

Good morning, everyone. Merry Christmas. This morning in this final sermon for our Christmas weekend I want to try something a little different. You see, there's a sort of trajectory, that I often generally hope for in the homilies I prepare. I tend to think of a little bit like hang gliding. When I write a sermon, I like to start out at the cliff edge. And then to take that leap into the gospel with all of you. I tend to want to dive from that into the hard places of what it's like to be alive. And my hope in any sermons I do is to get into those places where we deal with selfishness, pride, or loss, or anything else that might be difficult. And I pray to God, I don't just crash and burn right there. But ideally, we pull up and follow the gospel, higher and higher from where we first started.

This morning I don't know how much I want to dive down. In sense I feel like we've already done that. We've had our time in Advent and anticipating this Christmas day. And here we are. So rather than dive... I want to glide. To rest in this space we've made and to relish the good news that was made in Christ's birth.

We get so much of that from our Isaiah readings in this season. We hear of the theme of triumph, the sheer wonder of Christ's birth, and the victory of God's peace across the world. The message of the day is peace and beauty and salvation, goodness and splendor. It's an announcement that God wins and sin is out of luck. But what does that really mean? How is the story of Christmas still news? Have we not heard the story after year?

I mean, John's reading this morning, says that Jesus was the word, and the word was in the beginning, the word showed up at Christmas about 2000 years ago, and the word shows up in our major this time every year. The word keeps showing up, so what's new?

Well, you are. You're the new thing. There might've been others like you before. In fact, the good news I have is that there were. I wonder if you remember the people who you thought were important to you over your life. Maybe your parents, maybe your teachers, maybe a neighbor you met or someone whose life was thrown into your own and could've never expected. Amongst all of those people you hoped to be more like them... I really think you probably are like them. And you make the lessons they've taught you new each and every day you practice them. What's amazing that the good you do. Whatever they did in the past that inspired and taught you... Well that was taught to them. How miraculous is it that those gifts are now yours too.

Good doesn't go away. It doesn't fade. It persists. We may think that generation is better or worse than another. I can't tell you how many times I've heard, folks lament millennials or Gen Z or baby boomers for whatever reason, heck I know I've been

guilty of that sort of generational slander. The history of worrying about or blaming others is long and proud, its as pervasive as Roman law was around those early Christians and Herod's rule which sought to find and kill the infant Christ.

But of course, the newborn Christ is born again. Kindness triumphs. You carry out the love that was given to you by those who modelled it, and they modeled what good they themselves had received from others. New people are coming into this world every day, new people made in the image of God and bearing the light of Christ which shines in the door held open for you by an 8 year-old at the Jewel or the 13 year old who gives his seat up for an older person at Advent Craft night.

For Christmas day, let's glide on the new good that's part of our lives and the lives of others. Herald it when you see it today in those around you, announce it and relish it when kindness is offered. We'll have plenty of time to endure the hardships of life. For today, if you can, let's rest in the light that has come into the world and which shines even now through each of us. Amen.