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## Christmas 2022

To all the Faithful of the Diocese of Prince Albert,

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” (Isaiah 9:2)

In our Northern hemisphere, the natural symbolism of light and darkness is very much a part of our experience of Christmas. At the coldest and darkest time of the year, when darkness and night seem to have gained the upper hand, the days start to lengthen once more.

The celebration of our Saviour’s birth on December 25 happens at the moment when more light starts to come into our night. Scripture passages that speak of “a great light” shining upon us, such as that of Isaiah above, or Jesus’ own words, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12), resonate even more and warm our hearts. Even if winter has technically just begun, we remember joyfully that it is ending. This can be a powerful sign for us that our own struggles as human beings and the darkness in which we often find ourselves, has been overcome and enlightened by God. God joins us in the darkness to overcome it. The human birth of God’s Son is a new Flame that has come into the world: a spark of divine life that is meant to warm, purify, enlighten, and transform us all into adopted children of God.

In Matthew’s Gospel, a new star or light appears in the sky to point the way to the Messiah himself who is born in Bethlehem. The mysterious light in the night seems to move and lead travellers like the magi to the manger. So, creation itself bends and bows, points to a greater Mystery, the very Source of Light, that shines from an animal’s manger now repurposed into a bed for God made flesh.

My dear friends, the lights of our Advent wreath are all lit! We are ready to welcome and celebrate the Birth of God’s Son, Jesus. May the glow of candles in our churches and on our festive tables, as well as the bright lights that adorn our Christmas trees and houses, pierce every darkness, and remind us of the Light who is our reason for rejoicing in the dark.

May we share that light, that warmth and joy, with those around us especially with those who are struggling or in special need. A blessed Christmas to all of you!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

*+ Stephen A. Hero*

✠ Most Rev. Stephen A. Hero  
Bishop of Prince Albert