



St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church

Christmas Day 25th December 2015

Christmas Letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury

This year has been an extremely tough one for so many people and communities. In particular I think of our Muslim brothers and sisters who've felt pressured to defend themselves in the wake of horrendous attacks carried out so outrageously in their name.

I think too of the fear among Jewish communities, and among Sikhs, Hindus and those of other faiths. No one should have to feel fear and anxiety as they try peacefully to live, pray and worship in their faith tradition. All who feel that fear will be included in my prayers this Christmas.

Christmas is revolutionary for us as Christians and for those who live around us, especially those wrongly seen as 'different'. Jesus and his family were once misunderstood and hated. They fled to Egypt as refugees and migrants. Jesus went on to be misunderstood, hated, attacked throughout his ministry.

But through how he treated others – especially those who were also seen as different or inferior or to be feared – he taught us a profound lesson about the gift of the other. Whether it's the story of the Good Samaritan, or Jesus speaking to the woman at the well with whom no one else would be seen, Jesus showed us the infinitely surprising ways that we can love each other.

So what does that mean in practical terms? For me it's about responding to the love we're given by God at Christmas by offering it to those who might be feeling like they are on the margins, just like Jesus and his family were. That could be inviting your neighbour around for dinner or a cup of tea. It could be striking up that conversation in the school playground. It could be simply sitting next to that person on the bus who others seem nervous about sitting with. Try it – take the risk, see what happens.

As Christians we are called to be people who take that first step; who take the risk of kindness because we believe the other person is a gift to us from God, just as we can be a gift to them.

We're called to be people who don't accept narratives that seek to divide us as communities – wherever we hear them – because we have a better narrative: that God poured out his love for us by sending his son to be with us in a world of fear and danger. We have the capacity to share that risk-taking love with whoever we discover is our neighbour – not just this Christmas, but always.

Archbishop Justin Welby

***Please do take this sheet home with you to
read again or to refer to later***

The Readings

The Book of Isaiah – chapter 9

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Gospel according to Luke – chapter 2

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered.

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Eucharistic Prayer

CELEBRANT The Lord be with you.

ALL And also with you.

CELEBRANT Lift up your hearts.

ALL We lift them up unto to the Lord.

CELEBRANT Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

ALL It is right to give Him thanks & praise.

CELEBRANT: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father almighty, everlasting God. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might; Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

CELEBRANT: Holy and gracious Father, all creation rightly gives you praise. All life, all holiness, comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whom you sent to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

We therefore bring you these gifts, and we ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit, that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who offered Himself in obedience to your will, the Perfect Sacrifice for all humankind.

On the night He was betrayed, He took bread, and when He had given thanks to you, He broke it and gave it to His friends and said:

"Take this and eat it: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper He took the cup of wine: and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them and said:

"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, for the remembrance of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

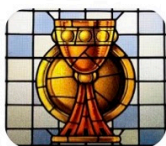
CELEBRANT Father, calling to mind the death your Son endured for our salvation; His glorious Resurrection and Ascension; His continual intercession for us in heaven; and looking for His coming again in glory, we offer you, in thanksgiving, this holy and life-giving sacrifice. Look with favour on your Church's offering, and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts may be filled with your Holy Spirit and become one body in Christ, and serve you in unity, constancy and peace. May He make us a perpetual offering to you and enable us, in communion with The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Bartholomew and the whole company of heaven, to share in the inheritance of your Saints.

With Him, and in Him, and through Him, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father Almighty, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven in songs of everlasting praise:

ALL: Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

(Continuing with the Lord's Prayer on Page 7 of the Booklet)

This Weeks Services & Groups



Family Eucharist

Sundays 9am – 10am

Holy Eucharist with a mix of traditional & contemporary worship – filled with music & prayer.



Taizé Service

Tuesdays 7pm – 7.30pm

Meditative music and chants in the peaceful and candlelit setting of the Church – simple and reflective.



Games in the Garden

New Year's Day 4pm – 6pm

Croquet & Scrabble in the Church garden, with refreshments! Players of all standards welcome.

AA Group: Open Meetings are held in the Church Centre in English on Tuesdays & Fridays at 6pm. For more information please call 0690 65 61 22 or 0690 54 17 99.

People

Bishop: The Rt. Revd Errol Brooks, Bishop of the North Eastern Caribbean and Aruba

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Treasurer: Alex Harbord

Vestry: The Wardens, Dawn Drouant, Clarion Romney, Richard Lester, Nancy Swann, Philip Trangmar & Lloyd Younger

Director of Music: Ombeline Collin

Pianist: Christian 'Kiki' Petat

Website: www.stbartholomewsanglicanchurch.com

Donations:

We are an entirely self-funded Church and dependent on your generosity and regular giving.

Do talk to Father Charlie or one of our leadership about how to most effectively give to the Church.

Friends of St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church

US Charitable 501(c)3 Foundation

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