

## Christmas Year A 2010

*“In those days a decree went out from the emperor that all the world should be registered.”*

That’s not good news....counting up our humanity....categorizing, quantifying life’s mystery...as a practical matter the means of taxation and the conscription of troops.... Luke very much onto the political scene... contrasting the ways of empire up and against a brave new way....The message this night...Is that there is some good news from the dark....at this dark time of the year...the winter solstice, the womb-time....the darkest time in which we stand together around a fire....like the ancients long before us....and we invite our God to please be among us...to lighten the darkness... to enlighten us with hope for the way ahead....and the good news... the good news from the dark is that our God is born among us....not as magician or hero, or even unique...but as a child...vulnerable like us, subject to the flux of life like us...like us this God, same DNA....born among us, and with us always, dare we claim, as friend....as friend...It has not always been so....ancient civilizations, maybe even the demigods of our modern world... making sacrifices to a God they perceived who punishes and destroys, who chides, who condemns.... A hapless people appeasing a capricious deity....that God sadly is still around in some circles....but not so with us....dear people of the light.

There’s new news about that...news out of the dark...News from the stars....that our God comes among us, as one of us...a friend and not a stranger....One whose life’s work is the sacred art of befriending....Jesus, the archetype, the icon, the model whom we praise rightly....the true human, like us no less.... whose life was spent to bear compassion and mercy and justice and dignity to those who were given him....and so it is with us of like DNA.... this birth is not just the birth of Jesus of Nazareth...but it is the birth of a way of life....the birth of a way of life for us all... a sacred birth which requires our participation, our urgent assistance....A sacred birth which requires our mothering care and nurture...Because this birth has every implication as to the way the world might be....up and against the registry of empire, the taxed socio-economic structure...a world occupied by indignity and injustice, and violence....This, brothers and sisters, is no sentimental story we hear tonight...but this is news that is the only hope for our world.

That’s the news from the dark....that this birth....our very own birth, this night, this birth will stand against the indignities of the world....this birth will bear the light of hope in a world fearful of the dark....that this way

of the Christ....this way of inclusion and embrace...this way of kindness and mercy....and peace and justice...and healing....this way will save us and all if we would but live into this birth.

It is because of this news born of the darkness that the shepherds and the hosts of heaven sing this night...It is why we sing....praising God for God's gracious befriending us....friends and not strangers....God with us, God one among us....that's something worth singing about this night and always.