

Reflection for Christmas Day 25th December 2021 by Rev Fleur Green

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John's gospel is very different to the other three, in particular to Luke and Matthew in that here, at the beginning of his gospel we find no baby Jesus, no Mary and Joseph, no angels singing, no shepherds on a hill side, no wandering wise men and no gifts. All we hear of is the Word, light, life, dwelling among us. We hear of John, the one who is sent, the preparer, the Baptist elsewhere, but here he is the witness. He is the one who will testify to the light that is coming, namely Jesus. This Christmas, let us focus on the Word, the light, the life, dwelling among us once again, let us focus on Jesus, coming into the world and bringing God's glory. Let us celebrate his presence with us, now and always.

For many years I have enjoyed reading prayers and poems written by Jan Richardson – I encourage you to look up her work and I would like to share with you a blessing on light that she has written for you to read this Christmas time.

How the Light Comes

I cannot tell you how the light comes.

What I know is that it is more ancient than imagining.

That it travels across an astounding expanse to reach us.

That it loves searching out what is hidden, what is lost, what is forgotten or in peril or in pain.

That it has a fondness for the body, for finding its way toward flesh, for tracing the edges of form, for shining forth through the eye, the hand, the heart.

I cannot tell you how the light comes, but that it does.

That it will.

That it works its way into the deepest dark that enfolds you, though it may seem long ages in coming or arrive in a shape you did not foresee.

And so may we this day turn ourselves toward it.

May we lift our faces to let it find us.

May we bend our bodies to follow the arc it makes.

May we open and open more and open still to the blessed light that comes.

—Jan Richardson