

A revolutionary Christmas

A Christmas message from Archbishop Geoff Smith

There are many ways to describe Christmas. A time for family and holidays. A time for love and kindness and community are just a few. The idea that the birth of Jesus is a deeply political event is probably not high on most lists, and yet the coming of Jesus was the beginning of a revolution.

Christmas is certainly about love â?? Godâ??s love for the whole creation which we receive and share with others. Love is also shown in Godâ??s deep yearning for the world to be put to rights. Things are not the way they should be. There should be no war, no famine, no poverty, no injustice, no loneliness, no violence, no isolation one from another, no abuse or cruelty. This is not the way things should be and we have a deep sense of this dis-ease in the world.

The birth of Jesus was the start of a revolution which will see things being tipped right way up. We saw a glimpse of that in the ministry of Jesus. He healed people, fed people, connected people with God and their community, included people, showed unconditional love, freed people from evil, met violence with peace. This was a foretaste of the way things will be when God becomes king and things are tipped right way up.

This is political because it will challenge the forces and systems and powers that currently run the world. In the Christmas story Herod sensed the threat of Jesus as a rival which is why he tried to have

him killed.

Christmas is not fundamentally a religious event even though followers of Jesus celebrate it. The birth of Jesus was the start of a revolution to tip the state of the world right way up. Followers of Jesus continue to look forward to that time and work to make the world as kind and just a place as we can as we anticipate the completion of Godâ??s project.

Christmas is a special time. In the Christmas event we see that God loved the world so much that he came among us in the human we know as Jesus. The birth of Jesus gives us hope especially if we are suffering the consequences of our upside down world. A new creation is coming. The way things are now are not what they will be, and the birth of Jesus was the start.

Thatâ??s worth celebrating whether we do that in the company of friends or family or all by ourselves. God hasnâ??t forgotten us. A new time is coming, when God will be seen as king and the world will be put to rights.

I wish you a happy, hope-filled Christmas â?? a glimpse of what it is to come.

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