



December 2019

Dear Friends,

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! But Christmas means different things to different people. What's the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the post, roast turkey dinners with family and friends, and say-ing "Merry Christmas" to those who we meet? Is this really Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sadness. They don't have the money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Many are saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who won't be able to come home for various reasons, or perhaps it's a Christmas without a loved who've died. For some, Christmas dinner may be only a wish and not a reality.

Christmas is a season to remember when God poured the whole of his divinity into a baby born at Bethlehem. Christians address God as: "*Almighty God*" out of reverence and respect. But at Christmas we see God in a very different light. There's very little that is *almighty* about a new born! They are *vulnerable, delicate and fragile* - does that sound familiar?

Baby Jesus was little, weak and helpless! So rather than addressing God as "*Almighty*" we could say "*Vulnerable God*" and perhaps continue: ...you came to us as a fragile child to share in our weakness and struggle.

You grew up and lived in a country surrounded by turmoil and uncertainty.

You are the "*Vulnerable God*", "*God with us*" – not judging and condemning from on high but understanding and sharing our humanity in the here and now of everyday life. You know what it's like...

- to grow up in an earthly family with all the hassles and tensions, the joys and the sorrows.
- to do hard physical work for small wages.
- to loose family members and friends you loved.
- to suffer injustice and unfairness.

*Vulnerable God* ... you know and understand and care and want to help.

When we address God as "*Almighty*" we think of God as OUT THERE – remote and uncaring. Thinking of God as "*Vulnerable*" we recognise that God is right here, along side us – in the thick of it – in the messiness of life – in the daily struggle.

Our communities, our families and even we ourselves have times of vulnerability. Is there someone who needs you to share the loving kindness of our God who became vulnerable to help us all know that we are NOT alone. Reach out to those you know and maybe those you don't know too well who may be struggling this Christmas. A simple word, a smile, an act of kindness may cost you little but mean so much. Join in the various Christmas services and activities to celebrate again the loving kindness of our God who became vulnerable to live among us.

Merry Christmas

*Rev'd Nicki*