiona and her mom covered their mouths to hide their laughter. Fiona turned to the rest of her presents. A huge present with her name on it caught her eye. Fiona opened the present, not ripping the paper, and saw something that changed her life forever. Fiona gasped.

To be continued...

Bio: Imogen Campbell has a brother and a cat, and does school with her cousins. She absolutely loves anime!



The Christmas Story

STORY BY MARA McDONALD
PAINTING BY CAROLINE FISCHER

A long time ago, in the Middle Eastern part of the world, in the small town of Bethlehem, lay the tiny and precious Jesus the Messiah; the Savior of the World. The only clothing that he wore was a small piece of ragged cloth, and instead of a comfortable bed, hay was his only comforter. The stable was cold and bare, and smelled of pasture animals. This may not seem like the obvious place for a king to be born, but it was all part of God's plan as a kind and humble King.

The story began nine months earlier, in Nazareth, in the town of Galilee. Gabriel the Archangel came to Mary telling her that she would have a son, the Messiah. He would be called by the name, Jesus. Mary humbly agreed. Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed, was confused and anxious upon hearing the startling news, and was thinking about not marrying her. Shortly, an angel appeared to him in a dream telling him to not be afraid and to follow God's plan for him and Mary. Joseph kindly and virtuously took care of Mary as the months turned into weeks, and the weeks turned into days before the delivery of the Child.



The couple traveled to Bethlehem on foot for the birth of Jesus. The day that Mary was in labor was a challenging, harsh, and tiring one, but Joseph did his best in everything that he did. After searching for hours for a place to stay, only finding full inns and homes, the couple was restless. They did not give up, though, for God had a plan for them; they were blessed to find a stable to stay in for the night, lent to them from an innkeeper. The stable was nothing more than animals and lots of hay and dust, but it did just fine. For Jesus was born that night in the stable; holy and precious was He. Let us not forget the promises of Christ this Christmas, and what goodness He brought and continues to bring into the world. As always, "Keep Christ in Christmas!" "Hark! The herald angels sing: glory to the new-born King!"

Caroline Fischer is a thirteen year old girl who loves to paint, ride horses, and bake. She lives in Glen Rose Texas with her two brothers, two loving parents and three playful cats. This is her third year with Scholé Academy, and she really enjoys it!

Mara McDonald is an extraverted thirteen year old girl who is in the 8th grade. As a recent Floridian, she enjoys the arts, her Catholic faith, and creating chocolate things in the kitchen. This is her third year with Scholé Academy and first year working on the Scholé Chronicle.



Hope For a Life Well Lived

BY MAUD FIORELLO

“Men’s courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead,” said Ebenezer Scrooge. “But if the courses are departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!”

This quote is from the beloved Christmas movie, *A Christmas Carol*, which was originally a novella written by Charles Dickens in 1843. The novella was written in the Industrial period where many cities desperately lacked resources. This was a time of widespread poverty throughout England and people were looking for hope. The story of *A Christmas Carol* was flawlessly turned into a movie in 1938, then it was remade in 2009. It is a sad tale filled with reminders of the mistakes of the past and thoughts of a life well-lived.

In the beginning, viewers meet Ebenezer Scrooge, a grouchy businessman, who only cares about his success. Although Scrooge lives largely in a spacious house, his employees live penniless lives of poverty. Scrooge undervalues hard work and is infamously known throughout the town as rude, greedy, and stubbornly self-centered.

One day when Scrooge comes home from work he is greeted by the ghost of his old business partner, “Jacob Marley.” Marley warns him to change his ways or he too will become a ghost and suffer for eternity. Later that night, Scrooge is unexpectedly visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future. The ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge where he would be now if he had made discernibly different decisions when he was younger. The ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge his underpaid employees happily at home with their families despite their difficult lives. The final and scariest ghost of Christmas Future ominously reminded Scrooge of the cycle of life as he stood in a graveyard. He was told that this would be him next Christmas if he continued

to be selfish, greedy, and focused on the wrong things. Scared and in denial, Scrooge began to question if he had led a life well-lived

After the visits, Scrooge permanently abandoned his old ways and was a changed man. He realized that life is short and there are more important things than money and wealth. With this new revelation, he suddenly buys his poor employee the biggest turkey in town and celebrates Christmas with his family. Scrooge is eternally grateful to the spirits who reminded him how to have the Christmas spirit.

A Christmas Carol is a holiday favorite about the importance of generosity and being selfless. The story takes place during the season of giving and beautifully shows viewers that anyone is capable of dramatic change. The main character, Ebenezer Scrooge, is a grumpy old man who is solely focused on his wealth. He is visited by three spirits who allow him to see alternative ways his life turned out if he had learned to balance work with fun. Something viewers would have loved to see was what Scrooge was like after his change of heart. Did he continue being generous after Christmas? Did he forget about the lessons the three spirits had taught him? To show viewers how he has truly changed, a sequel would be a great addition to this tale. Although there are several ways to make this movie better, it communicated to the people of England and viewers all over the world the importance of selfless living and provided hope for a life well-lived.

Bio: Maud Fiorello is a 13 year old student at Scholé Academy, and she enjoys ancient literature and logic. She is an avid tennis player who competes in national tournaments. Maud is a big Harry Potter fan and a proud Gryffindor.

Newton's Universal Law of Gravitation

BY ABIGAIL METZNER



Picture if you will, a stately manor house nestled comfortably in the rolling hills of the English countryside, rooted firmly amongst gardens dotted here and there with whimsical trees. Underneath one of these trees sits Isaac Newton himself, pondering the nature of the threads that weave together our universe. As he sits thinking, an apple hits him squarely on the head, and something clicks. “Eureka!” he shouts (or perhaps, “Ouch!”). Why did the apple fall down, rather than to the side, or even up? The answer is gravity, Newton would tell you, one of the fundamental forces of the universe. Newton, though perhaps not literally hit with an apple, certainly was hit with inspiration that long summer day in 1666, and scientists have looked at the world with new eyes ever since.

Gravity is responsible for a toddler sliding down a slide, keeping the planets of the universe in their proper orbits, and everything in between. It pulls the tides and keeps the clouds from floating off into space. Newton represented this force with the equation $F = (G) mM / d^2$, and his theory has since become a scientific law. In his equation, F is the attractive force, G is the universal gravitational constant (thought to be the same everywhere in the universe), m and M are the masses of body 1 and body 2, and d is the distance between their two centers of mass.

This equation is certainly invaluable in many of the modern sciences. For example, if we simplify the equation to $g = (G) M / r^2$ and then plug in the correct values, we can calculate the gravitational force of the earth on us, or earth's gravity. That value, 9.8m/s^2 , means that the velocity of a falling object will increase by 9.81 meters every second because of earth's gravitational pull. This then can be used to calculate kinetic and potential energy, weight on different celestial bodies, etc.

Newton's Universal Law of Gravitation was also a jumping off point for Albert Einstein in the late 19th century when he developed his theories of special and general relativity. However, while Newton had considered things such as force, time, and space to be invariable and ever-constant, Einstein played with the idea that they



were, in fact, changeable based on physical circumstances. He also reasoned that gravity and acceleration were the same—meaning, for example, that standing still on a rocket ship that accelerated at exactly the same rate as gravity on earth would feel just the same as standing still on the ground. His amazing discoveries revolutionized the scientific world and helped to paint a fuller picture of the universe today.

So, why should we take time to understand invisible forces like gravity? Perhaps it's there, but was there really any point in Newton spending eight years of his life developing an equation for it? Besides the obvious scientific value, when we take time to understand the world around us, we can appreciate in a whole new way the awesomeness and wonder of the Lord. Some may say that scientifically explaining things like the wind, the tides, and gravity, prove that there's no need for a "god" controlling it all. However, as Christians, we can look at these calculations and see a God who had the power and creativity to build a beautiful and ordered world; a God who is not ruled by science, but who created it, and a God who loves us so much that he will one day make all creation new.

Bio: Abby Metzner is an 8th grader from northwest Arkansas where she enjoys art, music, math, writing, and hanging out with her awesome friends and family. She attends both Scholé Academy and Wilson Hill Academy and absolutely loves it!



The Biggest (and Smallest) Force

BY AARON HIGLEY

Jump. Did you jump? If you did, I bet you fell back down to the earth. Why? Why did you fall back down? Well, let me answer these questions in a story form.

