



## **2024 Christmas Messages from Leaders of Christian Churches in Australia**

*Love is born  
With a dark and troubled face  
When hope is dead  
And in the most unlikely place  
Love is born  
Love is always born* (Michael Leunig)

This poem written by Michael Leunig captures something of the mystery of the birth of Christ celebrated at Christmas. The social reality of the time of Jesus' birth was one of military occupation, and it was an environment of violence with little justice or compassion. This is seen in the decision of Herod to kill first born infants, and the resulting need for the Holy Family to seek asylum in Egypt.

There are parallels with our global environment. What is very different, though, is the ease with which we have all this darkness, trouble and hopelessness presented to us on a daily basis. Media giants thrive on doing this and we can experience hopelessness.

To see, become aware of, and point to love being born takes a different sense of insight and awareness. The Christmas story describes how Mary and Joseph knew love was being born. The shepherds knew this, and the travellers from the East also knew. In a humble setting in Bethlehem, not in a place of power, in a feeding trough love was born.

Love continues to be born in kindness, forgiveness, compassion, peace, and justice. These are among the signs of the continuing presence of Jesus in and around us. In small ways as we nurture the signs of the presence of Jesus, no matter how small they may be, love is born, and it grows.

May you in this Christmas season, wherever you are, and in whatever circumstances you find yourself in, see and experience the ongoing birth of love.

*Reverend John Gilmore, President  
National Council of Churches in Australia*

(NB. In the Western Church, Christmas is celebrated on 25 December 2024.  
Most Orthodox Churches will celebrate the Feast of the Nativity on 7 January 2025.)

15 messages from National Church Leaders follow.

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For more information, contact the NCCA Secretariat on 02 9299 2215 ([secretariat@ncca.org.au](mailto:secretariat@ncca.org.au))

## Anglican Church of Australia

One of the key characters in contemporary Christmas celebrations is Santa Claus who developed from St Nicholas, the bishop of Myra who died around 342AD. The feast day for Nicholas is December 6. In some countries, children receive gifts on that day.

There is not a lot known about the historical Nicholas which is not surprising since he lived in turbulent times, with the church enduring persecution under the Roman emperor Diocletian. But there are many legends about Nicholas and his generosity, particularly his generosity to children and people in need. One of the best-known legends concerns Nicholas saving three young girls from prostitution by dropping a bag of gold through the window of their house for three nights so their father could pay a dowry for each of them.

It is significant that the basis for Santa Claus who is celebrated by many at Christmas was a Christian bishop known for his generosity to the poor. One of our Christmas customs is gift giving. We give gifts and mostly receive gifts in return. One of our anxieties is trying to make sure the value of the gift we give will balance the gift we are likely to receive.

It is estimated that 30 billion dollars was spent on Christmas in 2023 in Australia. This is a huge amount of money and much of it was probably spent on people who didn't really need it. I wonder whether we might consider alongside exchanging gifts, as part of following St Nicholas' example, giving to people who can't give to us in return.

There are a lot of people who are in need in Australia. Demand for food and financial assistance seems to be continuing to grow and organisations that provide that assistance report shortages in resources and volunteers. There is lots of scope for us to give without expecting anything in return.

Lots of words are used trying to explain the spirit of Christmas or the real meaning of Christmas. For me, the kind of generosity shown by St Nicholas, mirroring the generosity of God in coming among us as one of us in the person of Jesus, is really at the heart of any celebration of Christmas.

Maybe, by giving to those who can't give back we will experience more of the true meaning of Christmas and help those who are in real need.

Have a holy and happy Christmas.

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

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## Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese

### Christ is born, Glorify Him!

We await the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose birth brings the promise of light into the darkness, joy to the sorrowful, and peace to the troubled.

This light, joy and peace are gifts which the Lord offers to us through each other. Thus Christmas, which celebrates the “coming near” of our Lord Jesus Christ to us, reminds us of our calling to “come near” to those who are lost, lonely or suffering, extending our love to them in any way we can.

