

Christmas Day BCP – Hebrews 1:1-12, John 1:1-14

May I speak in the name of God, creator, redeemer, sustainer.

Both our readings today are from chapter 1s, they are beginnings, and as we celebrate Christmas, we celebrate a new beginning, a birth, the beginning of new relationship a new story within the great story of the world. The Christmas story falls right into the arc of God's action from creation to redemption of the world.

Stories are powerful, they are ways that knowledge, understanding, love, creativity and faith are passed from one person to the next. They tie us together, every culture has its stories. We tell one another stories of our lives. We use stories in Junior Church Godly play to explore the movement of God in our world and wonder in response. Stories when used in this way enable encounter.

Words of stories can be in prose, but sometimes, they form songs, poems, epic sagas. Our readings today are poetic, their words create a sense of wonder and mystery. Songs such as these, those we sing in services with music, and those we tell enable us to engage with heart and mind in each act of worship. They enable us to encounter more deeply.

Through this encounter we are able to build a relationship with a God we cannot see. A God who is relational, caring and involved in the plight of this world. We encounter and come into relationship with the baby whose birth we celebrate today and come to know the God who speaks in times past and who speaks in these days too. A God who spoke to Moses in the Burning Bush, Elijah in the still small voice, to the disciples and all eternity through the incarnation as a

human baby living and breathing among us. And a God who speaks to us, in and through our lives.

Our God is a God who speaks, who we encounter, who we grow in relationship with.

When we come into relationship with someone, we know their name. We grow to know more and more about them. Our readings offer us several: The word, high priest, heir of all things, superior to the angels.

In times past to speak the name of God was considered unforgivable, so in the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament we see the letters Y W H, or Yahweh. In another reading we often have at this time of year we hear other names Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. As we journey from the beginning into our Gospels we hear more names, Jesus, Son of God, Christ. We grow in relationship as we encounter more of God.

This Christmas, may you encounter God in the beginning. May you come into relationship with God. May you draw your identity in this relationship with God. And may you live in this knowledge of love of God as a child of God to enable others to encounter God themselves.

Amen.