

Jayne Foster



Hi Friend,
Here's a short story to help you smile, reflect, and rejoice in the journey you're on. I hope this lightens your load and encourages you to keep your eyes on the One who is always a part of your next steps.
Jayne

Odd Celebratory Practices and other musings...

It's the most wonderful time of the year... or the craziest time of the year depending on your perspective: cards, stockings, cookies, choir performances, orchestra performances, club volleyball practice, basketball games, parties for school, parties for work, parties for church groups, ornament exchanges, fudge for the neighbors, online shopping, traditional storefront shopping, baking, planning, organizing, cleaning, and gift-wrapping. Know what I mean? My blood pressure is elevated simply typing all of this. I just completed a master "to-do" list for the month of December, and now I want nothing more than a warm bath and an early bedtime. Sometimes December can feel like more of a marathon in patience than a walk in wonder.

Then there's the age-old controversy, "When do you put up your Christmas decorations?" Is it just past Halloween or just past Thanksgiving? My whole life, I've been a Christmas purest. My motto: no Christmas music or lights on the house until after Thanksgiving. But, after the anxiety produced by creating my lengthy "to-do" list, I'm beginning to rethink my own rules. It's just that fall is my favorite season, and I can't stand the idea of pushing fast forward on autumn in favor of songs about chestnuts and open fires when we're still blasting the air conditioner in Texas due to above average temperatures. My dear husband, Troy, knows how I

feel about all of this and tries to sneak in a little “Carol of the Bells” or “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch” just to garner an exuberant eyeroll from me.

A couple of weeks back Troy’s co-workers popped the infamous question, “When do y’all put up your Christmas tree?” Troy answered, nonchalantly, “My wife never takes it down. Right now, our tree is decorated with turkeys and pilgrims for Thanksgiving.” I even caught him snapping a picture of our Thanksgiving tree just before bedtime one night to deliver tangible proof of my outright lunacy.

Friends, please hear me out. Doesn’t everyone’s home look more holly-jolly with a Christmas tree in it? Quite possibly, the day the tree comes down is the most depressing time of the year. I decided to solve that problem by gifting myself with a Christmas tree when I officially entered my late 40s a few years back. The tree stays up year-round in my living room and gets decorated for Valentine’s, Easter, 4th of July, Back to School, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc... POV: if you decorate a Christmas tree with green shamrocks for St. Patrick’s Day, you may be disappointed with the uniform color scheme. To prevent the unsatisfactory look of a barren landscape atop the tree skirt, I decided to wrap 3 presents in plain brown paper and adorn them with a neutral, black and white checkered fabric ribbon. The presents represent the divine gift of my 3 children, wrapped in mystery and dipped in possibility. Most days, my kids are barely amused with my penchant for whimsy. When they asked, “What’s in the boxes, Mom?” and I responded, “a metaphor,” they were aaaaabbbbbsssoolluuutteellly devastated.





The Fall Tree





The Winter Wonderland Tree





The Happy Easter Tree

A perpetual Christmas tree in the living room allows me a quick read on a new guest to our home. Some folks are offended at the ridiculousness of a perennial tree.

Some people break into a grin with a look of surprise and a glimmer of delight. Still others land firmly on the side of practicality and can't comprehend the reason behind celebrating every season.

A few years back, after unboxing my new Christmas tree in my birth month of September, I promptly decorated it with pumpkin ornaments and sent a snapshot to my mother. A week later, she sent me a photo of her own Christmas tree, proudly displayed in the corner of her living room filled with cascading orange ribbon and fabric leaves in brilliant fall hues.

Do you have any unusual ways of marking your days? If not, I'd like to make a proclamation. "You don't need a permit to become the author of your own fun." You never know, your laughter may even inspire someone else to give it a whirl.

May your days be merry and bright. May you delight in the blessing of the ones entrusted to your care. May you marvel at the love of the One who made you, and on that holy night, sent His only Son to redeem you and change the world forever.

Blessings to you and yours,

Jayne



The Chasing Dragonflies podcast will begin airing in the New Year! Stay tuned for where to find it. I just recorded my first episode with my dear friend, Sue Scheele. Can't wait for you to hear it!



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