The world in which we live is marked by division, hardship, and despair. If we as Christians welcome the Lord Jesus Christ into our hearts and into our lives, we can become healers of division, relievers of hardship, and dispellers of despair. This is our challenge, and this is our privilege to allow the Lord Jesus Christ to transform our lives through his coming, so that He, through us, can begin to transform the lives of others. Then, the hope of Christmas expressed in the words of the prophet Isaiah, **“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined”** (Isaiah 9:2), will be fulfilled. Amen.

Christ is Born, Glorify Him!

*His Eminence Metropolitan Basilios, Archbishop*

*Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines*

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## Catholic Church in Australia

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose message of love and reconciliation is especially relevant in times of conflict.

War is a profound tragedy that starkly contrasts with the joy and hope of the Christmas season. The Church teaches that every human life is sacred, and the violence and suffering caused by war are deeply lamentable.

Christmas reminds us of the angels’ proclamation of “peace on earth” and calls us to be peacemakers in our own lives.

It is a time to reflect on the teachings of Christ, who urged us to love our enemies, engage in deep listening and dialogue, and seek unity and reconciliation.

As Christians, we are called to embody this message by promoting peace, justice, and compassion in our communities and the world.

During this holy season, let us pray for an end to all conflicts and commit ourselves to work tirelessly for peace as our faith in Christ compels us to do.

*The Most Reverend Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth, and*

*President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference*

*Catholic Church in Australia*

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### Helpless but not hopeless

At Christmas, we look to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. The name of the town means “house of bread (food)”. This has great significance for us who believe that Jesus is the bread come down from heaven: for the life of the world. An important detail in Luke’s account of the Nativity is that, after he was born, Jesus was placed in a manger. “Manger” is an old word, no longer in common use, which means feeding trough. From the outset, Jesus is presented as the living bread offered for those who desire to live with God forever.

As our gaze turns to Bethlehem, we grieve for the present reality of the land where the Son of God took his first human breath. The words I wrote earlier this year, at Easter, are still sadly true: “Violence has begotten more violence; and ordinary and defenceless people are being ground up in the unforgiving wheels of history, politics and the arms trade.”

We may feel helpless, but let’s not give in to hopelessness. The true message of Christmas is that a light has shone into our darkened world. God has entered our world to redeem it from within. Each one of us can say yes to this hope every time we say yes to the acts of forgiveness, reconciliation and love that we can decide to do. And we can find the strength to keep doing that when we are nourished by the living bread who is our Saviour - in Fellowship, Word and Eucharist.

*Bishop Michael McKenna, Bishop of Bathurst, and  
Chair, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s Commission for Christian Unity and Inter-Religious  
Relations.  
Catholic Church in Australia*

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## Chinese Methodist Church in Australia

### The Christmas season is a time for good news!

The birth of Jesus Christ was prophesied countless times in the Old Testament before it was recorded by the writers of the four New Testament Gospels. Isaiah made a clear prediction eight centuries before Jesus was born: **“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”** (Isaiah 9:6). This prophecy makes it clear that God is intervening in the world directly, and the baby born is God Almighty, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, full of glory and wisdom.

The New Testament gospel records that at the birth of Jesus, an angel announced the good news with the words, **“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”** (Luke 2:10-12). Jesus was born to save the world. He came to give everyone the chance to hear the good news and become children of God.

In this turbulent world, people need to hear the gospel of peace. Jesus Christ promised, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”** (John 14:27). This Christmas season, let the Church of God spread the good news that the birth of Jesus Christ brings true peace to the world.

*Reverend Milton PK Nee, Bishop  
Chinese Methodist Church in Australia*

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## Churches of Christ in Australia

Each Christmas we seem to be bombarded with scepticism about the Church, faith, and the events surrounding Jesus' birth. Christian-themed Christmas carols and nativity scenes are often rejected, too, especially by people taking offence on behalf of those who are not even offended. People of faith are sometimes uncertain as to how to defend their beliefs amidst such angst, though this does not make those beliefs indefensible.

