



CHRISTMAS 2022
A MESSAGE FROM THE
PRIMATE OF THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH

'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'.

THE story of Christmas has been told and retold through the centuries, to countless generations. It is the good news of the birth of the Saviour Jesus Christ, the One who came from God to bring back to God men and women of every age and time – back to the God who is our origin, our life, our hope, and our salvation.

The Nativity of the Lord is at the heart of Christmas. It is the celebration of the fulfillment of an ancient promise made by God and foretold in ages past, long before shepherds and kings would come to Bethlehem, long before Caesar Augustus would decree a census causing Mary and Joseph to make their way to the City of David called Bethlehem.

The story of the birth of the Christ Child to the Blessed Virgin Mary is indeed as startling a revelation as it is a joyful mystery. It is a miracle as all new life is a miracle of God, a holy event. As the Gospels record, this was no ordinary human birth. This was a birth that so changed the course of human history that it stands at the very centre of human civilization, culture, and history. The Nativity of Jesus Christ ushers in the time of our salvation, calling humanity out of darkness and sin into His redeeming light.

As Christians we are not immune from the realities of life; but as Christians we know the joy and hope this Season brings. The joy which is unique to those who know Jesus and believe on His promises. The hope which comes from His comforting words, “Be not anxious, I am with you always. Believe in God, believe in Me. Let not your hearts be troubled.”

We have all been following the news over the past few months. There is certainly little joy in the face of Russia’s war against the people of Ukraine. There is little comfort in the shootings, the killings, the injustices, the economic want, which continue in our world. The ‘tidings of great joy’ seem to have fallen on deaf ears. Yet once again we join our brethren across the world in the celebration of the birth of the One who is the Prince of Peace. The Lord knows we need His peace, but the world has not yet grasped that fact. And so, it is not surprising that we struggle to rejoice at this time; we struggle to find peace of mind and heart as we face the realities of our times. But it is precisely in the face of these realities that in faith we are able to rejoice, that we are able to hold on to hope and joy, and so celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, the Lord of glory.

The Seasons of Advent and Christmas are about renewing our relationship with God, and making a path in our hearts for His coming among us. Part of that renewal includes our questions, our pain, our sadness, our hurt; for all have a place in the life of faith. Belief does not preclude bewilderment, sorrow or doubt. But neither does our pain, our questions, our sadness preclude joy – true joy, the joy of Christ’s presence in our lives. With every question we ask, with every emotion we feel, with the thoughts that go through our minds as we watch the nightly news, we can still open our hearts to God, sometimes in doubt, sometimes in fear, sometimes in sorrow, but always, always with faith.

Christmas unites us once again to the Word who came down from heaven and dwelt among us. For Christmas is not just an historical event recorded for us in the stories of the Gospel; nor pretty pictures on Christmas cards or beautiful carols sung in church. Christmas is the celebration of the union of God with man for the redemption of the world. And therein is the truth of this Holy Season – that the eternal Word of God, born in a manger, born in time yet present from all eternity, is born again and lives on in every heart and every soul which receives Him as Lord and Saviour.

A very joyous and blessed Christmas to you all!

The Most Reverend Shane B. Janzen
Primate of the Traditional Anglican Church