



The visitation by Mariott Albertinelli, 1503

Something Completely Different

*She who was said to be barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing shall be impossible with God.
Lk 1:36-37*

Christmas celebrates newness. The first Christmas saw events that were completely out of the box. Things that had never ever happened before were taking place. Elizabeth, barren and well past childbearing age, had a son. Mary got pregnant and was a virgin still, a star led foreigners over many months to a house in Bethlehem, angels sang in the midnight sky and, most stunning of all, God became a human being.

We know these events so well that the impact of their newness has worn away. But try to recapture the wonder and amazement that these happenings evoked at the time. Such things had NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. For those who were aware of these happenings there must have been incredible excitement and perhaps a little fear. "What's going on?" they must have asked. "Such things are impossible aren't they?" But they did happen. God did something new.

God's power to do the new and impossible is the source of our hope – on the macro level of our salvation and eternal future but also at the micro level of our daily lives and experiences. Elizabeth's hope of having a child had long since faded away. The prayers had stopped as she accepted the disgrace of childlessness (v.25). And now, against all hope, comes the answer. What must it be like to have hope that has died renewed?

If we have become weary, jaded, skeptical or despairing, Christmas reminds us to hope. In our own lives and with those we accompany let us remember that we serve a God without limits. Make room for the unexpected.

*Dahlia Fraser
Membership Officer*



A Blessed and Holy Christmas to you from the TASD Executive.