In 1666, Isaac Newton, sitting in his mother's garden, observes an apple falling from a tree, and this generates the epiphany that there is a force pulling that apple to the ground. This led him to wonder, "What if the apple was pulling on the earth too?" Now, Isaac Newton was a really smart man, (estimated IQ is 190~200, same as Einstein's) so, with a few years of experimentation, he was able to come up with an equation that stated that the attractive force between two objects is proportional to the mass of one object multiplied by the mass of a second object divided by the square of the distance between the objects' centers, but he knew that the attractive force (he called it gravity) had to be much smaller than that, or else everything would just fly toward everything else, and that doesn't happen. For instance, the device you are on doesn't just fly toward you. So, Newton added a constant, a very small number he called "Universal Gravity" and made his equation look like this:

$$F=G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

You might be confused about all these letters. I mean, when I first looked at this equation, I was thought to myself, "Wait...what does this mean?" The letter F stands for the attractive force (gravity), m1 stands for the mass of one object, m2 stands for the mass of a second object, and d squared stands for the square of the distance between the two objects' centers (sometimes you will see the equation written with radius squared instead of distance squared, don't worry, it is the same thing), and then there is G...that tricky G. That tricky G fooled Newton. That's right, Newton was finally fooled. But he didn't let this stop him¹⁴ from publishing his work. After all, if he let "big G" get in his way of publishing his equation, then nobody would find that chaos-causing constant. But alas, somebody did. Enter Henry Cavendish. Henry Cavendish was another brilliant man, with important discoveries about hydrogen,

atmospheric air, and maybe one of his most important discoveries... the mass of the earth. I know what you're thinking, "Wait, I was really hoping he found "big G!" Well, by calculating the earth's mass, scientists were able to deduct the universal gravitational constant, $G = 6.673 \times 10^{-11} \text{N m}^2 \text{kg}^{-2}$. So now Newton's equation is finally finished. But what can it be used for? Well in those days, it was used for calculating the attractive force between two objects, for instance, you and your computer. Let's actually do that. Let's calculate your force towards your computer. The average human's mass is 62 kg, and an HP Jet computer's mass is roughly 5 kg. If you were about 18 cm away from your computer, plugging that into an equation we get about 1.149 times 10 to the negative 9th power. Whew!

If you have been very attentive to what I have been saying in this paper, you will notice that I said in those days and not now. Well, has the use of the equation progressed? The answer is yes. Now the equation is being used to understand the gravitational force of people on the Moon, Mars, et cetera. This helps astronauts with training for the gravity difference on other planets.

In addition to helping us discover the mass of the earth, this understanding in gravity helped all of the inventions in space. Without an understanding of gravity, we wouldn't have been able to release the Hubble telescope, the International Space Station, or take a trip up to the Moon! I believe this equation is important because so many people underestimate small things when they hold the universe together. And it all started under an apple tree... Well, maybe.

Bio: Aaron Higey lives on a farm in Lynchburg, Virginia, with his parents and four siblings. His hobbies include playing the piano, acting, baseball, and reading. His favorite book of all time (fiction) is The Warden And The Wolf King by Andrew Peterson, and his favorite (non-fiction) book of all time is Everything Sad Is Untrue, by Daniel Nayeri.



Holiday Recipes

You will need...

INGREDIENTS

- 4 ounces saltine crackers
- 1 cup butter (2 sticks)
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- A bag of chocolate chips (any kind, though semisweet works best!)
- (Optional) topping (crushed peppermint, your favorite chopped nuts, or festive sprinkles)

TOOLS

- Cookie sheet
- Saucepan

SALTINE CHRISTMAS TOFFEE

Recipe by Samuel Woizeschke

Here is a delicious recipe for a salty and sweet toffee-like candy! This treat is very easy to make, and is therefore perfect for occasions from simple snacking to holiday gatherings. It has a satisfyingly crunchy texture from its saltine crackers and a sweet taste from its chocolate and melted sugar and butter.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (163 degrees C).
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and place the saltine crackers in a single layer (touching, but not overlapping).
3. In a saucepan combine the sugar and butter. Bring to a boil and boil for 3 minutes. Immediately after, pour the substance over the saltines and spread it, covering the crackers completely.
4. Bake at 325 degrees F (163 degrees C) for 5 to 6 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle the chocolate chips over the top. Let sit for 5 minutes. Spread the now-melted chocolate with a butter knife.
5. (Optional) sprinkle your topping onto the chocolate just after spreading.
6. After allowing it to cool completely, break into pieces.
7. Enjoy! (You can eat it just after it has cooled, or you can leave it in the refrigerator)



You will need...

BOTTOM LAYER:

- 2 cups of cranberries, fresh or frozen
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

MIDDLE LAYER:

- 1 and 1/2 sticks softened butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

TOPPING:

- 1 tablespoon of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

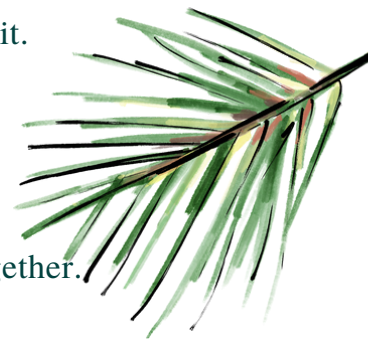
NANTUCKET CRANBERRY PIE

Recipe by Ailsa Rogers

I'm Ailsa Rogers. I was born on Nantucket Island and I'm eleven years old. This Nantucket Cranberry Pie is made of a fruit that Nantucket is known for harvesting: cranberries! The following is an easy and fast way to make it.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Toss cranberries, sugar, and walnuts together.
3. Pour into greased 8-inch cake pan.
4. Combine wet ingredients for middle layer in one bowl.
5. Combine dry ingredients for middle layer in a separate bowl.
6. Combine wet and dry middle layer ingredients and pour over the cranberry mixture.
7. Mix ingredients for topping and sprinkle on top.
8. Bake for 35 minutes. May be sliced and served out of the pan or flipped out on a cake plate and served upside down.
9. Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.
10. Enjoy it!



The Christmas Vision

A FICTION STORY BY SOPHIA KLBER

In the misty mountains of her homeland, Bella, in her beautiful Christmas dress, was helping set up for their family's Christmas party. "Bella, get the hors d'oeuvres!" her mother shouted.

The young girl skipped to the kitchen and quickly grabbed them. "Why are you skipping?" asked her little brother David. "It is almost Christmas. I cannot wait for all of my gifts!" exclaimed Bella. Bella was a sweet and kind girl who obeyed her parents, but when any holiday that had gifts in it came around, she would become a greedy monster. Every day she would say, "Presents are almost here for me!" The children in the town did not like Bella's monster phase. The misty streets were not filled with Christmas joy, but with disappointed children who were poor.

Tonight was the night of the annual Christmas party that Bella's parents threw every year. Rooms were filled with decorations and lights that were as bright as the moon. The family was all dressed up, including David who hated having to look like a prince getting ready for a great ball. As guests entered, Bella kept on skipping around with joy inside of her. All the guests questioned Bella, "Why are you skipping?" or "What do you want for Christmas?" Bella answered with a loud and obnoxious voice every time, "One, it is CHRISTMAS! Two, I want every single toy I can get my hands on." Every reaction from the guests was normal, and they did not realize how greedy Bella was acting.

As the goodbyes were said, it was about midnight. Bella's father Gabriel picked the children up one by one to lay them in their beds. Suddenly, Bella woke up from the groaning of her father having to pick her up and carry her up the stairs. She finished the task by walking up the stairs and getting into her blue floral nightgown. Climbing into bed, she suddenly heard an echo of voices. She slowly walked to the old balcony and looked below. It was children, they were gathering under a bunch of cardboard boxes to

stay warm. (If you were to see this, I would hope you would feel this way- you would probably feel bad and try to help, but Bella did not.) She yelled, “Be quiet!” and slammed the balcony door. As Bella fell asleep, dreams were starting to crawl into her mind, but not just dreams, visions.

Bella woke up with the sun shining on her face and the snow falling upon her nose. The cold girl thought, “Wait, why am I outside?” She decided to look at her reflection in the frozen puddle on the street. The shock of her reflection made her jump. Bella was wearing a ragged dress with a white apron, a bonnet, and a million different spots of goop that were impossible to identify. Immediately, she bolted up to the street her house was on. She knocked on the door and yelled, “Papa! Something terrible has happened”. Her beloved father did not answer. An old man answered the door, “Hello my dear,” he said to the frightened girl. The man’s face was kind-looking, but even so, Bella ran for her life.

