

## A Christmas Message from Bishop Allende

*The people who lived in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light  
has shined.*

[Isaiah 9:2]



Christmas falls around a time that we in the northern hemisphere experience long periods of darkness. The longest night comes just four days before we celebrate the birth of our Savior. So it is wonderful to connect this wonderful event with the lengthening of the days.

We are also living in a time of spiritual darkness. You need not do more than turn on the evening news to see how polarized we are as a nation and as a world.

But at Christmas we declare that God in Jesus, the light of the world, has come among us. Jesus comes at Christmas not just to shine a light into our hearts but to transform the living conditions of the world. And the world cannot remain the same.

It's always good to see the number of people who do good deeds at this time of the year such as giving out food baskets and toys to children, serving hot meals to the homeless and needy. There are actions that declare the Good News of Christmas.

Christmas is a time for confronting the reality of the Bad News, and declaring that peace, justice and righteousness have come into the world in Jesus Christ and will not be denied, because this is the birth of the King of the Universe!

May God's light shine on you this Christmas, and may God's Spirit inspire you to become that light for others. May peace reign in your hearts this Christmas and always!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to The Rev. Abraham D. Allende.

The Rev. Abraham D. Allende  
Bishop – Northeastern Ohio Synod, ELCA

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