

## THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

By the magical light of a small Christmas candle  
A little old man tries to carefully handle

The small porcelain manger which serves as a bed  
For the wee Baby Jesus to lay down His head.

In wonder he brings the manger up to his view,  
Smiles at the baby and whispers, "I love you!"

I love you for bringing this season of joy,  
I love you for growing to a man from a boy;

For being our light and leading the way,  
For being the spirit which makes Christmas Day!

You've been my mentor, my model, my hero and guide,  
Please continue to help me and stay by my side.

I've tried to follow your teachings and give as you gave,  
Reminding all to be kind and that it's wise to behave.

Help me to serve others and bring them your light,  
Especially the children, please bless them tonight!

Some have so very little, scarce food for their table,  
You know how it feels - you were born in a stable!

Bless all their mothers and fathers with a knowledge that's sure,  
The best gift they can give is their love, strong and pure.

That's the Spirit of Christmas when all's said and done,  
God's gift of love, that came as His Son!"

Then back to His mother the child is returned  
The Nativity glows as the candle is burned.

In a wink the little old man slips quietly away  
Some say he goes up the chimney and climbs in a sleigh.

Whatever the case, His mission is clear -  
Give unto others, bringing love and good cheer.

He flies into the night and bids us adieu  
Doing for others what Jesus would do!

Greg Olsen - 2009

### Greg Olsen

Greg was born in Idaho Falls, Idaho and grew up in the nearby farming community of Iona. He is the oldest of five children. Greg was blessed with very supportive parents who always encouraged him and provided opportunities for him to pursue his passion of art. Greg remembers a time as a teenager when he had been hired to paint a large sign for a local grocery store. It was wintertime and too cold to paint in the garage so his parents let him set up a workshop in his bedroom. He promptly spilled two quarts of black and orange enamel paint all over his bedroom carpet. Amazingly, his parents still encouraged him in his artistic endeavors.

After high school Greg attended Utah State University where he studied art. While attending school he met his wife, Sydnie Cazier. They have six children and are enjoying their new role as grandparents. Greg likes being close to his family. He paints in his studio, 37 steps from the back door of their home. Greg says, "From an early age I have always been fascinated by paintings that create mood, emotion and atmosphere; especially those paintings that lift me and transport me to some far off place. These are the elements I strive to create in my paintings. My paintings in many ways record what is most important to me: my feelings and experiences with family and friends along with the spiritual aspects of my life. My hope is that in these images you will find something familiar, something which will resonate and remind you of what is important in your own life."