

*Christmas  
Eve*



**One of the beautiful  
things about Christmas  
are the traditions...**



## **Poinsettias**

America's Christmas flower, native to Central America were brought to the United States (and given their name) by the country's first U.S. ambassador to Mexico, botanist Joel Roberts Poinsett, in the 1820s.



## 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 1800's. A New York woodsman is credited with opening the first U.S. Christmas tree lot in 1851.



## **Christmas Pickles**

If there's a pickle among your ornaments, you're likely taking part in the German tradition of hiding the green ornament on the tree, so that the first child to find it wins a gift or gets to open the first present Christmas morning.



## Gingerbread Houses

Although Queen Elizabeth I get 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.



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**Today candles placed in windows are a sign of hospitality to Christ. Candles are placed in windows as a way of saying that Christ is welcome in that house. They represent spiritually revived hearts and minds.**

*Jesus came to light up the darkness...*



*Jesus came to light up the darkness...*



*...and offer hope where there is distress.*

*Light...*

*Hope...*

***Darkness...***

***Distress...***

# ***Darkness...***

*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.*

Isaiah 5:20

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# ***Distress...***

*And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness.*

Isaiah 8:22

*Light...*

*Hope...*



# *Light...*

*"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned."*

*Matthew 4:15-16 quoting Isaiah 9:1-2*

# *Hope...*

# *Light...*

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# *Hope...*

*"Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets; a bruised reed He will not break, a smoldering wick He will not quench, until He bring justice to victory; and in His name the Gentiles will hope."*

*Matthew 12:18-21 quoting Isaiah 42:1-3*

## Matthew 1:8-25; Luke 2:8-20

- <sup>8</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.
- <sup>19</sup> And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.
- <sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.
- <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”
- <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:
- <sup>23</sup> ***“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel”*** (which means, God with us).

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,  
<sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a son.  
And he called his name Jesus.



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## Luke 2:8-20

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.  
<sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.  
<sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them,  
“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.  
<sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

17 And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

# Isaiah 9:6-7

- <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a Son is given;  
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,  
and His name shall be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a hallway. In the center, a window is illuminated from within, showing a lit candle. The hallway is dimly lit, with the light from the candle casting a warm glow. The overall mood is somber and mysterious.

***Darkness***

***Distress***



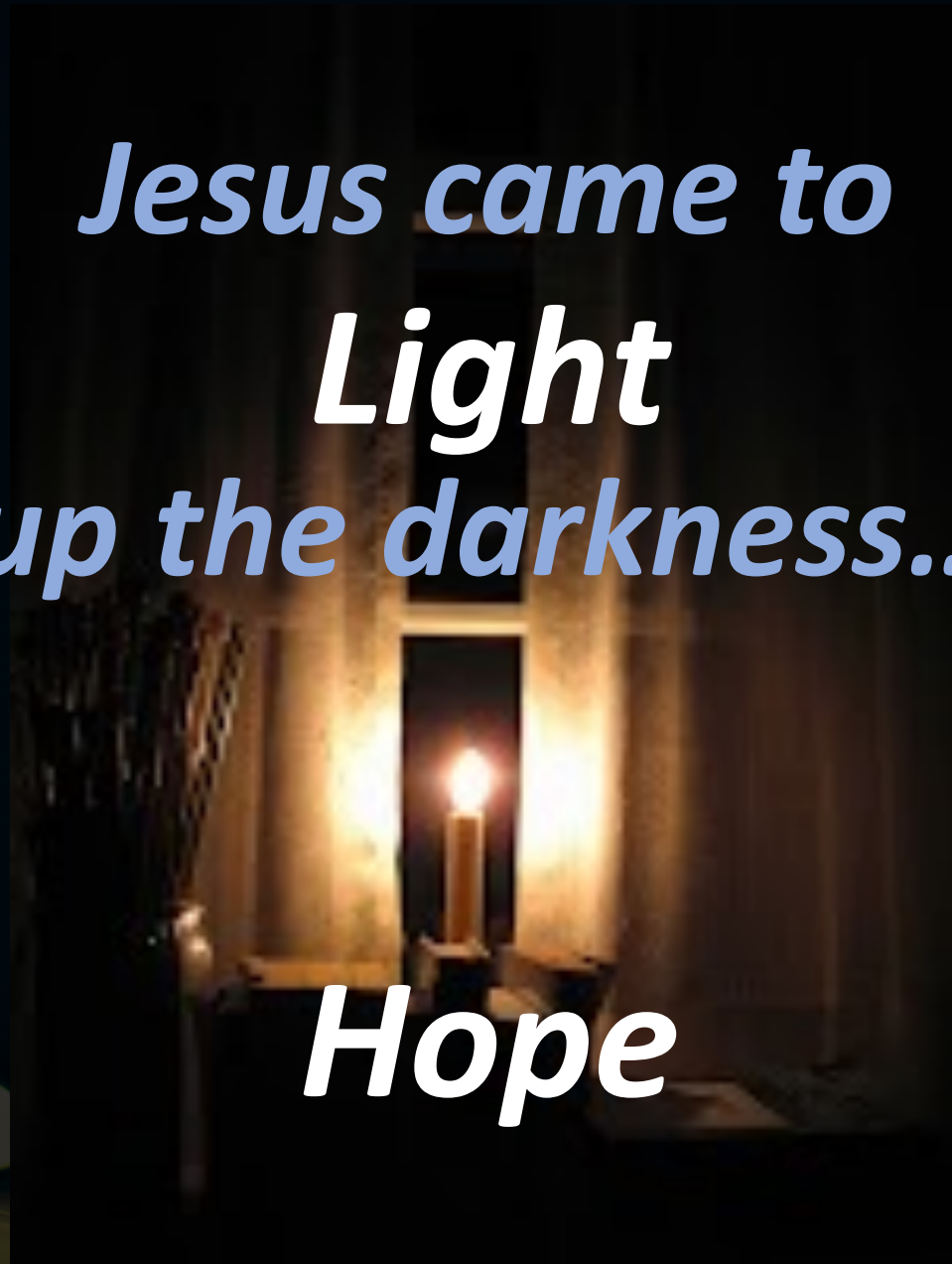
A photograph of a lit candle in a window at night. The candle is the central focus, casting a warm, golden glow. The window is framed by light-colored curtains. The background is dark, suggesting it is nighttime. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful. The words "Light" and "Hope" are overlaid on the image in a white, serif font.

