

It seems to me that the grumpy innkeeper in our story today had every right to be fed up at being disturbed so many times during the night. People wanting things from him, noise and light. I would be grumpy too. Of course this is only a made up story, not found anywhere in the gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus. And although I have heard it so many times it still makes me chuckle – especially with Keith as the inn keeper! I too hate to be disturbed from what I am doing by unexpected need, noise or anything that isn't part of my plan. But during Advent this year I have wanted to be disturbed, stirred up by God. I am so busy in my job here at church leading up to Christmas that I can so easily miss the point of my business. I plan, fret and prepare and despite loving my role, I get overdone, exhausted and irritable and could easily miss the point. I may miss the "It's a baby" moment. Jesus came, Emmanuel, God with us, in the form of the Christ Child. That is something to be wondered about because it is just that wonderful.

I don't want this year, as I have other years, to arrive at Christmas Eve and then, when it is too late to do any more preparation for anything, suddenly realise I have missed the opportunity Advent gives to wonder at his coming, and not just 2000 years ago, to peasant parents in a stable. He comes in the people I meet, maybe even in those who disturb me! He comes in the words of a child, a line of a song, the hug of a friend, the laughter and joy of family... in so many places to encourage, inspire and transform just as he transformed the lives of his parents, the shepherds, the wise men, his disciples, those who listened to his stories and those he healed.

I want to be transformed. I want an "It's a baby moment"do you?

Liz