We actually don't have sufficient evidence on which to build a watertight case either for or against belief in God, but faith is not baseless. The Christmas story reminds us that we have the right to respond to God's initial move toward us two thousand years ago. The birth of Jesus, as God's perfect son, was so that he could die in our place for our shortcomings to therefore bridge us to God. Being human but also divine, he qualified to be our substitute and to therefore save us from eternal death. That death is simply the just penalty for our sins, no matter how small they might seem, and it inevitably separates us from God.

Of course, the story of faith and of God's plan for our redemption comes in a biblical package that many will spurn with minimal interest in its detail. Many biblical texts have actually been verified by archaeological findings and by their capacity to change people's lives. But while the Bible offers evidence for faith beyond reasonable doubt, it cannot provide evidence beyond all doubt. The importance of the Christmas story, and of the Bible that contains it, needs acceptance by faith, a faith that is believable.

This Christmas, Christians the world over will have many opportunities to proudly assert that faith. Will you be one of them? The centring of our lives on Jesus who came to bring unconditional love, perfect justice, and hope for the future, also offers a changed heart, strength to impact our world, and an eternal purpose on which to build our lives. We can accept that message or choose to reject it but, in the short life we get to live, our response to the Jesus of Christmas will determine which of those outcomes will be ours.

Merry Christmas and a blessed and fruitful 2025.

*Reverend Dr. Rob Nyhuis, National Chair and State Executive Officer  
Churches of Christ in Australia*

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# Coptic Orthodox Church

## Diocese of Sydney and Affiliated Regions

### Message for the Glorious Feast of the Nativity 2024

It is my pleasure to congratulate you on the Feast of the Nativity. Wishing you all a holy and blessed life, which befits the name of Emmanuel, Christ our Lord, who loved us and, without sin, was incarnate and came to our world. Our hearts are joyful with the birth of Christ, **“The Good Shepherd”**. (John 10)

In fact, our hearts are exalted with the birth of Christ, **“Our Good Shepherd”**. Christ, the Good Shepherd came for us, for the sake of everyone.

He is our Shepherd, as well as the Shepherd of everyone. As we celebrate the Nativity of Christ, it is appropriate to say with David the Prophet, **“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”** (Psalm 23:1) Christ, our Good Shepherd, the Baby of the manger in Bethlehem, is our victory in our continuous war with the devil. although we ache and suffer from the severity of Satan’s war against us, yet we are happy and joyful with the birth of our Good Shepherd, Christ our Lord and Savior.

Our Good Shepherd guides us in the wilderness of this world, Our Good Shepherd is our Leader, and we follow Him.

He is not like the ordinary shepherd who walks behind the sheep, but He walks ahead of us for He is the True Light, which guides us in the midst of the darkness of this world. He prepares the road in front of us and makes the great mountain a plain. (Zechariah 4:7)

Let us rejoice in the birth of our Good Shepherd, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who opened for us the road to the Kingdom by His incarnation and birth from our Mother, the Holy Virgin Mary, Who loved us and on our behalf gave Himself up on the Cross.

Christ protects us from the snatching wolves by His mighty hand; Who leads us through the wilderness of this world by the light of His life-giving teachings; Who opens His arms and happily accepts our return to Him, lifts us up from the defilement of this world, and gives us the pleasure of sitting with Him in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6).

May Christ our Lord the Good Shepherd bless and protect Australia and grant our nation and people prosperity and advancement.

In Christ

*His Grace, Bishop Daniel*

*Coptic Orthodox Church, Diocese of Sydney & Affiliated Regions*

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## Diocese of the Armenian Church of Australia and New Zealand

### Blessed is the revelation of Christ

**“And because a child is given to us ... the Lord of peace, the father of the coming eternity. The Lord God is with us”** (Peace Hour Prayer).

The world still is in turmoil, tens of thousands of people die, and hundreds of thousands are wounded because of avarice, selfishness and disregard to ethics and morality. This is so, as the peace declared by our Lord has not been understood and lived by humanity at large.