She could not understand what was going on. Did she do something wrong? Suddenly, she heard a loud rumble. At first, it frightened her, but then she realized it was her stomach. Even in shock, she could not ignore her hunger. Door to door, she asked for food, but every person turned her away. Bella began to give up; she sat on the steps of a house and began to mourn. All of a sudden, a girl who was wearing the same outfit as Bella sat next to her and handed her an apple. Bella accepted the gift from the benevolent girl but did not say thank you because she was still in awe of this wonderful act. “Why do you cry?” the girl asked. Bella explained everything, but even so, the girl’s facial reaction told Bella that the girl did not understand. “Would you like to stay with me?” asked the girl. “Okay, but what is your name?” asked Bella. The girl’s name was Mary. She was a poor and kind girl. For the rest of the afternoon, the two girls learned of each other and their families and soon became good friends.

A week had passed in this new world; Bella soon was used to her new life but still mourned for her old. Mary and Bella worked together to survive the terrible winter ahead. That day Bella and Mary were searching for food, but instead saw a horrifying sight. A rich person rode in their carriage, minding their own business. Suddenly, a little boy, who was younger than her, dropped an apple and ran to retrieve it, but the carriage was coming

right in front of it. Luckily, the driver stopped just in time, but that was not the worst part. The woman stepped out of the carriage with her big fancy dress to smack the poor boy, but all of a sudden, Mary stepped in front and took the fall. “What are you doing young girl! That boy deserves to be punished” the woman said. Mary replied, “No he does not. He made a mistake, but no one was hurt so it is fine.” Mary's reply made the women very angry. The woman grabbed the horsewhip from the driver and began whipping Mary.

Bella did not just stand there. She ran forward and pushed the women over. She grabbed the whip from the woman's hand and said, “You do not treat people like this. Everyone should be treated with respect. No matter how rich or poor they are.” This was the bravest and kindest act Bella had ever done. Mary was transported to the doctor on Christmas day, but abruptly, a bright light blurred Bella's sight of what was going on. Bella suddenly woke up back in her bed.

Bella ran downstairs to see what had happened. She was in her own house with her family and in her clothes. Her little brother David ran down the stairs and yelled, “It is Christmas!” Bella was overjoyed to see her family, and each member was given a hug. When the family began to open presents, Bella picked up all the ones with her name on them and walked outside. Bella gave each of her gifts to the poor children of her homeland.

After her kind task, Bella never became the greedy monster again, but you must be wondering what happened to Bella and Mary. The night that Bella fell asleep, God created a vision for Bella and had his angels help her defeat her greediness. Mary was an angel of God whose job was to teach Bella, and the old man whom Bella ran away from was watching over her during her trials. Once the old man, the angel, saw Bella's heroic act, he awakened her from her vision. God sent down this vision to have Bella be reborn.

Bio: Sophia Kliber is a thirteen-year-old student of Scholé Academy. She decided to create this fictional story about giving.

Winter

a poem by Alitsa Setian

Christmas Eve and we are by the fire-side,
Sipping tea,
Leaves crackle, crunch and crack
Wind howls through the eves,
But by the fire I am cosy and warm
The toasty flames heat my feet
We all drink tea, the entire swarm.

I wake up; open my eyes
I shiver, cold as an ice cube
Then I realize,
Christmas day!
Turkey and gifts, family and fun!
Hip-hip- hooray!
I tumble out of bed, rush down the stairs

Oh, the tree, the gifts!
Scalloped, golden paper shines like the sun,
I touch the gifts, shake them
Breakfast; we sit down, eat our buns,
Pancakes, jam and syrup, I munch it all
The tree in the corner; stands tall
Shines more beautiful than the sun.

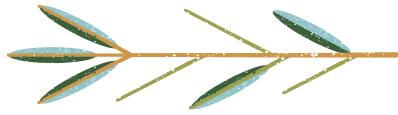
Presents! We shout,
And rush to the tree
Glittering, here and there about
Mama decides who will go first
And it is I; oh I thirst,
For my gift
I rip it open, and sift
Through all the paper
And it is- a pair of skates!

Could anything be any better than this?

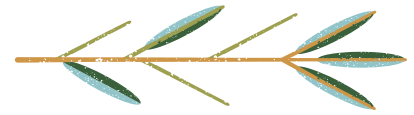
Bio: I am Alitsa Setian. I am 12 years old and in 6th grade. I love to read, write, act, and do anything that has to do with nature and animals. I also love to swim, dive, and do flips in the pool. When I grow up, I hope to become a children's historical fiction and fantasy author. I also want to live on a farm and own lots of horses. I want to use my talents for the glory of God and to help others know about Him.



The Horrible (Best) Christmas



by Wyatt Hsu



'Twas' the night before Christmas. The two brothers Calvin and David were so excited for Christmas that they went to bed early so they could wake up early for presents. The problem was Calvin and David were dubbed the Troublesome Two because of the chaos that they caused. On Halloween the two toilet-papered Mrs. Johnson's house, and during a birthday party, Calvin tripped the Birthday Boy, Elijah. Santa put the two on his bad list. Santa was stumped on what to bring to the two brothers (Santa still brings presents to the bad kids.)

Soon, Santa thought of something (not coal, for Santa is not that cruel.) He thought of school books to help the two study for their next year in Scholè Academy. The next day was Christmas and the two brothers were so excited to open presents. The two brothers woke up their parents at an alarming 4 am! David opened his first present, "A schoolbook! I got a schoolbook. I am so mad! Santa is the worst!"

Calvin was next, he was expecting a better present than David. Calvin ripped open the present his eyes grew wide and he yelled

"A SCHOOL BOOK! SANTA, DO YOU THINK THIS IS A JOKE?!"

The two were clearly mad. They both got five more school books. By this time the brothers were fed up. They each had one more present to open. David opened his last present, and with a disappointing sigh he said, "This is probably a school book;" David then took out the package. It was a computer. Mother Sarah joked, "That is for school!" David laughed at that. Calvin opened his present. It was a new Baseball bat, the one he wanted for the whole year. "Thanks Santa for the present." This was the best and the worst Christmas for the brothers.

Bio: Wyatt is an 11-year old and loves playing baseball and basketball. He also likes playing Minecraft.

My Christmas 2020 Story

By Elsa Hoffman



“Gram-ma, tell me a story,” The six-year-old child clambered up into her grandma’s lap.

“And what kind of story would that be?” Grandma asked.

“A Christmas story. A story about when you were a little girl.”

“Well...I suppose I will.” Grandma thought for a while, and the six-year-old squirmed eagerly.

“Here’s a good one,” Grandma said, “I wasn’t exactly a little girl, but a girl all the same.” The girl on Grandma’s lap laid her head on Grandma’s shoulder and closed her eyes as Grandma started to speak.

In a house in the city on a hill lived three children. They were named James, Isabella, and Chase. James was the oldest, then Isabella, and Chase was the baby. It was Christmas Eve, and the three children were hanging up their stockings. Isabella’s stocking was mostly green but had red and white octagons on it. James’ stocking was mostly red but had green and white octagons on it. Chase’s stocking was a mix of the two, not yet James’ stocking, but not quite Isabella’s either. As the children hung their stockings on the fireplace, they asked each other what they hoped they’d get for Christmas.

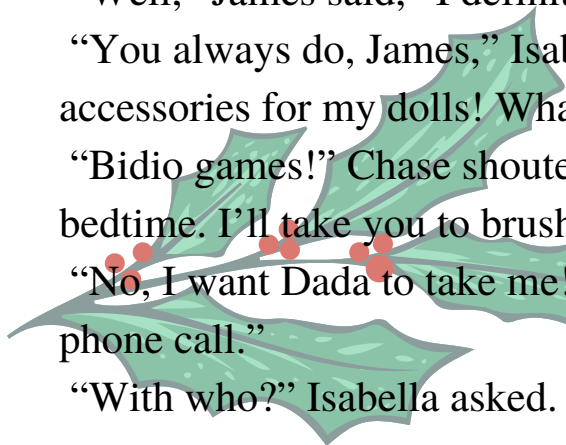
“Well,” James said, “I definitely want some kind of video game.”

“You always do, James,” Isabella said, “For me, I’d like some new clothes and accessories for my dolls! What about you Chasey?”

“Bidio games!” Chase shouted, bringing their mother who said, “I think it’s bedtime. I’ll take you to brush your teeth, Chase.”

“No, I want Dada to take me! Where’s Dada?” Mama hesitated, “He’s taking a phone call.”

