

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Monday 11th December 2023

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

Hopes and Fears

We had a wonderful Nativity Play in church yesterday morning and my thanks to Derek who wrote the fantastic script and to everyone who helped make the occasion very special, specially our children, young people and their leaders.

It was a telling of the Nativity like no other! From the Shepherds asking king Herod for some more (porridge?!), the wise men who had come from afar leading the congregation in a reggae song and dance, Herod perplexed as to where afar was in his kingdom despite the best efforts of his chancellor to placate him, to Mary leading an aerobics class and the congregation in a version of 'follow the leader' and Joseph composing a witty little ditty! The angel Gabriel flitted beautifully in between Joseph and Mary as she announced the amazing news to them and Michael Jackson did a moonwalk!

All of that built up to the amazing act of love by God, which is a very human story and we come to God as human beings with our hopes and fears. We had been invited earlier in the service to think and write them down. Our hopes and fears for our selves, for those we love, for this planet. We then, brought those hopes and fears and laid them in a basket at the feet of the new born babe, just before we heard his first cries (although his cries might have something to do with him being abruptly moved with lighting speed from behind the cast and handed to Mary!)

As the line from the familiar carol says, the hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.

We can bring our hopes and fears to God. He listens to us and He understands. And His answer, is revealed in the cries of the new born babe, born in a stable in Bethlehem, 2000 years go, and who lives in us by his Spirit today.

BIBLE PASSAGE:

“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit of God,
You promise to come to us in our need.
When we have been hurt and feel low,
when people take advantage of us for their own ends
it's hard to know that you are there.
We don't always know how to pray to you.
Help us to discover your presence in the pain and confusion.
Give us the hope that comes from realising that you know and understand us,
and that the deepest longings of our hearts
are an unspoken prayer that we might be renewed by your love,
and transformed by your grace.
Amen.

*John Hellyer, superintendent, Gloucestershire Circuit and Deputy Chair of the
Safeguarding Committee*

Pour into our hearts, O God, the love that casts out fear, the truth that sets us
free and the grace that is sufficient for all our needs. Though you are unseen,
do not be unknown. Though you are hidden from our eyes let us rejoice in your
beauty at the last.

Louisa M Alcott (1833-1888)

