



## ADVENT/CHRISTMAS 2022

*In the beginning was the Word ...  
and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*  
John 1:14

### **Advent/Christmas Greetings!**

This is a dark time.

Not only are the days of sunlight shorter, but Hurricane Fiona left us all literally in the dark for a while and there are still some who have not had their power restored at the time of writing this letter!

Metaphorically, it has been a dark time too. Everyone I speak to us is feeling tired from worry, anxious about the future, and sad or depressed more than usual. It's been tough on us.

Unlike some parts of the world, we are just not used to this much here.

While some folks are introverts or housebound and have enjoyed keeping in touch by social media these past few years, for others, the return, more and more, to ***in-person*** events is helping us get through things.

***In person*** connections exchange a spirit and energy that is missing when we communicate in other ways. That is one of the things the pandemic is teaching us, I think. We need it.

Sporting events, concerts and fall suppers have been a wonderful help, as have music and smiles, now visible without masks, in worship.

Relationships, and ***in person*** contact are what Christmas is all about, really.

Christmas is about Incarnation; about God not being far away above the clouds but intimately one of us; being here ***in person*** and sharing first hand, those feelings of anxiety, fear and despair. God knows how we feel.

Listening and sharing helps on the human level and it helps spiritually too.

God is not just on social media.

God, in person, in Christ, is the One that can gift us with courage and strength; God is the ultimate source of faith and hope beyond short term optimism.

We are happy for those who join us on line each Sunday. But if you want or need more, we invite you to join us "***in the flesh***" as we focus this Advent on **HOPE** and as we prepare for Life and Light and the WORD made flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are not alone. God is with us.



In addition to the regular Advent services from November 27<sup>th</sup> to Christmas Day, we want to highlight a few things for you:

- Clifton Family Christmas Concert on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 7:00 p.m. at the Old Barns United Church with Highway 236 and Friends (Free Admission)
- White Gift Sunday on December 4<sup>th</sup>, with a special offering for those in need
- Christmas Eve services: Hilden at 7 p.m. and Old Barns at 9 p.m.
- Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, therefore a special on-line service of “Lessons and Carols” will be available for you to tune in to before or after you open your gifts Christmas morning (no in-person service)
- New Year’s Day Sunday service will be online also (no in-person service)

Relationships of love, expressed in person, is what God thought we needed in the dark times of 2000+ years ago.

Maybe we need to do the same.

Come join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Word made flesh; God in person.

Merry Christmas!

Reverend Phillip Kennedy

