

The  
**WACKY FUN**  
Magazine



MILK  
and  
COOKIES

Christmas 2022

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**Do you Want to contribute to the magazine?  
All you have to do is email your article to  
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could appear in the next edition!**

# *top 10 Christmas traditions*



1. Celebrating Jesus
2. Donating to kids in need
3. Family Get Togethers
4. Opening Gifts
5. Decorating the Tree
6. Hot Chocolate
7. Christmas Parades
8. Seeing Christmas Lights
9. Wishing for Snow
10. Making cookies

By: Elizabeth Yother

# Book Review: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

John Van Fleet

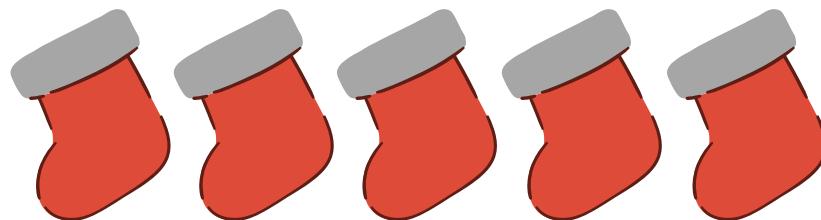
Author: Barbara Robinson

Publisher: Harper & Row

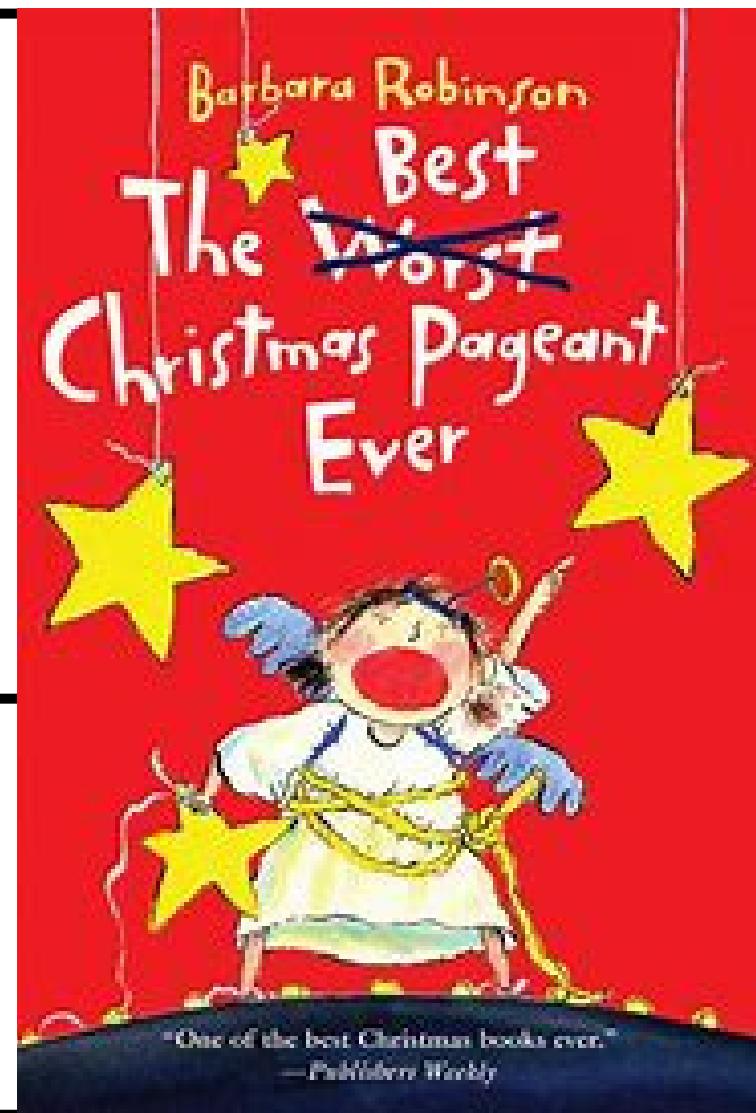
Grades: 4th-12th

Pages: 150

Genre: Comedy, Fiction



5 Stars



This book is the best Christmas book I have ever read. The Herdmans are a rambunctious family of kids that are always causing trouble. Then they get the lead roles in the Christmas pageant!? Uh-oh...