Christians in the Middle East and the Armenians with them are suffering, in the Holy Land, in Egypt, in Armenia, Lebanon and Syria. Moreover, Artsakh has been cleansed from its ethnic Armenian people; even the churches and khachkars have been eliminated.

On this festive occasion, may the peace emanating from the innocent babe descend upon all humanity so the world as one extended family might live in peace and justice.

***“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace”*** (Isaiah 52:7)

May I wish you and your loved ones a healthy and prosperous New Year. May all your good plans be realised in the coming year.

Christ is born and revealed, blessed is the revelation of Christ.

With Prayers

*Archbishop Haigazoun Najarian, Primate  
Diocese of the Armenian Church of Australia and New Zealand*

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## **Greek Orthodox Church of Australia**

Protocol No: 2950

***“Χριστός γεννᾶται, τὴν πρὶν πεσοῦσαν, ἀναστήσων εἰκόνα!***  
**Christ is born, so that He might raise up the formerly fallen image!”**

Heaven and earth are united today, for Christ is born! Today God has come upon the earth, and humankind gone up to heaven. Today, for the sake of humankind, the invisible one is seen in the flesh. Therefore let us glorify Him and cry aloud: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace bestowed by Your coming, Saviour: Glory to You!

(Idiomelon, Midnight Office, Feast of the Nativity)

Our Lord Jesus Christ exclaimed: ***"I am the way and the truth and the life"*** (John 14:6), ***"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life"*** (John 8:12), ***"I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly"*** (John 10:10).

These words of Christ, which are ***"alive and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart"*** (Hebrews 4:12), reveal to us the very mystery of the incarnation, ***"for God so loved the world, that He have gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"*** (John 3:16).

The mystery of the incarnation is precisely the refashioning and the recreation of the human person from corruptibility to incorruptibility, from the state of sin to the life of sanctification given freely and abundantly by Christ Himself, who took on ***"the likeness of sinful flesh"*** (Romans 8:3), to raise up the human person to new and true life, according to ***"the measure and stature of His fullness"*** (Ephesians 4:13) - He who as true and perfect God become true and perfect man.

In and through the mystery of the incarnation, Christ unites Himself to us, and ***"is always with us, even to the end of the age"*** (Matthew 28:20), strengthening us, bestowing upon us His life-giving and deifying grace, embracing us with His infinite love, and leading us towards eternal life. Our life in Christ begins here and now and is completed and perfected in the Heavenly Kingdom which is to come. It is only by having Christ as the centre of our lives, in whom ***"we live and move and have our being"*** (Acts 17:28), that we are able to participate in the glorious riches of ***"the mystery that was hidden from ages and from generations, but now made manifest"*** (Colossians 1:26) to us.

The salvific proclamation of the feast of the Nativity is precisely that ***"the Kingdom of God is at hand"*** (Mark 1:15), and we must strive with ***"faith, hope and love"*** (1 Corinthians 13:13) in Christ for ***"every good work"*** (1 Timothy 3:17), ***"for today, salvation has come"*** (Luke 19:9). May we open our hearts to Christ our God that we may be embraced by His love, His peace, and His joy, so that we also may

imitate our Master and become Christ-like in our entire being, sharing these heavenly riches with our loved ones and our fellow persons.

Wishing all a blessed and joyous Christmas!

Prayerfully yours,

*Archbishop Makarios, Primate and Exarch of All Oceania  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia*

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## **Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand**

Most people have heard that wonderful Christmas carol, 'Good King Wenceslas' who 'looked out on the feast of Stephen'. It tells of a kind-hearted king who reaches out to the poor and needy in the name of our gracious God.

There really was a King Wenceslas. It was about 1000 years ago, when a young Christian king rose up to become a beacon of hopefulness, in the nation we know today as the 'modern' Czech Republic, known as Bohemia at the time. Wenceslas was only 25 when he was assassinated. He had only ruled for about five years.

