

# Jesus is the Light of the World

JOHN 1:1-5; 8:12

REV. CHARLIE BERTHOUD | SERMON FOR CHRISTMAS EVE, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020

Merry Christmas!

Even though this is not the Christmas Eve we expected or wanted, we still get to celebrate the good news of great joy for all the people.

Jesus is born, bringing new life to the world.



John's gospel tells us:

The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)

We've had too much darkness this year. It has been a hard year for just about everyone.

If you're struggling in the darkness right now—financially, emotionally, whatever—please know you're not alone. Please reach out. We need each other in this hard time.

In the darkness, we remind each other that the light continues to shine.

I see that light shining here at Covenant:

- Cards, phone calls, emails—caring for each other
- Bible studies and small groups; a new “racists anonymous” group; continuing generosity
- Youth volunteering at The River and doing other mission work, kids doing Sunday School crafts at home and making worship videos



I see the light shining in the world. Even though there is lots of bad news, we can see plenty of good news.

In April, a 99-year-old British veteran, Captain Tom Moore, set a goal of raising \$1000 pounds (about US \$1300) by walking around his yard. Word got around, and people were inspired by his daily walks. He ended up raising over 30 million pounds (about 40 million dollars) for COVID-related charities.

He got over 150,000 cards for his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday—so many that the British postal service had to open a separate office and recruit 20 volunteers. And he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth.

In the USA there are plenty of people letting the light of goodness and kindness shine, like a New Jersey newspaper deliveryman named Greg Dailey.

In March, one customer asked if he could get the paper closer to her door, as she was afraid of the coronavirus. Dailey obliged, but he kept thinking about her. So he asked if she needed any groceries. She did. He asked the hundreds of houses on his route, and soon he was overwhelmed with seniors needing help.



With the help of his family, and free of charge, Dailey has supplied more than 140 homes and done over 1,000 grocery runs.

That's light, shining in the darkness.

The Bible tells us that Jesus said:

“I am the light of the world” (John 8:12)

But Jesus also said:

“You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14)

I believe Jesus wants us to share what he came to bring us: hope, peace, joy, and love. I believe he wants us to love one another and care for one another and make this world a better place, with the light of God’s love.

On a typical Christmas Eve, there would be hundreds of people here in the sanctuary. With the lights down low, one candle is lit from the Christ candle, and soon after, the sanctuary is filled by flickering candles.

This year is different. I’m alone in the sanctuary. But I can feel you with me.

So, I’m going to light my candle from the Christ candle, and I invite you to light a candle, turn on a flashlight, or look at the fireplace or at the lights on a Christmas tree.

As we sing “Silent Night,” we give thanks that Jesus is born to be the light of the world, and we remember how we can share the light of God’s love with everyone. Thanks be to God for the light that shines in the darkness. Merry Christmas! Amen.