



Celebrate Christmas

Rev. Joyce Kramer



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JOYCE KRAMER
ministries

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Bible quotations are from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

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Christmas is the greatest birthday celebration in existence—the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. On Christmas we honor the one known as Savior, Messiah, Master, and Teacher. His birth has stirred the minds and hearts of people through the centuries. Jesus even now has an impact on humanity like no other. Jesus became our elder brother and way-shower, encouraging us to follow Him.

Jesus brought a new concept of God to mankind—one of goodness, love, peace, and power. He gave us a vision of the brotherhood of man and the unity of all people under the Fatherhood of God. Jesus taught that the Spirit of God is within everyone. He encouraged us to follow His teachings and do His works: “...he that believeth on me the work that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do....” (John 14:12)

If we are to follow the way of life that Jesus advocated, Christmas must become a two-fold celebration. Not only do we celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus, we

Celebrate Christmas

celebrate the birth of His Spirit, the Christ within our mind and heart. The greatest event in history and in the evolution of the human race on the earth plane was the birth and subsequent life of Jesus. The greatest event in our soul evolution takes place when we become aware of “the mystery which has been hid for ages and generations which is Christ in you, your hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:26-27)

To celebrate Christmas, preparations are made. We express our love and goodwill through greeting cards, gifts, food, sharing, and fellowship with family and friends, and by helping those less fortunate. These things in themselves are incomplete and may leave us with the “let-down” feeling so commonly experienced during or after Christmas.

*Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born
If He is not born in thee
Thy soul is all forlorn.*

In prayer and quietness, we prepare our minds and hearts for the birth of the Christ. We honor Jesus Christ and what He has done and is doing for humankind, and for those who chose to follow His way. We revere His Spirit that is enfolded within us and dedicate ourselves to its unfoldment and expression into every facet of life.

Rev. Joyce Kramer

Meditating on the symbols commonly associated with Christmas helps us get ready for a spiritual experience during this special time of year. These symbols represent ideas related to personal growth and spiritual unfoldment. As we understand what they represent, awareness of these symbols will have a decided effect upon us.

RED AND GREEN are traditionally known as the Christmas colors. Green is the color of new life, the living force that persists in expressing itself in the animal and plant kingdom. Within human beings, it is the life force that animates both mind and body giving strength, stability, and living energy. Red is the color of activity and enthusiasm. It relates to our ability to give outer



Celebrate Christmas



expression to the life of God that is within us through purposeful activity that leads to accomplishment. Have you noticed that during the holiday season your work gets done more quickly and easily?

Christmas is the season of **LIGHT**. Lights in windows, on trees, in yards, and on buildings bear witness to Him who said, “I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12) Light refers to an illumined mind that sees beyond the appearance of things to behold the presence and activity of God. Light symbolizes understanding or illumination, the ability to comprehend spiritual ideas. Jesus indicated that our life should pro-

Rev. Joyce Kramer

vide inspiration and guidance to help others move out of darkness into the light of God. He said, “Ye are the light of the world; let your light shine....” (Matthew 5:14)

The **CHRISTMAS TREE**, originally evergreen, is associated with the idea of immortality. It lives and stays green during the long winter months. Life in the evergreen continues to flow, demonstrating the tenacity and eternal quality of life. The smell of the evergreen in the home enhances our feeling of excitement and enthusiasm for Christmas. Christmas trees remind us of the immortality of the soul, and its eternal connection with the source of life, God. Outer decorations on the tree symbolize the powers of God within the soul, our unique spiritual gifts that adorn and beautify our true nature, the Christ within.



Celebrate Christmas



The **STAR**, a sign of the Holy Birth, was a call to acknowledge and worship the Christ child. It guided the Wise Men and shepherds to the place of the child's birth. Within each of us there is an inner guide always available that will lead the way for us to discover and respond to the dream of God within. Jesus followed His inner star that guided Him each step of the way through His life, death, and resurrection. It is not enough to recognize the star, we must follow wherever it leads. Our star will lead to a closer walk with God as we journey forward to follow His will and purpose.



ANGELS played an important part in the Christmas story. An angel appeared to Mary to announce that she had been chosen to bear the Savior of the world. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream informing him that the young woman to whom he was betrothed had been “overshadowed by the Holy Spirit” and would bear the Son of God. Angels appeared to the shepherds in the fields announcing the birth of the long awaited Messiah. Angels are messengers of God, bringing new ideas and understanding direct from the mind of God into the mind of man. Those who pray and have receptive minds and hearts will receive direct, personal, and meaningful messages from God.

Celebrate Christmas



The **SHEPHERDS** were the first to receive the news that the Christ child had been born. The shepherds lived a simple life with time to think and to commune with God as they watched over their flocks. When the angels came bearing tidings of great joy, the shepherds quickly responded by starting on their journey to see and honor the Christ. The shepherds represent faith in God that enables us to respond instantly and easily to inspiration. We need the faith to believe in the messages we receive from God, plus the courage to follow. We nurture our faith through quiet, peaceful communion with God.



The WISE MEN responded to the star in the East, traveling a long distance to find the baby Jesus. The Wise Men represent the intellectual side of our nature that is inclined to analyze and think through our decisions. In scripture, the East represents “the within”—the intuitive side of our mind. Balancing the intellectual and intuitive aspects of our nature is essential to growth. This leads to a greater awareness of God and the cultivation of a good relationship with our Creator.

