

Christmas Eve 2024
A Meditative Prayer
December 24, 2024
North Decatur Presbyterian Church
Rev. David Lewicki

We've been making something here over four weeks in Advent.

First thing we did is take away everything that's usually here.

- Sometimes, in order to do something new, we have to pare down, to focus only on what's important.
- Now, in the silence of this evening, I'd like to invite you to share with God something that need to clear away to make room for what's important...

(silence)

With all of that cleared away, each Sunday of Advent, we've been adding pieces.

The 1st Sunday of Advent, we read the story of Daniel going into the Lion's Den. And we remembered that God is with us when we face powers that feel bigger than us.

- God is with us when we are afraid.
- Take time in this sacred silence, to share something that makes you afraid.
- Will you ask God to help you face that fear?

(silence)

- God is with us when we are afraid.

The 2nd Sunday of Advent, we part of Isaiah. The part where Isaiah dreamed about his beloved city of Jerusalem being repaired. He dreamed that people who had nothing would have enough and those who were in prison would be free. And those in debt would be forgiven.

- He dreamed that God would mend what was broken.
- In the silence, ask God to show you a future in which what is broken is repaired?

(silence)

- God is with us in the healing.

The 3rd Sunday, we read from the prophet Joel, who says "in those days, God's spirit will be poured out on everyone. The young see visions and the elders dream dreams."

- In this quiet, will you share with God a dream for yourself, your family, our world?

(silence)

- God is with us when we dream.

This past Sunday, we sat with Mary, the mother of Jesus. God enlists Mary in a project to save the world from imperial power and from human selfishness and apathy. Mary struggles, as any of us would. She says, "let it be." She says, "yes."

- Is there something to which God is calling you, to which you are ready to say “yes?”
(silence)

This manger we've made holds important things. It holds the hopes of ancient prophets. It holds the fears of our ancestors. The dreams of our parents for a better world. It also holds our hopes. Our fears. Our dreams. It holds the most vulnerable parts of ourselves. There is so much that we cannot make or do or accomplish on our own. We bring all of it, and we offer it to God.

A beautiful thing happens at Christmas. **Your vulnerability is met by God's vulnerability.**

Here, in this make-shift bed, the Creator of Worlds, the source of all wisdom, the architect of all that is, lies: tiny, cold, gulping in air, crying. God, needing to be taken up and held in warm, human arms.

In this way, you are drawn into the never-ending circle of Divine Love. Love needed, love given, love received. This love will cast out fear. This love heals whatever we break. This love dreams incessantly about the wholeness of Creation. This love never fails you, it never leaves you, and it never ends.

This manger holds important things. The hopes and fears of all the years. The vulnerable child, who comes to save.

From John's gospel:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²The Word was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through the Word, and without the Word not one thing came into being. What has come into being⁴in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.