

Christmas 2014

My Dear Friends,

Another year of change and uncertainty has unfolded; municipal elections promise a difference but will there be; the Ebola virus claims lives; icons are accused of sexual abuse and we continue to look into what feels like chaos and the abyss.

Into this world of apprehension the message comes to us as it did to Joseph “Do not be afraid!”

“Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife”, (Matt 1:20) the angel assures Joseph. And what does Joseph have to fear? – the shame of his legal wife being an adulteress, the laughter of friends and neighbours; whose child is this anyway; how can I trust Mary; the responsibility of raising a child while living with the Roman occupation in the land. And finally the fear of the unknown; we can certainly identify with that.

Our fears comprise the uncertainty of life today. How long will my savings last? Will there be anything left to leave my children? Will my health stay the same? What about the possibility of a debilitating illness? How will my children or grandchildren fare. What about the many countries facing crises but are no longer in the news? We won't even mention the ecology. In short – the unknown.

The angels' message to all of the characters in the Christmas story is the same: Joseph – do not be afraid; Mary - do not be afraid; the shepherds – do not be afraid.

To us – do not be afraid! Why? Good tidings, good news – the Saviour who is Christ the Lord is among us. God is taking on our fears. Whatever happens we don't lose that presence. God's intervention in human life assures that while the future is unknown to us, “God with us” goes before us to light our way and receive our burden.

Our response to this loving act is to sing “Glory to God in the Highest”.

I wish you all the blessings of God's love.

The Rev Fran Kovar,  
Rector

The schedule of Christmas services is enclosed along with an envelope for your praise offering