

S20 Christmas Carol Concert and Celebration 2011.

On Sunday evening we had our Christmas Carol concert in Gilead chapel. We really were very privileged to have Pencoed Silver Brass Band and the Cantorion Coety Singers.

They played to us, sang to us and led us all singing some traditional carols including my favourite, "Hark the Herald Angel Sings".

I reckon, counting the ban and singers we had over 100 people attending.

As part of the evening I was also invited to share and expound a passage of Scripture.

The reading was from Luke's Gospel, chapter 2.

6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

11 "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

12 "And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

18 And all those who heard it marvelled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Here are some brief notes that I made just to help me keep on track.

CELEBRATION

How will you celebrate Christmas Day?

Eat, drink and watch TV?

Hands up all those who will watch the Queens Speech. Hmmm!

How about opening presents? Hooray, a reaction at last, Ha Ha.

Let's see how the shepherds reacted to the news of this wonderful birth.

FEAR

They were afraid when they saw the Angel.

How would we react if we saw an angel? I think I would be afraid too.

THEY BELIEVED

A Saviour – then something wrong that needs to be put right – something so terrible that only the Son of God could solve the problem.

God and the Bible calls the problem SIN. A deep rooted problem that has contaminated the whole of our being, spirit, soul and body that we can never solve.

THEY ACTED

The letter by James tells us that faith without works is dead.

Not that the works save us, but that the works reveal that we have changed; we have faith, we believe and because of that want to do things that we would never have done before.

These shepherds, smelly, unkempt and ignored by the rest of the population left the sheep, searched and found Jesus.

Have you too found Jesus, the Saviour.

PRAISE

They could not keep quiet. They shared this wonderful good news with many people and by so doing glorified and praised God.

Why?

Because it was exactly as the Angel had told them.

Which brings us to a very significant part of this account.

I believe in Christmas because it is true.

The wonder of it is that we are here tonight to celebrate the same truth.

I trust and pray that you too believe this same truth; that Jesus came to this world to save us from our sins.

We all at Gilead pray that you will have a wonderful Christmas wherever you are.

Pastor Keith and members.