

RISE TO THE MOMENT OF TRUTH
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Opinion

Allen Mendenhall: Horizons of wonder

[Allen Mendenhall](#) | 12.20.24



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In the twilight of institutional credibility, America finds itself transfixed by a peculiar aerial phenomenon: mysterious drones materializing like specters over the nation's troubled

landscape, transforming mundane suburbs and military installations into theaters of collective apprehension.

These ethereal visitors have become emblematic of a deeper malady: a profound erosion of public trust that transforms even the most anodyne governmental reassurances into objects of reflexive suspicion.

From the unexpected drone epicenter of New Jersey to the sensitive peripheries of rural America, these unidentified flying objects have caused widespread unease. Federal agencies pirouette between calming rhetoric and technological surveillance, deploying infrared cameras and digital scrutiny while simultaneously admitting the prosaic truth – that most purported drone images resolve into conventional aircraft upon careful examination.

As these nebulous airborne intruders occupy the national consciousness, casting shadows of uncertainty, another, more benevolent ethereal migration prepares to take flight – this one powered not by technological enigma but by the pure, unassailable faith of childhood.

While skeptical adults scan the heavens for drones and decode cryptic federal communiqués, young children turn their gaze skyward with an altogether different expectation: the imminent arrival of a rotund, red-suited aeronautical marvel and his team of cervine navigators.

Yes, I mean Santa and his reindeer.

No matter how easy it is to take flight across the friendly skies or send astronauts and spaceships into outer space, the worlds above us, outside our atmosphere, continue to amaze and haunt us. We are perpetual strangers to the infinite, suspended between the comfort of comprehension and the vertigo of the unknowable.

Our human consciousness perpetually negotiates a precarious boundary between what we can measure and what forever eludes our grasp. Each horizon represents not merely a geographical limit but an existential threshold where being confronts its magnificent insignificance.

The sky – whether populated by mysterious drones or imagined reindeer – becomes a canvas of radical uncertainty. We project meaning onto its vastness, constructing narratives that simultaneously reveal and obscure the minimal significance of our personal existence.

Our instruments can map, our technologies can probe, but beneath these efforts lies an irreducible fear: the terrifying chance of a universe indifferent to human comprehension, where meaning is not discovered but relentlessly invented.

In this context, the child's anticipation of Santa and the adult's drone-induced anxiety become parallel expressions of the same fundamental impulse: to make sense of the incomprehensible, to find patterns in randomness, to transform the blank slate of possibility into a legible story.

Fortunately, the Christian story offers a profound resolution to this existential challenge: Jesus Christ – the ultimate meaning transcending our limited perception. Where human understanding falters, divine revelation illuminates.

He is the logos that gives structure to chaos, the eternal Word that transforms uncertainty into hope, the incarnate answer to our most fundamental questions of being and purpose. In Christ, the infinite becomes intimate, the incomprehensible becomes knowable, and the vast, haunting sky becomes not a void of meaninglessness but a testament to a love that pervades and defines all existence.

Merry Christmas – in this season and always!

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