

WHITFIELD PARISH

St James' Church † St Luke's Church

LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 29 November 2009

The Advent of Good News – Luke 1 : 57 – 2 : 12

How many of you have been pregnant at the same time as a relative or close friend? When born how close were the children? Discuss amongst the group how this situation affected the friendship and the children.

Read Luke 1:57-80

1. From day one was Elizabeth's baby different from most others, and if so why?
2. How did the community receive Elizabeth's baby? Was that your experience?
3. Was he linked to God in any way? Was your baby?
4. What about the parents, how did they react? Is this anything like your reaction? Did anyone prophesy over your children?
5. After such a great fanfare at his birth, why do you think he was allowed to wander off into the desert until he was an adult? Was it to prove that he was different, or perhaps wild?
6. Could it be to make him totally dependent upon God's grace, or to make him self reliant having only nature to sustain him?
7. How do you think this made his parents feel? Could you do what they did for/to your child? Would it not seem a waste after all that time childless?

Read Luke 2 : 1 – 12

8. Why do you think Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem but not John's parents, they were related? Elizabeth would have been a great help with the delivery. Why no mention of her now?
9. How did the community receive this child? Why the difference? Were Mary's or Joseph's family even happy? Why not? Has anyone you know suffered like Mary?
10. Was this baby linked to God in any way? Who was doing all the celebrating?
11. What about these parents, how did they react? Who comes to welcome the baby and bring his first presents? For whom is the baby? (verse 10)
12. Why do you think there was such a big difference between the births of the two cousins? Does this sort of difference happen now in families that you know?
13. Discuss amongst the group the differences between the two births and the ramifications in the future. How does studying the births make you feel individually?
14. How will you spend this Advent and Christmas time, as you usually do eating and drinking and generally enjoying yourself, or will you think more deeply about the reason for the season, and tell at least your family and friends about those two little babies who were born two thousand years ago and still are immensely relevant to all of us today?

May God bless you all this Christmas and throughout the coming year.