“With who?” Isabella asked.

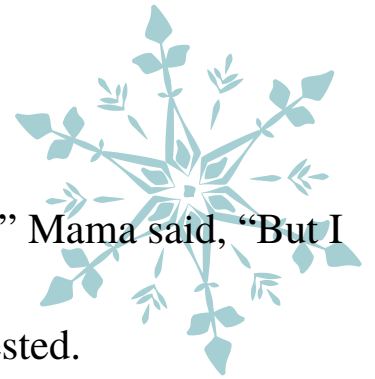


“With whom, Isabella, and it’s Grandma,” Mama said.

“Why? Is she not coming over tomorrow?” James asked.

“We don’t know yet, but we’ll tell you everything tomorrow,” Mama said, “But I think you should all go to bed now.”

“But mama! I’ve never gone to bed this early!” Isabella protested.



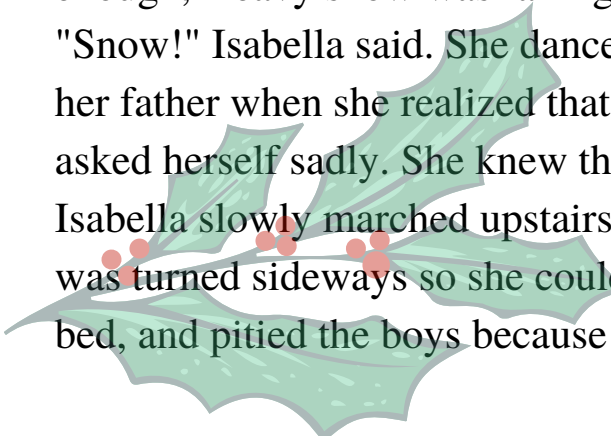
“No complaining. Get into your beds and you can read your books until eight o’clock. Then I should find the light out in your room and your books on the night table.” The two older children sighed and stepped away from the warm blaze of the fire. Their stockings were hung, and now there was nothing to do but go to bed. Nevertheless, James and Isabella still dragged their feet along the floor as they slinked up the stairs.

Inside the single attic room that was at the top of the steps, there was one bed and one bunk bed, and two closets along the hall. The bunk bed was for the boys, and the bed was for Isabella. One of the closets was for the boys, and the other was for Isabella. There were nightstands between the two beds and a tiny bathroom on the far wall. Isabella and James could hear their little brother’s teeth being brushed in the downstairs bathroom, as they opened their closets and pulled out their Christmas pajamas. Isabella went into the bathroom to change, and as soon as she pulled off her clothes, she realized how cold it was, and her nose started to freeze. She shivered hurriedly into her pajamas, and then brushed her teeth quickly, but well. Then she ran out of the bathroom where James was standing transfixed at the window.

“Snow!” He said. Isabella gasped with delight and dashed to the window. Sure enough, heavy snow was falling down onto the grass below.

“Snow!” Isabella said. She danced with delight and was running downstairs to tell her father when she realized that he was having a phone call. But what about? She asked herself sadly. She knew that her father loved the snow.

Isabella slowly marched upstairs to look at the snow again. She was glad her bed was turned sideways so she could gaze out at the snow while she was reading in her bed, and pitied the boys because they didn’t have that lovely view.



Isabella got her book off the little nightstand, sat down on the bed, and pulled the covers up to her chin.

Seconds, minutes, and then finally an hour had passed, and James was turning out the light. Isabella looked up in time to see the glow fade away, before they were left in darkness, with only the light from the moon shining on the snow to accompany them.

“Night, James,” Isabella said after she had put her book on the nightstand. James did the same, bade Isabella good night, and climbed up the ladder and into the top bunk of the bunk bed. They both laid down, their minds on exactly the same thing: Why was Grandma calling father? She almost never called on Christmas Eve! But there were other things to think about as well, and soon the childrens’ minds slipped off the topic of worry, and into treasures, and candy, and peanut butter cookies with peanut butter cups on top.

James and Isabella never heard their mother open the door to the room, never saw her bringing a sleeping baby Chase into the bedroom, for they were soundly sleeping.

Isabella woke up slowly and lay in bed, gaining her bearings. When she was more awake than she had been, she gasped. Realization crowding her mind.

“It’s Christmas day!” she said aloud. Then she started.

“It’s Christmas Day,” she whispered. Isabella started up, throwing the covers off her, and heedless of the cold that struck her, ran towards the door. But as she was turning the knob, she saw with despair that the clock was just striking 5:00 in the morning. She started to go back to her bed when she heard a muffled giggle from downstairs, and, puzzled, she wondered why it sounded so much like Chase’s laugh. Again she turned the doorknob and this time and stepped out into the hall. She turned around to close the door, but hearing a rustle from James’ bunk, forgot the idea entirely.

Isabella took one look down the flight of stairs, and thought it would be best not to risk the creaks in the floorboards, so she climbed onto the banister instead, and not

thinking of what her mother would say right then, she pushed off.

The ride was swift, but fun and Isabella vowed that she would definitely do that again, but not when Chase was around of course. That was too risky.

Isabella walked through the kitchen and then passed the doorway to the living room before going into their basement. She almost peeked at the Christmas tree in the living room, but then jerked away at the last second. She'd be able to see any presents around the tree later, with James and Chase. As she crept down the stairs, she heard more giggling and some music. This roused Isabella even more, and she stepped her socked feet on the little wooden ramp beside the stairs and slid down. She almost never did this except when there was something urgent going on, and this, in her mind, was very urgent.

Peeking around the corner of the stairs, she saw her mother and her little brother Chase watching *The Nutcracker*! Isabella loved *The Nutcracker*. She stood transfixed, staring at the screen, and creeping closer until she could touch her mother's head if she wanted.

"Izy! Why are you up so early?" mama asked, whirling around. Isabella blushed and said, "I heard Chase, so I came..." Isabella relayed the whole story to her mother but skipped the part where she slid down the banister. It's not important right now, she told herself. Mama sighed and said, "Well I suppose it's Christmas anyway, so it's of no consequence. I guess you took a peek at the Christmas tree?"

"No!" Isabella said, "But can I watch with you guys?"

"Well, It's Christmas after all. Is James awake yet?"

"Nope, he's still asleep," Isabella shook her head.

"Don't be surprised. It's still only about 5 o'clock. James usually wakes up at 7!"

"Yep."

The *Nutcracker* kept playing on and on and on. Chase kept watching and asking questions, which mama, and sometimes Isabella, answered. Finally, the show came to a close, and mama turned off the TV.

"Well, let's go see if everyone's awake yet, but you two shouldn't wake anyone up, they need sleep. I'm not opposed to the idea of sending you guys back to bed as well." At this, Isabella said, "No! Please don't! We want to stay up and help you!"

"Well," mama said, "There's really no reason for you to be going back to bed. It's just turning 7:00 anyway." Isabella glanced at the clock with wide eyes. How had time gone so quickly? she thought. But the clock did say 7:00, so Isabella said, "Can we please go wake up James?? Pleeeeease?!" Mama smiled and nodded her head.

"I suppose you can. After all, it is Christmas," she said with a laugh. Isabella whooped and thundered up the stairs and into the bedroom upstairs.

"James! James! Wake up! It's Christmas! There are presents! There are stockings! There's-" But Isabella was cut off there by the loud crack as James' head slamming into the ceiling above him.

"Ouch! What was that?" He said, looking over at the clock with blurry eyes while rubbing his head.

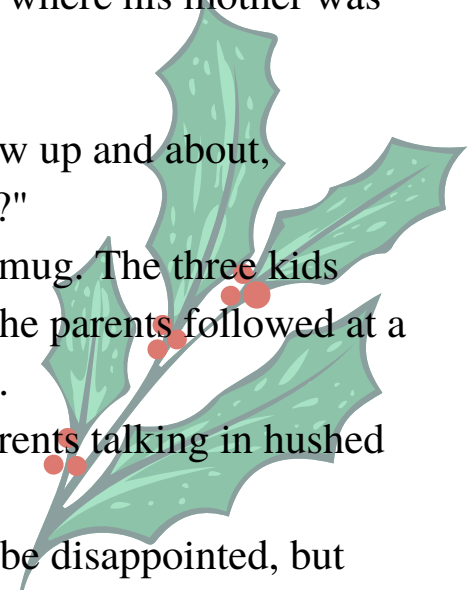
"It's Christmas James! How many times do I have to tell you?" James climbed out of bed, shivered, and pulled a blanket around his head. When Isabella was sure he was ready to go, she leapt onto the staircase and said, "C'mon! What are you waiting for?" James slouched over and through the door, where he was met by a tiny Chase, hugging his legs and saying, "It's Cwistmas! It's Cwistmas!" James rolled his eyes, and stumbled the rest of the way downstairs where his mother was putting an egg casserole into the oven.