Celebrate Christmas



The GIFTS the Wise Men brought to honor the Son of God are symbolic of the resources of the soul, available to those who follow the Christ and are dedicated to His will and purpose. At Christmastime, we follow the pattern of the Wise Men in sharing gifts with family and friends. Spiritually, our gifts should be given in recognition and honor of the Christ Spirit within the person to whom the gift is given. Bless each person to whom you give a gift by silently acknowledging and giving thanks for the Christ child that is being born within his or her heart.



MUSIC accompanied the announcement of the Savior's birth. At no other time of the year do so many people listen to beautiful music. Music is a universal language that speaks to the soul, stirring a response from deep within. Christmas carols bring the message of the Christ birth into our minds and hearts. The message of joy, peace, and love is enhanced by the beautiful words and music of Christmas songs. Music helps bring forth that heavenly state of joy that Mary felt when she realized she would bear the Christ child. She said, "My soul doeth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my savior." (Luke 1:46-47)

Celebrate Christmas



MARY, the young mother of Jesus, had been brought up in the temple. She was taught to look to God as the one presence and power of absolute Good in her life, and to trust God completely. She represents the purified soul, the virgin mind and heart that desires, above all else, to do the will and work of God. Through her spiritual aspiration, her purity of heart, Mary became a perfect channel through which the Christ child could

come into the world. Mary depicts divine love that leads to a highly intuitive nature. Through selfless devotion to God, we can prepare for the Christ Spirit to be born in our mind and heart. We nurture the Christ ideal by serving God in our thoughts, words and actions.

JOSEPH was at first troubled with the news that Mary was to bear a child. He was assured by an angel in a dream that Mary's child was the work of God, that she would bear the long-awaited Messiah. Joseph quickly acted upon his guidance from God and devotedly took care of Mary. Joseph represents wisdom, and wisdom works with love to nurture the Christ idea and to bring forth the perfect expression of God in man. The love and purity of Mary was protected and sustained by the wisdom and understanding of Joseph. He had a strong faith in God, even though it exceeded human understanding.

When we first hear that the Christ, the Spirit of God, is to be born in us, we are likely to wonder how this can be. As we in faith accept the idea of God in man and nurture it with our love and wisdom, we can expect something wonderful to happen in us. "...and I will put my Spirit within you...." (Ezekiel 36:27)

Celebrate Christmas



Dr. Rudolph Steiner wrote, “In Christ Jesus we have the great prototype of that which should be born out of the human soul.” JESUS CHRIST personified the love of God born into the world for the salvation of man. He gave His all that we may learn the Truth and through that Truth give dynamic expression to His Spirit into our world, to the glory of God and the honor of humankind. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the Truth.” (John 18:37) “And ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

Celebrate Christmas! Participate fully in this festival of joy and goodwill in honor of the birth of the beloved son, Jesus, and the birth of the Christ within the human heart. Ask God to reveal the significance of the Christmas story to you, and how to relate it to your life. Ponder in your heart the mystery of His birth in you. Rejoice as the loving, active, and powerful presence of Christ comes alive in you. Celebrate Christmas!

Celebrate Christmas

The Christmas Story

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them and they were sore afraid.

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 Saviour, 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.

Luke 2:8–14



About the Author

Rev. Joyce Kramer (1930–2022) is one of the most prolific inspirational ministers not only in America but across the world.

Ordained by the Unity Ministerial School in 1968, for over fifty years Rev. Kramer delivered thousands of sermons and classes at Unity Church of Tidewater (which she founded and built) in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

For twenty-seven years her weekly radio broadcasts—more than 1,400 programs—reached listeners in Ghana and Nigeria through Radio Africa. During this time, volunteers distributed 40,000 audio recordings of her messages. For twenty-five years her radio programs were broadcast in the United States. In addition, she recorded thousands of daily inspirational messages for her telephone ministry known as Dial-A-Blessing.

Rev. Kramer served as president of the Association of Unity Churches and as visiting instructor for the Unity School of Religious Studies. Her writings have appeared in *Daily Word*, *Unity Magazine*, and other publications. Many organizations have called on Rev. Kramer as a guest speaker and seminar leader. She also taught night courses in the Chesapeake School System, including *Creative Thinking*, *Psycho-Cybernetics*, and *Dynamics of Success*.

Her work has been recognized by many local, national, and international organizations. She was named Hampton Roads Outstanding Professional Woman and received the award for Outstanding Contribution to the Elimination of Racism from the YWCA of South Hampton Roads. Her international radio programs won her the Voice of Unity Award for Excellence in Broadcast Outreach. In 2017 Unity World Headquarters recognized Rev. Kramer's half-century of service in a special presentation made by Unity CEO Jim Blake.

Having successfully completed her work at Unity Church of Tidewater, Rev. Kramer launched a new and expanded global ministry to teach the Science of Practical Christianity. Her ministry continues to share spiritual principles for successful living through the publication of books, audio programs, and the Joyce Kramer Ministries website (www.joycekramerministries.com). An inspirational email, "Joyce Kramer's Daily Blessing," is sent to those who request it. A sign-up form is available on the website.



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The Joyce Kramer Ministries logo depicts a dogwood tree planted across the entrance to the church that Rev. Kramer founded in Virginia Beach. Transplanted from her brother's property in Charlottesville, for eighteen months the tree seemed nothing more than a lifeless stick in the ground. Finally, on a Wednesday afternoon, the decision was made to dig it up, but the lawn maintenance man did not have a shovel with him. The next week, he said, he would come back and discard the dead tree. But that Sunday when Rev. Kramer arrived at church, she noticed a single leaf had appeared on the otherwise barren stick. They left the tree in place, and it grew into one of the most beautiful on the property. This flowering dogwood represents the message of Joyce Kramer Ministries: Growth is always possible; never give up.



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