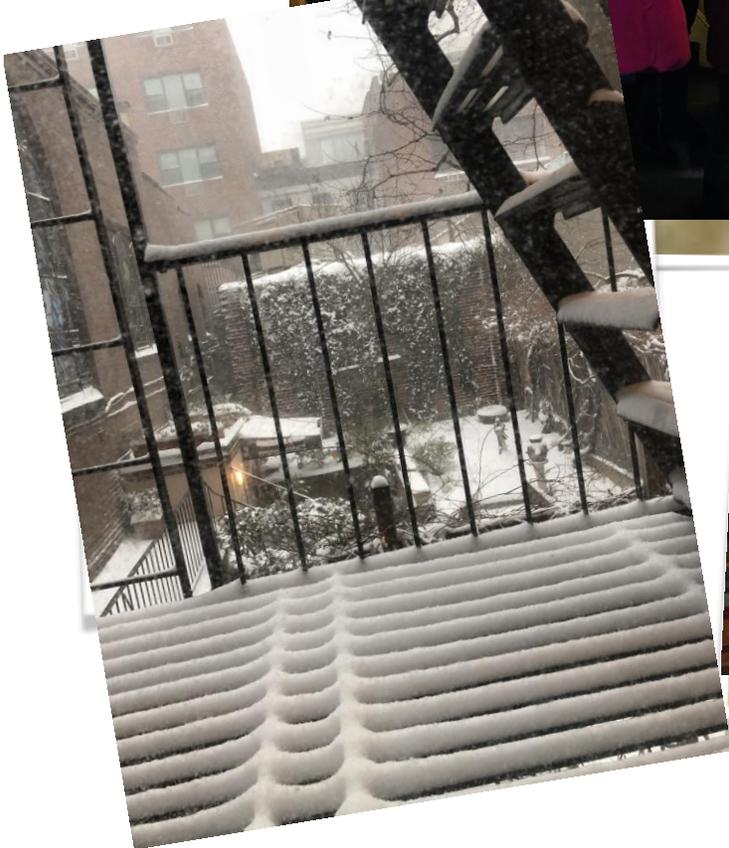


# This Past Christmas

The Light Shines in the Darkness



Hope in the Manger

The Birth of the Christ

Angels Singing



# Seeing the Light

## Mary pondered all these things

Once again All Saints, along with the rest of Christendom, has gone through the paroxysms of Christmas. By this, I mean to echo the thought of St. Paul in Romans where he writes about the entire creation groaning in travail, like a woman in labor. Somehow this year, even with all the commercial trappings and secularization of the season, I still saw the Christmas event as more of a universal celebration than ever before. It seemed to me that people from all and no religions felt something special occur. From my perspective there seemed to be a intensity of light that made people want to heal relationships and create a more peaceful and loving way of being.

In the texts for Christmas there was a reference to Jesus as being a light to the Gentiles. The gospels intent is to speak about the universal appeal of the Christ event. Somehow in the humble story of a poor, expectant family, dislocated by a powerful political force, landing outside the safety net of human society to deliver a child, came a universal message that transcended ethnic, political and religious divisions. In the story, God was not judging the world from afar but joining the world from within.

The explicit message of Christianity is not sectarian, or exclusive. Rather it is the announcement that holiness is found in the all too often rejected places of ordinary life. There is a reign of love and compassion where the primary credo is the compassionate response to human need and the restoration of broken relationships through partaking in non-exclusive meals and fellowship (which is the basis of our worship).

Here at All Saints we host a weekly Saturday meal where all are invited, especially those who have fallen through the safety nets of our society. When we practice hospitality, when we welcome the least of these, i.e., the hungry, the rejected, the forgotten, into our space and serve them hot meals and treat them as honored guests, we are practicing the ethics of the original Christmas story and the epiphanies that followed. When we see the infinite holiness of every human being we are practicing the joining together of heaven and earth and honoring the sacred Christ-like dignity of every human being. Like the sacraments that we celebrate upstairs, these acts are small in and of themselves, but powerful symbols and reminders of the new age and reign that has dawned in the Christ event.

This year, come and adore him and then go out into the world and practice your belief in the one who has come to break down divisions and build up the sacred in the human condition.

***ALL SAINTS LEVY CHOIR***

Thursday, January 25th, at 6:30 the All Saints Levy Choir will sing at the Sutton Area Community's annual meeting, located at the Terrence Cardinal Cook Building, 350 E.56th St.

Saturday, January 27th, our Choir School will attend the annual Cathedral Treble Festival all-day workshop, and perform at Evensong at 5pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

***THE JOY OF VOLUNTEERING!***

Did you know that every week your fellow parishioners spend hours of their Saturday in food preparation and cooking in order to feed God's hungry and needy children? It is strong spiritual medicine, both in the giving and the receiving. You are invited and welcome to participate.

***VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AND AT OUR WEBPAGE***

If you're a Facebook user and like our page or review us, it will encourage others to join us. Also be sure to visit our website at [www.allsaintsnyc.org](http://www.allsaintsnyc.org) to see news, read the service sheet in advance, and follow a link to the lectionary readings. Father Yagerman, Annette, or Andrea welcome your comments and feedback and will be glad to answer any questions you may have about our internet presence.