



A Christmas Message from the Bishop of Keewatin

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings in the name of the Risen Lord.

“Joy to the World”.

The words of the beloved carol with its message of joy and love replacing sin and hatred will ring out time and time again this Christmas just as they have year after year since 1719 when the author Isaac Watts was inspired by the angel’s message in Luke 2:10 “Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy”

Regrettably they ring out in a world which seems to be becoming increasingly joyless. The disparity among people is increasing. Rich folk spend Christmas cruising the Caribbean while poor people line up at the food bank. Individuals become more and more self-centred while the life of the community dwindles. Some are so busy that they do not have time for the important things of life while others in loneliness pine away the hours. The news is filled with violence and alienation. Even the Church is plagued with schism. In other words, the situation today is very much like it was two thousand years ago when our Lord was born and when the angels delivered their message in song.

“Joy to the world” is not just a seasonal greeting. It is a mandate, a command for every baptized Christian. Instead of complaining about the world, we are called to transform it. We are set as a light in the darkness.

As a joyful people, we are called to set our priorities right by taking time to enjoy the wonders of creation and each other, by thinking of others first by sharing with each other the great gifts God has given us, and by making our homes and our churches places of warmth and welcome to friend and stranger alike. Having experienced joy ourselves we are to carry that joy into the entire world.

My prayer for you this Christmastide is that not only may you experience the joy of Christmas but that you may become a bearer of that joy to your family, your friends your workplace, your community, and your world all the days of the coming year.

My wife Penny and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and may God bless you all the days of your journey.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+David". The plus sign is small and positioned to the left of the letter 'D'.

Right Reverend David N. Ashdown