

Christmas Reflections 2015

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As the year 2015 draws to a close, we in the CHP and many of our fellow-citizens pause to reflect on the '...old, old story' that we love so well—the story of the Man-child who came from heaven to save the world. How badly our world needs to hear this story again! Here is a portion of the Christmas story according to the Gospel of Luke 2:6-20 (NIV):

⁶While they (Mary and Joseph) were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. ⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." ¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Christmas is a season for reflections of Christmases past; Love, Joy, and Peace to be enjoyed now; and bright Hope for the future! It is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Saviour of the world. Why do we celebrate Jesus' birthday differently than we celebrate other birthdays? We celebrate the arrival on planet earth of Jesus the Son of God, as a baby born of a virgin and placed in a manger in a barn in Bethlehem. Is it proper for us to celebrate Jesus as a baby year after year? Absolutely!

Just think about the events that took place as recorded in Matthew 2 and Luke 2. Angels came down from heaven to earth to herald His birth (Luke 2:10-14). Shepherds came to honour Him and to spread the "good news." Sometime later, Magi (wise men) from the East brought Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh as they worshipped Him. All of these people had no idea at the time who Jesus would become and what He would accomplish as an adult. Today, we, as Christians, know who Jesus is: — our personal Saviour and Lord. We also know that He died for our sins and rose from the grave to bring us eternal life. Hallelujah — what a Saviour! Jesus' birth was, and is, the most remarkable event in human history and that is certainly worth celebrating every year. Happy Birthday Baby Jesus! I encourage all of us to worship not only the "Babe in Bethlehem" but also the Saviour at Calvary this year and until He comes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

Recently I came across "A Christmas Creed" written by Walter Russell Bowie that I hope will be a blessing to you and others. My wife Katy and I wish all of you a most blessed Christmas Season and God's peace, protection, and provision in the New Year.

A Christmas Creed
by Walter Russell Bowie

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room, and I confess that my heart still sometimes wants to exclude Christ from my life today.

I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

I believe in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible.

I believe in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I confess my ever-lasting need of God: The need of forgiveness for our selfishness and greed, the need of new life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.

I believe in God who gives us the best of himself. I believe in Jesus, the Son of the living God, born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world.

As we reflect on the miraculous birth and mission of Christ, we in the Christian Heritage Party extend to all our friends across this country our very best wishes for a meaningful and restful Christmas season and our hopes that the New year of 2016 will be filled for you with faith and excitement as you trust in the work of the Man-child who came from heaven and finished His work on the cross for your benefit. May we have eyes to see His hand at work in our families, our communities and our nation and may each of us embrace the work He has given to us to do as citizens of Canada!