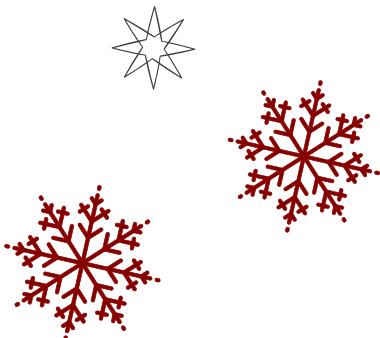


# Animal Spotlight

## Reindeer (caribou)

- Reindeer live in Greenland, Scandinavia, Russia, Alaska, and Canada.
- They are a member of the deer family
- They spend about 40% of their time in snow, their hollow fur traps heat to keep them warm
- Reindeer actually do have red noses! They have hundreds of tiny veins that circulate warmth to their noses and make them appear red.

**By: Daniel Yother  
picture borrowed from the internet**



# How 12 Christmas Traditions got their start

## Daniel Van Fleet

**Christmas Trees** - Decorated trees date back to Germany in the Middle Ages, with German and other European settlers popularizing Christmas trees in America by the early 19th century. A New York woodsman named Mark Carr is credited with opening the first U.S. Christmas tree lot in 1851. A 2019 survey by the American Christmas Tree Association, predicted that 77 percent of U.S. households displayed a Christmas tree in their home. Among the trees on display, an estimated 81 percent were artificial and 19 percent were real.

**Advent Calendars** - Early versions of this tradition, started in Germany in 1903 by publisher Gerhard Land, offered a way for children to count down to Christmas by opening one “door” or “window” a day to reveal a Bible passage, poem or small gift. Since gaining mass popularity by 1920, the calendars have evolved to secular calendars that include daily gifts from mini bottles of wine to nail polish to chocolates to action figures.

**Gingerbread Houses** - Although Queen Elizabeth I gets credit for the early decorating of gingerbread cookies, once again, it's the Germans who lay claim to starting the gingerbread house tradition. And when the German Brothers Grimm wrote “Hansel and Gretel” a new holiday tradition was born. Today, the edible decorations are available in a slew of pre-packed kits.

**Ugly Christmas Sweaters** - You can blame our neighbors to the north for this silly, ironic tradition that really gained steam in the 1980s. According to the Ugly Christmas Sweater Party Book, the sweaters became a party trend in Vancouver, Canada in 2001. And the trend is seemingly here to stay. According to Fox Business, the ugly sweater industry is a multi-million business, with websites such as Tipsy Elves, retailers including Macy's, Kohl's and Target, and even food chains jumping on the ugly bandwagon.

**Cookies and Milk for Santa** - While leaving treats for Santa and his reindeer dates back to ancient Norse mythology, Americans began to sweeten up to the tradition during the Great Depression in the 1930s, as a sign of showing gratitude during a time of struggle.

**Candy Canes** - Whether devoured as a treat or hung on the tree as decoration, candy canes are the No. 1-selling non-chocolate candy during December, and date back to 1670 Germany. The red and white peppermint sticks arrived stateside in 1847, when a German-Swedish immigrant in Wooster, Ohio placed them on a tree. By the 1950s, an automated candy cane-making machine was invented, cementing their mass appeal.

**Door Wreaths** - Wreaths have been around since the ancient Greek and Roman times, but the evergreen Christmas wreath, often adorned with boughs of holly, eventually took on Christian meaning, with the circular shape representing eternal life and the holly leaves and berries symbolic of Christ's crown of thorns and blood, according to the New York Times. Today's wreaths, which come in all varieties, from flowers and fruit to glass balls and ribbon to artificial and themed, are most often seen as a secular winter tradition.

**Christmas Cards** - The first official Christmas card debuted in 1843 England with the simple message, "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You." The idea of a mailed winter holiday greeting gradually caught on in both Britain and the U.S., with the Kansas City-based Hall Brothers (now Hallmark) creating a folded card sold with an envelope in 1915.

Today, according to the Greeting Card Association, more than 1.6 billion holiday cards are sold annually.

**It's a Wonderful Life** - Frank Capra's classic Christmas film debuted in 1946, with Jimmy Stewart playing George Bailey, a suicidal man who is shown what life would be like without him by an angel. But before becoming an annual TV-viewing tradition, the movie was a bit of a flop at the box office when it premiered, although it did receive five Oscar nominations (but no wins). A lapsed copyright in the 1970s allowed TV stations to air the movie for free. It has aired exclusively on NBC and USA since 1994.

**Christmas Lights** - Thomas Edison may be famous for the light bulb, but it was his partner and friend, Edward Hibberd Johnson, who had the bright idea of stringing bulbs around a Christmas tree in New York in 1882. By 1914, the lights were being mass produced and now some 150 million sets of lights are sold in the U.S. each year.

