

*Merry*

**CHRISTMAS**

FROM THE

**CEDAR**

*Sentinel*

V o l u m e 5 6 I s s u e 3

# Volume 56

## Issue 3

Editor in Chief..... Luca Phillips

Assistant Editor..... Alannah Tjhatra

Layout..... Luca Phillips

Reporters..... Fay'ja Day  
Luca Phillips  
Sebastian Celestial  
Ashley Boehner  
Kim Tosi  
Alannah Tjhatra

Sponsor..... Mr. MacDonald



## Index

4	Christmas in the Girl's Dorm
5	Christmas Traditions in Australia
6	Christmas Playlist
7	Christian Christmas Customs
8	Modern Day Bible
9	Calypso Christmas
10	In a New Light
11	Laugh Out Loud



## *Editor in Chief*

Hi Kingsway,

I can't believe it's already Christmas! I don't know about you but I'm super excited for a much needed break. This passed week hasn't been all too busy for me but this month has. Getting homework and assignments done and finishing up all your tests can be a challenge when you have so much going on in your classes, just sending out a word of encouragement and congratulations for making it through the first few months of the school year! Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Cedar Sentinel. Hope you have an amazing time over the break and get lots of rest before it's time to come back. Enjoy this issue of the Cedar Sentinel, It's my first time doing the layout for a Christmas issue, so I hope you all enjoy the festive candy cane theme. A big shoutout to my awesome assistant editor Alannah who has alleviated some of the stresses of being the editor of the paper. Thanks girl! Also a shoutout goes to my boss and english teacher Mr. MacDonald for making the paper possible, we couldn't do it without you!

Anyway, happy reading!

## *Congratulations*



Congratulations to Ashley Boehner for solving both of the Sudoku's from last months paper! Keep a look out for the next contest for your chance to win!



# Christmas in the Girl's Dorm

By Ashley Boehner

It is so hard to believe that the Christmas season is already here! It seemed like just yesterday, we were all shaking each other's hands, getting to know each other. I have been asked these questions many times around the holidays: "Isn't it hard not being with your family around Christmas?" or "Do you guys do anything special for Christmas in the dorm?" For the first question, yes, it may be a bit hard sometimes being away from my family around Christmas, but Christmas in the dorm is something that I look forward to each year. It brings me closer with my dorm family. To answer the second question, of course we do things in the dorm! With the Christmas season now approaching, the girl's dorm is getting in the spirit!

I don't know about you, but to me it doesn't really feel like Christmas until the room is decorated and the tree is up. The Saturday night after Thanksgiving break, Minnie eagerly hauled out the Christmas decorations from storage. A couple of girls and I helped Minnie decorate around the dorm. We put red and white poinsettias around the lobby, hung up her large wreath, and decorated the Christmas tree in red ornaments and ribbon. While decorating, we

had some old Christmas classics playing in the background, getting us all side-tracked as we ended up singing and laughing together for most of the time.

Another thing that the Girls Dorm does to get into the Christmas mood is Secret Santas. For those who may not know what Secret Santas is, it is where you pick a name from a hat and you buy that person a gift anonymously. Secret Santas is a great way to remind us that Christmas isn't just about receiving, it's also about giving too. It is a really great way to bring everyone closer as sisters. This year, I volunteered to take on the task of being in charge of keeping it organized.

One evening I gave all the girls a slip of paper and asked them to write down their names and some cheap things that they would like for Christmas. The wish-list items varied from makeup to food and everything in between that teenage girls could ask for. Once I received them all, I put them into a hat and went around to the girls' rooms. One by one they picked a name from the bucket. The girls were so excited as they were choosing their Secret Santa. Some ended up picking their best friend from the bucket and others picked up a girl that they didn't know that well. Either way, no one is going to know who gave them the gift!

We will be opening the gifts at our dorm Christmas party on December the 18th. At our party, we will have a special Christmas dinner with everyone. We will then head into the lobby where Santa will come and greet us. He and his elves will hand out the gifts to the girls that their Secret Santa lovingly picked out. We will all open them at the same time and get our picture taken all together with Santa and our gifts.

Hopefully this answered the question of what we do in the Girls Dorm for Christmas. Christmas in the dorm brings us all together. Whether it's by decorating, singing to Christmas tunes, or giving a gift to a friend, new memories and friendships are made. Sometimes we are too busy with Kingsway's schedule, it is good to take time and spend the holidays together. As we are away from our biological families for most of the year, in the dorm we become like a second family of sisters. There's no need to feel bad for us because we're in the dorm. If anything, you can be jealous; we get two Christmases - one with our real family, and one with our family away from our family. I know Christmas is extra special for me because I get to spend part of it in the dorm.





