



A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MEGAN M. TRAQUAIR

A MESSAGE FOR ADVENT

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Advent!

This is a season that is dear to our hearts - where scripture and music help us to proclaim our hope in our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a season with beloved traditions of prayer, food, and gatherings - much of which we are translating into an altered form, due to the pandemic. In joy this year there will also be bittersweet moments. But bittersweet and hope often live together.

Perhaps the most important thing about Advent this year is what is important **every** year: it roots us back into the longer narrative of who we are as God's children. The prophets called for justice, mourned their people's suffering and spoke of God's faithfulness.

In Advent we remember that long wait, but we already know the punchline: God sent his Son not just to Israel but to the whole world.

We hear the theme of restoration echoing through our scripture. We find it in Isaiah 61:1-4, in Amos and the Psalms. It is repeated in Luke 4:18, when Jesus was beginning his ministry and chose these words from Isaiah to describe his ministry.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed, go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Luke 4:19-19



We, the followers of Jesus, see where the broken hearted are healed and see

how captives of all kinds are freed. We see the faithfulness of God.

But we also see where the restoration is not yet complete. We are familiar with pandemic, sorrow, ashes and racism. In Advent we see that God's Kingdom has begun, but that it is not yet complete. Our very act of proclaiming hope in Christ is a dramatic witness to our weary world and even to ourselves. There is nothing sentimental about it.

We proclaim hope when we are supporting ministries that feed the hungry or advocate for the needy. We proclaim hope when we do not let the isolated be forgotten, nor the essential workers ignored during these holidays. We claim hope against despair when we keep our eyes on this big gospel story instead of getting lost in digital narratives of despair.

But hope is strongest when it is communal. Faithfulness in meeting for Sunday worship online, proclaims hope to each other.

- Let the Advent Wreath making begin, find those candles for the four Sundays of this season.
- Let the beautiful music of faith ring out. Perhaps someone will figure out a way to have a massive, online, Messiah sing-along!
- Read the stories of the Bible and our hope for a Savior, using the reading from lessons and carols. [**Click here for more information.**](#)
- Start a small group and take the Advent journey with The Way of Love. [**Click here for resources.**](#)

Separated by geography, united in prayer: together, we are walking the deep, fruitful path of the Anglican way. We are inviting others to join us. We know the way of love is the only path for us.

Moving through Advent in 2020, I know that we will see signs of God's great faithfulness, because hope is already on its way to us and his name is Jesus of Nazareth.

With hope and trust in God's faithfulness,

+Megan

+ Bishop Megan

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