"Well, dad, what do you think?" she asked dad, who was now up and about, making coffee, "Should we let the kids open their stockings?"

"I have no objection to it," dad said, pouring coffee into his mug. The three kids jumped with excitement as they dashed to their stockings. The parents followed at a distance and watched as the children removed various items.

As Isabella was reaching into her stocking, she heard her parents talking in hushed voices.

"It isn't safe to go to grandmother's this year. The kids will be disappointed, but what can we do?" her mother asked.



“I don’t know,” dad said, stirring his coffee, “Except just staying home and being thankful that we are able to celebrate Christmas at all.”

“When should we tell them?”

“Let’s do it during breakfast,” dad said.

Isabella, though puzzled about what her parents were talking about, still was excited when she pulled things out of her stockings. She replicated her brothers’ shouts of joy with equal sincerity, and ran to hug mama and dad after she had taken everything out, with shouts of, “Thank you guys so much!” and, “This is the best! Thanks!” Mama and dad smiled after each and every one of these little exclamations of joy, and laughed at her excitement, in addition to hugging Chase every time he pulled something out of his little stocking.

When the stockings were empty, all the children shouted together, “Can we please go out and unwrap our presents? Please?” Mama and dad looked at each other and said, “Why don’t we have breakfast first. We need to tell you something.” Now it was James’ and Isabella’s turn to look at each other. Chase didn’t care; he was chagrined that he wasn’t allowed to open presents.

“Pweez?” he asked, lip quivering slightly.

“I-” Mama said, looking at dad, “I don’t know.” Everyone knew that she was implying that dad should take charge.

“Maybe one present each,” he said. But James had set his mind on hearing what his parents had to say.

“Why don’t you tell us what you need to say, and then we’ll tell Chasie later,” he protested.

“That’s a good idea,” mama said.

“I’ll go be with Chase,” Isabella said, “I-I already know.” Her parents looked at her with surprise.

“Really? You know everything?” dad asked.

“I-I know that we can’t go to Grandma’s house this year, but I don’t know why.”

Mama and dad looked at each other once again.

“That is correct,” mama said, “As for why...”

“A lot of people are getting sick right now, so we’re not going over just in case,” dad said.

“But what about our presents for Grandma and Grandpa?” Isabella asked.

“We’re going to mail them,” mama answered.

“Ahh....I see.”

“Mmm.”

“MAMA!” Chase shouted, “Can we go open presents now? Pweeze?”

“You three go with dad. I’ll catch up once I get my coffee,” mama said. The three children cheered and thundered through the kitchen and into the living room where the Christmas tree was. From there, they started shuffling around presents to find the ones that were theirs, until each of them had a reasonably sized pile around them. Then they waited with eager anticipation for one of them to open the first package.

Chase broke first, of course. Not twenty seconds after he had his pile, he started ripping open the present closest to him and yowling with delight at what he had uncovered. After this, he kept opening present after present.

As this was taking place, Isabella and James were having a staring contest across their piles of presents; whoever lost had to open their first present last.

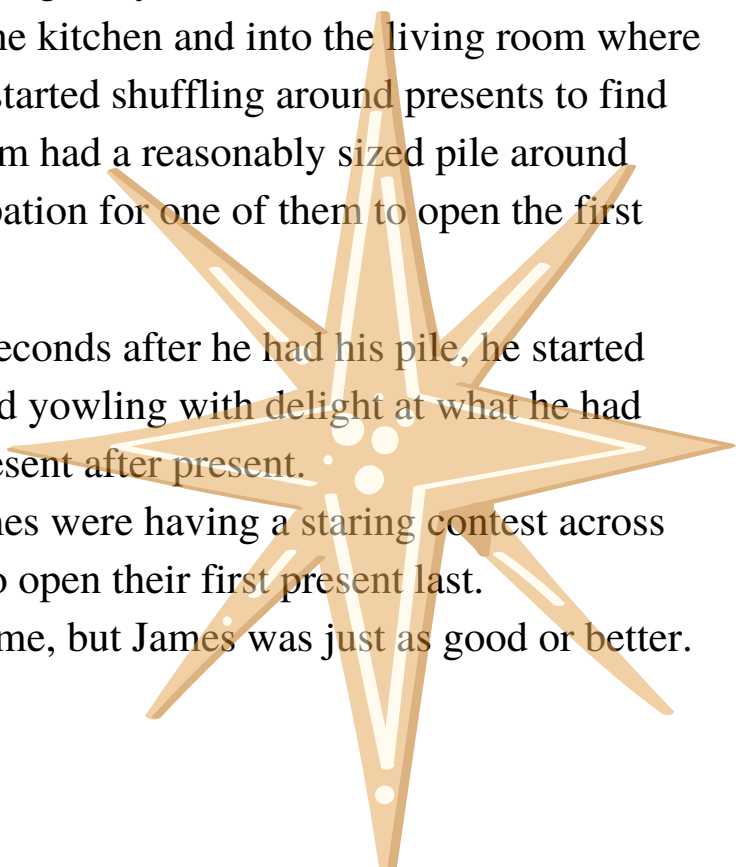
Isabella knew she was excellent at this game, but James was just as good or better. They kept staring at one another.

Staring.

And staring.

And staring some more...

Until James blinked. Isabella shouted with triumph. She pulled a present close to her and threw the wrapping off the package. James watched with scrutinizing care until Isabella was done, and after she was, he yanked one of his presents to him and unwrapped it.



After this, the children opened presents one after the other. When all the items were stacked in lopsided piles, and the wrapping was strewn around the room, everyone grabbed cookies from the tree and played with their presents.

“Breakfast, kids!” Mama called from the kitchen; piling egg casserole on plates. All the children groaned but went over to the table.

“Help me get into my seat!” Chase said, tugging on his high-chair tray. Isabella went over and pulled the tray out, letting Chase get in. Then Isabella clicked the tray back into place. Dad sat down with his coffee. Mama served everyone plates of egg casserole, which they ate with vigor, being much hungrier than they had been. After breakfast the children ran into the playroom and settled down onto the couch, playing happily with their new toys.

One month later:

Isabella was writing in a notebook, doing math when she set it down and looked across the table at James, who was also doing math.

“Remember Christmas?” She asked.

“How could I ever forget?” James said. Isabella smiled and looked back into the living room where the Christmas tree had been just a few weeks ago, remembering the presents that had surrounded the base, and went back to her work.

“And that’s the end,” Grandma said. The little girl let out a satisfied sigh and gave her grandma a hug.

“Thanks, Gram-ma,” she said. The girl’s mother called from the kitchen, “Time for dinner!” and Grandma took the girl’s hand and led her into the kitchen where they both took their seats.

The End

Bio: Elsa Hoffman is an 11-year-old girl who enjoys writing, stretching, and reading. She has two siblings, and lives in Erie Pennsylvania right now, and is happy alone somewhere writing or drawing.

Ten Songs That Should Be on Your Christmas Playlist

By Olivia Hill



I love Christmas music. That's probably an understatement. I love almost all music I listen to, and I love making playlists of my favourite songs. So I thought I'd share ten songs with everyone (in no particular order) and reasons why I like them.

P.S. As a roughly eighty five song long playlist of my favourite Christmas music would be too long to write down or read, I picked ten of the songs.

1. Hope of Christmas by Matthew West.

This song conveys what Christmas is all about. In this season, it's so easy to get caught up in all the rush of things, and it's easy to forget about the true meaning of Christmas. "You're still the hope of Christmas, you're still the light when the world is dark. You're still the hope of Christmas, you're still the king of my heart."

2. Christmas With You by Cochren and Co.

This has a jazz style yet it's definitely a Christmas song that is sung by a husband and his wife. It is sweet, has excellent harmonies, and will have you singing along in no time - even if you don't know the words. "I know you love Christmas, and I love Christmas too; this time of year, there's so much we can do."

3. Breath of Heaven by Amy Grant.

This is a beautiful, tender, and sweet song. It is a song that tells Mary's story and her plea to God. As my voice teacher put it, "I love this song because it shows Mary's vulnerability and her plea to God, her supplication towards God." "Breath of heaven, hold me together, be forever near me, breath of heaven."

