



A Baxter Family Christmas

Karen Kingsbury

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From #1 New York Times bestselling author Karen Kingsbury comes *A Baxter Family Christmas*, the first in a new series, combining the charm and holiday ambiance of *The Bridge* with the familiar members of fan-favorite family, the Baxters.

Two sorrowful years have passed since the terrible car accident that took the life of John Baxter's daughter, Erin, along with her husband and three of their four daughters. But this year John has invited a stranger for dinner - Kendra Bryant, the transplant recipient who now has Erin's heart.

In light of her father's idea, Ashley and her brother Luke don't think it's right. They want to protect their ten-year-old niece, Amy - the only surviving member of the accident. But John is determined and believes meeting this woman is something his deceased daughter would want.

At the same time, Maddie West, the eighteen-year-old daughter of Brooke Baxter West, is praying for meaning this Christmas. Could she find it in a newfound friendship with a boy she never expected to see again? Maddie believes in miracles, especially at Christmastime, but this is a stretch even she can't imagine.

Meanwhile, Kendra Bryant has been struggling these past few years to find meaning in the tragedy that gave her a second chance. She believes this invitation to see the Baxters and witness their unwavering faith in God can instill hope and happiness back into her life.

Heartwarming and touching, filled with love and hope, *A Baxter Family Christmas* brings together two families in the aftermath of a tragedy and in the midst of an unfolding love story, all with the help of one very special child.

A Baxter Family Christmas Details

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From Reader Review A Baxter Family Christmas for online ebook

Laura says

I'm going to be honest here and tell you that this is the first book in the Baxter Family Saga series I've ever read, I have read one or two Karen Kingsbury books, decided she's a stellar writer but I don't like to cry through my books so that pretty much was when I backed away. Then I saw the cover for A BAXTER FAMILY CHRISTMAS and it looked so inviting and welcoming and I had to read it. So, I did.

At first I kind of felt like an unwelcome guest. I didn't know these people. I didn't care about them, and there I was sitting at their dining room table involved in a terribly intimate conversation about a heart transplant and how they'd like to meet the reciprocate. Wonderful. But that meant someone died. Who? Why? How?

I did keep reading and I grew to care about the characters in this book (I probably won't go back and read the other books, but I enjoyed the time I spent with the Baxter family in this family saga. I especially liked the fledgling romance forming between two teens and how the Christmas Eve family gathering ended. Sweet.

I got a copy of this book off Netgalley. All opinions are my own.

Anna says

I have read all of the books about the Baxter and Flanigan families, and felt like I was reuniting with old friends. Patriarch John Baxter feels compelled to invite Kendra Bryant to the family's Christmas Eve gathering. Kendra received her heart transplant from Erin, John's daughter who was killed along with her husband and three of her four daughters a couple of years earlier. The remaining daughter, Amy, now lives with her Aunt Ashley and her family. Ashley is resistant to have Amy meet Kendra, afraid she'll be hurt and confused.

John Baxter's granddaughter, Maddie is still carrying the the guilt of an accident that almost took the life of her younger sister, Hayley when they were young girls. Conner Flanigan is home from college, working with Maddie on a Christmas performance. He is immediately struck by her and wants to get to know her better. He can't understand why Maddie is so guarded with her feelings.

Can a Christmas miracle bring togherness and healing for the Baxter clan?

Pam says

"In this world you will have trouble. But be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." John 16 verse 33.

The Baxter Family Christmas is an emotional heartwarming story about a family still coming to terms with

the loss of Erin & her family. One daughter, Amy, survived & is living with her aunt. They were killed in a terrible car crash on the interstate. Erin was a organ donor & her heart was given to a woman, Kendra, that didn't believe in God. John, Erin's father, has reached out to Kendra & has invited her & her husband to spend Christmas Eve with the family. Several of the family members have problems with this since they aren't sure they can deal with it or that Erin's surviving daughter can. Can God pull the family together? Do Kendra & Moe find their way to Him?

