

**SHARING THE FAITH: WEEKLY EMAIL DEVOTION
FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 27, 2009**

Reading for December 24, 2009, Christmas Eve:

ISAIAH 9:2-7

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.
You have multiplied the nation,
 you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
 as with joy at the harvest,
 as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
 and the bar across their shoulders,
 the rod of their oppressor,
 you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
 and all the garments rolled in blood
 shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
 a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
 and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
 and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
 He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
 from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Faith Questions:

1. What images or Christmas memories do you associate with this text? How is Christmas a time of light for you? How is it a time of darkness?
2. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." When have you been in personal darkness? When have you had light in your being? What is the difference between those two feelings?
3. Where are the dark places in your life today that you need to let God into? If you were truly willing to let God in to bring light to your dark places, then what might the dawn look like? What might look different?

4. Once you have experienced the light that Christ brings, how can you bring that light to others?
5. What is your hope this Christmas for yourself, your family, your community, your world? Where are there light and darkness in each of those places? How can you be a light-bearer in those different contexts?

Let us pray:

Lord, help me to let Jesus bring light into my dark places. Show me how to bear that light into the world, so that others may share the joy that I have from knowing you.

For whom else, and for what else, shall we pray? (Insert your own prayer here)

Amen.

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Devotion prepared by staff at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, Pennsylvania, under the direction of Rebecca Kolowé, Diaconal Minister.

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