

Sermon preached at OCC on Christmas Day 2025

May your word be a lamp to our feet, and a light to my path, my rock and my redeemer amen.

### ***The Story of Light***

Isaiah 52:7–10 and John 1:1–14

When was the first time you ever felt light?

It's an unusual question. We usually think our first moment of light happens when we open our eyes after birth. But while reading John 1:10 — "*He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him*" — I found myself wondering about something very simple: can a baby see any light while still in the womb?

I looked into it. And yes — according to medical researchers, a baby's eyes are developed enough to sense light long before birth. Around 27 weeks, the baby opens its eyes. Around 31 weeks, it responds to bright light. The vision is still fuzzy, but it can already focus a little, follow movement, and even see one colour — red. So, even before birth, we have already met light.

But it's not until after birth that we can truly *see*. Only after birth can we recognise shapes, understand what we see, and respond to the world around us. In other words, early light is real — but we don't yet understand it. This is very similar to our journey of faith.

God's light has always been shining. It has been around us long before we understood it. But as we grow in Christ, our spiritual eyes slowly open. We begin to see Him more clearly. We start recognising His presence. We understand more of His truth. We begin to walk in His way.

So, today's readings invite us into the story of light — where we recognise light, grow in it, and let it shape our whole life.

### ***The Word and the Light***

John starts his Gospel in a very unusual way. There is no baby in the manger yet. No shepherds, no wise men. Instead, John says, "*In the beginning was the Word.*" The Greek word is *logos*, important to both Jews and Greeks.

For Jews, *logos* reminds them of Genesis 1. God speaks, and things come into being.

For Greeks, *logos* is the meaning and order behind the universe.

So John is saying something both simple and profound: Everything that exists comes from the Word. And this Word is the true Light of all people.

Everything alive, everything breathing, every creature — all depend on light. Even the deep-sea creatures that live in the dark depend indirectly on the work of light and the energy God built into creation. Light is part of the way God sustains the world.

Yet here is the sad truth John gives us: The Light came, but the world did not know Him.

It's like the foetus that senses something, but the eyes are not fully open yet. The light is real, but the world's vision is not ready.

John is not scolding the world. He is describing the reality of spiritual growth. Eyes need to be formed. They need to open. They need time to recognise the light. And, thank God, the Light keeps shining — whether we recognise Him or not.

### ***Recognising the Light: The Message of Isaiah***

Isaiah gives us another image of light.

He speaks of *the beautiful feet* of the messenger who brings good news and announces salvation. We may ask: why feet? Why not the face? Why not something more impressive?

Because when you are desperate, anything that brings hope becomes beautiful.

When someone is drowning, even an old boat is beautiful. When someone is thirsty, even a chipped cup is beautiful. When someone is lost, even a rough path that leads home becomes beautiful. For the exiles in Babylon — tired, hopeless, and homesick — the feet of the messenger were beautiful because those feet brought the words, “Your God reigns. Salvation is coming. You will go home.”

It was a moment of light in their darkness. And when the light shines like that — we recognise it. Even imperfect, ordinary, surprising forms of light become beautiful.

Many of us know moments like that. A quiet prayer answered. A comforting word on a hard day.

A person who stands with us when we feel alone. A moment in worship when our hearts soften. A memory that reminds us we're not abandoned. These are the “beautiful feet” moments. They are signs that the true Light is still shining.

### ***How Do We Keep This Light?***

Deuteronomy 6 gives us a clue. Moses tells Israel:

*“The LORD alone is your God.*

*Love Him with all your heart, soul, and might.*

*Talk about His words at home and on the road,  
when you lie down and when you rise.”*

We often hear this as a command to read the Bible — which is good and true. But remember: this command was given before Jesus was born, before the Light became flesh.

Jesus fulfilled this command by living it. During the day, the disciples watched Jesus act.

At night, He explained God’s heart to them. In His compassion, His mercy, His humility, and His authority, the disciples saw what it meant to love God with heart, soul, and might.

And now that the Light has come to us in person, the command is not only to read or recite. It is to live in the light. When we pray at home or serve someone quietly, or forgive someone who has hurt us, or stand with someone who is struggling, or choose kindness over anger, or speak truth gently, or bring hope into a difficult place —the light of Christ shines through us.

This is how we keep the Light. This is how we live the story of Light. This is how God’s light becomes ours. Before we were born, we sensed light we did not yet understand. But once our eyes opened, we learned to see, to recognise, and to respond. Faith is much the same. The Light of Christ has always been shining. Sometimes we recognise Him; sometimes we don’t. Sometimes our spiritual eyes need time to adjust. And God is patient.

But when we receive the Light —when we let Him make His home in us —something changes. We begin to see differently. We begin to live differently. We begin to shine.

May we live in this story of Light —at home and away, lying down and rising, in all we do —so that the true Light shines through us always. Amen.