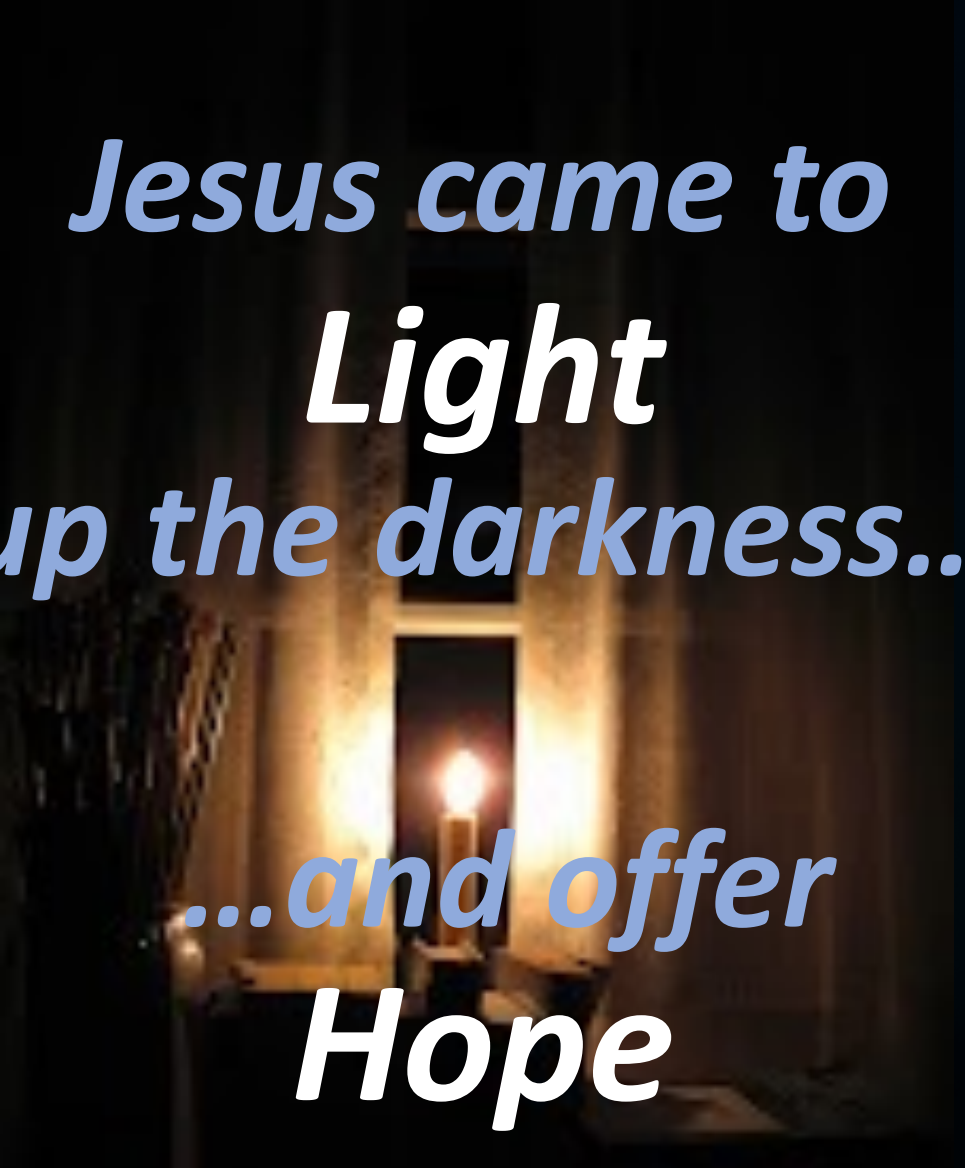
*Light*

*Hope*

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*Light*

*Hope*





*Christmas  
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*In 2023 you can be a ...*



**House of Hope**



