

## **Christmas Eve Message- 2022**

In a time when anxiety and need often feel like a smothering blanket, Christmas comes with its message of God's light coming into our darkness. Look with me into the faces of some who wait for the light.

They waited in the dark. They almost had lost hope that dawn would come.

The "night" had lasted 400 years — 400 years since God had spoken hope to Israel through his prophets, since he had promised salvation through a Messiah he would send.

Suddenly, the darkness was scattered by a light that hurt their eyes and troubled their hearts. With the light came a messenger saying, "Don't be afraid. Unto you this day is born a savior."

Then as quickly as the light had come it was gone. Yet, somehow, it wasn't quite as dark. A small light glimmered on the horizon. They went to see what could stand against the darkness.

They sat in the damp darkness, filled with the smell of wet animals and moldering straw. The pains were quite close together now. There was no time to find a better place.

They were frightened. He covered her with a blanket and then his coat. He built a small fire. The pains increased. The baby cried its entrance. She slumped in exhaustion.

They recalled the words of their strange visitor that a son would be born who would be the savior of the world. They hadn't understood then — or now. But something was different. The fire had died down, but the night seemed brighter.

For the Shepherds, angel voices spoke. Loving arms embraced their hearts and brought a message of hope. They walked on, led by love and hope, but the shadows were not quite so deep. A glimmer of light shined ahead.

As you approach this Christmas season, search the darkness with eyes of hope; stretch forth fingers of faith. Listen. Can you hear the news?

"Don't be afraid. I bring you good news for all people. ... For unto you this day is born a savior who is Christ the Lord. And you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Go and find him!"

Come as we follow the light that shatters our darkness.

### **Candle lighting/ Carols:**

Away In A Manger/Silent Night/Candle lighting- PK will light a candle from the Christ candle and start it on both sides of the isle.