We might not have heard of this young man, if it had not been for an Englishman, named John Mason Neale who wrote the story of Wenceslas into a popular carol, about 150 years ago. Historians tell us that Wenceslas was assassinated partly for explicitly promoting Christianity. He was living his faith and was showing to his people that this new Christian religion, which was only recently brought to their land, was promoting a way of life that was 'different'. Wenceslas worked for social reform in his country, to change the stars for those people who were cast aside or trampled down.

Opponents to Wenceslas had him assassinated, but then came the extraordinary miracle, as often happens. In his dying, Wenceslas became an admired hero for the people and Christian teachings spread throughout the country.

John Mason Neale wrote his carol to remind us to be always acknowledging the great blessings that our God has given to us, by looking out for those in need. At Christmas time, we say our 'Thank you!' to God. We thank God for providing for us in abundance by saying 'As God gives to me, so I give to others'. In the carol, John Mason Neale ends with the suggestion 'Therefore, Christians all, be sure, wealth or rank possessing you who now will bless the poor - shall yourselves find blessing.'

Daily in our contemporary world, we hear of victims of war, in the Middle East and in many forgotten corners of the globe. How can we give to others as God has given to us? God bless you as you reflect on the message of the Christmas story: of the baby in the manger and of the angel's declaration of 'peace on earth'. Let us work together to enter into the purposeful life of Good King Wenceslas, striving for charity and compassion for the poor and oppressed, living that last line of Neale's Christmas song, 'You who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing.'

On behalf of the people of the Lutheran Church in Australia and New Zealand, I pray that you and your family may discover the holiness and happiness of the good news of Christmas.

***And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' (Luke 2:13-14)***

*Reverend Paul Smith, Bishop  
Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand*

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## Religious Society of Friends in Australia (Quakers)

For many Quakers, Christmas Day is considered a day like any other. We should be loving, generous, joyful and peace-loving every day.

However, many of us do join with family in Christmas celebrations, often with special food – and children have a special place at the table.

For me, as a former chorister in an Anglican cathedral, Christmas church music means a lot to me. So many good hymns and carols! Similarly, many Quakers had a former life in other churches and might enjoy other forms of worship at this special time.

This Christmas we are painfully aware that the world is not peaceful, that there are growing injustices and that we are beset by climate crises. And we remember that the world into which Jesus was born was also riven by persecution and injustice.

Yet the messages of love and hope and joy persist in the world and in our hearts and we are given the task of living them every day as well as Christmas day. As Quaker Caroline Fox said in 1840:

“Live up to the Light, and more will be granted thee”.

Donating to Act for Peace through the [Christmas Bowl](#) to support displaced people is one good way of doing that!

*Bruce Henry, Presiding Clerk,  
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia*

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## The Salvation Army Australia

I love the line of the song, “Light of the world you stepped down into darkness, opened my eyes, let me see....”

This Jesus, who came to earth, as a baby, grew up, God with skin on his face. He taught the world how to live like Him and for Him. He spent time with the Father, He did what the Father asked Him to do, He trained up the disciples, He tackled injustice, He showed how to live life in abundance, He died on the cross to take on the sins of the world, rose again, lives today, and has sent the Holy Spirit to be with us.

This Jesus!

If ever the world needs Jesus, it seems like it might be now. Turn on the news each day! And so, we as His people live like Him and for Him. We live close to Him, we spend time with Him, we represent Him, we .... walk into the darkness, and are the light.

And, we don't do this alone. The Holy Spirit is in us, with us and for us.

We walk into the darkness of what is happening all around our world. We pray and believe. We act. We know that our God rules and reigns and we go forward with confidence.

This Jesus!

And so at this Christmas time when THE Light of the world stepped down into the darkness, may we represent Him beautifully. May we step into the darkness in our world, and around the world, and be the light. May we be the hope givers and the hope bringers. May we spread His love and kindness, peace and joy.

And, may you enjoy time with those who God has given you, take time to reflect, to enjoy, to love...

And, as the song finishes..." Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you're my God. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me"

This Jesus! Thank you, Lord.

Bless you friends.

