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I Bring You Great News of Great Joy

by Rev. Douglas S. Stivison, Pastor

I bring you great news of great joy...

After 2000 years of repeating this holiday refrain, our spirits are still lifted by this wonderful message that never grows dull. Despite the changes brought by two millennia with sweeping differences in culture and technology, our hearts continue to be warmed with the same joy proclaimed at the Nativity.

Great news of great joy.

One of the most beautiful things about the joy we feel during the Christmas season is that the more we share our joy with other people, the more our own joy increases. Truly, the more we share, the more we have. One glance at the back cover of this issue of *The Spire* conveys a sense of the range of activities that are taking place in the weeks ahead. For both the young and the young-at-heart, for faithful members of the church and occasional visitors, the weeks ahead provide opportunities for service, fellowship, and worship. We offer times together that will be quiet and reflective, and times together that will be filled with song and laughter. Yet the spirit that animates all that we do throughout Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany is all focused on bringing those “tidings of great joy” into our individual, family, and congregational lives.

We know that the holiday season can be particularly difficult for individuals who live alone and those who have lost loved ones this year. The activities at this church provide many opportunities for us to bring some of the joy of the season into lives that particularly need “tidings of great joy.” And we are the ones who can convey those tidings; who can convey personally and directly a spirit of joy. Please consider inviting others to sing the familiar carols, listen to the talented musicians, share the enthusiasm of our children, and to worship with us. Consider, too, offering rides to people who may no longer be comfortable driving — especially for evening events.

Of course, the sanctuary will be beautifully decorated throughout the Advent season and each and every Sunday worship service will be filled with music of the season. It is a season when we all can step back from our daily lives to hear a word of hope, have our spirits lifted in song, and to enjoy the genuine fellowship that is the hallmark of this congregation. It is truly a season filled with, “great news of great joy.”