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Dear Friends

It's not Christmas without CHRIST!

The season leading up to, and the day we celebrate on the 25th December, is not like any other day when friends and family come around for a meal.

People from all walks of life – of Christian faith or non – all recognise this day. Some with great relish, going all-out with presents, decorations and the food; others with dread when they think of the loneliness, or expense. Still some go through this season prayerfully and in worship, recognising that every time this date draws near, we are reminded of the gift of God in Christ taking our form and being born of woman in order to bridge the gap that sin had caused. Christ comes at Christmas to shine the light through the darkness that has overtaken the hearts and minds of people, to illumine the need for care and love for one another. The season of Christmas makes this possible as we are most generous during this time. We are likely to give more to charity and to those who ask than at any other time in the year. The spirit of giving, which Christmas encourages in all of us, speaks of the generous love God shows in sending Jesus to live and die for our transgressions.

During his life on earth, Jesus pointed people to a 'different' way of living – a way contrary to the inclination towards self. He taught that to be great means embracing a life of service – doing all that is possible to make a difference to the life of another. Jesus healed those who were cast out of society because of their illness and thus restored them into society. He restored sight to the blind in order to give vision to those he had been teaching about the kingdom. He dined with the rich and the poor in equal measure to show the inclusive nature of God's kingdom.

May we, who have heard the herald of the coming King, seek to make a difference to those who will be lonely this Christmas, to those who need food or clothes or toys in order to make this a special time. Importantly, let us show and tell of God's all-embracing love come down in Jesus.

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas,

Mmasape