*Commissioner Miriam Gluyas, Territorial Commander  
The Salvation Army, Australia*

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## Uniting Church in Australia

Hope isn't found in what we possess or what we lack. Hope is born in the most unexpected places. On that first Christmas night, hope entered the world in the form of a baby. Jesus, the Son of God, was born not in a palace but in a humble stable—God entering our world in humility and vulnerability.

Through this child, God chose to dwell among us, bringing love and light into the darkness.

Today, many of us carry heavy burdens. From communities across the country, I hear stories of grief, fatigue, and isolation. Our world is marked by conflict and uncertainty. At times, it can feel like hope is far out of reach.

Yet the Christmas story speaks to these very struggles. Just as hope was born into poverty on that first Christmas, so hope continues to be born into our broken world.

Jesus' birth is God's promise that no matter how dark or uncertain life may feel, we are never alone. There is hope.

I have witnessed this hope firsthand. I've seen communities come together in times of crisis, reaching out with compassion and courage. I've seen women and girls standing boldly for equity, reclaiming their voices and dignity. I've seen peacemakers at work in places of deep conflict.

These acts of love reflect the hope we celebrate at Christmas—a hope born when we show up for each other, just as God showed up for us in Jesus.

At Christmas, we remember the birth of Jesus—the birth of hope itself. Jesus brought a message of God's radical closeness and unwavering love. It's a love that has the power to heal what is broken, bring peace, and unite us across every divide.

This Christmas, may we weave Christ's love and hope into our lives. Let us show up for our neighbours, treat one another with compassion, and work towards a future where unity, peace, and love conquer hate and fear.

Hope is here.

Hope is alive.

And it's up to us to share it.

Merry Christmas. May hope and peace be yours this season.

*Reverend Charissa Suli, President  
Uniting Church in Australia Assembly*

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## Australian Christian Churches - ACC

### 'The cost of Christmas'

One of the biggest topics in the community that is currently dominating political agendas and discussions at kitchen tables is the soaring price of everything. It seems the three most common words heard in every news bulletin is 'cost of living'.

It's a very real challenge for many people to put food on the table and make ends meet. You may have noticed how many advertisements have been broadcast in recent weeks, with suggestions for consumers on how to cut costs this Christmas.

The truth is that this season we are celebrating came at great cost. One of the better-known verses in the Bible reminds us of this in the words of Jesus Himself:

***"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 NIV)

That captures succinctly God's heart for humanity. Love motivated His extravagant gift to us. That love transcended His concerns about the immeasurable cost.

As gifts are exchanged this season, consider this: It is possible to give without loving, but one can never love without giving. Love drives generosity.

This Christmas may I invite you to take time, amongst all the activity that comes with this time of year, to express your gratitude for Jesus – that priceless, incomparable gift of God to us all.

*Pastor Wayne Alcorn, ACC National President  
Australian Christian Churches - ACC*

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## Australian Baptist Ministries

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," penned Charles Dickens in the opening line of *A Tale of Two Cities*.

The reality of what Dickens wrote is indeed reality today. We live with a relatively low unemployment rate, a shortage of skilled employment but an increasingly high cost of living which disadvantages so many. We must admit that while there are advantages to some, there is a significant impost on family time for others.

Egalitarianism has always been an important part of the Australian ethos. We look at who a person is, rather than the circumstances they come from. Their race, age, or beliefs should never be a cause for discrimination. It is at the core of who we are as Australians to help out a mate and to lend a hand to someone who is down.

Regardless of our circumstances, Christmas is one time of the year we can stop and recognise the teachings of the Jesus whose birth we celebrate at Christmas. The values of equality, of caring for each other and living peaceably with others.

I would urge you to stop and put aside the trappings of a commercialised Christmas for a moment and look at the real meaning of the season. Let's all take the opportunity to act with justice and care for the less fortunate and — the hardest of all — to forgive those who have wronged us. That is what the angels meant in Luke 2:14 when they proclaimed "Glory to God in the highest. Peace to all women and men on earth".

May this Christmas be a time of blessing and peace to you and yours.

*Reverend Mark Wilson, National Ministries Director  
Australian Baptist Ministries*

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