

Christmas 2025

As we gather this Christmas, we do so with eyes wide open.

Ours is a world weary with war that will not end, with nations turned inward in fear, with widening gulfs between rich and poor, and with a planet groaning under the weight of our neglect.

Refugees wander without welcome.

Violence has become ordinary.

Cynicism has learned to speak fluently in the language of realism.

And perhaps most corrosive of all is the thinning of truth.

Too often, political leadership trades honesty for advantage, outrage for wisdom, and slogans for moral vision.

Facts are bent fear is stoked and lies are baptized as loyalty.

Many years ago, the Rev. Dr. William Sloane Coffin, the minister of Riverside Church in NYC, once observed that *“the greatest threat to morality is not immorality, but moral indifference.”*

In our time, indifference has been joined by manipulation, leaving many to wonder whether truth itself still matters.

It is into this world—not a calmer one, not a more reasonable one—that Christmas comes.

On Christmas we proclaim a scandalous truth: God comes not in force, but in vulnerability.

Not in the halls of power, but in a borrowed stable.

Not with coercion, but with trust placed in human hands.

God does not enter history riding the machinery of empire but lying helpless before it.

Coffin warned that *“there is no smaller package in the world than that of a person all wrapped up in themselves.”*

Our public life today tempts us toward that smallness—toward tribal loyalties, moral shortcuts, and the false comfort of being right.

Christmas refuses that temptation.

The child in the manger does not arrive to remember our grudges, but to redeem our humanity.

Love is not about winning arguments; it is about being faithful.

And faithfulness in times like these is costly.

It means telling the truth when lies are convenient, choosing compassion when contempt is applauded, and risking hope when despair feels more realistic.

The angels sing *“peace on earth,”* not because peace is guaranteed, but because it is possible.

This is not sentimental optimism, but stubborn hope which is not the same thing as optimism; Hope is the belief that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

Christmas hope does not deny the darkness; it lights a candle and hands it to ordinary people.

So tonight, we do not flee the world’s turmoil—we meet it; bearing the fragile, defiant light of Bethlehem.

We leave this place not to agree on everything, but to love without exception; not to sanctify power, but to serve the vulnerable; not to surrender truth to expediency, but to trust that God is still at work in unlikely places—perhaps even in us.

For unto us is born not a ruler who commands fear, but a child who invites love.

And that is still, in the last few days of this year, good news.

A merry Christmas to you all.

Rev. Charles L. Cvington