

I'll Be Home Christmas



Christmas has always felt magical and miraculous. After the stress and anxiety of the last 10 months we need the hope and peace of the Christmas Season more than ever before. Even if you're not religiously inclined, there's still something delightful about Christmas - the one time of year where we live up to our potential as kind, considerate, generous human beings. Christmas is a chance for all of us to be kids again, to try to recapture some of the innocence and sense of wonder.

What does "the **Spirit of Christmas**" mean? Whatever it is, I think we all need some of it this year. In Charles Dickens', "The Christmas Carol," three apparitions visit Ebenezer Scrooge, a cranky, miserly old fellow who has no concern for anyone other than himself and his money. The message of the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future show us that the true Spirit of Christmas is when we are invested in giving what we can, being grateful for what we have, and look for merriment in the company of others. The lights of all our decorations drive away the darkness and symbolize hope, warmth and safety. Lights create a beacon for others who are out in the dark and cold.

Regardless of who you are, where you live, or your income, this Christmas will be unlike any other. There has been much sadness, disappointment, frustration, anxiousness and anger this year. But if 2020 has taught us anything, it has been to enjoy the moments we have and not take any day, anything or anyone for granted.

Like it or not, the **Christmas Season** is upon us, so for the sake of our mental wellness, we all need to find a way to make the best of it. No gatherings does not mean Christmas is cancelled. Christmas is coming and will be as good or as bad as we make it.

What our kids will remember about Christmas 2020 will not be gifts.

I'll bet you have a lot of Christmas memories. Hopefully, they're all good ones. I'm also willing to bet that you could not name on one hand any of the gifts you received. Sure a very special present here and there but certainly not anywhere near all of them.

How can we create new and magical Christmas memories in 2020 despite all the restrictions?

- Take a virtual tour of Bethlehem
- Watch the Nutcracker online
- Read a book for enjoyment or out loud for younger family members
- Get outdoors and enjoy nature
- Reminisce with old movies, videos, photo albums - share virtually with loved ones
- Be creative with cooking, baking, crafts, slideshows, videos, photo editing
- Call old friends
- Be generous by leaving a craft, a note or baking for a lonely neighbor
- Make silly videos and send them to a grandparent
- Create a treasure hunt
- Play charades
- Build a blanket fort
- Have a Lego contest
- Go skating
- Go downhill or cross country skiing
- Head out into the forest or fields to go snowshoeing
- Enjoy an outdoor fire pit
- Build a snow fort
- Tobogganing
- Snowmobiling

There are many things that are cancelled right now but Christmas, hope and kindness are not. From my bubble to yours, I send you the very best wishes for love, health and peace during this Christmas Season.



This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. Tammy advocates for students and parents, providing a link to other supports within the community. Tammy has been a social worker for over 20 years and is a mother to 4 teenagers and a three legged rescued pitbull.