

Happy Birthday Jesus Cake

By Valerie Neal

A few years ago I was looking for something different and stumbled upon this idea. This is the cake I make each year to celebrate the birth of Christ. It looks different each year, read on and I will explain.



How to make your own.

I decorate cakes and teach cake decorating so I decided to go all out, and to make plenty for Christmas gifts to family, so I needed something that was quick and easy, yet did not look quick and easy. The way I do this uses 3 box mixes and get 4 cakes. I prefer Duncan Hines mixes.

For cakes

1 White Cake Mix
1 Red Velvet Cake Mix
1 Chocolate cake mix
Green Food coloring

Decide which shape of pan you are using, the first year I made 8" round cakes, the next year I made 8" square cakes. I fill my pans to 2/3 full, that way I can level the cake in the pan, slicing off the "hump" using the pan as a guide. Make 2 layers of each mix according to instructions, with one exception, add green food coloring to white cake mix. Let cool in pans 10 minutes (no longer, they will stick, trust me I know) Cool on rack till cool all the way through. Torte (do not fill yet)each layer making 4 layers of each kind of cake.

To learn more on leveling your cake go here.

<http://www.wilton.com/cakes/making-cakes/leveling-cakes.cfm>

Assembly

Things you will need for assembly.

Cake circle-same size as cake

Cake circle or plate 4" bigger than cake

Butter cream Icing

Decorator Bag & Coupler

size 12 tip

Spatula

Filling-I use pudding, you can use icing, jams, preserves, and you can use a different kind in between

layers.

Optional 18" bag and quick-icer tip 789

Place a bit of icing on your smaller board, then place the bottom layer (chocolate) on cake circle, you may need to trim the circle just a bit for a better fit. The icing will help to prevent sliding.

Layer your layers in this order.

1. Chocolate-represents sin, place on cake circle bottom side down, take your bag with your tip 12 and icing and make a dam around the edge of your cake layer. Fill with filling.
2. Red Velvet-represents the blood of Christ. Place your red velvet layer on top of your chocolate layer, bottom side up. Make your dam and fill with filling.
3. Green-represents the new life we have in Christ. Place bottom side up.

For more help on filling and/or torting cakes Wilton is a great place to start.

<http://www.wilton.com/cakes/making-cakes/filling-cake-layers.cfm>

<http://www.wilton.com/cakes/making-cakes/torting-cakes.cfm>

Icing your cake

Next, brush the crumbs off of you cake, and place a layer of butter cream icing on your cake, icing top first then sides. NOTE: the icing bought at the store will NOT work for this, unless it is butter cream icing found in the cake decorating supply isle. You can also purchase some at most local bakeries. I use the Wilton icing tip (789) and an 18" bag, it comes out the right thickness and it is so much easier to smooth. If you are covering with fondant, as I do, I still recommend smoothing before adding fondant, and I still put a 1/4" layer of icing, my family prefers it that way, and so do most of the people down here in NE Texas, they just don't like the taste of the fondant. I use parchment triangles to smooth and on really humid days I use a non design paper towel. For a more detailed look at using the Wilton 789 tip go to <http://www.wilton.com/decorating/icing/using-decorating-tip-789.cfm>

Video helps.

<http://www.wilton.com/decorating/icing/using-a-spatula.cfm>

http://www.countrykitchensa.com/videos/icing_a_cake_quick_icer.aspx

Fondant

I like to use the fondant for these cakes because to me it just represents the robe of righteousness. To save money I make my own fondant. When making just one cake I prefer to use ready made, it is easier to work with, but as I make anywhere from 6-8 cakes that are 8" wide and 4" high, fondant gets a little expensive.

