

Jesus said,

*I give you peace,
the kind of peace that
only I can give.
It isn't like the peace
that this world can give.
So don't be worried
or afraid.*

John 14.27



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Gift of Peace



PARISH OF ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR

Christmas Greetings, Dear Friends,

Gloria and our family join me in extending to you a very Merry Christmas. Now that things have settled down after the Christmas rush, may we find time during the Christmas season to do what truly matters, spend time with the people we love.

One of the things that strikes me about the Christmas story is the sense of peace. Even though the events move along one after the other, it seems nothing was rushed. The Shepherds spent time with each other in the presence of the Angels. Mary and Joseph spent time together traveling by foot the long journey to Bethlehem. After Jesus was born, the three of them spent time together in the stable. There is surely a message here for our modern ears; take time to be together!

On CBC radio a few days ago, there was a feature about loneliness! According to experts, people today suffer a great deal from loneliness. Loneliness, they say, can cause serious health issues including heart disease. Astonishingly, it's not the older people in our society who suffer most from loneliness. Rather, it's the thirty year olds and under! Why is that, we might ask? The answer is the isolation brought on by modern technology and social media. Young people have their faces glued to a computer screen. They are so captivated by their devices that they have no time to spend with other human beings. I find this remarkably sad. As the old saying goes, "No one is an island." We all need each other. We need to spend time listening to and sharing with each other. Our health and the health of our society depend on it.

Christmas is about God visiting us and spending time with us. As the Benedictus (Luke 1.68ff) from the Book of Common Prayer says it, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath **visited**, and redeemed his people..." Let us truly visit with each other this Christmas time. If God chose to visit with us, we will

do well to visit with one another. It is the greatest gift of love we can possibly give.

Howard+



CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

Donations were made to the following funds for the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of:

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Parents Raymond and Daphne Dooley, Lewis and Elizabeth Drover , Leslie Drover, MaryAnna Drover by Wayne and Lois and family
Departed Loved Ones by Gil & Daphne Pritchett
Sons Robbie and Randy Benmore by Mom Loretta Goodyear
Ceri Hynes from Howard, Gloria & family
Walter Chafe from Gloria, Howard and family

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Office Fund

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