

Christmas Imagination

If you're an adult it's possibly too late for you to understand Christmas. Not because you have outgrown Santa and rushing downstairs first thing on Christmas morning. Not because you become more mature, or because you have grown tired of the endless dinners. It's probably because you have lost the childlike ability to imagine. To a child, a box becomes a castle (far better than the overpriced present inside), a duvet becomes an ocean, and seeing the Clerk of Session in a tea-towel at a Carol service is as good as being in the Middle-East (He will have to wear one now!).

In Church we do our best to help our adults and rescue them from their lack of imagination, especially at advent. The images we give you in Church during this season are loaded with hope and change. Here in Church, we challenge you to imagine that the world doesn't always stay the way it is. Advent says, 'Get Ready', 'Things are going to change!' and 'Prepare the way for the Lord!' Imagination leads us to places we never thought we would find ourselves in. How often have I heard people helping out with Sunday School, running around like an idiot with a youth group, sitting in a bible study, balancing on a roof to help a neighbour, or teaching kids in South Africa, say, "I never imagined I would do this?"

It's a sad fact that this lack of imagination can start with our teenagers, who act like 40 year olds, stressing about Christmas card lists and shopping. Whatever happened to their

imagination? Imagining what new things they can do, rather than acting out the tired routines of us adults.

Søren Kierkegaard, a Swedish thinker, wrote a story and asked us to imagine what it would be like if geese could talk. Like us they would go to Church. They would gather every Sunday and listen to the gander's sermon and they would sing hymns. The preacher would tell them that their wings would carry them away to distant regions, where they truly belonged. When the service was over the congregation would rise and the geese would waddle home. And again next Sunday they would attend Church—and go home—and that would be that. They would thrive and grow fat, become plump and tasty, and eventually they would be eaten on Christmas Day—and that would be that.

Kierkegaard then writes that we are just the same in Church. We also have wings—it's our imagination. It is meant to help us really soar—but all we do is play, and get entertained on Sunday, and then on Monday we never possibly imagine that God will change anything.

As you come to Christmas maybe you are even dreading the whole experience. Perhaps you face issues with your health. Perhaps you wonder if you can cope with the painful divisions in your family that Christmas only makes worse by forcing you all together. Perhaps you must make a difficult decision that you hope you can put off until the New Year.

But at Advent a young girl's life is turned upside down, a baby cries in a manger and the world's super powers get nervous. The world will not always be the same.

Imagine That.



Celebrating
250
YEARS

Your Christmas
guide to worship
and witness at
2nd Ballyeaston.





250th Anniversary Dates

15th December:

Sunday School Christmas Party:
Creche—P6 Fun Factory 10:45
P7 upward: Bambou 5pm

6th January:

All-age worship

20th January:

11.30am Service of Dedication
7pm Communion

3rd February:

All-age worship

9th February: (1st Ballyeaston)

Presbytery Day of Prayer

13th February:

Ash Wednesday

14th February:

Tractor Club Gospel Concert

Advent Services

16th December:

11.30am Advent III and
Sunday School Nativity
7pm Carols by Candlelight

23rd December:

11.30am Advent IV

24th December:

11.30pm Christmas Eve

25th December:

10.30am Christmas Day