

## December 27 2015    Year C    First Sunday after Christmas

### Scripture Lessons ~

*Psalm 148*

*Titus 2:11-14*

*Luke 2:41-52*

### Sermon        *It's a Boy!*

So one day on a Sunday, I was driving home and I saw this great big sign fixed to the post of the front porch by four pieces of yarn. It was a wonder that it stayed in place as windy as it was on that particular day. It was a sort of hastily made sign and on it in big black letters ending with a great big exclamation mark were the words, ITS A BOY! It's a boy! It wasn't difficult to imagine what was being announced. Someone had a baby and was eager to tell friends and neighbors, in fact, the whole world that the baby was born. There was no self-consciousness involved. There wasn't any wondering or thinking that they were strange for putting up something like that. Golly my art work is not so great and it would have been something like that if I had put it up. Really what was there was sheer exuberant joy and forgetting self because of this wonderful event. Seeing that sign made me stop and think for a while what actually lay behind such joy. Who in the world were these people? What had happened? I really didn't know and probably will never know. Were they a young couple? Were a little bit older? Was this their first child? Had they been having trouble having children and were finally blessed with this new baby? It was sort of fun trying to imagine exactly what had happened in the life of that new family. It is kind of easy to enter into this kind of experience because most of us have been through it one time or other. If we don't have our own children we have lots of friends and relatives around that do have lots of children and one does not keep silent about such an event. Some of you guys like to hand out cigars, announcements are sent, no detail is left undone because we want to know the height, weight, the sort of hair, the color of eyes, the name, the sex and the birth date in fact down to the minute and who are all the family members. We really want to share it all.

On a day like this we sort of get a small glimpse in the gospel lesson who the baby Jesus became when he became twelve years old, one can't help but imagine how God must have felt the birth of God's little child. Was God any less proud as a parent as were of those parents that hung that sign?

Luke's gospel tells us even though it was late at night God sent messengers to gather the only people who were awake; the shepherds who were out in the field. It was just too difficult to hold back on the announcement until morning. "I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people for to you this day is born in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord," the angel said. As if this wasn't

enough, the announcement was set to music sung by an angel choir, nothing less than a singing telegram, was sufficient for God's son's birth.

And good old Matthew takes it even further that God was so proud of his little one a wonderful star was hung in the heavens so that everybody would know that something very special had happened that night. And God didn't stop with the grand announcement but there were gifts; gifts fit for the birth of a king-Gold Frankincense and Myrrh. This was one proud parent.

Just as we have no trouble getting caught up in the birth of a newborn child. We have no trouble getting caught up in the birth of God's child. Someone once said the birth of a child is God's announcement that there is still hope for the world. I think that is worth repeating, a birth of a child is God's announcement that there is still hope in this world and in this special child, we know there is hope for every last person on the earth.

So in this Christmas season we do express our hope, just as God did. We put up our trees with stars at the top. What do we have at the top of our tree here- an angel, well that is good too. We put those trees up, we hang lights and we give each other gifts, our expressions of joy may not be beautifully artistic, (like my sons said about the photo I sent out on Face Book. My tree looks like a Charlie Brown tree. He is the older kid) but we still can't contain our joy no matter how we decorate. We have to hang out our sign for everybody to see. We are compelled shout out to the world. What's the title of the sermon: "It's a boy."

There are adjustments as we spoke before, when you have a little one in the house. We soon find out that everything is not that joyful. The child has to be cared for. There are the 2:00 O'clock feedings. We have to change messy pants. There is crying. There are upsets as well as joy with every new stage of growth in a child's life. His parents soon find out that this little kid makes his presence known. He is going to jerk his parents around a little bit until he finds out who he is, just as Jesus did in the temple that day. He creates some problems as he elbows a place for himself in the world. He tests us and in the process he learns the meaning of the word love is all about. And so it is with Jesus the world receives him for the most part with love and joy at his birth and as he grew; he taught the world what love was all about. As he elbowed room for himself in the process, he created room in the hearts of men and women followers to have room for love in our hearts. The world said to him how much do you love? And he said, "I love you this much" and he stretched his arms out on a cross eventually and died for the sake of the world.

But we are getting a little bit ahead of ourselves because today we are not called to dwell upon Jesus' ministry but instead of his birth. Today we bask in God's warmth, a love so great so that people like us become like Jesus. We rejoice that God sent this little kid, kicking and screaming into the world and who grew into a man-Savior. A man who look evil in the eye and made it lie down forever and forever.

A little kid who demonstrates there is hope for us and a hope in this world no matter what is thrown our way. So we rejoice today, "It's a boy" and what a boy, it is! Amen