



### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

In one of my favourite Christmas Carols, it is said of the little town of Bethlehem, “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” Hopes and fears are common to all of us in our human experience, and for people of faith, these realities are all mingled. When faith is strong, hope will be on the rise. When faith is weakened, fear may take over.

The last twenty-one months have acquainted us with both fear and hope. It has often seemed that, just as hopes are raised, they are dashed again. The fight against the pandemic has been long and we may be growing dispirited. So let the Good News of Christ’s birth infuse our hearts this Christmas more than ever. God, who knows our hopes and our fears, our dreams and our despondency, has chosen to come among us as the Word made Flesh, Emmanuel. The birth of Jesus Christ brought all the hopes and fears of humanity together in God’s plan for our salvation. As it was in Bethlehem two millennia ago, let it be so today. This Christmas may God overcome our fears with His hope and help us to celebrate this season of joy.

Yours in Christ,

+Daniel Miehm  
Bishop of Peterborough