

Anticipation

Advent 2 – 4th December 2011

Readings:

Isaiah 40: 1-11, Mark 1: 1-8

Have you ever planned a holiday trip?

It seems to me that sometimes the planning and anticipation is more important than the trip. Reality never has a chance to interfere. Everything from connecting flights, to travelling companions to the weather - all we anticipate will work out fine. So it is with Advent and Christmas. Advent the time of anticipation - Christmas the actuality. And sometimes the actuality falls a long way short of our anticipation.

So this morning we are to be privileged by a small play by our young people that shows in real contrast what we can do to the miracle of Christmas. In this case the actuality falls a great deal short of the anticipation, the Spirit of Christmas.

A PLAY

...

(Isaiah 40: 1-11, Mark 1: 1-8)

Two readings about anticipation - about new beginnings.

But note both are predicated upon seeing the world as it really is. Not the tinsel and self-indulgence. Both refer to repentance - turning back to God.

And it is only the realization of our need for God that makes a safe path for us into our unknown futures. Not that the path will be free from trouble but the lows will not seem as low, the obstacles not as high, because we ace them with the assurance of God's presence in our lives.

The Turning Point of Time

1.

The stillness of anticipation
Cradles tiny Bethlehem;
Silent now in preparation
For the miracle of birth.
All creation, hushed, expectant,
Waits a baby's cry;
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.

2.

Be silent, earth, before the myst'ry
Of the long-awaited birth.
All the hopes of human hist'ry -

Pilgrim Uniting Church
Rev. Tony Duncan - Sermon

Longings, yearnings, dreams, desires -
Gathered in a single moment,
Focused in a child;
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.

3.
A nascent star, in celebration,
Blazes over Bethlehem;
Crucible of all creation,
Where the human and divine;
Are refined in simple beauty
In the new-born child;
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.
Born in all simplicity at the turning point of time.

N. Quintrell 1973
Praise for all Seasons
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