



SUNDAY SERMON

Holy. Wonderful. Blessed.

Good Morning Rite 13ers, Parents, Church – It is good to see all of you. Well, It's good to see you every Sunday morning, but it is especially good to see each of you here this Rite 13 Sunday Morning. It totally confirms my long held suspicion – that this congregation knows something about honoring the presence and witness of our young people. And to you Rite 13ers and to the other teenagers in our midst; you probably don't hear it enough but thank you for showing up and being church with us. Our community is better and stronger because you are here in it.

Now to the fellow grown ups - I trust it brings you as much joy as it brings me to witness the church use the occasion of Sunday worship to remind these lovely humans of a truth that they may occasionally forget – that they are holy and wonderful and blessed and we will not turn away from them.

With a baby, it's almost impossible not to think that this creature is holy, wonderful and blessed. My youngest son, Otis is now 4 months old. In the short time we've been mother and son there have been many things that I've wondered or even doubted about him – but I have never once, not once doubted for a second his holiness, his wonderfulness nor his blessedness.

We are born with the obvious imprint of God's goodness. The little face I wake up to everyday these days reminds me of that in stunning fashion. And yet just 12, 13 short years later sadly, we've internalized enough crummy messages about ourselves, and the world we live in that we forget this basic truth – that we are full of God's goodness and light and God will never turn away from us.

Friends, if I'm allowed to share a non-expert opinion for a second. The church is at her best when she is telling people of all ages to remember their true identity. that fundamentally – at their core; we, the people of God are all holy, wonderful and blessed.

These adolescents in our midst are giving us this incredible gift, they're giving us the opportunity to be church at its best – to declare and affirm out loud for all to hear either again or for the first time - that you are; that they are; that we all are holy, wonderful and blessed. I imagine that if you are not a Rite 13 honoree it's been a long time since you recalled and reclaimed your true identity. So Rite 13ers, I hope you don't mind but we're going to follow your lead for a moment and declare what and who we are. Everyone I want you to turn to your neighbor and say neighbor, I am holy, I am wonderful, I am blessed.

continued

DATE

Epiphany 4
Sunday, February 2, 2020

PREACHER

The Rev. Amy Molina-
Moore

St. Columba's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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God intends for Holy places, full of faithful people to abound with whispers and declarations of holy, wonderful and blessed. Such a scene is what we encounter in this morning's Gospel passage. A scene where young and old are brought together to illuminate God's plan for salvation.

I love that the infant Jesus is recognized as the Messiah by elders of the community with years of wisdom and insight. This simple act illustrates a truth that is playing out here this morning. The young and the old and everyone in between we all need each other. Together we speak truths that the other needs to hear. Together we embody and give shape to the body of Christ that is not neither young and old, but is in fact both young and old.

In a few minutes the young people will take center stage and we will rightfully honor the people they are and the people they are becoming. For the rest of us, we might be tempted to sit back and assume a passive posture while this rite takes place, but I want to encourage everyone in here to lean in and stay engaged with the youth in our midst. Let's follow the lead of Anna and Simeon who came up alongside the young holy family with exuberance and joy at all that was and for all that was to come. This is what we do for one another as the church – we show up and we will not turn away from you.

And now in the words of Chance the Rapper – “Are you ready for your blessing?...”