Ms. Kingsbury writes emotional inspirational stories that cause you to sit back & evaluate whether if not you are living your life to the fullest & in God's name. From the beginning scene you are pulled deep into the Baxter's life's & story. She has a way with descriptive narrative that not only enables you to picture the scenes in your mind, you connect with each character on an emotional level. Every emotion is pulled out of you as you experience what the characters are feeling. Everyone in life experiences troubles & difficulties but God helps you through it. I would recommend this book & any others Ms. Kingsbury has written for everyone. Have the tissues handy, you will undergo an emotional experience like no other.

Cheri says

I love Christmas stories that are well done, but am always looking for new ones, too. I chose this to read since I knew it was published relatively recently. What I didn't know is this is something like 18th in a series of Baxter Family stories. The minor disadvantage is not having followed them throughout the prior books, who got married, who had children, reading about those children growing up and maybe having children or dating dilemmas. It was easy enough to follow.

I should have read some reviews, but not knowing of anyone who had read this, or at least not knowing them well enough to have an idea of their tastes vs my own, I skipped that process. My bad.

I understand that Christmas is a Christian holiday, although most of our celebratory machinations have nothing whatsoever to do with religion in any way, shape or form. I have spent a good deal of my life in church, voluntarily, so I have no objection to the discussion of religion, the mention of faith in any deity, or prayer. I can't say I object to anything in this book, but if you're going to spend as much time as is spent "preaching" to a reader, I think it should be categorized / labeled / disclosed as a "Christian" book rather than just a Christmas book. I've read enough Richard Paul Evans books to know his will have a religious slant to them, but his slant is gentler.

Beyond that, the story – to me – was a little too tied up all in a nice neat pretty package with the perfect bow. More than a little too unrealistically put together. Was it sweet? Of course, but not naturally so.

I'm happy for those who read this and loved it. Honestly. There certainly should be books for those people who need a strong dose of faith in their Christmas stories.

I can't completely dismiss this story as a terrible story, it just wasn't above a 3 star for me. I did not take any stars away for blindsiding me with an overdose of religious zeal.

For me, the story was uninspiring, unexceptional ... just *meh*.

Kim says

2.5 stars, this was okay plus. Didn't realize that this is Christian fiction not that that matters. There were a lot of characters to try and keep track of though. All in all, this was ok.

Denise says

I almost abandoned this book. It was my first Baxter Family book -- and that may have been a bit of the problem. This is book 24 in the series and I could pretty much follow it, but there are so many characters. I try to read a variety of books and was open to reading Christian fiction, but in places, I had difficulty relating. (For example, I don't care if a teenage girl calls a teenage boy on the phone and asks him out. And.. I'm an organ donor and don't care at all about the religious background of the potential recipients of my organs.) It's fine to have differing views from the people you are reading about, but there were a few little things that bothered me because it seemed like it was implied that OF COURSE any good Christian would have these beliefs/doubts/feelings. I accept that those may have been my own personal hang-ups, not necessarily the fault of the author, but it altered my reading experience nonetheless.

There was also a side storyline that I had zero interest in and I thought it consumed way too much of the early chapters. (view spoiler)

However - I was really glad I finished the book. I thought the ending was very sweet and I think I could've gotten on board with the book earlier if it had focused more on the storyline of John/Kendra/Erin/Amy. Especially...(view spoiler)

The author did commit to writing more Baxter books. I might consider another one - or at least consider trying an earlier book to catch up a bit. I suspect if you are already a fan of the Baxters, you'll love this book.

Alicia says

I found this sometimes over-the-top sappy (especially during the dialogue) and the characters didn't really get a chance to develop, but there were a couple of moments that brought the tears to my eyes. Overall, a sweet Christmas story that reunites the reader with the Baxter clan.

I highly recommend reading the rest of the Baxter books before reading this one! There are a lot of backstories and a lot of characters mentioned in a fairly short book. I've read almost all of the Baxter books and I still had to pause for a second a couple of times!

