



St. Joseph of Nazareth Anglican Church

290 Balmoral Drive, Brampton, ON L6T 1V6

Phone: (905) 793-8020 FAX: (905) 793-8626

Email: stjosephofnazareth@gmail.com

Website: www.stjosephofnazareth.church



*I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship, should set his love upon the sons of men,
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers, to bring them back, they know not how or when.
But this I know, that he was born of Mary when Beth'lem's manger was his only home,
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured, and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.*

December 8, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

Even as we continue to journey through a global pandemic, the pressure of Christmas coming can be felt. Decorations and treats have been in the stores since before Halloween, and the call to shop, shop, shop, for gifts was not far behind. There may be slightly fewer parties these days, but the anxiety of negotiations over who will be where, on which day and at which time, have been heightened by news reports over rising infection rates, and the debate over the threat posed by new variants.

Against the pressures of Christmas – the usual ones *and* the pandemic related ones - I thank God for the call that Advent gives us to step back, to pause and to reflect. To pray and to repent, which literally means to turn to a new path. To re-direct our lives, re-orienting ourselves in the light of the good news of Jesus Christ coming into the world.

I suppose it is the uncertainty of the times that leads me into this time of reflection in a questioning mode, and the question I keep coming back to is “Why?” Why did “he, whom angels worship ... set his love upon the sons of men?” Why did Jesus come into the world? Why did God choose to work through human experience, and human frailty, and human flesh? The hymn quoted above attempts to answer the question, talking about how “he heals the broken-hearted, and stays our sin and calms our lurking fear, and lifts the burden from the heavy laden,” and as well, about how he will win the nations and “reap the harvest he has sown.” But these are really more answers to the question of what Jesus’ birth, ministry, death and resurrection accomplish for us, rather than why he did what he did.

So I turn to that most famous of Scripture passages, the one that people post online in chat forums and comment sections, and hold up on signs at football and baseball games, and put up on signs on their lawns – John 3:16.

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but may have eternal life.”*

Why did he come? Because of love.
It is as simple, and as complicated, as that.



God loves us, so he came to be with us. He loves us, so he sent his Son to save us.

In a sermon a few weeks ago, I mentioned having read the booklet produced to celebrate the history of St. Joseph of Nazareth Bramalea. And in it, I discovered that the question of “Why?” was used as a slogan when raising funds to build at 290 Balmoral Drive. Fundraising team members drove around the community with signs on their cars that just said “WHY?” And no doubt, that sparked conversations with many people who were not members of the church; conversations about why the building was needed, and how it would serve God and serve the community.

And through the years, this building has done just that. It has served as a place for God’s people to gather, to praise God in word and song, to pray and read Scripture, to share at the table around which we are all invited to sit. And it has served as a place where the neighbourhood can gather, used by church members and community groups alike.

To be sure, we have learned over the last couple of years that the work of the church can go on even when we can’t come together in one place on a regular basis. We have done new things, and old things in new ways, both in terms of our worship, and in terms of how we serve our neighbours, and the church community of St. Joseph of Nazareth Bramalea is alive and well, even though we are still somewhat dispersed.

And yet, even in a pandemic, the church continues to be the centre of our activity, the place we long to gather together, the place where we desire to meet God, and meet each other. And as we move into 2022, it will be a focus of our thoughts, and of our conversations, as we take up again the discussions about how our building and property need to evolve, to meet the changing needs of our congregation, and our neighbourhood.

And when we have those conversations, we will ground them in the question, “Why?” And we will ground them in the answer, “Because of love.” Because we love God with heart and soul and mind and strength, because we strive to love our neighbours as ourselves, we will undertake what needs to be done to continue in the process of discernment, and all that is entailed in it. Our goal, in all things, is to love God and to make him known, so that others can love Him too. Our goal is to share the gospel – the good news – of Jesus Christ come into the world for our sake, so that the promise of that great hymn will be fulfilled:

*But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture, and myriad myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, will answer, 'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'*

Thank you, dear friends, for welcoming me to this parish, and into this family. Thank you for all that you do to support the work of the church, giving of yourselves week after week. Thank you for caring for one another, and for all that you do to reach out into the community. Thank you for your faithfulness, and thank you for your love.

May the love and peace of God be in your hearts and in your lives, this Advent, this Christmas, and always.

Blessings,



The Rev. Pam Prideaux
Incumbent