



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA
Christmas 2022

Dear Friends,

Walking one afternoon in the cold, locked-down and lonely world of last Christmas, a flash of red caught my eye. Thinking it was a cardinal, I readied my camera and searched the bare branches of a nearby tree. No bird was in sight, but rather a bright red ball hanging all by itself, striking in its contrast to the muted background colours of winter. It seemed to be lit from within, and upon zooming in to focus, I saw that the setting sun was being reflected gloriously. A small miracle, in the midst of all that was, or was not, going on.

A lot was going on when Joseph and Mary arrived to register, along with everyone else, in Bethlehem. Travelling amongst the crush of people would not have been an easy journey for the young couple, especially with Mary ready to give birth. The unusual circumstances in which they both found themselves likely felt destabilizing and alienating at times. So finally finding a humble, tucked away place where Mary could give birth must have been a small and glorious miracle.

When we are at a loss or challenged, it is easy to focus on what we don't have. And when things are going well and life is full and busy, it is easy to take what we have for granted. In both instances, it is the small miracles that stop us in our tracks and remind us of Isaiah's words: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined."

May you and yours be blessed with small miracles this Christmas – in the moments that are challenging or lonely and in the moments that are full and fun. For the Christ Child seeks to be born in us again and again. The love of God seeks to be reflected in our lives each and every moment. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit seeks to empower us beyond what we can ask or imagine.

With blessings and gratitude for each one of you,

Beth

The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff
Dean