Marsha Spohn says

Reviewed at Keeper Bookshelf

I will be upfront in saying that I have not read the previous stories concerning the Baxter family. Yet, having said that I do not feel that anyone who picks up their story from this point would be so lost that they cannot enjoy A Baxter Family Christmas for the story it tells. There are enough references within the story to be able to identify who is who among the family. And maybe it was coming into this family without any background knowledge that gave me a slightly different slant on the story.

I saw a family that had been dealt such an emotional and spiritual blow that not all families would recover from. Still, they faced a new reality with grace, and such a strong faith. That doesn't mean there were no questions, but I've never seen it as wrong to ask why. I might not like the answer but I've never felt that God would turn His back on me when I asked Him... why things are the way they are. It's not a sign of a lack of faith but a deep need to understand that is only human.

I found myself wondering as I read this story if, should something like this ever happen in my family, I would want or need to meet the recipient of a loved one's organ. The honest answer is I don't know. The bravery of Kendra amazed me. Just think of how you would feel walking into a family gathering knowing you held someone's that they all loved heart beating in your own chest. That takes a special kind of courage.

I enjoyed A Baxter Family Christmas very much. And I'll have to go back and start at the very beginning of the stories of this amazing family. This is a story that will touch your heart. I don't feel that it matters what faith you follow, this event is something that could happen to anyone at any time. See how one family deals with loss and the continuation of life.

I received an e-ARC of this novel from the publisher via NetGalley. That does not change what I think of this novel. It is my choice to leave a review giving my personal opinion about this story.

Marianne Nichols says

This idea short, quick read that is for my book club meeting this month. Which is today and I just finished it. Ha! It was a warm, heart touching Christmas story. I cried several times while reading. I would say that all the characters can be confusing. Most of them are from one family. She has written many books about this family, and perhaps if you started with the first one it might not be so people confusing. Still and all, I enjoyed it.

Beth says

A Baxter Family Christmas is Karen Kingsbury's newest addition to the Baxter Family Series and it's another work of a master author.

It's been two years since a horrible car accident took the lives of Erin Baxter, the youngest daughter of John Baxter, her husband and 3 of their 4 children. As the holidays approach, John Baxter wants to invite Kendra Bryant, the woman who received Erin's heart following the accident, to Christmas dinner with the Baxter family. The announcement is received by the family with mixed feelings especially Ashley and her brother Luke. They want to protect Erin's surviving daughter Amy. They also know that Kendra and her husband are atheists and have an unhappy marriage. However, John pushes ahead thinking this is what Erin would want.

Kendra is troubled. Her marriage to Moe seems to be on the rocks and she doesn't know how to save it. But after being in contact with John Baxter, she begins to question her beliefs and why she was given a second chance at life.

There is also Maddie West, daughter of Brooke Baxter, who prays for a special Christmas miracle for her sister.

Karen Kingsbury tells a beautiful, heart-warming Christmas story of two families coming together after a tragedy to celebrate their strong belief in God, family, and reconciliation. What makes the story so special is Karen Kingsbury's writing. The Baxter family comes alive and could be anyone's family complete with hurt feelings and misunderstandings. However, throughout all is the theme of God's constant love and unwavering faith. It's a feel good story and a perfect way to celebrate the Birth of Christ without a heavy does of commercialism.

I received an advanced copy of this book from NetGalley and Howard Books

Mary says

I received an ARC copy of this book for a review. I must start by saying this was my first time visiting with the Baxter Family. It will not be the last. I hope to have a very good relationship with them. I loved the book!

Karen Kingsbury is a fantastic author. She knows how to write to get people interested in her books. How to get to the heart of many people. I understand that the Baxter Family will soon be on TV. I don't know if the Hallmark Channel is going to run it.

The book told the story of Kendra who received Erin Baxter's heart after she was killed in a car accident. The story centers on Christmas Eve when the whole family gathered at Ashley Baxter's family house to start the celebration of the Holidays.

