

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

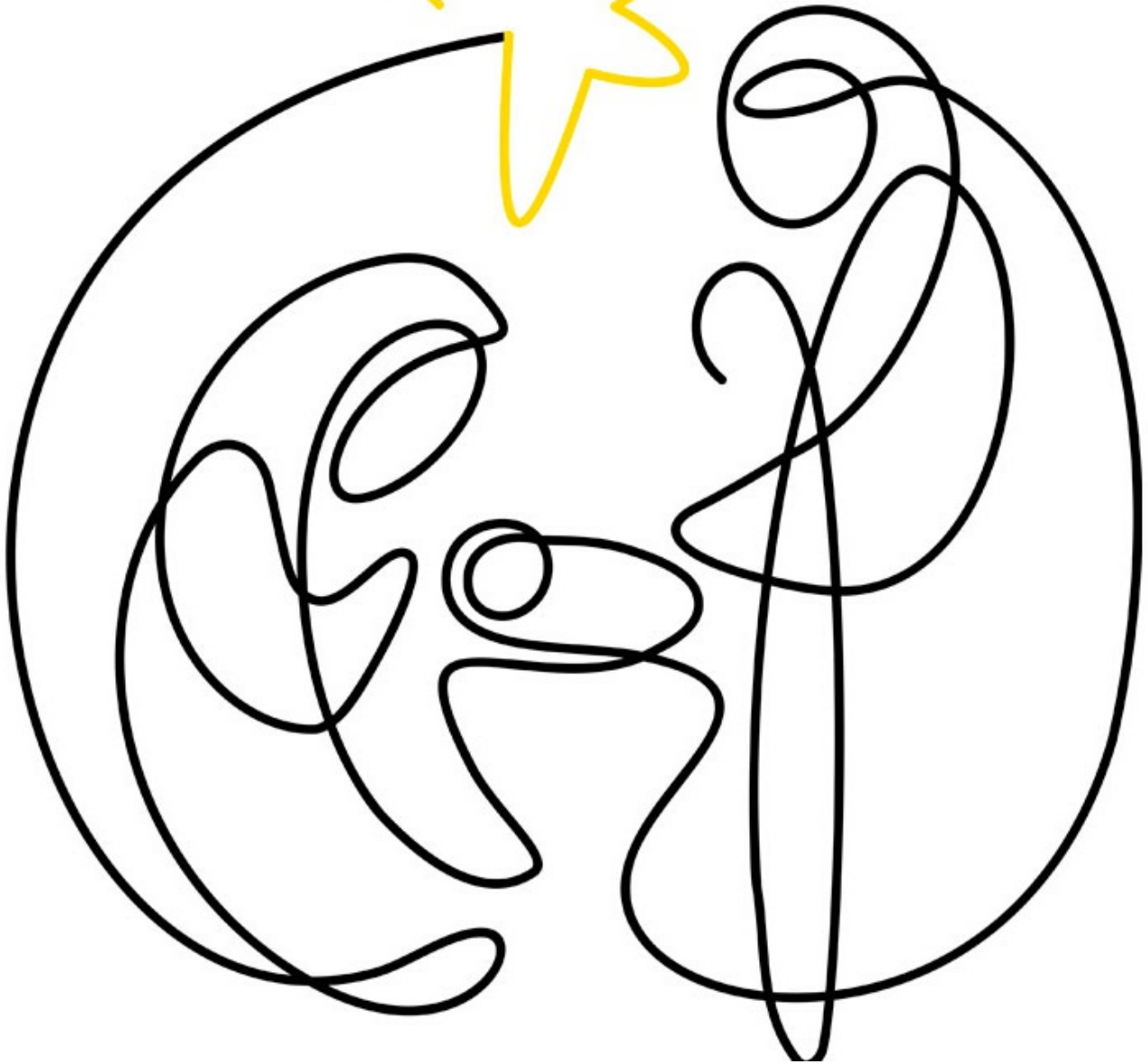


ADVENT PROGRAM

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ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 8, 2024

Weekly theme: Peace

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 7:28-35

28 I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 (And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God, because they had been baptized with John's baptism. 30 But by refusing to be baptized by him, the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves.)

31 "To what then will I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep.' 33 For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon'; 34 the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 Nevertheless, wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

DEVOTION

The Rev. Carolyn Cranston '99, Director of Alumnae/i and Church Relations and D.Min. Student

Has Jesus lived up to your expectations recently?

There is a great deal of truth in the statement by Voltaire: "If God has made us in his image, we have returned him the favor."

Do you worship the God of creation or the God you created? We lead busy lives and map out our days to accomplish what is necessary. It is frustrating when our plan is not God's plan. Sometimes, in anguish, we question if Jesus is really the Messiah. Is our Trinitarian God even listening? We have a perfect plan, and God fails to follow our instructions. This is nothing new.

Luke tells us that the people in Jesus' day expected someone different. They hoped for a warrior to ride in on a mighty horse and free the Israelites from Roman oppression. Instead, they got Jesus, who was healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and raising the dead.

This especially did not sit well with the experts in the law. The Messiah did not fit the Messiah of their creation. In fact, they claimed John the Baptist had a "demon" and Jesus was a "glutton and a drunkard."

Jesus described them as "children in the marketplace." Cranky children at that. Children complaining that John and Jesus weren't dancing to the tune they were playing. Sometimes, we are those children. Have you ever been frustrated when Jesus got the steps wrong to the dance you created?

How much easier our lives would be if we would let go of the reins we so firmly grasp and invite God to take over our lives—heart, mind, body, and soul. When we give up control, we find true peace.

This Advent season, I would invite all of us to give ourselves to Jesus. Obedient to death on a cross, Jesus already covered us with grace and secured our salvation. We can trust Jesus to care for us. Take time to read Scripture, meditate, and pray. As children of God, we are safe in God's care.

PRAYER

Gracious, loving, creator God, keep us from trying to remake you in our image. We put our faith and trust in you, knowing that you provide far more than we could hope for or imagine. Thank you for the gift of your son, our Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

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