# Christmas Traditions in Australia

By Luca Phillips

As some people might know, I am part Australian. My grandparents on my moms side both come from there, why they decided to come to Canada bewilders me especially during the cold winters here. A few years ago, my family and I traveled down under to visit relatives during Christmas. We were there for three awesome weeks.

It was so amazing to have the opportunity to visit my family in Australia and be able to spend some time getting to know the place where my relatives come from. Although I was quite young when we went and i don't remember as much as I did a few years ago, I certainly would have thought I'd remember being told about all the poisonous snakes and spiders that inhabit the lands of Australia. For some reason my parents failed to tell me about such frightening creatures before the trip, maybe it was for the better though.

During my time in Australia it made me wonder how our traditions in Canada differ from theirs. I already was introduced to the different dialect that Aussies speak. Words such as "boot", meaning the trunk of a car and "bathers", meaning swimming suit or bathing suit. These words soon became a part of my knowledge.

Among the differences between Canada and Australia stands

the celebration of Christmas. Although there are many similar aspects to Christmas in Australia, there are still some unique traditions and perspectives that we Canadians aren't accustomed to. One being the fact that the seasons in Australia are totally opposite from ours. So while we are celebrating Christmas in the coolness of winter, theirs starts towards the beginning of summer.

Similar to Canada, Australians decorate their houses with light and trim their Christmas trees. One thing they do differently while decorating is instead of the holly or the mistletoe that we normally hang, they string their homes with bunches of Christmas Bush, a native Australian tree with small green leaves and cream coloured flowers. Around the time of Christmas, these trees turn a luscious red.



During Christmas, in each State capital city there is a large Carol by Candlelight service. This service sometimes feature famous Australian singers like The Wiggles, John Farnham, Anthony Warlow, Colin Gery, and Niki Webster to help sing carols. This event is somewhat similar to the Jingle Ball that we have staged in different parts of the world. It was recently held in Toronto. These carols are broadcasted on TV across Australia.

This event is not the only broadcasted event in Australia, another one is huge pageants in each state capital city. These pageants include huge Christmas parades, dancers, bands, and activities such as pictures with Santa and pageant queens and kings contests. Ending the night in a display of fireworks.

When Santa comes to town for us in Canada he pulls his nine reindeer behind his sleigh, but when he gets to Australia, he lets his reindeer rest and uses his 'six white boomers' a.k.a. kangaroos. As well as the change in sleigh pullers, Santa also changes into something a little more fitting to the temperature, resembling a cool surfer Santa.

Learning these new traditions and customs of my family's home country helped me become closer with my culture and embrace my Australian heritage.

Merry Christmas mate!

# Christmas Playlist



**It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas**  
Bing Crosby



**Baby It's Cold Outside**  
Idina Menzel Ft. Michael Bublé



**Wrapped in Red**  
Kelly Clarkson



**Mary Did You Know?**  
Pentatonix



**Last Christmas**  
Wham!



**Silver Bells**  
Martina McBride



**Blue Christmas**  
Elvis Presley



**Christmas Offering**  
Casting Crowns



**Oh Holy Night**  
Céline Dion





# Christian Christmas Customs

By Kim Tosi

Christmas is almost here! Most people have been anticipating this time of year for quite some time. Nonetheless, as people hustle around trying to find gifts, decorations, and cards, one may start to wonder what exactly is being celebrated. Most people are quite aware that Jesus was not really born on December 25th and wonder whether it is right to join in to this holiday craze. The celebration of Christmas on December 25th was of a quite ungodly origin. It all started when the Romans began celebrating the 'birth-day' of the Pagan Sun god which was held on December 25th (when the Romans thought the Winter Solstice took place) and was then adopted by the early Roman Catholic Church as a holy day.

Although we are conscious that the origins of the Christmas celebrations are pagan, Ellen White makes it clear that we can use this heathen tradition for good. In her book *Adventist Home*, Ellen White states that we can celebrate Christmas in a way that brings honour to God: "As the twenty-fifth of December is observed to commemorate the birth of Christ... It can be made to serve a very good purpose." She goes on to say that simple things such as a Christmas tree in each church "may be made a great blessing" (Review and Herald, December 9, 1884). Therefore, celebrating Christmas

is not a problem, that is, if people celebrate it the right way. When people become so engrossed in the material aspect of Christmas to the point of only thinking of what their gifts will be or what they will fill their stomachs with, that is when the meaning of Christmas is lost. Instead, Christians should take advantage of the season that often softens people's hearts to make Christ known to other people. So here are some suggestions on how people can turn their focus towards God this Christmas season.

#### *Give to those in need*

- Instead of buying expensive gifts for members of their families, people could spend a little less and send the money they saved to an orphanage or to a child in need in a foreign country.

