

I could hardly wait for my birthday—
especially the presents!

BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

By Sarah Carlson

(Based on a true story)

"The temple is a house of God, a place of love and beauty"
(Children's Songbook, 95).

There are lots of great days every year: Christmas, Easter, the last day of school. But my favorite day of the year is my birthday. I love having a party with all my friends, and birthday cake is my favorite food. And I love getting presents!

Today was my birthday—the best day of the year! I got to wear the birthday crown and be the line leader at school. At lunch I got to eat a special dessert. All day I walked around humming, "Happy birthday to me!"

I ran home from school. Mom had decorated the house with balloons and streamers and a big banner that said, "Happy Birthday, Caleb!"

"I like it!" I told her. "I'm ready for the party!"

Soon my friends all came. I opened the door and showed them where they could put the presents they brought. Some presents were big. Some were small. Some were round. I couldn't wait to open them all!

We played games and ate pizza and cake. Then Mom called, "Time for presents!" My friends sat in a circle in the living room, and I got to sit in the middle while they handed me presents. I got a water gun, a ball, and a model airplane. Every present was better than the last!

Then my friend Collin handed me a present wrapped in light blue paper. It wasn't very heavy. It wasn't very big. It didn't look like anything special. As I ripped the paper, I was already looking around for what the next present would be.

Then I saw what Collin had given me—it was a picture of the temple. All my friends crowded around to see what it was. They were all talking loud and trying to pass me another present, but I felt quiet and warm when I looked at the picture.

"Thanks, Collin," I said. "I love it."

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRAD TEARE



When my friends left, Mom and I put the presents in my room.

"That was really nice of your friends," Mom said. "We'll have to write them all thank-you notes."

I nodded and looked around at my presents—the water gun, the ball, the airplane. Then I remembered the warm feeling I got when I opened Collin's gift.

"The picture of the temple is my favorite," I said. "I'm going to put it on my dresser right now!"

As I put the picture up, I realized I was singing a different song than I had been all day.

"I love to see the temple," I sang, and I smiled. It had been a pretty great birthday. ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.