4. Christmas Shoes by Newsong.

If you cry easily, this song will definitely move your heart. This is a sweet, sentimental song, telling the story of a man who is shopping behind a young, poor boy, whose mother is sick. And it comes to a moving conclusion. "Would you hurry sir, Daddy says there's not much time, you see, she's been sick for quite a while, and I know these shoes will make her smile, and I wanted her to look beautiful if Mama meets Jesus tonight." At my first listen ever, I was crying.



5. Little Drummer Boy by For King and Country.

Pretty much all of us have heard of this classic Christmas song. But have you heard this version? For King and Country puts a totally new and awesome spin on this classic that will have you bopping along with your windows rolled down (if it wasn't December and too cold for that.) "Come, they told me, par rum pa pum pum." Enter epic music.

6. Grown-Up Christmas List by Kelly Clarkson.

This is a Christmas song with an impactful message. Have you ever heard a grownup's Christmas list, and thought it was totally boring? Well, in this song, there's none of that. The wishes that she brings are things we are praying for today, and they are wishes you could sing along with, with all of your heart.

7. Go Tell it on the Mountain by Zach Williams.

Bring out the Christmas cheer! This song is upbeat, but more than that, it has the straight-ahead gospel message behind Christmas, reminding us that God came down among us, and gave us new life!

8. Where Are You Christmas? by Faith Hill.

This is the song I'm singing for the Christmas concert at my co-op. It is a song that is asking a valid question (does Christmas change when you do?) and giving a valid answer ("If there is love, in your heart and your mind, you will feel like Christmas all the time.") It also finishes with an inspiring message at the end. "The joy of Christmas, stays here inside us, fills each and every heart with love." Oh, and check out the Piano Guys version of it. It's adorable, and you have to watch the music video (for a little surprise at the end).

9. We Wish You the Merriest by Idina Menzel feat. Josh Gad.

Do these names sound familiar? 3...2...1...! Time's up! Yep, you guessed it. Elsa and Olaf. This is a chipper, bright, and cheerful song. Plus, it's sung by Elsa and Olaf (they even sound the same) and that makes everything better!!!

10. The Sweetest Gift (dedicated to Annie Schmidt) by the Piano Guys.

Yeah, another sweet song. It also might make you cry. If you're missing someone this Christmas, this is your song. It reminds you of a true and sweet gift. That's all that needs to be said about this song.



Well, I hope you enjoyed my song recommendations. Until next time, happy listening. Oh, and MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!!

Bio: Hi! I'm Olivia! I love listening and singing almost all music, and I love reading (especially LOTR and any other Tolkien.) I'm also planning a ton of books to write, but so far, I only have one named Slavian Chronicles: The Hidden Nation. Namárië!

CHECK OUT OLIVIA'S SPOTIFY PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO THESE SONGS!


<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1frpnFmZB1vtx6NJpKzc1w?si=92cb8d2d01334518&nd=1>

The Desert Sacrifice

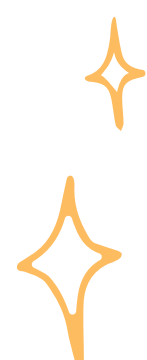
or A Christmas Miracle

BY MICHAEL HOFFMAN

A note on reading: So that the meaning of this poem is placed first and foremost, the rhyme scheme and iambic pentameter (originally modeled after that of The Canterbury Tales) have been adjusted; unfortunately, this can make the poem slightly more difficult to read out-loud in places. It is important to remember in line 18, that 'himself', can be squeezed into one syllable if necessary, same with 'twenty' in line 16, but of course, I shall leave the reading to the readers! Bearing this in mind, please enjoy!



The days were hot as murderous fiery pit
Each night brought cold as sharp as any whip
The days brought threat for skin at last run dry
And when it did the flesh would doubtless die
Each step brought pain as surely as a clock
But stranger had he no choice but to walk
At evening took he his very last water
Lest bareness leave the sickening flesh to totter
Near nightfall pace increased o'er sand and stone
Lest winter freeze the marrow in his bones
Through all the night he moved in such a manner
The last of hope dripped slowly to the desert
When morning came he lay him down to die
In his despair a single tear did cry
Twas this day of the year he did remember
That very day the twenty-fifth of December
The day that savior Christ entered the world
To give himself up for us ungrateful churls
That through his holy sacrifice we men



Could be in God's good fellowship again
But as these very things he verily thought
A vulture flew to see his body rot
A cry of anguish gave the stranger then
And gave his final prayer to high heaven
No sooner did the prayer escape his lips
Than vulture crashed beside him in the sand
He looked in the bird's eye and saw its plight
Without water it would not henceforth take flight
He took a knife to do the fellow in
But reaching there he felt his waterskin
In its last recesses a tiny drop he felt
Which time and desert heat had failed to melt
He took the skin to feed a swig to him
But then he saw his mortal enemy
Escape the desert never will I do
But maybe though the same is not for you
So saying him he pried open the beak

From prolonged thirst the bird was very weak
With the first drops the eyes again were open
And next the wings for thus they were not broken
At the final drop the bird flew away
To stranger gave him not a mind did pay
With man's last strength he got he to his feet
And with his last he chased the flying streak
His eyes did swim his legs were very weak
At first thought his mind began to falter
For just ahead lay a deep stream of water
A truer Christmas miracle I think
There never was in all the world's whole history
But as for that the past is still a mystery
The stranger lives until this very day
Perhaps he's closer than you think, I say

Bio: Michael Hoffman is a thirteen-year-old 8th-9th grade student. He aspires to poetry and philosophy and enjoys writing fiction in his spare time.

CHRISTMAS MAD LIBS

Fill-in-the-Blanks Game by Vlad A. Malin



Jingle Bells

Jingle _____,
plural noun

Jingle _____,
same plural noun

Jingle all the way.

Oh what fun it is to _____
verb

In a _____ open sleigh!
number noun

_____ through the _____,
verb ending in -ing plural noun

Over the _____ we go,
plural noun

_____ all the way.
verb

Bells on _____ ring,
plural noun

Making spirits _____,
adjective

What fun it is to _____ and sing
verb

A _____ song tonight!
verb ending in -ing



Twelve Days of Christmas

On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me a _____ in a pear tree
noun

On the second day of Christmas, my _____ gave to me, two turtle _____, and
noun plural animal
a partridge in a _____ tree.
food

On the third day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, three French _____, _____
plural noun number
turtle doves, and a _____ in a pear _____.
noun noun

On the fourth day of Christmas, my _____ _____ gave to me, four _____ birds...
adjective noun noun

On the fifth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, five golden _____
verb ending in -ing

On the sixth _____ of Christmas, my true love gave to me, six _____ a'laying,
length of time animal plural (anything except mammal)

On the seventh _____ day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, seven swans
noun

a' _____ ...
verb ending in -ing

On the eighth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, _____ maids a'milking...
number

On the ninth day of Christmas, my true _____ gave to me, nine ladies _____...
noun verb ending in -ing

On the tenth day of Christmas my true love gave to me, ten _____ a'leaping...
plural noun

On the eleventh day of Christmas my _____ love gave to me, eleven pipers piping...
adjective

On the _____ th the day of Christmas, my love gave to me, _____
number same number plural noun
_____ ... and a _____ in a pear _____.
verb ending in -ing bird noun

Bio: My name is Vlad A. Malin and I am in seventh grade. I like climbing trees, writing stories, and Mad Libs. We have lots of Mad Libs (some of which I wrote) and we enjoy doing them with our friends.



Aslan is Coming Soon

BY REBECCA RIZZOTTI

Cover image by Jamin Still. Used with permission.

“Why, it is she that has got all Narnia under her thumb. It’s she that makes it always winter. Always winter and never Christmas; think of that!”

We live in a perpetual winter. A winter of widespread corruption, hostility, war, tyranny, and death. We have allowed the allure and beguilement of wealth and pride to draw us under the fatal spell of evil and transgression. People snub those who dare to disagree with their narrative. Governments oppress the rights of their people. Everywhere death reigns as the final enemy. Such is the winter we are trapped in.

