



The Bishop of Lincoln

Christmas 2025

Every year, we bishops send a Christmas card to a wide variety of people across the Diocese of Lincoln. We choose a theme and invite people to submit their designs. Bishop Nicholas and I have spent many hours personally signing these cards as we want to assure God's people of our prayers at Christmastime.

This year, we chose a theme based on God's words in creation – 'let there be light!' (Genesis 1.3) This is because just as we see light at the heart of Creation, so too we see light at the heart of the Incarnation. Christmas is the story of the Incarnation: the birth of God's own Son, the Word made Flesh. Mirroring that first chapter of Genesis, the first chapter of St John's Gospel describes this wonderful Christmas mystery as 'the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'

Our Christmas card this year shows the image of the Nativity, the manger in which the baby Jesus was laid, bathed in glorious light.

The image of the light shining in the darkness is one I ask you to hold onto this Christmas. We live in a world full of darkness – there is war, violence, anger, hatred, oppression and injustice. Christmas is a reminder to us that even in the midst of darkness, there is light that shines. There is such a thing in our world as joy, hope, love, kindness, forgiveness and peace, to name but a few.

I invite you to ask yourselves: where can I see this light shining in the darkness? Where can I see good things happening in the world? Where can I see people loving each other, just as Jesus commanded us to?

You might tell me that it's sometimes difficult to see those things in the world. Sometimes the darkness feels overwhelming. I would suggest that if you're struggling to *see* signs of hope, love and peace, then you might consider *being* those signs instead. Ask yourselves: how can I be the light shining in the darkness? How can I make a difference in the lives of my family, my friends, my school, my home?

This Christmas, God says to us 'Let there be light.'

As we draw closer to our celebration of Christmas, I ask you to be lights for Jesus, shining in the darkness, bringing hope to a world which needs it.

Merry Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Conway". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

The Rt Revd Stephen Conway
Bishop of Lincoln