

November 30 2014

### **Scripture Lessons ~**

*Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*

*I Corinthians 1:3-9*

*Mark 13:24-37*

### **Sermon**     *Hey, Wake Up!*

This is probably going to show my age up more than I would like to, but how many of you remember a television show hosted by Leonard Nimoy, Mr. Spock of Star Trek fame called “In Search of----“ Who remembers “In Search of” It lasted a long time, and became syndicated and they played it over and over again. “In Search of” A part of the show by Leonard Nimoy, if you remember it went in search of as he put it of all kinds of bizarre and supernatural, paranormal phenomenon. It was designed to kind of grab our attention; designed to kind of wake us up and to get us to watch his show. Such as Big Foot, Lochness Monster and Space Alien and all the good stuff that kids are interested in.

If I had to give this Advent period in the church year a title, I would as I did my sermon and title it after Leonard Nimoy’s show, “Hey Wake Up!”, “Wake up!”, “Jesus is coming! “” Jesus is coming! ““Wake up” as I mentioned earlier that Advent is the beginning of the new church year. For Christians this is our New Year celebration. This is our January First. And so again I say you should have lived it up last night because it is all over now. But as such, it is also the beginning of a journey. It is also the beginning of a journey of discovery. Mark’s Gospel tells us, Advent is not only a time to wake up and watch for Jesus but also a time on which we go on a journey; a time when we search for Jesus and who Jesus is to us. During Advent we have the opportunity to make some New Year’s resolutions if we want to. We have an opportunity to start all over again where our relationships to God and to those around us are concerned; because the very first place we find Jesus in the Gospels is as a little baby. Fresh and pure and new as all babies are and how in the world can you not be awake when there is a new baby in the house – right? I remember that as well. As I thought about this idea of being awake for the coming of Jesus during Advent I thought of a former parishioner an older lady from Ritzville. Her name was Elsie Opp and her painting from the 1930s of the three Wisemen hung all year long on the sanctuary wall of the church. I thought it was the strangest thing I had ever seen because all the year around the three Wisemen would journey on the wall of our sanctuary every single Sunday morning. Obviously we usually think about the Wisemen of being part of our celebration a little bit later in the season. But I also think it is appropriate that we

think of them right now. When we think about the Magi, it is amazing what we can learn from them about our Advent journey. They were awake to where they were going; they knew who they would find but in Elsie's painting they haven't arrived at their destination yet and there is a sense of freshness; a sense of excitement; a sense of anticipation for them right in the midst of the journey. There is a sense when they do arrive their lives will be will never be the same again and all things will be made fresh and new when they do arrive at the end of their journey.

I invite all of us then this morning to wake up to begin this journey of Advent together and I invite you to become aware of the excitement. The excitement of seeking after the Christ child as if it were your very first time. I don't care how many times you have been through it before. We start our journey today with this parable that Sandy shared with us today a little bit earlier and I think it is appropriate that we focus our attention there. Someone said if we do this is, it is to jump way too far ahead in Jesus life story and yet if we remember the central teaching of the advent Christmas season is found in Jesus' symbolic name from the gospel. The symbolic name Emanuel which means God with us; the teaching that God came down on Christmas to be one of us and to live with us and in a sense to die for us. How appropriate it is then that we celebrate this important teaching during advent season reminding ourselves of the fact that God was with us. God did die for us in Jesus because God loves each one of us so very, very much.

I encourage all of us then to begin our advent journey here amongst all these wonderful friends and family, here in the warmth of this beautiful sanctuary with Jesus by our side. Jesus came to teach us how to love one another and so in the spirit of Leonard Nimoy's show, "Hey Wake Up!" "Jesus is coming!"

Together we say AMEN.