Sermon: **“With my own eyes I have seen your salvation”** (Luke 2.30)

The debris of Christmas lies around us - the fridge stocked up with left-over food, tinsel and pine needles all over the floor, wrapping paper and boxes stuffed into the recycling bin, grandchildren have returned home and we all breathe a sigh of relief. Christmas is over!

But story of Simeon and Anna remind us that in reality Christmas has only just begun!

Back in UK a tradition of Communion at a Midnight Christmas Eve service. Strange at first to remember Jesus’ death at his birth. But unlike most of us his whole life had a rich purpose fulfilled at its end.

The name Jesus = Saviour; it is not so much the baby who saves, but the man whom the baby became.

In Advent Study we wondered why we have no stories about Jesus from birth to manhood, with one exception, (Luke 2.41-52). Because his growing up is in itself not important.

Despite what angels told the shepherds (Luke 2.11), and what the magi came for (Matthew 2.2) no-one at the time seemed to realise why Jesus came. With emphasis on the Christmas baby, we might miss why too.

Exceptions are Anna & Simeon. She connected Jesus with setting Jerusalem free (38), he – TEXT, and 34f.

This salvation is understood by Simeon to mean ‘light for nations’ (32) ‘glory for your people, Israel’ (32).

This is why Jesus came, this is why the story has just begun. Through the rest of the Lectionary Year we explore Jesus’ life to see how it all plays out. Come and join me in that exploration!