#### *Bake cookies - then share them*

- One of the greatest joys of the Christmas season undoubtedly is baking and decorating Christmas cookies. To change things up a bit, why not give away the cookies to some lonely Church member or even to a random stranger on the street? You can attach an inspirational quote or Bible verse to the cookie bag, it might really cheer someone up.

#### *Sing your heart out*

- There are so many beautiful songs that talk about our Saviour's birth; songs that touch people's lives and remind them of the reason for the season. Christmas songs often remind us of the reason Jesus came to the Earth and the joy His birth

brought to all mankind. So get a group of friends together and sing. *Be especially kind and cheerful*

- It is said that Christmas brings out the best in people. A simple smile, a small act of kindness can really make someone's day.

Although the world doesn't really celebrate Christmas in the right way or for the right reasons, we as Christians should be different. Above all, people should remember why Christmas is supposed to be a joyful season. What could bring more joy than to know that the Ruler of the Universe actually came to this world to save each and every person? When you stop and think what God did for humanity, Christmas definitely becomes the season to be jolly.

While the world is focusing on the joy of the season, may we focus on the joy found in Christ. While the world is focusing on bringing gifts to their loved ones, may we focus on giving gifts to those who are not loved. While the world is focusing on what will be under the Christmas tree, may we focus on what is inside our hearts.

"Christmas is coming. May you all have wisdom to make it a precious season. Let the older church members unite, heart and soul, with their children in their innocent amusement and recreation, in devising ways and means to show true respect to Jesus by bringing to Him gifts and offerings" (Review and Herald, December 9, 1884)





# Modern Day Bible

By Sebastian Celestial

**M**artin was born and raised in a wealthy and Christian family. All his life he has gotten whatever he wanted from his parents. When he was 16 his mother was diagnosed with cancer and died when he was 18. Ever since, he devoted his time to cancer research and helping anyone in sickness or pain. He practiced medicine, kinesiology, and psychology. Martin then got a job as a full-time physician. Martin loved the Sabbath and always kept it holy. He stopped all his work that he would do on the previous six days and would spend the day worshiping and praising the Lord.

One Sabbath, however, was different. During the pastor's sermon there was a loud crash outside. The pastor stopped for a moment and then kept on preaching. People that were not in the sanctuary went to check what it was. There was an accident outside, two cars had collid-

ed. One of the cars t-boned the other car on the driver side.

A member of the church rushed into the sanctuary and explained to Martin what had happened. Martin always had supplies wherever he went. He went into his car, grabbed his supplies, and rushed to the scene.

Here is a little secret about the church, many members of the church did not like Martin because of how "perfect" he was. Martin knew this but paid no attention to it. The members of the church thought that if he helped the people at the scene then he would have disobeyed the Sabbath and they would have something against him.

When Martin saw a man drenched in blood he rushed over to help, but stopped for a moment because an elder of the church yelled,

"If you help that man you will be going against God and His Sabbath." Martin started unpacking his sup-

plies but at the same time he said,

"What is better to do in this situation, good or evil? Is it better to help this man and save his life or to do evil and let him die?" The audience was amazed with his answer and the man who had yelled at him stood in silence as he felt foolish.

The man who got t-boned had a large piece of glass in his side. Martin took the piece out, sterilized the wound, stitched it up, and bandaged it. The man also had other injuries but they were very minor and just needed a bandage. The members then went and discussed how they would get rid of Martin.

Although the members of the church were getting rid of Martin behind his back, Martin couldn't care less. He had done a good deed, Sabbath or not he was doing the work of God.





# Calypso Christmas

By Fay'ja Day

There are many things that people look forward to when it comes to Christmas. There is getting gifts, the Christmas Sabbath service at church, Christmas carols, and of course all the food. For me it's being with my family, I love getting together with everyone on both sides of the family, I also like getting stuff from my Grandmas and Uncles.

Then there is Boxing Day, a day everyone looks forward to. However, even though all that is good and great, my family is a little different. And because I have two families (my mom's side and my dad's side) my family is semi-big. Also because of this I have two Christmas days.

On my mom's side, everyone is from St. Vincent. Every year my grandma hosts a Christmas party at her place, and everyone tries to show up. Every year my aunts and female cousins come with food or are in the kitchen making dinner.

Every year my grandma's kitchen is beyond loud, and anyone who is not cooking should stay out the kitchen or else you would be attacked. Everyone else is either in the living room with Christmas music playing or in a bedroom watching a movie. The kids are in a separate room playing games while the elders are talking at the kitchen table.

On my dad's side, the Trinidadian side, everyone is loud and exuberant. Soca music is blasting from the mini speakers, nephews and nieces are running around, the teenagers are in the living room either talking or watching TV, the grandmas or aunts are in the kitchen, all while the men are in the backroom. But even though everyone was separated we were still together. Even if we were in different rooms we were at the dinner table when it was time.

