



# NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

*“What are you doing to preserve Christ’s birthday?”*

## Preserving Christmas

*In December 2016, I wrote about visiting the National Christmas Center in Paradise Pa. They had exhibits from the 1950’s, from around the world, streets of Christmas memories, history of Christmas celebrations, Santa room, toy train mountain, animations, an old 5 & 10 store, life-size story of Jesus’ birth, and hundreds of nativity scenes. I saw the American Flyer train that I still have. I saw the Plasticville buildings that I once enjoyed. I saw the nativity figurines that my parents displayed every year. I felt and heard the spirit and excitement of Christmas that I remembered as a child.*

*“From the moment you walk through the doors, you’re bathed in the cheer and comfort of your favorite Christmas memories. If you haven’t surrendered to the spirit of the season by the time you’ve explored the 20,000 square feet of Christmas ephemera, then possibly not even Scrooge’s spirits could move you. The National Christmas Center got its start in 1998 when founder and curator Jim Morrison decided his lifelong collection of Christmas memorabilia had grown large enough to need a place of its very own.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“The museum has 20,000 square feet with 15 main galleries and a variety of changing smaller exhibits. In Toyland Train Mountain, a 30-foot, three-tiered trainyard fills the room. No matter how many times you visit, there will always be something new to find in the miniature, detailed landscape. Other walk-through displays include Christmas Around the World, with historic depictions of holiday traditions from across the globe; an Antique Emporium with decorated trees behind glass; and Vintage Christmas Memories. The Art of the Nativity features creches, large and small, from around the world spanning 200 years. A 1950’s Night Before Christmas display shows children catching the jolly elf in the act.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“The culmination of the museum is the walk visitors take from Nazareth to Bethlehem, passing by thieves and angels, Roman centurions, markets and homes on their way. The path is dotted with dangers and delights and features some of the sights and sounds the holy couple may have experienced on their own journey. And finally, you see the newborn baby Jesus, along with Mary and Joseph, the wise men and shepherds. You are reminded what Christmas is really all about.”<sup>1</sup>*

*In October, I planned to take guests there. I looked on the internet for the times they were open. I was greatly disappointed to learn that they permanently closed January 1, 2017. Except for [photos](#) and a [video](#), their preservation of Christmas was no more. Then in preparation for a devotional about this fading of Christmas past, I again went to their [website](#). To my excitement, I had to change the direction of this devotional, I saw that [The Stone Gables Estate](#) purchased The National Christmas Center collection and will be moving it, not too far away, to their location at the restored Star Barn.*

*It is so sad to see that much of the Christmas celebration is turning away from the main reason for the season. No longer do you see the Nativity on our courthouse steps. Christmas carols are rarely sung. Merry Christmas is being replaced with Happy Holiday. Real trees, toy trains, and even kids’ toys are becoming a thing of the past. The time off from school is now called Winter or Holiday Break. As Christians, we must preserve and proclaim that Christmas is when God gave the greatest gift, Jesus.*



Removed forever.

*Charles L Stambaugh  
December 2018A*

*“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11*



Closed but will be preserved.

<sup>1</sup>It may be the National Christmas Center's last holiday season [Lancasteronline.com](http://Lancasteronline.com) Dec 3, 2017

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