

Sermon Christmas Day “What fits, why?”

Isaiah 9:2-7 Luke 2:1-7 (8-20)

Prayer: Creator God, be with us as we reflect on how you fit our lives and ask that we fit you into our lives. Be with us as we reflect on why it is important for you to come to us. Be with us as we reflect on what we have for you, and why that also is important... Be with us as you promise. Amen.

What is a good ‘fit’ for you? What makes something feel ‘right’? What doesn’t work? What is it that makes us wonder about something fitting? Being a good fit? Being fitting, for something or someone?

Last Saturday in the local paper – the H & P Times (I found out you can’t copy the picture!) was a story about a local Real Estate Agent Marilu Hirtzel. She is working through the consequences of cancer and has changed clothing ‘size’. All her old clothes and shoes etc don’t fit any more. So she is selling her fantastic wardrobe and giving most of the proceeds to charity, including Cancer charities. For her a life – health change means things (clothes) in her life ‘don’t’ fit any more. Interestingly the realisation of a non-fitting life has gone deeper than just her ‘outer’ appearances – she has begun an exploration of how parts of her life had ‘got-out-of-hand’.

Sometimes it is an external event that makes us start to reflect on what is fitting for our life, and sometimes it is an internal event that makes us connect the dots. Marilu is centred, according to the newspaper on her wardrobe no longer fitting her life, triggered by cancer.

Sometimes it is health, sometimes it is loss, sometimes it is gain, sometimes it is just ‘change’, sometimes it is the ‘mess’ of ordinary life ... whatever it is I am positive all of us have had occasion to wonder about our life ‘fitting’ what we want, desire, believe, decide.... We do this in a physical setting – and today I want to invite you to reflect on doing it in a spiritual setting.

You have chosen to take time to come to church, midweek, on a Wednesday – because you fit ‘God’ into your life – why? What is it that makes your life – fit – with God? Cv

I can offer some suggestions – but at the end of the day you are the one God fits, and so you are the one to accept the challenges and joys of that relationship. God fits into your life as fully as you open your spirit-soul to let the Divine Creator of the Universe in. I happen to believe that each one of us is designed to be complete when God / Son / Spirit takes up residence, and that just like being flat-mates or marriage partners or starting to ‘go-out’ with someone; learning to live in relationship is a challenge and takes work – from all parties concerned. You have to learn what fits, what is fitting and why!

There is a sentence in the video we will see in a moment that asks what the most fitting place for the Creator of the Universe is. As the narrator introduces ‘God’ we hear: *“This is also the same God you see on Christmas Cards. A little baby, Surrounded by shepherds And farm animals. All powerful God lying helplessly in a manger. Doesn’t seem the most fitting Place for the creator of the universe, does it?”*

Show Video:

The video is called ‘Christmas Mystery’ and it is a mystery why the Creator of the Universe would come to us – right? Why bother? Because “The angel in the Christmas story said it best.... “I bring you good news of great Joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David A Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-12”

A Saviour has been born, a new beginning is on offer, a fresh start, opening the way for hope to grow and Isaiah’s vision of a good and righteous (right) kingdom to be established, because a ‘Child has been born...’ cV

"Hannah Arendt is a non-practicing Jew who knew the horrors of the Twentieth Century first-hand and struggled with the resulting moral crises along with some of the most probing thinkers of her time saw clearly and wrote:

The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, "natural" ruin is ultimately the fact of natality.... It is, in other words, the birth of new men (sic) and the new beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born.

Only the full experience of this capacity can bestow upon human affairs faith and hope, those two essential characteristics of human existence which Greek antiquity ignored altogether, discounting the keeping of faith as a very uncommon and not too important virtue and counting hope among the evils of illusion in Pandora's box.

It is this faith in and hope for the world that found perhaps its most glorious and most succinct expression in the few words with which the Gospels announce their "glad tidings": "A child has been born to us." (The Human Condition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1958, p. 247) SacraConversazione

The 'Child' Isaiah envisioned was one with God, and Christians have traditionally understood that child to be Jesus, born of Mary. Isaiah's prophecy gave life; in his time and it gives life in ours because it **gives hope** in a new beginning, a fresh start and **promised** that the Creator of the Universe – of over 7 x22 'o's' stars, **is one with us.** cV

Isaiah's people desperately needed to hear this promise and believe because of the horrors surrounding them. War, destruction of homes, families, desolation, despair, exile, the darkness over their ordinary, everyday lives is close to overwhelming. And Isaiah offers light – a way forward, a better way. God will come to be with us, and this is how: 'Unto us a child is born, a Son is given....'.

There is a power in those words for us and they make echoes loud and clear when we hear from the angels "in the Christmas story who said it best: "I bring you good news of great Joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David A Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-12

Christ, the Lord, the Son of God – Creator of the Universe... born on a farm, amid smelly animals on the fringe of the town, ... God fitted into Humanity to save us. And the first group of people to hear this news was a bunch of itinerant workers. Shepherds who in their culture were on the fringe, not really trusted by town's folk, not learned, not wealthy, and probably very smelly! But God trusted them with the news and asked them to tell others. A real Christmas mystery of why, but one that fits with God!

God – Creator of over 7 x22 'o's' stars showed up in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago because? Because why? Because it was promised and God always keeps His promises? Because God wants to fit humanity completely so that the 'fit' was / **is** exact, and then the healing, the wholeness offered, the connection is unlimited, permanent and salvation **is** real.

It is a Christmas mystery but very real. God chose to come to be with us – with you. God entered time and space to intersect with your life. To know you and be known by you. To love you and be loved by you. To save you.

The angel in the Christmas story said it best.... "I bring you good news of great Joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord" Luke 2:10-12

Amen