

The Symbolism of the Chrismon Tree

For two thousand years, Christians the world over have celebrated Christ's birthday, each country according to its own traditional interpretation of the holy day. The Chrismon Tree is decorated with the symbols that tell the story of God's love.


The word, "Chrismon" is a combination of two words, "Christ" and "monogram." A Chrismon is just that -- a monogram of Christ.


All the Chrismons are made in combinations of white and gold. White is the liturgical color for Christmas, referring to Christ's purity and perfection. Gold refers to His majesty and glory. "Christ, the Light of the World" is indicated by using tiny clear white lights.


There are various combinations of these crosses, monograms and symbols on the Chrismon tree.


Chrismons were first developed by Frances Kipps Spencer at Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia. She originated them in 1957 when she set out to create decorations appropriate for a church Christmas tree. Centuries-old symbols depict the Life of Christ and tiny white lights reflect the purity of our Savior as they decorate the evergreen tree in the Church. Chrismons add their white and gold beauty to the Christmas season and make the celebration of our Lord's birth more meaningful by emphasizing God's great Gift to the world, our Savior Jesus Christ. Mrs. Spencer wrote four instructional books with the help of her congregation so that this "ministry" might be shared throughout the United States and the world.


The Crosses:


 **Tau Cross** (Anticipatory, Old Testament, Advent) Salvation promised but not yet accomplished.
[Numbers 21:9](#) ; [Isaiah 53](#)

 **Anchor Cross** (Cross of Hope) This Child, the hope of the world; or, a cross rises from a crescent moon, a symbol for our Lord's mother.
[Hebrews 6:19](#) ; [Luke 2:7](#)

 **Cross Crosslet** The spread of Christianity to the North, East, South, West -- to the ends of the earth.
[Matthew 28:19](#); [Mark 8:34](#); [Acts 1:8](#)

 **Passion Cross** (Cross of Suffering). Pointed ends remind of the points of the nails, the thorns, and the spear. [John 19](#)

 **Cross in Glory** (Rayed, Easter). The rising sun behind the cross suggests the new day when our Lord conquered death by His Resurrection. [1 Corinthians 15:2](#)

 **Cross of Constantine** The Chi Rho with the X turned to form a cross; Christ the conquering King.
[1 Timothy 6:15](#)



Cross Flamant (Fiery Cross). Flames signify the fiery zeal of one filled with the Spirit of God.

[Romans 12:11](#)



Cross Treflée (Bottonée). Three circles at the end of each arm symbolize the Holy Trinity.

[2 Corinthians 13:14](#)



St. Andrew's Cross Andrew was reputed to have died on a cross of this shape. Here, this cross symbolizes the whole Christian Church.

[Ephesians 1:23](#)



Latin Cross Long, upright; most widely used form of the cross among Christians



Greek Cross All extensions of equal length. This balanced form is easier to use in designs and was much employed by early Greek artists.



Cross over the World Christ over the world, "Go ye into all the world..."



Jerusalem Cross Four Tau Crosses meet to form a larger cross; Five wounds of our Lord. Or, Old Testament prophecies (Taus) culminated in the crucifixion of our Lord (large cross) on a hill near Jerusalem. Since then His followers have carried the Gospel to the corners of the world (small corner crosses).



Cross Triumphant A world united in Christ; triumph of the Lord over early sin.



Cross Patée with Four Scrolls. Our Salvation as proclaimed in the four Gospels. Winged man - Matthew; winged lion - Mark; winged ox - Luke; eagle - John.

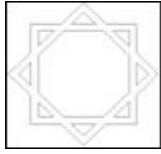


Cross in Eternity

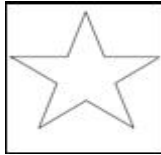
As we journey through Advent here are additional Chrismon symbols and their meanings.



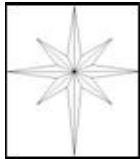
Star of David – The Star of David or the Creator's Star. The six points represent six aspects of God: love, mercy, wisdom, majesty, power, and justice. In this form, the two triangles represent the Trinity.



8 Pointed Armenian Star – The eight pointed Armenian Star, the points symbolizing Christ; in the west, it is called the Bethlehem Star, symbolizing the world Jesus came to save; eight is the symbol of regeneration, often associated with baptism or resurrection.



5 Pointed Star - Christians believe the 5 points represent the five wounds of Christ.



Natal Star Cross – A natal cross, with a four-pointed Bethlehem Star representing the sign in the night sky announcing Jesus' birth combined with a cross, symbolizing the salvation which the birth of this child brings.



Descending Dove – The dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, recalling the Holy Spirit's descent on Jesus as a dove at his Baptism. The nimbus, three-pointed rays around its head, is a symbol of the Trinity.



Chalice – The cup symbolizing the sacrament of Eucharist or Communion; it also represents forgiveness and reconciliation with God.



Peace Dove – A dove carrying an olive leaf is a symbol of peace.



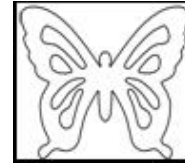
Lamb of God – Judaism believed the lamb was an offering. Christians think of Jesus as the Lamb of God who was sacrificed to forgive our sins.



A King's Crown is the symbol of royal power and authority. It symbolizes Jesus as King of the Jews, in fulfillment of prophetic expectation, as well as the exalted Christ as King of Kings.



In the book of Luke we read the story of how the angels went to simple shepherds to tell them the news of the Savior's birth, "Glory to God in the Highest!" Angel symbols remind us that the Gospel is for us and for all.



The butterfly symbolizes transformation.



Chi Rho, Two Greek letters are the first letters in the Greek word for Christ.



Alpha and Omega, The Greek letters alpha (First) and omega (Last) from Rev. 1:8 and 22:13, symbolizing Jesus as the Christ who has come and will come again; it also symbolizes the continuity of God's presence in human history.