

Thoughts for the first week in Advent

Come, we cry, but do we mean it?
Are we ready for the change that 'come' demands?
Are we ready to make more room in our lives for the presence of God?
Are we ready to become?



It may take all advent and more to answer those questions, but advent is the time to begin the exploration. Advent is both the expectation of arrival and the exploration of the journey. We talk of waiting but Advent waiting is a passive waiting but the active inner transformation that creates new life. To be truly alive in God is to be awake, aware, alert, and attentive, which means being alive to possibilities. It means learning to live responsively and responsibly, thinking of the needs of others and trusting others are doing the same for us, and most importantly that we are open to suggestions. Rather than demanding satisfaction on our own terms, we welcome opportunities that build oneness and awareness of others.

As we glimpse the baby born in a manger, we witness God's love for humanity and the at the same time the truth about humanity. Why does any child have to be born in a manger, homeless in an alleyway, in a shack on the edge of a rubbish tip? It is the actions of humanity that deny humanity the fullness of life in the love of God. We also witness the invitation to become, to engage with creation in a rewarding exciting way. Just as the shepherds engaged with a startling possibility, just as the wise men responded to a predicted possibility, we are invited to be open to new and exciting discoveries that will take us deeper into our humanity.

In advent we are waiting to celebrate the moment when humanity was invited to see with eyes wide open, the coming of a new way, the coming of God's Kingdom and our oneness with the Cosmic Christ who was, and is and always will be.

To celebrate Christmas is to welcome in the Kingdom of God with all its possibilities, surprises and love.

To reflect on

Mary heard a message that was unexpected and startling and she responded.

Joseph heard a message to trust Mary.

They both had to make a journey, spiritually and physically as they responded to Emperor's call for a census. It would not have been easy, it was a long way to Bethlehem and there were no roads, this was a trek and there were risks.

Think about the longest journey you have ever made

How did you plan it?

How long did it take?

What did you feel during the journey, what were the high points and low points?

Would you make the journey again?

Prayer

God of love as journey through advent may we be open to hear your voice, to feel your presence and to reflect your love. As we begin each day, may we be open to the possibilities it holds, however unexpected and startling, and brave enough to take a risk and journey into the unplanned. Amen