

Chrismons and Chrismon Patterns

Chrismons are Christmas decorations with Christian symbols on them. They help Christians to remember that Christmas is the celebration of Jesus's birthday. They are often used on [Christmas Trees](#) in Churches and Christians homes.

They were first made by Frances Kipps Spencer at the [Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia](#), USA. She also thought of the word, Chrismon, which is a combination of Christ and monogram (meaning symbol). The idea quickly spread to other churches. It is traditional that Christian groups can make their own Chrismons with their favorite symbols on.

Each year a 20ft (6 metre) Christmas Tree is decorated in the Ascension Lutheran Church, as Mrs Spencer intended, and visitors come and hear the story of Jesus explained through her original Chrismons and a few gifts from around the world.

Chrismons are traditionally colored white and gold. White is the liturgical (or Church) color for Christmas and symbolises that Jesus was pure and perfect. Gold symbolises His Majesty and Glory. Chrismons can be made from nearly anything, but paper and embroidered ones are the most widely used.

Click on a Chrismon to open a larger version which you can use as a pattern to make Chrismons.



The Cross symbolises that Christians believe Jesus Christ died for everyone on a Cross.



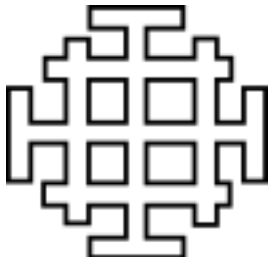
The Latin Cross, also sometimes called the Roman Cross. The base of the Cross has three steps that symbolise faith, hope, and love.



The Irish or Celtic Cross is a normal cross with a circle in the middle to symbolise eternity.



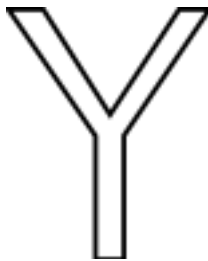
The Triumphant Cross represents the earth with the cross on top. It symbolises Jesus is triumphant over anything we can face in the world.



The Jerusalem Cross was worn by the crusaders going to Jerusalem, in the middle ages. It can symbolise the Four Gospels in the Bible, the spread of the Gospel to the four corners of the earth or the five wounds of Jesus when he died on the cross.



The Eastern Cross is used by many Eastern or Orthodox Churches.



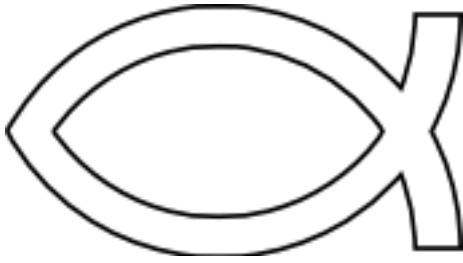
The Furca or Upsilon Cross comes from the Greek letter Y. It is also called The Thieves' Cross from the two robbers who were crucified on each side of Jesus. It also symbolises the choice between good and evil.



The Anchor Cross reminds Christian's that Jesus is the anchor of their faith.



IHS are the first three letters of 'Jesus' in Greek, this has been used to represent Jesus from the third century. From the middle ages, they also were used in the latin phrase "Jesus Hominum Salvator" which means "Jesus, Saviour of men". And in English they can mean "In His [Jesus's] Service". I've added them on a Cross as it looks more interesting!



The Fish is one of the oldest Christian symbols. The letters, from the Greek word for fish (ichthus), stand for Jesus (I), Christ (X), God (Q), Son (Y), Savior (S). Some of Jesus' disciples were fishermen.



Alpha and Omega are the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. Used together, they symbolise that Christians believe Jesus is the beginning and end of all things.



The Chi-Rho looks like a 'P' with an 'X' on top of it. These two letters are the first two letters of the Greek word 'Christos' which means Christ.



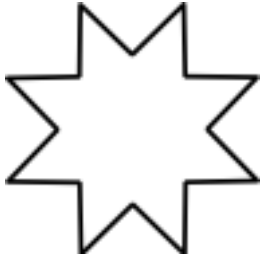
The Star of David, sometimes called the Star of Creation, is a symbol that Jesus was a Jew and a descendant of King David.



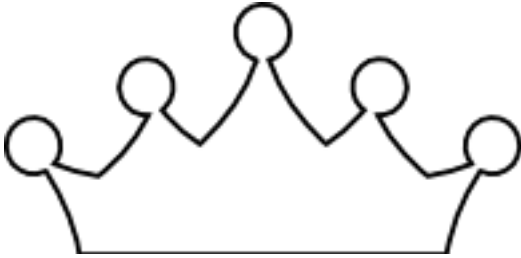
A Five Pointed Star represents the five wounds of Jesus on the cross.



The Nativity Star is the symbol of [the Star of Bethlehem](#) or Epiphany, when the [Wisemen](#) visited Jesus.



An Eight Pointed Star represents baptism and regeneration.



The Crown is the symbol that Jesus is King. It shows that Christians believe Jesus is ruler over heaven and the earth.



The Shepherd's Crook or Staff remembers that Jesus sometimes called himself a shepherd. It can also represent the shepherds who were the first people told about the birth of Jesus.



Both of these symbols represent the Christian 'Trinity' of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. **The Triquetra** is made of three loops making a triangle representing the three parts of the trinity. **The Trefoil** (at the bottom) is three equal circles intertwined to form a whole.



Hands in Prayer help Christians remember that they should pray to God.



The Scroll represents the Bible.



The Dove is the symbol of peace and the Holy Spirit. It is shown pointing down to represent the Holy Spirit that appeared as a Dove when Jesus was baptised.



The Lamp and **The Candle** both represent that Christians believe Jesus is the Light of the World.



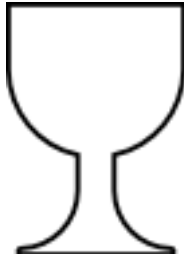
The Shell is a symbol for baptism. It reminds Christians of the water that they are baptised in. It is also a sign of Pilgrimage, as Pilgrims to the Holy Land (Israel) would use a shell as a drinking vessel.



The Keys are a symbol for the Church in all the world. Jesus told his friend Peter that "I will give you keys to heaven", so this means that Christians have to tell other people about Jesus.



The Ship is also a symbol of the Church, sailing towards heaven.



The Cup or Chalice is a symbol of the Mass, Eucharist or Communion. It also represents God's forgiveness.



The Angel reminds Christians of the angels who told the shepherds about the birth of Jesus. It can also represent the second coming of Jesus, which the Bible says will start with an Angel blowing a trumpet.



Babe / Manger represents Jesus as a baby at Christmas.



The Lamb is a symbol for Jesus who is sometimes called 'The Lamb of God'.



The Butterfly is a symbol for transformation and the immortal soul.



The Heart is a symbol of love and reminds Christians that God is love.



The Lion is a symbol for Jesus who is sometimes called 'The Lion of Judah'. Jesus is also represented as Aslan the Lion in the Chronicle of Narnia books by C S Lewis.



The White Rose is a symbol for purity and can represent Mary.

You can [download all these Chrismon Patterns in a pdf](#) (1.2mb)