

Christ the Savior is born.

Advent and Christmas 2014

Church of the Ascension
Sudbury

www.churchoftheascensionsudbury.ca

Dear People of God,

The wardens, board members, and honorary clergy at the Ascension join me in wishing you and your loved ones a very Holy and Happy Christmas, and God's richest blessings in the New Year. I am looking forward to welcoming you to one of our services of worship on Christmas Eve as we welcome the Christ child into our hearts and lives. If you are going to be away for the holidays do find a church nearby and attend a service. I guarantee it will be a blessing to you.

Christmas Eve service times at the Ascension are at 7pm and 9:30pm

One of the most poignant moments during the Christmas Eve services is the time we stand side by side in the darkened church towards the end of the service and watch and wait for the lighting of the taper candles. Slowly but surely as the light is passed from person to person the whole church seems to glow and warm with a different kind of light.

The Gospel writer John tells us about that 'other' light in the book that bears his name:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-4)

These are powerful, hopeful words, that remind us that God has been there since the beginning of time, and is here with us now, regardless of our circumstances. These words also promise that any form of darkness never has the

last word and that light will eventually prevail. The God who said, "Let there be light," and who confirmed that this light was 'good' transcends time. The light that shines in the December darkness year after year is the light of all generations!

The arrival of the 'light' is delivered by John the Baptist who functions as a lamp that radiates grace and truth. As God's people in this generation we are called to continue bearing witness to the light to a world that is often filled with darkness and despair.

Day after day as I minister alongside you at the Ascension I see Christ's light shining in and through you. You don't just talk or think about being *light*, you are *light*. Whether it is as we pray and worship together, as we offer the gifts of our hands and hearts in service to others, or in the ordinary moments of fellowship, there is always plenty of evidence of Christ's light around.

A darkened room is lightened and an aching heart is brightened by your loving, caring ways. May this continue throughout the coming year.

Christmas gifts

In gratitude for what you bring to me personally, and to the Church which you love so much, my gift to all of you is a donation to the Anglican Foundation's new project: '*Hope Air*'. You might have read about it in the latest copy of the Anglican Journal News.

"Hope Air is dedicated to arranging free air travel for Canadians who are in financial need and require medical care outside their communities. As a partner, AFC is helping make free air travel possible for children and young people. When you or someone you know needs to travel to a medical appointment, Hope Air may be able to arrange a flight. Hope Air is proud to provide all flights to eligible clients completely free of charge." Anglican Foundation website.

I will be able to request that the travel is from our community. Please pray for the recipient of this gift - that they will feel and experience Christ's light in the midst of a difficult time in their lives.

Christmas offering

In this letter is the annual Christmas Offering envelope. All of the proceeds from this offering will go to one of the many Outreach projects at the Ascension in 2015. Through this offering we have been able to reach out to individuals, organizations in our community and further away. Please consider your offering prayerfully and know that it will make a big difference to someone's life.

Christmas flowers and Christmas communion

If you wish to place flowers in the church on Christmas Eve as a thank offering or memorial, please email me at cagermond@bell.net or contact Anne Trimmer at 705.566.8127. We suggest a donation of \$25 for Christmas flowers.

I will be bringing communion to retirement residences and nursing homes on the 22nd or the 23rd December.

The office will be closed between Christmas and New Year although there will be the usual Sunday services on December 28th.

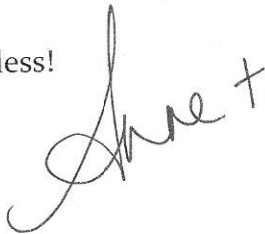
*O God our Father,
Whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem,
May the light of faith illumine our hearts
And shine in our words and deeds;
Through him who is Christ our Lord,
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever.*

Amen

(Collect for Christmas : BAS pg. 274)

Colin, Caitlin and Richard join me in wishing you a Happy and Blessed Christmas and New Year,

God bless!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anne +', written in black ink.

The Ven. Anne Germond