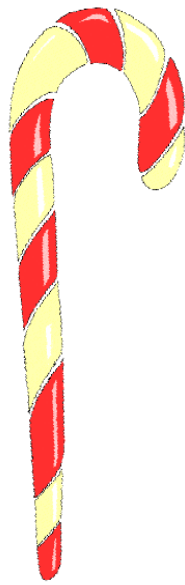


**D**id you know that the *candy cane* was one of the first decorations for Christmas trees? At that time, however, it was just a straight white stick of yummy candy. However, it didn't take long (c.1670) before someone suggested a small change that turned it into a meaningful symbol: one end was curved to form it into the shape of a shepherd's staff. So it went from a simple decoration and a treat to a simple way for Christians to tell the Good News of the coming of Jesus Christ to all the world!

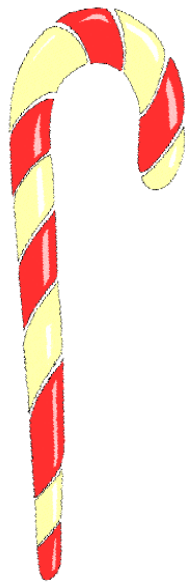


***But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. (Titus 3:4-5)***

This is the work of a Good Shepherd who loves His sheep: because of God's great love, He gave His only Son to die on the cross for us. By His free gift, Jesus Christ shepherds us weak sheep through this life and all its troubles.

It didn't take very long to notice that, upside down, the candy cane is also shaped like the letter "J" for Jesus, God made flesh, who was sinless and white as snow (a symbol of purity and innocence).

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One last time, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, candy makers altered the traditional design, adding stripes of red and green — more for decoration than anything else. Nevertheless, attentive Christians were quick to notice that this was a very fitting change: the red stripe proclaimed that the Good Shepherd born at Christmas willingly shed his blood so that we who are sinners, with dirty souls and lives, could be made sinless and live eternally with him — the green stripe representing eternal life!



Just as this candy cane is a sweet and free gift, so too is the good news that it offers, that is eternal life through Jesus Christ!

## ***Merry Christmas!***

***If you have no church home, we invite you to visit ours as we rejoice that our Saviour has come!***



**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
25 Hildegard Dr, Moncton E1G 2G5  
384-9453 -- [www.GoodShepherd.nb.ca](http://www.GoodShepherd.nb.ca)

Sunday School 10 AM — Divine Service 11 AM

**Christmas Eve, 7 PM — Day (25<sup>th</sup>), 10 AM**

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