

Interrupted...by Christmas

by Rev Dan Balsdon, Christmas 2020 | read online at www.revdanbalsdon.com

Hi friends, however you're spending it, not matter how interrupted it feels, I pray you have a safe and blessed Christmas

A wife posted her Christmas wish list on the fridge for her husband to see. Rather than a list of items of desire, she simply wrote, 'something that will make me look beautiful'. When Christmas rolled around she expected to open a package with some fancy jewellery or clothing. Instead, she unexpectedly received an exercise bike.

Christmas this year is not what we would have expected back in January. Christmas has been interrupted.

There's things we can't do.

Places we won't go.

People we won't see.

We may feel frustrated, disappointed, hopes have been dashed, people are hurting.

2020 has been a year of change, restrictions and interruptions.

And if you're anything like me, I'm not a great fan of interruptions to my plans and routines.

We're all marking Christmas differently this year in one way or another...

As we do, I wonder if living through an interrupted Christmas might help us see the Christmas story differently – and afresh for us.

Because the Christmas story itself is filled with interruptions.

Christmas is an interruption.

Mary's day is interrupted when an angel appears before her and says she will have a child. How does Mary respond? Does she head out stockpiling loo rolls and pasta? No, she said 'I am the Lord's servant, let it be'.

The whole land was interrupted with a census called by a foreign dictator that sent everyone back to their hometowns – their own lockdown – so to speak...what do Mary and Joseph do? Do they head to Barnard's castle for an eye test? No, they comply and head to Bethlehem.

When they get there there's nowhere to go.

Everywhere has already filled up, social distancing and the rule of 6 mean there's no space for Joseph and a pregnant Mary...they find some shelter...

And then, the biggest interruption of them all,

A baby is born.

Immanuel, God with us.

A baby that is God, and is human, and turns everything upside down.

Who enters the mess of the world and be with us in our pain.

A gift that challenges injustice.

A gift that is full of forgiveness.

A gift that shows the world true love.

Because God became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14)

Shepherds on the hillside watch their sheep – their night interrupted with light and the songs of angels...

Townfolk's sleep interrupted as shepherds run through the town praising God...

Magi's studies are interrupted by the appearance of an unusual light...

Herod's confidence interrupted by unexpected news a new king had been born....

All because God interrupted the world and interrupted the status quo, through a vulnerable babe in a manger.

This Christmas, may the worldly interruptions we face,

be insignificant to the kingdom interruption that Christmas is all about.

A holy interruption.

Love is with us, Hope is with us. God is with us. Immanuel.

May your life be interrupted by Christmas – God with us.