

## The meaning of Christmas

*“An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them. “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” Luke 2:9-11*

The season of Christmas has come. Christmas this year might feel very different to what we’re used to due to the ongoing global pandemic challenges. And yet, for children, this is a season they are longing for because Christmas means getting many good presents. But as we all know, that’s not the real meaning of Christmas. Some people say, “The best part of Christmas is being with my family.” That might be a part of Christmas but not the best part of Christmas. The best part of Christmas is that God came down to earth in flesh to save us on the first Christmas. That holy night, God demonstrated His perfect, pure, unconditional, irrepressible, inconceivably awesome, self-denying true love.

John wrote, “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16) This message gives us hope. The purpose of His coming was to save us from our sins. In His infinite love, God sent His Son to rescue us from sin and death. As we prepare to commemorate Christ’s coming at Christmas, we also recognize His presence, Emmanuel, now. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He did not leave us here alone. He comes into our souls and in the community of the Church. We need only open our hearts to Him and His love. Christ Jesus is not far from us. He is with us here and now. Jesus, who came among us at Christmas and is with us, will return in glory at the end of time.

As we await and hope for the end of the pandemic, let us even more importantly await the coming of the Lord and place our hope in Him. We might be celebrating Christmas and New Year’s Day with just immediate family. However, the message of Christmas has not changed. May God’s hope, faith, love, joy, light and life fill your home this Christmas and New Year.

Have a joyful Christmas and Happy New Year!

Your Pastor, Hannah