

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

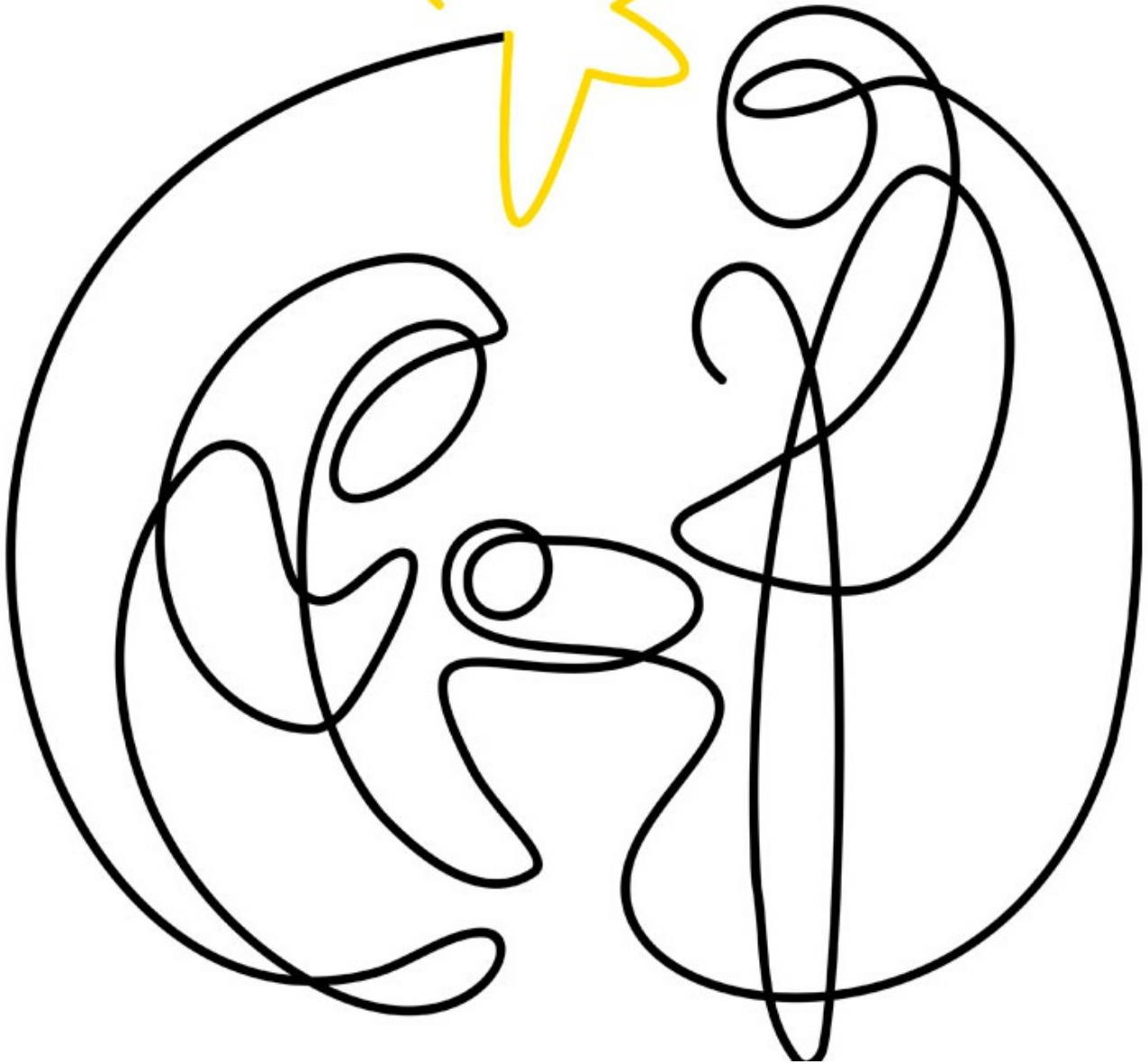


ADULT PROGRAM

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ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 25, 2024

Weekly theme: Love

SCRIPTURE

1 JOHN 4:7-16

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God.

16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

DEVOTION

Dr. Elayne Arrington '21

The catholic epistles have not been among my favorite New Testament scriptures. Yet in considering this season in which we anticipate the arrival or advent of the Christ—when we are especially cognizant of the love shown to us by the Father sending his Son and the Son coming to live among us and to give that earthly life for our benefit—I have been especially drawn to the words of 1 John 4:12: “if we love one another . . . his love is perfected in us.” This resonating text is a proclamation that even a love so great as that of the Father and the Son is not complete. We can complete or perfect it by loving one another. I can perfect it by loving my fellow humans. I can complete the love of God by seeing all of us as lovable, by considering our faults as imperfections that are fixable or of no real consequence. One of my favorite scriptures on love has been 1 Corinthians 13. But I now see that familiar text as giving the characteristics of our love for one another and this resonating text as giving the purpose of that love. During this season when our concentration is on gifts, this resonating text is a proclamation that the proper response to the celebratory gift of love incarnate by the Father and the Son is our gift of mutual love for one another.

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for opening my mind and heart to a new perspective and an appreciation of more of your word. I pray that you will guide us that we may fully receive and give the gift of love.

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