Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

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Bishop's Advent Message 2026

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Every year, when the days become shorter here in Newfoundland and Labrador, the familiar debate begins again: should we still change the clocks? When Daylight Saving Time ends and we "fall back," the evenings grow darker more quickly. Some argue we should get rid of the change altogether, while others defend it. Most of us notice how hard the shorter days feel. We wake in the dark, return home in the dark, and the world around us seems to shrink into shadow. But no amount of clock-changing can stop the sun from setting earlier as we move toward the winter solstice. The natural rhythm of the earth turns us toward longer nights, and we must wait for the light to return.



Advent ushers us into a similar journey. The word means "coming," and in this season the Church deliberately walks from darkness into the Light of Christmas. We do not pretend the darkness is not real, but acknowledge our need for the Light of the World. So, we light the candles of the Advent wreath one by one, accepting the shadows in our world and in our own hearts, as we steadily move toward the Light that no darkness can overcome.

The prophet Isaiah declared: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined" (Isaiah 9:2). St. John the Evangelist wrote that "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5). At Christmas we celebrate the birth of that Light - Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world - who entered our darkness not as an idea, but as a child in a manger. We cannot argue the shortening days away, any more than we can argue away the losses, uncertainties, or challenges that mark our lives. But we can choose to journey intentionally toward the Light.

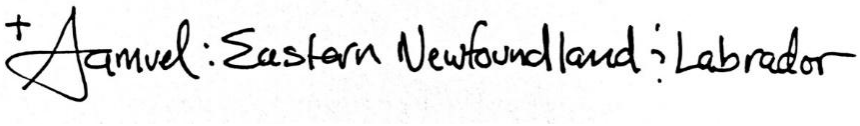
This Advent, I encourage you to deliberately make the journey. Light a candle each week or offer an act of kindness that pushes back the dark for someone else. Reach out to a neighbour, support a local food bank or thrift store, or simply sit in quiet prayer as the light fades outside. We can help those who carry the weight of shorter days and longer nights by offering glimpses of Christ's light.

A prayer for our Advent journey:

Lord Jesus, Light of the world,
when the days become shorter, and the darkness lengthens,
guide us on this Advent path from shadow into your radiance.
Help us not to fear the night, but to walk in hope toward the stable,
where your love was born among us.
Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

May this Advent be a time of honest waiting and joyful expectation for you and your families.
The Light is coming. Christ is coming.

In the Light of Christ,



The Right Reverend Samuel Rose
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