

December 24, 2016 (Christmas Eve)
"Tradition!" (Newly Born)
Luke 2:1-4, 2:15-20
The Rev. Lynn P. Lampman

Background Information

From the dawn of time,
God was revealing Godself to humanity.
God sought to give us more than a glimpse of God's very nature
via the revelation of the Law, kings, and prophets.
Yet we weren't all that quick to catch on.
So, finally God decided on a full reveal –
coming to earth, in the form of a baby!

Sermon Summary

The story of Christmas is about the revealing of God,
in a vulnerable, tactile, and obvious way.
It is about what God did,
And yet we will miss both the breadth and power of the story,
if we merely look on God's action
and fail to see humanity's response.

The shepherds remind us that the time for responding is now.
They did not wait, till it was more convenient, or it fit into their
schedule. Rather, they said, I must see and meet this Jesus
tonight! The time is now, let there be no delay.

The wise men remind us that responding includes the giving of
a gift – something tangible that demonstrates one's devotion to
the Christ child.

(Slide 1) Mary Hoffman in her book, Three Wise Women tells of three women who follow the brightest star in the sky, each coming from a different part of the world.

All three women (a young woman from the west, a mother with her child from the south, and an old woman was from the southeast) meet at the stable, each giving a gift to the baby Jesus.

The first woman saw the star when she was baking bread, the second woman with her child saw the star when she took him outside due to him being unable to sleep due to cutting a tooth,

The third woman saw the star when she was telling stories to her grandchildren.

Upon getting to the stable the first woman gave her bread, and the second woman told the baby a story and the third woman's child reached out his arms and gave the baby a kiss.

The star baby in the stable never forgot the women and their three presents.

When Jesus grew up, he showed that bread tastes better when it is shared, and he told wonderful stories to anyone who would listen, and he taught the whole world that the greatest gift of all is love.

Sermon Application

We will have only understood and not lived out the Christmas story and the birth of Jesus, if we merely see the star.

Because revelation, the great God revealing, the birth of Jesus needs a response from us, if we are to understand and get the full meaning and impact of the story.

Shepherds, wise men and women had led the way for us.

For we too, like they did, have an opportunity to respond tonight.

Each of you has been given a red gift box and a slip of paper, so you too can respond in adoration, devotion and service. At this time, we will all have a few moments to either write what act of service we will do and for whom, in Jesus name in the remaining days of 2016 or in the days before us in 2017.

Our children may draw a picture of how they plan to serve the baby Jesus, if they would prefer to do so in place of writing.

During the singing of "The Little Drummer Boy" you are invited to place in the manger hay your prayer on the back of your reveal card, and place your red gift box on the floor around the manger as your response to God's revealing in Jesus.