

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022**  
**Luke 2:22-32**  
**Rev.Scott Burton**  
**Brightons Parish Church**

I wonder what you've been waiting for today. I wonder if your waiting has come true and I wonder if there's anything you've ever waited a really long time for. You might have been thinking 'Oh, Christmas is a really long wait!' I wonder if there's anything else you've waited a really long time for. Why don't I give you 20 or 30 seconds just in a moment to turn to your neighbor and say what is the longest you've waited for something and what was that something the longest you're waiting for something and what was that thing you waited for. Over to you just now.

Well, sounds like there's some interesting stories to share there. And so, what was the longest someone waited for something and what was that something. Anybody willing to share. Fiona? Having Alexanthemos, and what a gift to wait for. Yeah, well great to wait for and good to have him here. What else people? Harris? What was the ..... your birthday every year. Having to wait a whole other year till we get to that point. Anyone else? What's the longest you've waited for something? Rachel? 12 years and still waiting for sleep, definitely! Can anybody beat that? Cara? 10 years to get a dog oh you're getting pretty close there. But yeah, no definitely. Hope? Waiting for Christmas each year. Leonie? Another dog, as well. Yeah, yeah. six years of asking you eventually wore down your dad. He caved to last. Us softies, we give in eventually.

Well, I've been waiting four years to be at a Christmas Day service in person. Yes! I'm here! And I bet some of you were waging 'Is he gonna make it this year?' Particularly if you heard the Manse family had to dodge a vomiting bug during the week. it was this close. But, basically we ostracized Hope for a day. She is the best little girl in looking out for her dad and little brother. So, she is a star, So, well done little one, you put up with a lot to help us as a family. But we're here.

But none of our waiting is really quite as long as Simeon's waiting. We don't exactly sure how long he waited but it was probably quite a while, boys and girls, and certainly that's the idea we get in the passage. And if you read on in the passage you come to Anna and she's 84 at this point, and she's been waiting a really long time. But for Simeon we read that he had been waiting for the 'consolation of Israel' and I think there's a lot in that phrase. I think probably it's he's looking for freedom for his country because they're oppressed but I think he's also waiting for God's Kingdom to come and to bring the good that God had promised in the Old Testament. And God had painted many pictures in the Old Testament of what it would be like when His Kingdom came and he was waiting for that consolation but maybe waiting also to be proven true that this God, this revelation of God, this faith that they were clinging to, was true. This was the true God and they wanted that to be known. So, now it comes true because he goes on to say 'Sovereign Lord, you may dismiss your servant in peace for my eyes have you seen your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all nations. A light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people, Israel.' Jesus was the promise Simeon had been waiting for and He would be the way of salvation, He would be light to see God more clearly so that we could see God's heart and His ways, and Jesus would prove that the faith and promises of the Old Testament were true and that any who had faith in Him would share in God's future Kingdom.

Boys and girls, I know that we've all been waiting for a really big day today. Waiting for presents and now we begin to wait for that lovely food that I'm sure is coming later today. Waiting to spend time with family and I bet there's a few of us in the room and at home that are waiting for a rest. But let's remember what we have in Jesus. Salvation, a revelation of God, and a very sure hope that the waiting is over and the real celebration can begin.

But let's notice something else from our passage, that no one around Jesus and the family, other than Simeon or Anna, knew what was going on. No one else was expecting God to show up in that way, as a baby, and so, I'm not going to ask you to share but I wonder what was your least glamorous present this year, the one that you're like 'Oh, that's lovely.' secretly thinking 'Hmm.'

But, you know, maybe, maybe what is overlooked more often than not, what we think is not that needed, is more needed than we ever knew. It's more important than we've ever realized. That the flashy stuff is here today and then put in a cupboard and gone tomorrow. And so, when I say the waiting is over, Jesus is the salvation and revelation that we need, it can be tempting to go 'Okay.' it can be tempting to put on a nice smile, 'Lovely lovely. Yes good service Scott.' and we kind of just gloss over this because it's old news. It's old news to many of us. We've heard it for years upon years. But let's not be a people who do that to Jesus. Let's not be a people who just gloss over Him. Let's be a people who are joyful, who are delighted that this is Jesus. That He is our salvation, He is a revelation of God's heart for you and for this world, and He is very truly God come in human form. And let's take that into the new year, to be a people who don't gloss over Jesus and celebrate what we have in Him and through Him. I hope you have a really excellent day together with whoever you spend it with and enjoy the rest of the Christmas break as well.