



# World Communion of Reformed Churches

Called to communion, committed to justice

## WCRC Christmas Message 2024

How will we celebrate this Christmas?

Christmas remains a time of celebration despite all the challenges and uncertainties that the story unfolds. It is also a story of perseverance through difficult situations. Mary and Joseph faced uncertainty and adversity at every turn. From the angel's unexpected message to Mary to Joseph's struggle with doubt, besides their long, difficult journey to Bethlehem, and facing another challenge: finding no room at the inn, where they humbly accepted a stable.

In the middle of all the challenges that the world is facing today, the question of how we will celebrate Christmas in the midst of all these challenges is a valid one. How will the child in Ukraine and the Middle East celebrate Christmas where war is still going and the main worry of the people is to stay alive? How will our sisters and brothers in Cuba celebrate the long-standing embargo on Cuba and its impact on daily life? How will the churches in the Korean Peninsula, in Sudan, Congo, and Colombia, celebrate the long-lasting challenge for real peace? How will the churches celebrate where the growing strength of the right-wing extremists is becoming a real threat, or how will the world celebrate in regions where the accelerating climate catastrophe is destroying God's creation whether Brazil, Kenya, and many other areas in the world? How will all those who are marginalized due to racial, sexual, or gender issues celebrate?

Joseph, Mary, the angels, and the Maggi faced all hardships, keeping their unwavering trust in God's plan carried them through, turning obstacles into moments of divine purpose. Assuring that God is with them. God dwells among them.

**“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)**

The Christmas story encourages us to continue and persevere despite all; giving hope to those who are struggling, whose journey of injustice seems long and tiring; the birth of a child gave strength to all those who stood around the manger. It encourages us to celebrate the fact that God is with us in the midst of our struggle. We are not alone, but even hope will be born.

As a communion, we will celebrate Christmas despite all the challenges. We are encouraged by the dwelling of our Lord in the midst of our journey. We celebrate 20 years of the Accra confession and 150 years of launching the work of the Communion; still on the road challenges are there, and many injustices continue to prevail around our churches and the world. We continue to celebrate as our eyes are focused on waiting for the birth of hope, which starts with persevering and witnessing that “God is with us.” Immanuel is with the Communion as we move towards our next General Council in



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Thailand, witnessing to the God of life through our perseverance. We await the birth of hope as we meet in Chang Mai, the new envisioning together, and the assurance that God's glory is in our midst. We will echo Mary's Song of Praise : 'My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.'"

Jesus assurance that the Lord is with us, Emmanuel is with us, gives us hope to celebrate and opens our eyes to the reality that our strength comes from above; no one can steal our joy. The story of Christmas reminds us that even in trials, hope and perseverance can lead to miracles.

Have a joyful Christmas

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