

Presiding Bishop Curry's Christmas Message 2016

This child came to show us how to change the world. So this Christmas, make room for Him to change us. This Christmas help us change the world.

[December 12, 2016] "This child came to show us how to change the world," Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry said in his Christmas Message 2016. "So this Christmas, make room for Him to change us. This Christmas help us change the world."

The Presiding Bishop's message follows:

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry Christmas Message 2016

From Isaiah Chapter 9:

*For unto us a child is born,
unto us a Son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder;
and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

These words of Isaiah are often seen as words that foretell and foreshadow the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, born of Mary. The truth is, these words befit Him because this child changed the world. This child changes lives. This child changes us.

I remember when our oldest daughter was a baby. My wife and I were young. We were footloose and fancy-free. It was just the two of us newlyweds, so if we wanted to go out to eat dinner, we went out to eat dinner. If we decided to go to a movie at the last minute, we just went. We actually felt like we had money back then. And we did have a little bit of discretionary income. We could pretty much do what we wanted to do, within reason, and we didn't have to think too much about the consequences or impact of a spontaneous decision and what we had to do to make that happen.

And then, all of a sudden, this little, innocent human being, a little child, came into our lives, and literally gained control over our entire world. Before we could do anything else we had to think about, "Who's going to keep the baby?" or "Is this a good time for us to go without the baby?" We soon learned that we were not in control of our lives anymore. Even our sleeping patterns became very different. We would stay awake when the baby was awake and we went to sleep when the baby went to sleep. Literally this child began to control our lives and the child didn't even know she was doing it. And then we had a second one she did the exact same thing. And I've since learned that that's what babies do. When they arrive they take over! And their parents

begin to develop their lives around this child. To mold their entire lives around this precious needy baby.

Isaiah wrote, *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given . . . and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* This child who was born of Mary changes everything. This child born in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes changes how we live. This child born to the sound of angels singing Gloria in excelsis Deo -- this child to whom the wise ones came from afar bearing gifts --- this child, changed the way the entire world works.

And this Jesus, born into a world torn by strife and hatred and division and pain and poverty, this child is born anew wherever men and women say, "I'll follow Him. I'll follow Him as my Savior. I'll follow Him as my Lord."

When this child grew up, He said His reason for coming, again quoting Isaiah, from the 61st chapter, he said,

The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach Good News to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, the recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty all those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

This child, when He grew up, came to show us the way to live lives of love, lives of compassion, lives of goodness, lives of kindness, lives of justice. This child came to show us how to change the world. So this Christmas, make room for him to change us. This Christmas help us change the world. And make a new commitment, to go out from this day, to let this Christmas Day, be the first day of a new world.

God bless you. God keep you. Have a blessed Christmas. A Happy New Year. And go on out and change the world!