

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY DECEMBER 15, 2019

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"Don't Miss it!"

Based on John 1:6-18

Jesus offers a catalogue of newness, of miracles, of wonders, transformations that take people in their fear and failure and disability, and wrap their lives in newness beyond themselves. That is what Jesus does. Everywhere he goes, newness happens.

~Walter Bruggemann (39)

*"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us,"
(v14)*

"And you missed it," John the Baptist said.

"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him." (v10)

Mary received an invitation of the highest calling and it is likely that her family missed it, caught up in the scandal of an unexpected child and the damage to their family's reputation. Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist understood, but I rather think the rest of the family missed it.

The Innkeeper in Bethlehem missed it. Imagine the promotional material for his hotel brochure next census if only he had realized that the

young couple in front of him were about to birth to the Son of Man:

"Sleep in the room where Jesus was born! Only an extra \$25/night!"

But the Innkeeper only saw strangers before him, and poor ones at that. And so, he missed it.

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~John 1:6-18

The shepherds didn't miss it though. They were used to creation's whimsical way of showing off, but a chorus of angels that lit up the night sky in a fantastical manner had to be a sign of something life changing. They opened themselves up to the wonder of the moment, and they didn't miss it.

The wise men didn't miss it. As men accustomed to palace life: being schmoozed, wined and dined for political gain, and often bored by upstart bureaucrats who liked to hear themselves talk, they were humbled by the simple family before them. They presented their gifts willingly, and lingered in the holiness that surrounded them. They didn't miss it.

A little while later, King Herod didn't miss it either, although his intentions were altogether different. A new 'king' was not in his plan, and so he set about a scheme to rid the world of this 'infant king.' He failed, but it is disturbing that he even tried.

It would be the reality of Christ's entire ministry. So much to offer the world, and yet:

So many missed it.
The Pharisees missed it.
The priests of the temple missed it.
The Romans missed it.

It's almost Christmas.
Will you miss it or will you embrace it?
A familiar story, yes.
But it is a new story.

Each Advent, we are invited to journey to Bethlehem once again, and look for the joy. There is something new to experience as the wonder of the star takes its place once again.

Search for it.

Pray that you might receive the gift of a magical, holy moment this Christmas.

Open yourself up, and believe that the child can show you something new.

Don't miss it.

Embrace it.

Amen.

~This Advent series is based on the book "Celebrating Abundance" by Walter Bruggemann, a series being followed by Bible Study groups in the PCC all across Canada. Copies of the book are available at the Church Office for purchase.