# Moderator’s Christmas Message 2020

## Transcript of Videotaped Message

Hello. I’m Richard Bott, Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

I have something that I would like to say to everyone today: Merry Christmas! Really. *Merry* Christmas.

In November, when I wrote and recorded this message, no one knew what Christmas would look like due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Would there be more restrictions, or would some restrictions be lifted? Would we be able to reunite with our faith communities, or even with our extended families, or would these gatherings be possible only online or by phone? No one knew.

But now, as you are listening, I’ll bet it’s pretty obvious.

I’m guessing that some aspects of this Christmas will be quite different, while other things will be the same.

But, in the midst of all of that, I want to ask you: How are you? How are you on this holy day?

I hope that you are finding times of joy―moments when the love of God shines through the clouds that have appeared this year.

The story of Jesus’ birth is not completely a beautiful one. From angels who appear, saying, “Don’t be afraid!”; to Mary’s choice to accept her pregnancy; to Joseph’s wondering if he should remain with Mary; to their long march to Bethlehem; to the even longer trip to Egypt to escape the authorities―the birth of Jesus was not easy! On the contrary.

But, in the midst of all these difficulties, the beautiful, amazing, and immense love of God was made tangible in a tiny little baby, a newborn child. “Unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a child, who is the Christ!”

The joy of God, with the creation of God.

How did John say it? “Indeed, God did not send God’s Son into the world to condemn the world, but sent him to save the world.” The love of God, in a touchable form, here to help us heal our brokenness. Alleluia!

So, I’d invite you, sing the Christmas carols (even if you don’t think you can sing!).

Tell the story of Jesus’ birth with your friends or family―at home if it’s safe, or from a distance if needful.

Share the love that God has given us, every moment, every day.

Remind yourself―and the world―the message the angels proclaimed: Do not be afraid! Good news! Great joy!

Christ is with us now!

Christ is born.

Merry Christmas, beloved friends. Really. *Merry* Christmas.

May Christ’s peace be with you, always.