

JOY TO THE WORLD

*"But the angel said to them, do not be afraid.
I bring you good news that will cause great joy
for all the people."*

Luke 2:10

REFLECTION

We are two years into the Covid-19 pandemic. Just when we thought it was safe to travel, a new variant of the Covid-19 virus appeared. It is Omicron. This variant is said to be more transmissible and virulent than the dreaded Delta variant which had taken many lives around the world.

When a pandemic strikes, it affects not only the physical health of the people. It throws a spanner at the wheel of socio-economic activities, causing businesses to close, the disappearance of jobs, and emotional stress. Community interactions have to be curtailed, visits to homes of friends and families limited, and the gathering of Christians for worship and fellowship in a church building disrupted.

We have gone through two distressing years, and some experts are predicting that the pandemic will still cause us challenges in the New Year.

Thankfully, in this time of uncertainty, there are evidence of hope. Anecdotally, and from personal observation, we have seen more people stepping up and stepping out to offer practical assistance to those in distress. Instead of thinking only of their own problem and concerns, these individuals and groups - new and established ones - have been helping the homeless find shelter, the poor find financial support, and the troubled find emotional assistance.

Our journey in the past two years may seem bleak as the world struggles in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. But this dark cloud will not last. We must take care of ourselves and be socially responsible. But we should not be crippled by fear and worries. If you are burdened by economic and health issues, may you find peace and joy in Christ, as you entrust your life and livelihood to Him. However, if you have been blessed, you may want to reach out to bless those who are struggling.

The message of the angel first announced two thousand years ago is still valid today - *"do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."*

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are grateful that you sent Jesus into the world to be our Lord and Saviour. As we celebrate Christmas, teach us to be both grateful for your gift of everlasting life and to be generous in sharing this gift with others. Amen

SUPPLICATION

On this Christmas day, take the time to -

- Praise and thank God for the gift of salvation offered through Jesus Christ. This is the precious gift that opens the way for us to become children of God. Who else whom you know can benefit from receiving this gift of salvation? Pray that they may receive it.
- Ask God for forgiveness if we have failed to open our hearts and our homes to Jesus Christ. Pray that we will invite Jesus to occupy the centre of our life with willing hearts and open hands.
- Pray that Christians, as believers of Christ, will be empowered to announce to the world, not just during Christmas but throughout the year that the Lord, the Saviour of the world, has come, and will return one day as the Sovereign King.
- Commit to God churches and Christians around the world as they adjust to restrictions and changing ways of worship and witness in a disruptive world. Pray that we will remain faithful as we look for fresh ideas to gather the church for regular worship, and rally Christians to serve the Lord.

*"Yet in the dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light,
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in Thee tonight."*

Lewis Redner

***If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly
contact the pastoral care team via:***

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