Except John Baxter, the father, decides that it is time for everyone to meet the person who received Erin's heart. Not everyone in the family feels the same, especially on Christmas Eve.

The book has a Christian theme and is based on Christian beliefs which is a wonderful sound foundation for Karen's books and will keep me coming back for more.

The book is wonderful and I look forward to reading more from KRen Kingsbury.

Memphistigergal says

The Baxter family is back! One of my favorite families from Christian fiction is getting ready to Celebrate Christmas together. John Baxter is trying to create a reunion of sorts. It's been 2 years since his daughter Erin, her husband, and three of their four daughters were killed in a car wreck. He has invited Kendra Bryant – the transplant recipient of Erin's heart – and her husband to join them for Christmas Eve. Kendra and her husband are atheists and John has been praying for them to come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Ashley and Luke – two of Erin's siblings – are not happy with this idea. In fact, their plan is just to skip the

Christmas Eve get-together this year. At the same time, Maddie – the oldest daughter of Brooke Baxter West – is also experiencing her own problems. She's praying for a Christmas Miracle. Will she get one?

I absolutely loved this installment in the Baxter Family series. It was such a joy to revisit some of my favorite characters as well as getting to know some of the cousins more. I love how Karen Kingsbury presents her characters as real people. They could be unsaved individuals looking for truth. They could be people who have been in church their entire life but still have issues. Do they try to fix their problems on their own or turn to the Lord for guidance? I also loved that this was a shorter novel as well. It gave me the Christmas fuzzies I love so much as well as jumping deeper into characters that I have followed for 20+ books.

Karen Kingsbury will always get a 5 out of 5 stars from me. She is truly the Queen of Christian Fiction.

Judy Collins says

A special thank you to Howard Books and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Christian author -inspirational storyteller, *Karen Kingsbury* delivers a special heart-warming inspiring holiday tale, **A BAXTER FAMILY CHRISTMAS**, with a new series (three more, to come) with familiar faces and voices of this much-loved family.

A special holiday story offering love and hope in the least expected places and persons; with some special yummy holiday recipes and fun Baxter family games.

For all the Kingsbury (Baxter) fans, if you have not heard, The Baxter family is coming to TV. The new series focuses on the grown Baxter kids and their families and *their ever-changing lives*.

THE BAXTER FAMILY CHRISTMAS revolves around a stranger John Baxter has invited for Christmas Eve dinner. Kendra Bryant, the transplant recipient who now has Erin's heart.

Some members of the family are not happy with this decision and cannot understand the reasoning for bringing this person into their lives, especially at Christmas time. An intimate time for families, not reminders of their grief.

It has been two years since the terrible accident took the life of John Baxter's daughter Erin, her husband, and three of their four daughters.

The Baxter house in on ten acres, built by John and Elizabeth who died of cancer ten years ago, and the family house is now owned by Ashley and her husband Landon Blake.

This is the place where the family still gathers for their celebrations and Christmas. John is remarried to Elaine, age 59 and they live in Bloomington.

Ashley Baxter Black, age 35 (former black sheep of the family) and her brother Luke, age 33, a lawyer are against this plan. They are all about protecting their ten-year-old niece, Amy. She was the only survivor of the accident.

John, age 60, the family patriarch of the Baxter family, and a doctor; on the other hand, feels they should open their hearts to this woman and her family. He thinks it would please his daughter. Kendra was given a second chance. She wants to connect with this family to bring purpose to her life.

Maddie West, 18-year-old daughter, of Brooke Baxter West is also looking for a Christmas miracle. A boy she never expected to see again. Readers also get to revisit with the Flanigan family, which have been dear friends of the Baxters for years.

Ashley and Landon decide they will leave the family home and spare Amy, for the night so their dad can bring in this woman who has Erin's heart. Ashley thinks her dad is not being sensitive to Amy's feelings. However, no one has asked Amy her innermost thoughts.

