

The light shines in the darkness ...

John 1:5



Advent 2021
Fredericton NB

Dear Friends,

On a dark night, long, long ago, a little light shone from a place of humble beginning. A baby was born on the outskirts of a small, unimportant town, on the margins of society – in a feeding trough of stable animals. As the story goes, his bed was a manger because there was no room in the inn. From there shone a little light.

Perhaps this year, unlike many we have known, the message of a little light shining in the darkness will mean more because of where we have been. Some are finding darkness to be an apt description of the uncertainty and even the isolation that pandemic has forced upon us. Still, even in the darkness, the power and penetrability of even a little light makes it an effective metaphor for the message of the Christmas narrative.

In our context, whether it's feeling loneliness or isolation, frustration or fear, annoyance or even just inconvenience, a little light can make all the difference. Light, especially in the darkness, as it pierces with precision, cuts through stark shadow, divides even black obscurity, reminds once again that there is hope, life. It's not by chance that late December was chosen long ago as an ideal time to celebrate one of the best known of Christian messages: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." *John 1:5*

As cattle were lowing, meanwhile outside, an angel announced to shepherds: "Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news ... And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host." Many would come, from shepherd (the poorest), to Magi (the richest), to find the one born Messiah.

For the foreseeable future we'll no doubt continue to live with some extent of uncertainty. If we've learned one thing, perhaps it's the difficult lesson of vulnerability. It will be necessary to continue our watchfulness and to take action to be and to keep others as safe as possible. I fully expect we'll have more decisions to make, some needed quickly, others difficult, as we continue to navigate this thing called pandemic. But in the midst, we can be assured that whoever and wherever we are, there is a little light shining to remind of the hope that is ours. God's will it is to reach graciously in our direction and to bring us closer to him forever.

We'll continue through Christmastide to video stream and podcast as much of our worship as possible with the hope that those still unable to be with us in person can share at least a part of our Christmas celebration. We hope precautions and restrictions in place then will continue to bring some assurance of safety, not regarded as unnecessary barriers and help facilitate in-person worship for as many as are able. You'll find a schedule for Christmastide on the back or the next page. Home Communion is available where permitted. Please contact the Cathedral Office if you would like to make a request or arrangements.

May peace and joy be yours as this year ends. May God's gracious favour be upon you and yours as yet another begins. May we know more and more: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Hall
Dean of Fredericton
GMH

Give a
festival offering
ONLINE

Christmas Worship 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent (19 December)

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BCP)

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BAS)

4:00 p.m. Christmas Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve (24 December)

4:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist (*contemporary / family*)

8:00 p.m. Eucharist (*come worship*)

11:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist (BCP)

Christmas Day (25 December)

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BAS)

First Sunday after Christmas (26 December)

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BCP)

10:30 a.m. Carols for Christmastide

New Years Day (01 January)

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BAS)

*Please contact the Cathedral Office (506) 450 8500
to schedule a Home Communion.*

