

Christmas Message from our new bishop, Dorrien Davies

LLYS ESGOB, ABERGWILI
Advent/Christmas 2023.

Dear Friends,

“Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.”
Luke 2:14

At Christmas we are reminded of the message of the angels to the shepherds “Peace on Earth”, it is an important part of the Christmas narrative. As we reflect on the events of the past year, and all that has happened in the world the hope of the heavenly peace in our lives is more relevant than ever.

On the night that Jesus was born, the angel appeared to the shepherds announcing the birth of the Saviour, the Messiah. The shepherds would find this baby not in a palace or great house, but lying in a manger, a feed trough for animals. Yet in this simplistic, humble way the Incarnate God came into this world. Even though the world kept spinning and the events of that first Christmas went for the most part unnoticed, heaven resounded with the joy of the coming of the Prince of Peace. Lk 2.14. This is somewhat of an irony today when we realise that the town of Bethlehem is only forty-five miles away from the horrors and atrocities of conflict.

Christ comes to bring Salvation, hope, life and peace; in the heavenly message the angels testify and celebrate this peace as being for all people. Through the Saving, loving work of Christ, we can have peace with God, which hopefully will lead us into a peace with one another. Peace in our churches, peace in our communities, peace in the Holy Land, Ukraine and all troubled places in our world, and peace in our lives.

As we reflect on the life of Jesus Christ we come to realise that he came to bring a more expansive and inclusive peace. His mission was to establish the peace of God. This is more than inner peace. It is more than the cessation of war. It is even more than reconciliation between us and God. The peace of Christ includes all of these and more, it is the peace of his life in us. It envisions a universe governed by God in which all relationships are fully loving and just. This peace is centred in a right relationship with God, and it touches everything else in life.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, may we enjoy the peace we have with God through Christ. And may we be given a foretaste of the peace on earth that is yet to come. The peace of Jesus is for everyone, and when we accept his presence in our lives it changes our attitude in everything we do. Imagine the difference made between the shepherds and the baby Jesus, how the shepherds' lives were changed. Having heard the angels' message and travelled to the stable in Bethlehem; as they kneel before the Incarnate God, they experience that peace, that was beyond their understanding, is now within their reach. We too can have that peace by recognising that Jesus is our hope and that he gives meaning and peace to all our lives.

A festive blessing to you all, Merry Christmas,

+ Dorrien St Davids