



Anglican Network
in Canada

Advent 2018

My dear fellow members of the Anglican Network in Canada,
It is the week following Advent III and that means it is almost Christmas.

Every year I find myself thrilled and amazed at the message of the angel to the shepherds that first Christmas night (Luke 2:8-20). This year is no exception!

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:10-12)

I love it that the angel immediately comforted the terrified shepherds by saying, “fear not,” just as years later the risen Lord Jesus gave assurance to the disciples gathered behind locked doors that Easter evening by saying, “peace be with you.” (John 20:19)

I love it that the message the angel brought was declared to be good news of great joy for all people because the baby who had just been born in Bethlehem was born to be the Saviour for all and He is Christ the Lord.

I love it that the angel didn’t leave this incredible message to be missed by the shepherds but particularly and specifically stated: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)

This baby, that has just been born in Bethlehem to be the Saviour of all, is born for you too.

The “all” means “you”.

Who me?

Yes, you.

Well, as you know, the shepherds got it. They received the message, believed it, rushed off immediately to Bethlehem and found that baby exactly as they had been told. And then with joy, Luke tells us: **“they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.”**
(Luke 2:17-18)

The message of the angel that night did not stop with the shepherds. They shared it in such a way that you and I are thinking about it today, more than two thousand years later.

News this good must not be neglected and not held to ourselves alone. Everyone needs to hear because everyone needs that Saviour and in every case, when received by faith, this Jesus delivers his wonderful salvation– forgiveness of sins, eternal life and a right, living relationship with God.

It’s so simple but it’s true just as the birth of this baby born of the Virgin Mary is simple and true.

Again this Christmas, I write on behalf of our faithful and devoted team of Bishops and their wives. We are so grateful for your prayers and love for us! We need your prayers always and assure you of our constant prayer for you and the congregations which make up this diocese.

We are so grateful to have a message which is so good. We are passionate about this message of Jesus and long for more to hear and more to receive.

It is our regular prayer for you, and for all those you love, that you will experience more and more the joy of knowing this Jesus. And that, like the shepherds, this daily discovery will impact us all such that we simply must open our mouths and speak about him to those we meet.

Let’s not just sing it, let’s do it: “Go tell it on the mountains over the hills and everywhere... go tell it on the mountains that Jesus Christ is born.”

Isn’t it wonderful to have good news? And, as we pondered this past synod, the one who is the Saviour is looking for a great Harvest. For Jesus said: **“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”**

(Matthew 9:37-38)

The Lord bless you and all whom you love this Christmas and throughout the coming year! May this Christmas and 2019 be a year of great Harvest for Jesus!



+ *Charlie*

The Right Reverend Charlie Masters
Diocesan Bishop



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