**Twelve Days of Christmas** - Even though most hear the song between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, the Christian 12 days of Christmas, which span the birth of Jesus and the visit of the Magi, actually take place December 25 to January 6. The earliest version of the poem-turned-song is thought to have been published in *Mirth With-out Mischief*, a children's book from 1780, with the modern version credited to English composer Frederic Austin who set the poem to music. Each year the PNC Christmas Price Index totals up the total cost of the 12 gifts named in the song based on current markets.

For 2019, everything from a partridge in a pear tree to 12 drummers drumming would run up a bill of \$38,993.59.

**Salvation Army Bell-Ringers** - Come December, bell-ringers span out to accept donations in their iconic red kettles. Collecting money for the needy since 1891, the tradition started with San Francisco Salvation Army Capt. Joseph McFee who wanted to raise money to offer a free Christmas dinner to 1,000 of the city's most destitute. Inspired by a kettle he had seen in England in which people tossed in coins for the poor, he set up his own version, and the idea quickly spread across the country and the world. Today, the Salvation Army helps more than 4.5 million people during the holiday season and they don't only accept cash—donations can be made via smart phones.

# What Child Is This? Poverty, Not a Palace, for the Greatest King

Submitted by Mrs. Gwen Hood

Article by  
David Mathis  
Executive Editor, desiringGod.org

As a child, I was not impressed with a Christmas song that asked a question everyone already knew the answer to.

*What child is this? Really?* It's Jesus, of course. We all know that — even the kids know that. What I didn't yet understand is that questions aren't just for solving problems and requesting new information. Sometimes questions make a point. We call those "rhetorical questions." Other times the form of a question expresses awe and wonder about something we know to be true, but find almost too good to be true. It's too good to simply say it directly like we say everything else.

When the disciples found themselves in a great windstorm, with waves breaking into the boat, and Jesus calmed the storm, they said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:41). They knew the answer from Scripture. Only God himself can still the seas (Psalm 65:7; 89:9; 107:29); this, somehow, must be God. But it was too wonderful just to say. This new revelation of Jesus's glory was too stupendous to keep quiet, and too remarkable not to say it in some fresh way. God himself had become man and was in the boat with them. "Who then is this?"

It's in a similar vein that we say at Christmas, "What child is this?" We know the answer. It has been plainly revealed. And it is almost too wonderful to be true. God himself has become man in this baby, and has come to rescue us. The eternal Word has become flesh and dwells among us (John 1:14). It is clear and certain. We must say it straightforwardly and with courage. And it is fitting that at times, like Christmas, we wonder, we marvel, we declare in awe, "What child is this?"

## Such Mean Estate

"The light and joy of Christmas are hollow at best, and even horrifying, if we sever the link between Bethlehem and Golgotha."

What prompts this statement-question of awe, though, is not only that God has become man, but that he has come among us in this way — in this surprising poverty. The first stanza gives us the glory we expect: Angels greet him with anthems sweet. That's the kind of arrival we expected. Heavenly hosts sing. The heavens are alight with song.

But even here there's a glimpse of the unexpected. The angels sing to shepherds. That's odd. Angels, yes — but shepherds? Shouldn't there be dignitaries, especially from among the regal and religious establishment of the Jews, who have purportedly long awaited the coming of their Christ? Shouldn't shepherds take a number behind the king and his court, the priests and the scribes, and the Jerusalem elite?

The unexpected is there in the first stanza, but it is the second where things get especially peculiar. Why does the newborn lie "in such mean estate" in the very place where "ox and ass are feeding"? Why a stable? Why this place of poverty? Why not a palace, but the lowest of all structures?

## **Nails, Spears**

The beauty in asking — in saying — at Christmas, “What child is this?” is that it beckons us beyond lowly Bethlehem to a life of even greater lowness. And not static lowness, but increasing lowness.

Here at Christmas we celebrate that Jesus, “though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men . . .” (Philippians 2:6–7). But why? Why this surprising appearance among us? To simply show us it can be done? Surely this is more than a stunt. Why has he come? What is he here to accomplish?

Christmas commemorates more than his birth. It also presses us forward in his story, beyond the lowness of the manger to a life of lowly sacrifice with no place to lay his head (Luke 9:58) — and finally to the ultimate lowness, an odious public execution, condemned unjustly as a criminal: “. . . and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8). Some may suspect we are souring the brightness and joy of Christmas when we sing, “Nails, spears shall pierce him through . . .” Can’t we leave that for Good Friday? Let us have our nice, little, cuddly Baby Jesus at Christmas. No nails, no blood, no death, no thank you.

