



Anglican Church of Australia

Primate: The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith

Christmas Message 2021

What words come to mind when you think of Christmas? Family, friends, food, gifts, fun... all these are indeed good. When we dig down a little deeper, they are tied together with the most important aspect of Christmas – love. The love we share with our family and friends, the love we express in generosity to others, the love of children's delight and laughter. Yet, this love is seen in its greatest clarity in God's love for the whole of creation in coming amongst us as a vulnerable, helpless baby.

Our society appears to be becoming more and more vexed and polarised – the vaxers vs anti-vaxers, climate change activists verses sceptics, State and Federal governments divided over Covid response, increasing global tensions, issues of honesty and integrity in our leaders, and the list goes on. There is a lot of stress in the world right now.

Into this world God continues to speak his message of love. As followers of Jesus his love needs to be our motivation and our action. It is hugely important that we treat each other respectfully and focus on what is good for others and our society and to do that with graciousness, acceptance, and generosity. Our love mirroring God's love will bring hope and healing to this broken and divided world.

The simple story of a baby in a manger is dismissed by many, yet it continues to be a light of hope that shines eternal as it is the birth of God in human form, coming to us in love. This is the sign that God has love and hope for the world. As such the message of Christmas, the message of God's extravagant love, offers a real alternative for a flourishing life.

*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 1:14

As we come again to this Christmas time, I encourage us to ponder afresh the love of God seen most clearly in the coming of Jesus to bring hope to the poor, release for the captive, sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed and to proclaim to all the Lord's favour (Luke 4:18-19). And to respond to this love by loving God and neighbour.

With every blessing this Christmas and in the year ahead.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Geoffrey Smith".

The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith
Archbishop of Adelaide and Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia