

SEASONAL REVELATION

[written in oral form]

Luke 1:26-38  
Advent 4, Year B

December 20, 2020  
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A sermon must never follow a Children's Christmas pageant... and that will not happen today.

This is a "meditation." It's not as long as a sermon.

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Today's theme is "On the road to revelation."

For many people, especially children, the "revelation" comes when nicely wrapped packages are opened at the end of this week.

Perhaps, that is part of the revelation. ???

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C.S. Lewis is credited with saying the following:

There is a stage in a child's life at which [they] cannot separate the religious from the merely festal character of Christmas. I have been told of a very small and devout boy who was heard murmuring to himself [a song of his own composition. He was singing about Santa with the Wiseman visiting Jesus.]

But of course, the time will soon come when such a child can no longer effortlessly and spontaneously enjoy that unity. He will become able to distinguish the spiritual from the ritual and festal aspect of Christmas. Once he has distinguished [the difference], he must put.... one ...or ...the other first.

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I disagree with C.S. Lewis' conclusion.

I do not think we need to separate. To do so would be a huge loss, and missing the point.

Christmas is Not just a birthday party.

I think the Christmas experience can be demonstrated and felt in numerous ways.

We call it the Christmas Spirit, and it is a good and wonderful spirit. A spirit that must come from God.

It is the spirit in Jesus' birth story.

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Christmas spirit prompts us to imagine peace, hope, delight,.. elves, cookies and wrapped gifts that make us smile.

There is a transformative reversal that happens this time a year, and it is **fantastic**. The drab cold and extended darkness becomes twinkling lights, mistletoe, greenery and festive songs.

This year, more than ever, we need to embrace this reversal.

In the gloom and fear, we need hope, love, joy and peace.

All that is part of Christmas.

All that is part of the birth narratives, and more.

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The dark, grumpy Scrooge in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol is transformed. In a role reversal, he helps the poor and needy.

One of my family's favourite Christmas movies is Elf.  
This Santa's "adopted" Elf helps his long lost father to have a character reversal, and New York City is transformed, too.

Most of it was filmed in Vancouver, but historical facts Need NOT mess up a good story. [ ]

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The story in today's text includes enchantment, the supernatural, and even has an angel in it. It cannot get much better than that.

Think about it. Luke's story is about the biggest reversal of all:  
God--the one who made heaven and earth, the one who can do anything and go anywhere..... comes to earth and takes human form.

God in a helpless baby.....wow!

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The shepherds have a role reversal. From the lowest cast to esteemed invited guests to see the new born Jesus.

Ah,.....but that is Not in today's text.

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Mary is part of this divine surprise and role reversal.

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We know very little about young Mary. Back then, a typical age for a girl to have her marriage arranged was 12-14 years old.

There is usually a waiting time before the actual marriage.

Joseph and her were matched to be married. It was just another day.

Before the story starts, Mary likely just finished uploading a video to "tic toc", when low and behold, an angel appears before her.

This was no ordinary angel. The Scriptures tell of only two named angels, Gabriel and Michael. So, obviously this was an important message.

The first thing she hears is, "Hi, Favoured ONE. The Lord/ God is with you.

She checked to see if her phone was projecting a hologram, but it was not...

This was very unsettling for her,  
so Gabriel asked here to Not be afraid.

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The next part includes some supernatural stuff, and it is a little weird.

Yet, great stories find ways to get our attention... and amaze us.

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I do **Not** think the author, Luke, was woke to women's self control over their own body.

He said God was going to impregnate her. ~~~~~  
However, Mary did end up consenting.

Verse 38:  
Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."  
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Okay,.....I am having fun with this,.....yet I do think we need to lighten up..... We need to step back... and go, "Ya,...this is good."

Actually, this is a great story about how God chose a lowly, young lady to introduce and nurture something grand and wonderful.

Everything turned around. What was.... was no more.  
It was a reversal / a new fresh start for the universe.  
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The past 9 months have been tumultuous, depressing and unprecedented in our life time,.....and now comes Christmas.

In the darkness,... in the fear,.... in the grief and loneliness, hear Gabriel's assurance: God is with you.  
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We are in the midst of hope and wonder.

Let us wonder what joy and delight will happen.  
As with Mary, we too can have a role reversal.

Let us imagine what is coming.  
There will be singing, dancing and hugs.

Hey,.....we are ready to sing. We now have a new hymn book.  
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Christmas day is approaching.  
Christmas is now..... with the grand revelation of a new day--the birth of redemption.

May we receive God's joy as Mary did.

God is with you.