But the Word-made-flesh, coming without a cross in view, is no good news. The light and joy of Christmas are hollow at best, and even horrifying, if we sever the link between Bethlehem and Golgotha. “. . . The cross he bore for me, for you.” This time, he comes not in judgment, but mercy.

He did this for you. Christmas is for you only because his life is for you, and his death is for you, and his triumphant resurrection on the other side is for you. “Nails, spears shall pierce him through” doesn’t ruin Christmas. It gives the season its power.

## **Peasants Come — and Kings**

“Nails, spears shall pierce him through’ doesn’t ruin Christmas. It gives the season its power.”

So we sing, “Come peasant, king to own him.” Lowly shepherds are here. And when the lofty of his own people will not bow the knee, foreign dignitaries traverse far, over field and fountain, moor and mountain, to honor him by laying down their treasures. Peasants come, and kings. The weak and the strong. The wise and the foolish. The low and despised kneel side by side with those powerful and nobly born.

The manger is for all sinners because the cross is for all sinners. And this is all too much for simple fact-finding, cool-headed analysis, and calculated articulations. This is the stuff of singing. This is the time to say, to declare in the awe and wonder of worship, “What child is this?”

# Treats to Bake on Christmas

Evie Venable



## Gingerbread



## Sugar Cookies



## Cinnamon Cake



## Toffee Squares



## Peppermint Bark

**MONKEY BREAD**  
From Gwen Hood

**½ cup chopped pecans  
3/4 cup sugar  
1-1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
3-10 oz. cans refrigerated buttermilk biscuits (I use Hungry Jack)  
1-1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar  
3/4 cup butter or margarine, melted**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Sprinkle pecans in the bottom of a well greased 10-inch Bundt pan. Set aside.

Combine sugar and cinnamon. Using scissors, cut biscuits into quarters. Roll each piece in the sugar mixture and layer in the pan.

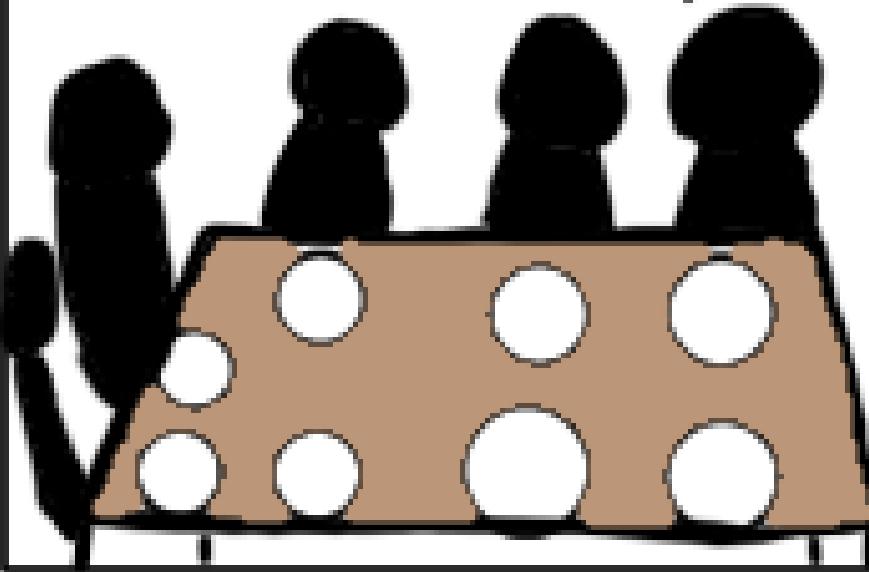
Combine brown sugar and margarine or butter and pour over dough.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes. Cool bread in the pan for 10 minutes and then invert onto serving platter.

This can be made the night before and then baked in the morning. Just cover with foil when you store it in the refrigerator and allow it to come to room temperature before you put it in the oven.

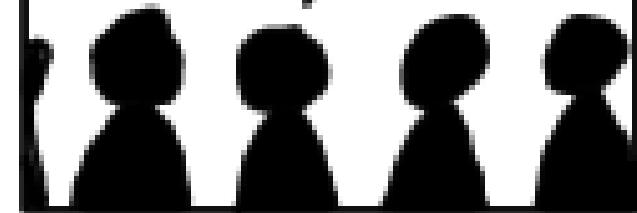
**YIELD: 1 10-INCH COFFEE CAKE**

Christmas Day



Featuring the friends

Not "the friends"  
us!



More like

Book and game  
friends.



here Are

Some

some of  
them...



are sneaky!



so  
sneaky,  
good!

OAC!