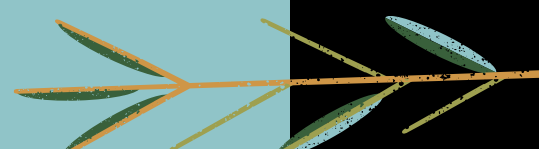
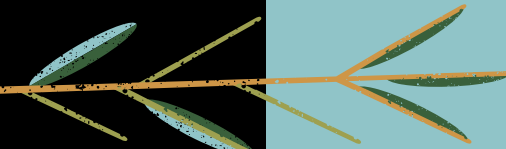
But we are beginning to see the first vestiges of spring.

We have been promised that our Lord is coming back, and that He will come “at an hour [we] do not expect” (Luke 12:40 and Matthew 24:44). We have also been promised that “the time is near” (Revelation 1:3)—Aslan is fast approaching.

“Aslan?” said Mr. Beaver. “Why, don’t you know? He’s the Lord of the whole wood, but not often here, you understand. Never in my time or my father’s time. But the word has reached us that he has come back. He is in Narnia at this moment.”

He will bring to us justice and peace, and he will “judge the world according to their deeds” (Ezekiel 24:14). This is what we are waiting for. This is why we fight against the evil in the world, taking our swords of righteousness against the dragon of iniquity, waiting for the moment when our King will come charging into this war and take back His kingdom, making it right again. That moment seems far off still. Nevertheless there are choices we can make in the meantime, though to make the right choices we must know what God requires of us, as seen in *The Silver Chair*. We can give up on the good and turn to the dark side, like Edmund did in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Or we can follow the example of Peter, Susan, and Lucy. They agreed to look for Aslan even though they weren’t sure he existed; to fight for Aslan even though they weren’t sure they would win; to live for Aslan even though they knew it could cost them everything. When they were doubting, they turned to the ancient prophecies for hope, remembering what Mr. Beaver had told them about Aslan—that when Aslan returned, evil would be no more. Not only did they remember the prophecies, they looked for signs that the prophecies were being fulfilled. The arrival of Father Christmas was a huge encouragement to them because they knew that, if the curse still held power, there could be no Christmas. Spring was still far away, but because of Christmas, they knew that spring would eventually come. Likewise, our spring has not come, and it may not for a long while yet. But in the meantime, we can celebrate the joy of a figurative and literal Christmas.

“I’ve come at last,” said he. “She has kept me out for a long time, but I have got in at last. Aslan is on the move.”



Bio: Rebecca has been writing for as long as she can remember and doesn’t intend to stop anytime soon. She loves classics and fantasy in particular, but is open to any books that will plant goodness in her heart, soul, and mind. She is fifteen years old and a sophomore in high school this year.



WORK CITED

C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*

Christmas Poll

We asked members of the Scholé community to fill out a survey about the best parts of Christmas. We received a hundred responses, and the results are here. Check them out and see how your answers compare with others!

Staff

15%

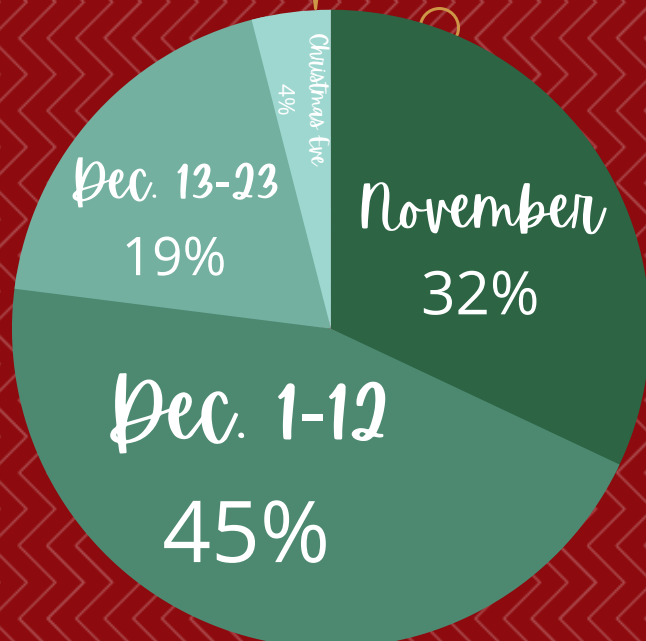
Students

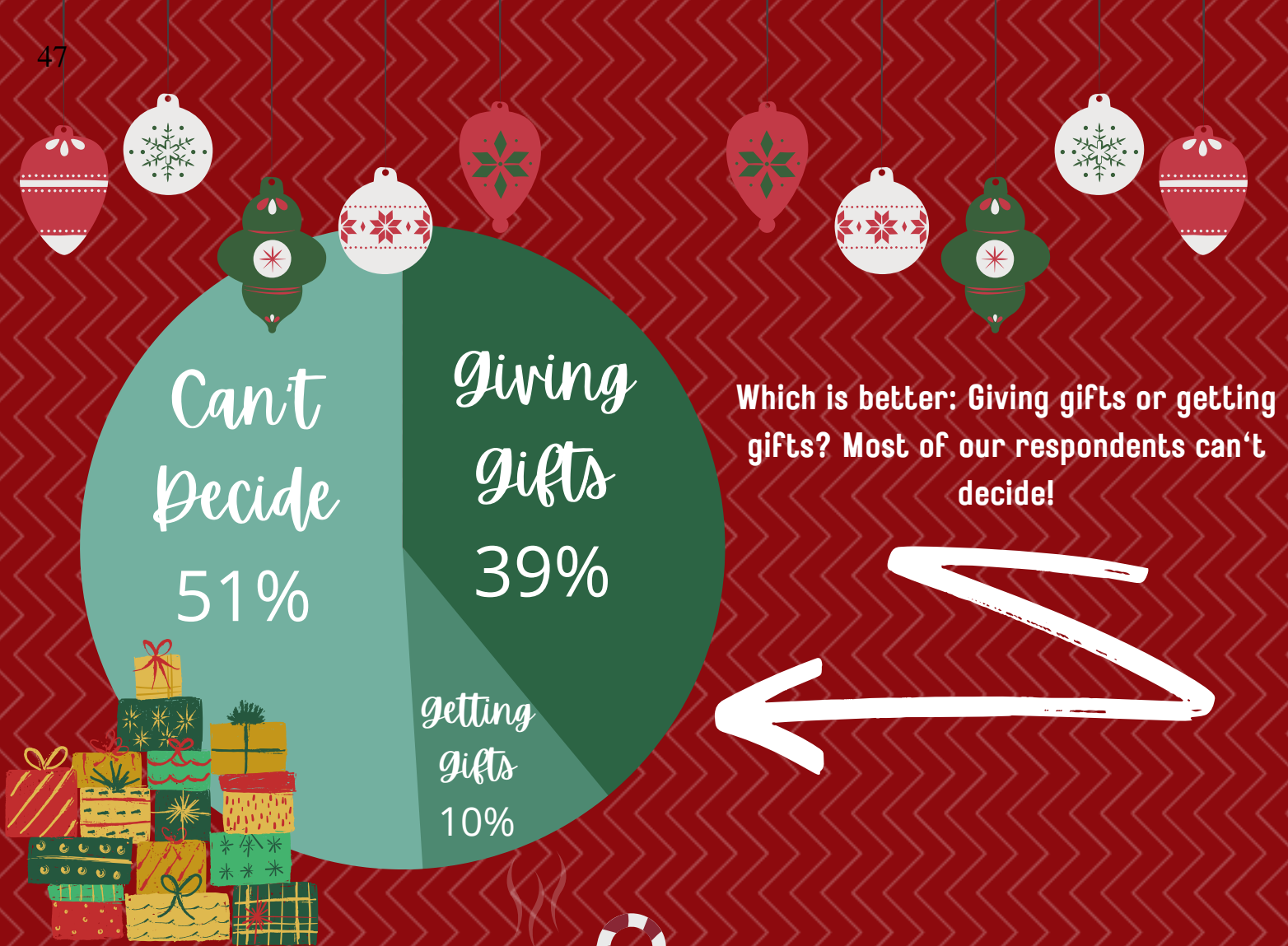
85%

Most of our respondents were students, but we got some responses from staff members too!