Maybe she wants to meet this special woman who has been given the gift of life. Her mom's heart. She must be someone special. Everyone seems to be tiptoeing about the other's feelings instead of being honest.

Her mom had left a piece of herself behind to help Kendra live. But that wasn't all. She had left a piece of her heart inside Amy, as well. Her mom's life was meant to make a difference, even in death.

What starts as a snowy, drama-filled, stressful and uncertain time, turns into the most remarkable and memorable family Christmas! Christmas miracles abound connected by the love of a young girl.

As always, *Karen Kingsbury* portrays a charming, heart-warming Hallmark Christmas, in an idyllic wintry setting, of two families coming together following tragedy and grief, to celebrate their strong belief in God, family, and redemption.

For those new fans or ones reading Karen's Baxter family for the first time, the author does an amazing job connecting everyone with a family tree of all the members and players, as well as an update of her own family.

On a personal note: My mom was a huge Karen Kingsbury fan and read each one of her books. (I even found her list after she died). She was looking forward to this title. As most of you are aware my mom passed away this August, after a three-year courageous fight with colon cancer. She will not be with us this Christmas for the first time; however, she lives on in each of us. This story is a special one, which my mom would have loved. This inspiring story, is for you, mom!

JDCMustReadBooks

Jennifer says

<http://bookishdevices.com/2016/10/24/...>

Readers have their favorite authors and Karen Kingsbury is one of mine. I wanted to love this newest book about one of my favorite fictional families but ...

Two years have passed since the car accident that took the lives of Sam and Erin Baxter Hogan and three of their four daughters. Erin's father, John Baxter has invited a stranger for Christmas Eve dinner—Kendra

Bryant, the recipient of Erin's heart. The family is divided about meeting Kendra and some say they'll miss Christmas so they don't have to meet her. At the same time, Maddie West, daughter of Brooke Baxter West, is praying for meaning this Christmas.

I'm going to write this review to two different groups of readers.

- 1 - Readers who have read all of the Baxter books before and
- 2 - Readers who are being introduced to the Baxter family for the first time.

Group 1, you're up first. I'm a member of this group since I've read all 23 books that precede this one. What bothered me about this book were actions taken by some of the characters that I found unbelievable. These actions didn't make the Baxters feel like the characters that I've grown to love. Then there were details and portions of the storyline that didn't match up with previous books. I don't want to say much more than that for fear of spoilers but as a reader of the Baxter books I was a little disappointed about these elements of the story. It hurts me to say but this book was a 3-star read because of the above-mentioned. If it wasn't for Erin's surviving daughter, Amy it would have remained a 3-star book. However, each time Amy was involved I sniffled my way through that scene. Her heartbreak became my heartbreak. Amy and the emotions I felt for her made this book for me. Karen always manages to pull at my heart-strings and she did that with Amy. I also enjoyed seeing Maddie at age 18. Group 1, you'll remember Maddie and what happened to her sister, Hayley. At the time of the incident it wasn't explored how Maddie felt back then. I liked seeing Maddie now trying to deal with the trauma of that event. In conclusion Group 1, look for something special at the end of the book. I believe lovers of the Baxters will enjoy it.

Group 2, you're next. The things I mentioned above probably won't bother you because you won't have the in-depth background Group 1 has with the Baxter family. I think you'll enjoy this read and want to go back and read the previous books, which I highly recommend you do. But don't worry! You can absolutely read this book without reading the others. A Baxter Family Christmas begins with an introduction to the family ... Who is who, how old they are, who their kids are etc. You'll simply want to read the rest of the books to fill in the greater details of storylines mentioned here.

In the end reader friends, this is a really quick read (less than 2 hours total reading time according to my Kindle). It's a good way to pass an afternoon snuggled up in your favorite reading spot. While there were instances when I wanted more, ultimately I believe old fans of the Baxters or new will enjoy this book.

I received an advanced copy of this book from NetGalley.

Reagan Soper says

great book. short but new book coming soon so can't complain
