

2019-02-03 ... 10am Worship Together ... Revd Canon Judy Hunt

Luke 2: 22 – 40

'Faithful Waiting'

Introduction ...

Two questions to begin with:

Is anyone here waiting for something at the moment?

I don't necessarily mean – waiting for something within this service – though it might be ... but more generally in life?

Or if not **can you remember a time when you were waiting for something?**

(Time to talk together and then feed back) ...

OK – another question:

What kind of 'sign' were you looking for that would make you think that your wait might be coming to an end?

Clues – such as a letter, a text, a phone call – number known or unknown ...

Example – Herbie (one of my dogs) knew my car was turning into the end of the road.

Related to Gospel Passage ...

In our Gospel passage we had at least 2 people waiting – Simeon and Anna – but I suspect that Mary and Joseph were waiting too ...

The birth of Jesus had taken place 8 days before – and they'd had the shepherds to confirm that this baby was special ... and then ... nothing ... or at least nothing but the ordinary days of newborn parents: feeds, nappy changes (whatever they used for the equivalent of nappies!) broken, disturbed sleep ... was that it? Was Jesus really so special? I think they were waiting, hoping for some confirmation, some help.

But we'll concentrate on Simeon and Anna: we can't be sure of Simeon's age – but we tend to assume he's not a young man – and Anna – definitely elderly.

The sense is that they'd been waiting a long time – waiting to see the Messiah.

What kind of 'sign' might they have been looking for? A hint that their wait was nearly over?

(talk together to consider what 'sign' they might have looked for ...)

Were they given that?

It's not clear how Simeon and Anna recognised who Jesus was – except that they must have been open to nudges from the Holy Spirit – and, especially if they'd been expecting to recognise the Messiah as an adult – they were willing to be surprised and to readjust their expectations!

Perhaps that has something to say to us ...

This coming week – can we be alert to the Holy Spirit – alert so that we can see Jesus in action – perhaps in surprising people, surprising places, surprising ways?

This alertness brought great joy to Anna and Simeon themselves – as well as to others.

PTO

Notice too that this event took place only because Mary and Joseph were following God's law – that's why they went to the temple. Maybe sometimes we make people wait longer than they need to because we're not being obedient to God!

This passage is a wonderful example of God keeping his promises to Simeon and Anna – and of providing reassurance to Mary and Joseph – as well as preparing Mary for difficult times ahead.

Conclusion ...

God is with us in our waiting – just because things take a long time – we needn't fear that he's forgotten or abandoned us.

God wants us to be able to recognise his presence ...

God wants to prepare us for what lies ahead.