

## *“Let us announce the way of the Prince of Peace”*

### The Secretary General’s Christmas Message

My dear brothers and sisters. On behalf of everyone at the Anglican Communion Office, I send you warm Christmas greetings and prayers.

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Christ. He is the “true light that gives light to everyone”. He is our saviour. He is the Prince of Peace.

In John 1 we read that John the Baptist was a witness to the light. He testified to the coming of Christ. He announced the Good News of transforming love.

As I reflect on the year, I give thanks for all the ways in which churches of the Anglican Communion around the world are announcing the Good News of Jesus Christ in their communities.

Many of you are doing so in challenging circumstances, where the realities of conflict, environmental crisis, and other issues are ever present.

This year, I have spent time with the Anglican churches in Japan and Korea, who for the last 40 years have worked together in peace and reconciliation work between their two churches and nations.

I have witnessed the vital peace and humanitarian work of the Church in places of conflict and war, including Israel and Gaza, Sudan, Myanmar and Congo.

I have been inspired by the ministry of a priest in Burundi, whose church building has been flooded many times. He told me he keeps the church open so that people have a place to pray.

We continue to pray for these ministries – and many others like it across the Communion.

Dear friends, wherever we are in the world, announcing the Good News and witnessing to the light of Christ isn’t always easy. We face many trials and uncertainties. Our pathways aren’t always clear.

But as we prepare for Christmas, I am reminded of Zechariah’s song, at the birth of his son John the Baptist. Zechariah praises God that John will prepare the way for Jesus and announce Christ’s salvation. His song celebrates that God will “guide our feet into the path of peace”.

And in Luke 2, we read of the angels, appearing to the Shepherds in the fields to announce the birth of Jesus, who praise God saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.”

Dear friends, as we celebrate Christmas and look to the year ahead, may we hold to these words, as we seek to be a faithful Christian presence.

We may face difficulties, but we know that we serve the light of the world who will bring Peace on Earth.

Just like John the Baptist, may we continue to prepare the way for Jesus, the Prince of Peace as we announce the Good News to our friends, families and communities.

Amen.