

Christmas Traditions Last Through the Years

BY KACIE DUNCAN



Nutcracker. Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

WHEN I THINK of Christmas, I think of playing in the snow with my siblings. I think of waking up at five in the morning and sneaking to the tree to have a peek inside my stocking. I think of making cookies with my mother and passing them out around the neighborhood. I think of family, friends, and the weird little things that make Christmas for me. If you asked me what my Christmas traditions were growing up, the first one that would come to mind is what I and my five siblings called “hide baby Jesus.” This sounds weird, don’t worry, I know. To give an explanation: Growing up my family had an advent calendar with little cloth dolls that were all people from the nativity scene and of course, baby Jesus was on December 25th.

So, leading up to Christmas, my siblings and I had a game where one of us would hide the little baby Jesus cloth doll somewhere in the living room, and the rest of us would try and find it. Baby Jesus found himself in Christmas trees, under presents, wrapped in bows, behind books, and so many more places. It’s an odd tradition, but it’s one of the most precious traditions I have in my heart.

While my favorite Christmas tradition is a very unique one, the classic and most common traditions hold a special place

in my heart as well. When tasked with writing an article about Christmas traditions, I thought it would be interesting to look into one or two of our most common Christmas traditions within the United States and look into the history of where they came from. One of the oldest and well-known traditions I came across was the nutcracker. According to an article on History.com, the nutcracker originated in Russia in the 1800s. It made it to England in 1934 and then to the United States ten years later. When reading this article I thought it was interesting and worth noting that many well-known Christmas traditions such as the Christmas tree, advent calendars, gingerbread houses, and candy canes all have German roots. The candy cane specifically dates back to the 1600s— but the thought to hang them on the tree didn’t come until much later in the 1800s.

I think the main takeaway I had when researching these traditions was the ability to last throughout the years. To me, this speaks to how important traditions are to us within our communities. Traditions hold different meanings to each of us. But within each tradition and each meaning, traditions always come back to love and being together. Whether your family has an obscure tradition such as hiding baby Jesus, or more traditional traditions of hanging candy canes on the tree – all of our traditions matter, and they’re all built on memories.