# Moderator’s Christmas Message 2019

## Transcript of Videotaped Message

Hello. Grace and peace to you, in the love of the Creator, in the joy of the Christ, in the communion of the Holy Spirit!

My name is Richard Bott, and I am the Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

Christmas is different things to different people. Sometimes a secular holiday, with time off from work or studies. Sometimes a time to be with family and friends. Sometimes it’s a time that is packed to the brim with experiences. Sometimes it’s a time of loneliness, or a time where emotions are so concentrated that they overwhelm.

For those of us who follow Jesus’ Way, it can be all of that—and, on top of that, a time to remember the birth of the central figure of our faith: Jesus.

Did you know that there are two stories about Jesus’ birth in the gospels—one in Matthew and one in Luke? Often, when the story gets told at Christmas, we mash everything together. While there are points that are the same in each of the narratives, the authors told the story each in their own way, and each to their own audience. In Matthew, there are echoes of the story of Moses; in Luke, cues for a gentile audience that this was an epic story.

The thing that jumps out for me, though, is that with the birth narratives, both authors seem to be saying right from the beginning, “This man is special! LISTEN TO HIM!”

I’d invite you to take time to read through both of these narratives: Matthew chapter 1, verse 1, to chapter 2, verse 23; and Luke, chapter 1, verse 1, to chapter 2, verse 40.

Listen to the stories about Jesus. What do they say to you?

I thought I’d finish off this time together by sharing with you part of the narrative of the birth of Jesus, according to the Book of Luke.

[*reading*]

Blessed Christmas!