Marshmallow Fondant

1 Cup Mini Marshmallows

1 Tsp liquid (I use 1/2 tsp clear vanilla & 1/2 tsp clear butter flavor and 1 1/2 tsp water, use 1 tsp clear vanilla and no butter flavoring if coloring with Kool Aid)

1 1/2-1 1/3 Cup Powdered Sugar

Optional 1 pkt Kool Aid (name brand only)

Vegetable Shortening

Generously grease sides of microwave safe bowl with shortening. Place marshmallows and liquid in it. Microwave for 30 seconds, stir, if marshmallows are completely melted move to next step, if not place back in microwave for 10 second intervals. This is a great time to add coloring or Kool Aid if using it. Use gel coloring (Wilton gel coloring is great), food coloring will change your results. When adding the

coloring stop just before you get the desired color, you can add more later if needed, but you may find that you added too much later on. Add half of the powdered sugar, you may use a dough hook on your mixer if you have one, if not stir with greased wooden spoon until mixed. Place part of remaining powdered sugar on mat on counter (you may use freezer paper) and turn mixture out onto surface. Knead, and add remaining as needed until it no longer sticks to your hands and the sugar is absorbed. You may want to grease your hands with shortening, don't worry they will look great later!!! For an 8" to 10" cake I double this recipe. Lightly cover your fondant with a coating of shortening and cover with plastic wrap, set aside for about 1 hour.

Roll out fondant, measuring both sides and width of top of cake. Example, 8" across + 4" side + 4" side = 16" + 1" = 17" circle of fondant. I use a cake measuring mat that I use for decorating, which I put a light layer of Crisco on prior to rolling out my fondant to prevent sticking. If fondant is too hard to work with you can place it covered in the microwave for 10 seconds to warm it.

Putting Fondant on cake

Carefully remove fondant from mat and place on cake. I use a large goblet I have to place my cake on so that it is easier for me to trim off any excess fondant.

For a great video on covering a cake with fondant go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vecmy4nKT-A>

Adding Decorations

Place either double sided tape, a heavy duty kind, or some other item on your larger cake board or plate, this will secure the smaller circle so no sliding occurs. Now place your cake on the larger cake circle or fancy plate. I use freezer paper to cover my larger circle and use 3 of them altering the direction of the corrugation of the cardboard, these cakes get very heavy and need the extra support. You may use a fancier paper to cover your boards, but please make sure it is food grade paper. I have used wrapping paper for a cake for my family, but did not let the cake sit for very long on the paper.

Each year I start in November making poinsettias for my cakes, I do put those on each year, and a bow. The first years cakes had a wreath of poinsettias on them, last years were square to represent the first Christmas present, the Christ Child.

Fondant Decorations

You can use store bought fondant, pre-colored fondant, or buy it white and color it or even make it and color it yourself, when I color my home made fondant, I use Kool-Aid. For fondant decorations I roll out my fondant 1/8-1/16" thick and use cookie cutters to cut them out. Investing in a bunch of plastic open cookie cutters is a wise thing for this. Metal cookie cutters work fine, but lose their shape easier and rust, so I tend to purchase plastic.

Pre-made decorations are another option, you can use the ones found at your local supermarket. One year I put snowflakes on our cake, just as no two snowflakes are the same we are all different and unique in God's eyes. Make your cake special, just from you and yours to Jesus. Place one large candle in the center, each family member hold a smaller candle and light theirs from the one in the cake and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus. If you have any questions please email me at cakesbyladybug@yahoo.com, or go to my squidoo lens that this cake is on www.squidoo.com/forsarah. I have also listed on my page where I originally got the inspiration for my cakes. There are more ideas for decorating listed on that site. Blessings-Valerie

Buttercream Icing

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup solid vegetable shortening
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine softened
- 1 tsp clear vanilla
- 4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar (approximately 1 lb.)
- 2 tablespoons milk

Makes: About 3 cups of icing.

Instructions

(Medium Consistency)

In large bowl, cream shortening and butter with electric mixer. Add vanilla. Gradually add sugar, one cup at a time, beating well on medium speed. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often. When all sugar has been mixed in, icing will appear dry. Add milk and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy. Keep bowl covered with a damp cloth until ready to use.

For best results, keep icing bowl in refrigerator when not in use. Refrigerated in an airtight container, this icing can be stored 2 weeks. Rewhip before using.

For thin (spreading) consistency icing, add 2 tablespoons light corn syrup, water or milk. You will use this to ice a cake.

For Pure White Icing (stiff consistency), omit butter; substitute an additional 1/2 cup shortening for butter and add 1/2 teaspoon No-Color Butter Flavor. Add up to 4 tablespoons light corn syrup, water or milk to thin for icing cakes.

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