

## Carols Carnival 5 minute talk. Rev. Bruce Stanley: "Visitors"

Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:8-16; Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11; John 1:1-5, 10-14

### III – Ambulance Siren

Do you recognise it? It's loud. You can't miss it. It's an ambulance siren! How do you respond when you hear one?

- If you're a car on the road, perhaps you get out of the way
- If you're a person on the footpath, maybe you cover your ears
- But if you're an injured person, I imagine you're glad to hear it! And really glad when it finally arrives!

I think most people associate ambulances with the siren. But I remember attending a car accident scene once, and a person was badly injured. The ambulance was called. And when I heard the siren, I was able to say to the person – "The ambulance is here, it's going to be OK." It was comforting. It was reassuring to know that help was here. We heard the noise, and we could tell they were coming, but what were we most interested in? When we saw the ambulance arrive, we were interested in **the people that got out of the ambulance**. The ambulance isn't about all the noise and sirens. It's about the people in it. When you're injured, you're not waiting for a siren. You're waiting for a medic! The ones who have come to rescue you.

Jesus' birth was a bit like the arrival of an ambulance! Think about it:

- The archangel Gabriel appears to Mary to tell her she's pregnant with Jesus.
- An angel appears to Joseph to tell him what's happening.
- An angel appears to Shepherds in the middle of the night, then a great multitude of heavenly hosts who sing.
- And a bright star appears in the sky to lead three Kings from the East to the place where Jesus was born.

This is an event that included angels and archangels and choirs and heavenly stars and Kings. This was a huge event! Sirens blazing! But is that what we're really interested in?

- For many people, Christmas is about a time for family and friends. A time to put up a tree and give presents. A time to enjoy Christmas lights and Christmas Carols. For many people, Christmas is about the noise. The parties. The sirens.
- But there's much more. Christmas is really about the person all that noise was announcing:

In our reading, it says in verse 10:

*"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him."*

Jesus, the one who made the world, came into the world. Christmas is about Jesus, God himself, becoming human. Jesus, God himself, the creator of the world, becoming human so he could save humans. And the world didn't recognise him.

When I saw those ambulance officers coming out of the ambulance, I knew who they were. They were in an ambulance. They wore a uniform. They were what I expected to see.

But God came to earth in an unexpected way. He came as a human. He came in flesh. And He came as a baby. And the world didn't recognise him. But do we recognise him now? Today?

I love Christmas. I love all the "noise"! The trees, decorations, lights, presents – it's a great season. And we can get frustrated by the shopping or the hassle of it all. But if we look beyond all that, if we look inside Christmas, we'll see what it's really about. It's about the saviour. The one who came to rescue us. God himself, the creator of the world, coming to us as one of us so he could save us. Look past all the sirens. And see, recognise, who Jesus really is. God in the flesh. The creator who came to us, became one of us, so he could save us.

Look past all the noise. Look inside Christmas. See the saviour. I hope this next song/item helps you to do that.