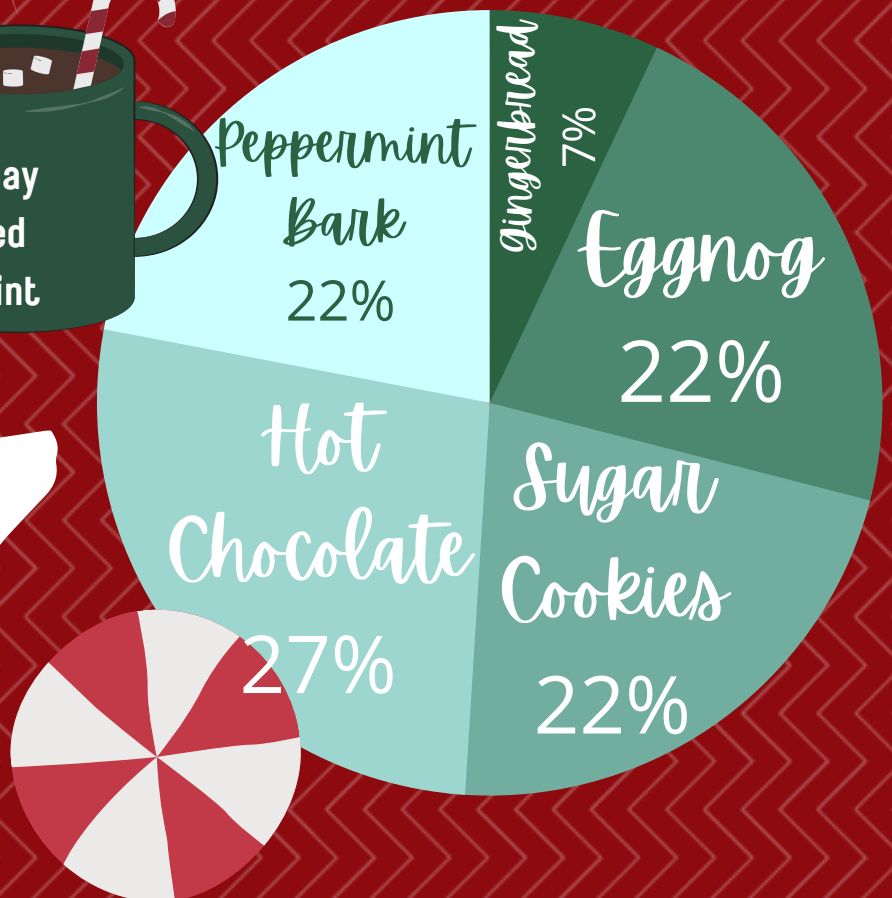


Early December is when most of our respondents put up their tree and start listening to Christmas music!

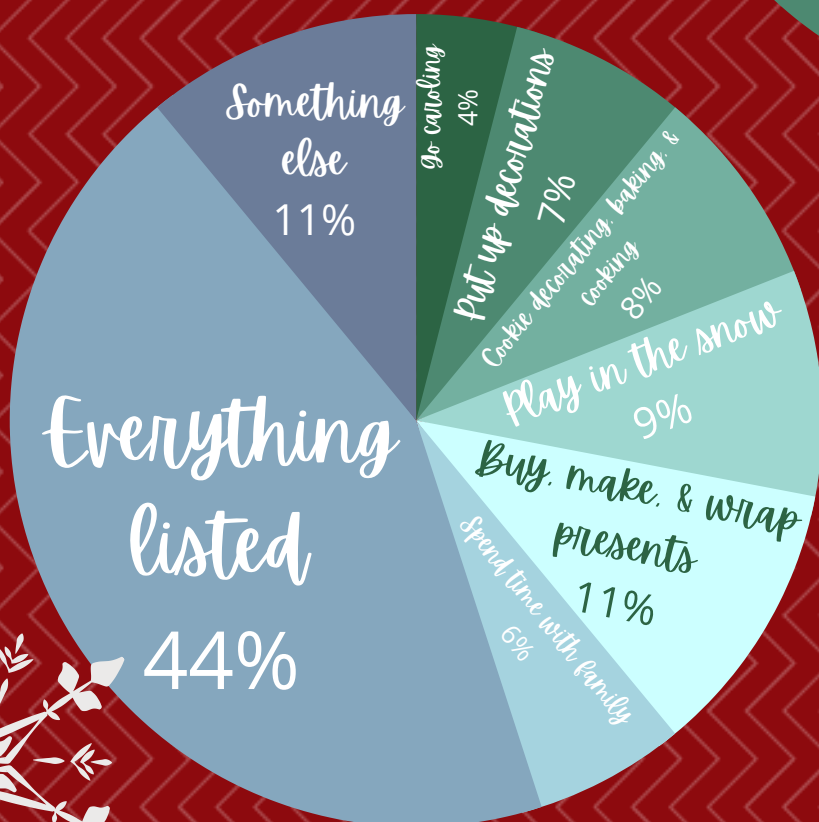
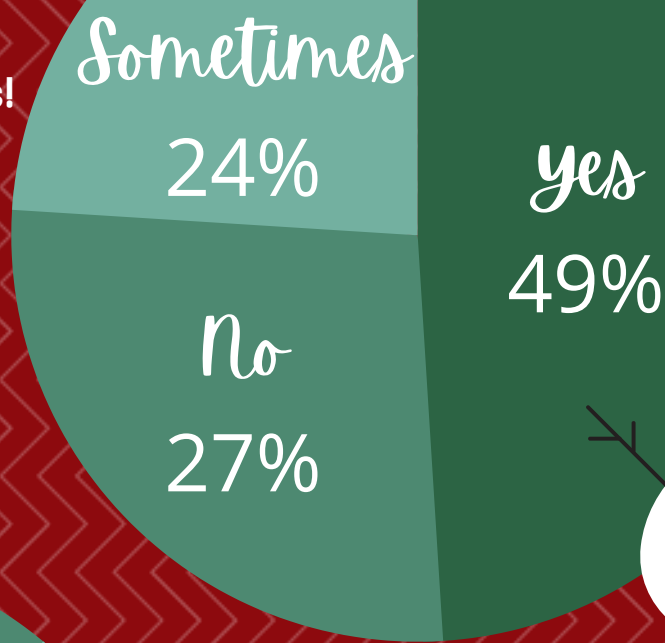




Hot chocolate is the favorite holiday treat of our respondents, followed closely by sugar cookies, peppermint bark, and eggnog!



We asked our respondents if they decorate their house with Christmas lights, and nearly half of them said yes!



There are so many fun things to do during the Christmas season! Our respondents gave lots of different answers when asked about their favorite thing to do around Christmas!

The Christmas poll was created by Alannah Woizeschke, and this display of the responses was organized and designed by her as well. Alannah would like to thank her fellow Chronicle team members for their help with the survey. And, she is also grateful for the many respondents who took the time to answer the questions.

Scholé Chronicle Team 2021



Grace Nelson is a 17-year-old senior living in Ghana, West Africa as a missionary kid. Grace loves the study of the human body and aspires to study nursing in college. When she is not doing school or attending her many online classes, she is playing the guitar, listening to music, obsessing over Jane Austen, or taking a walk with her friend in the village. This is her third year with Scholé Academy and the Scholé Chronicle; she serves as the chief editor this year-- her final year.



Adalie Everitt is fourteen and lives in Fort Collins, Colorado. This is her fourth year working on the Scholé Chronicle as the submissions manager. She enjoys reading, painting with watercolors, writing, spending time with friends, and learning new languages.



Sarah Greeb is a senior who makes her home in South Dakota. This is her third year at Scholé Academy and her first year as a layout designer with the Chronicle, for which she is so excited! She loves philosophy, writing, books, crafting (especially bookbinding), vintage fashion (especially top hats) and chili with lots of cheese on top.



Mara McDonald is fourteen-years-old and lives in southwest Florida. This is her third year with Scholé Academy and first year working on the Chronicle as an editor. You can find her whisking up things in the kitchen, singing, writing, praying, binging on shows such as the “Chosen” and spending time with her amazing (as Anne of Green Gables would say) “cindered spirited” friends. God bless you!




Norah Wade is a high school senior from Iowa. She loves tumbling, knitting, reading, and school. This is her second semester on the Chronicle team.



Alannah Woizeschke is thirteen years old and lives in San Diego, California. This is her second year with Scholé Academy and her first year with the Chronicle as a layout designer. She runs cross-country and track and is also on a swim team. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing, and spending time with friends. Christmas is her favorite holiday, but she has never had a white one!



Rebecca Anderson is sixteen years old and lives in Wisconsin. This is her fifth year with Scholé Academy and third year as a layout/designer on the Scholé Chronicle. She enjoys baking, rock climbing, reading, and spending time with her friends and family.



THE SCHOLE CHRONICLE
TEAM WOULD LIKE TO WISH
YOU A

Merry
Christmas

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We will see you again in 2022 with another issue!
Thank you for reading!