

“entertaining angels” worship - Genesis 18 & 21

here's some of what I did at college chapel today.

video

"so beautiful" from "helium" by [urban myth club](#) with video of a foetus in utero and verses from psalm 139 read aloud.

invocation

*This is the place where angels
visit those waiting in hope
This is the place where angels
visit those longing for rest
This is the place where angels
visit those yearn for justice
This is the place where angels
visit those needing good news
This is the time when angels
visit those with work unfinished
This is the time when angels
visit the barren and bereft
This is the time when angels
visit those listening in the shadows
This is the time when angels
visit those ready for new birth*

reflection

[Download how-many-times.pdf](#)

stations

#1 welcome - Genesis 18:1-8

a table setting with crockery, cutlery, wine glasses, wine and chocolate

When we offer hospitality to strangers, we are often surprised to find ourselves becoming the recipients of blessing. We entertain angels.

people were invited to tell a story of such hospitality to others at the table, and to write on the tablecloth words that described some of the 'blessings' that they had received from strangers

#2 promise - Genesis 18:9-11

God promised to make of Abram a great nation to fill the land of Canaan. When Sarai remained childless, God told Abram to look to the night sky, and promises descendants as numerous as the stars.

printouts of impossible 'good news' from <http://www.fugue.com/pics/goodnews.html>
(thanks to cheryl)

people were invited to think of Sarai's longing over many years, and to ask what 'good news' they longed to become real.

I had a crate with a light inside covered in black plastic. they were invited to make a whole in the plastic with a pair of scissors. the idea was that it would look like stars shining in the darkness. but the holes were too small - some people glimpsed the light and got the idea and some didnt...

#3 laughter - Genesis 18:12-15

a mobile of photos of people laughing and a couple of joke books

Read a few jokes from the joke book to another person and have a laugh together.

Do God's blessings sometimes seem to be a joke at our expense?

a hoped-for opportunity that comes at the wrong time...

a chance to step out just when we have become settled...

a new possibility that will bring almost as much pain as promise...

people were invited to talk about a time when God's call seemed like a joke and to reflect on where the blessing might have been.

#4 hope - Genesis 21:1-7

The promise strewn in the stars ends with Isaac's birth. God's word fulfilled. Abraham and Sarah's dreams come true... Sort of. The story of this clan is far from pretty - the rejection of Hagar and Ishmael, the rivalry of Jacob and Esau, and the misdeeds of generations to come show them as a dynasty of prime time broadcast proportions.

Our hope is not in events that go our way, but in a God who walks with us even when we are cast out by those called "chosen people". Watch these 'Postcard Secrets' sent from across the world. Imagine a community that includes Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac. (laptop playing postcard secrets animation with psalm 139)

Light a candle for someone who waits to hear that God's promises may be true for them. [the table featured a birthday cake and candles and matches. instead of lighting 'prayer candles', people lit birthday cake candles as prayers of intercession.]

that was kind of it apart from the communion etc