My favorite part of Christmas would have to be Christmas breakfast. We have this tradition on both sides of my family. On my mom's side

we have this type of special tea called cocoa tea. There is real coca, cinnamon, and bay leaf. I used to hate tea when I was a kid, this was the only type of tea I would drink as a child, and I only had it during Christmas so I would have to wait a whole year before I could have a cup. Which is what made it even more special.

While on my dad's side my grandma would also make tea too, till this day I don't know what the tea is, I asked but I don't know how to pronounce it. Anyways, I do know that my grandma adds the sweet Carnation milk (the one in the can) and two squares of sugar too make it taste even better. It's small traditions like these that make my Christmas' a little bit more different and unique. And it gets better every year!

I hope you all enjoy your Christmas just like I do. Make sure to spend time with your families, don't take this time together for granted.



# *In a New Light*

By Alannah Tjhatra

I wrinkle my nose as a nurse wheels me into the room. There's a strong scent of chocolate and coffee in the air; it's a sickening smell. The scent tightens around my throat, seeming to strangle the very life out of me until I can no longer breathe without gagging.

I resort to quick, shallow breaths. A nurse comes over and asks me if everything is alright. I nod my head yes.

When I finally adjust to the smell, I scan the room. Surrounding me is an assortment of people in wheelchairs like mine. Some are laying in cots because they are too weak to sit up, and a few nurses and attendants stand by in case someone needs assistance.

In the corner sits the hospital's sad excuse for a piano. It's the most off-key piano I've ever heard and the pedals squeal when you press them down. Against the opposite wall is a drooping green tree. The hospital staff have decorated it with red streamers, lights, and so many ornaments that it could practically blind a person. It's their vain attempt to cheer us patients up a bit.

Out of the window, I see snow blowing around in the cold air.

Why God had the notion to create the stinging white flakes, I will always wonder.

A school choir files up to the front of the room. I can hear laughing and talking among the kids, but I don't try to listen. Instead, I sit back in my wheelchair and close my eyes, trying to fall asleep so I don't have to hear the choir sing their pointless Christmas songs.

Just before I'm about to doze off, the events coordinator steps forward and introduces the choir. Their pianist is some boy called Mark, their director is a lady named Hazel. The kids are from a high school that I missed the name of.

Soon, the singing begins. Strong voices swirl around the room, but all the music gathers in my head like a pile of mush.

Somewhere in the middle of the program, a girl steps forward to sing a solo. She's got these bright eyes and a pretty smile. Something about her radiates enthusiasm – I guess it's a form of joy, you could say. I don't know what it is about the girl – but I take more of an interest her, leaning forward a little in my wheelchair. She opens her mouth to sing. A beautiful, husky sound forms from her lips and fills the entire room with the melody of O Holy Night. A

shiver runs up my spine. Everyone is quiet – the only thing that breaks the silence is the soft, off-key piano, and the girl's mesmerizing voice.

As she pauses between verses, she somehow sees me. Me, of all the people in the room. Just a scowling, skinny guy with cancer who's sitting in a hospital wheelchair. I look around for a second, expecting her to be looking at someone behind me or something. But she locks her eyes with mine, looking at nobody else. A smile spreads across her face – a smile just for me.

Suddenly, the off-key piano doesn't sound so off-key. The Christmas tree against the wall seems to stand a little taller and shine a little brighter. The snow outside doesn't seem as bad as I thought.

The girl ends the song and returns to her place, the audience giving her a loud applause. The choir sings another piece, but the girl's eyes stay on me, lips sparkling with that smile of hers.

And then I feel it – I haven't felt it since I was diagnosed with cancer five months ago.

A tiny pang of hope.



# Laugh Out Loud

Dear Santa,

It's not necessary to get me a toy this year, but if you do I would like a surprise. I've been somewhat bad, so I understand if you don't get me anything. I love what you got me last year though.

PS. I'm really sorry for being bad.  
PPS. I like Lego

Thanks,  
Thomas

Dear Santa,

This year please give me a big fat bank account and a slim body. And please, don't mix the two up like you did last year.

Thanks,  
Lucy

Dear Santa,

If you leave a bike under the tree I'll give you the antidote for the poison that I put in your milk.

Merry Christmas!  
Roger



*"Merry Christmas ya filthy animal!"*

~ Angels with Filthier Souls

# *Holiday To Do List...*

(Optional)

- Eat a Beavertail
- Drink Hot Chocolate
- Give a Hug
- Throw a Snowball
- Do you wanna... Build a Snowman
- Hudson's Bay Christmas Windows
- Go Boxing Day Shopping
- Watch a Christmas Movie
- Go Sledding
- Give Your Sibling a Present
- Bake Cookies
- Go Skating