

Advent 2022 Series

As we enter Advent and Christmastide, we'll be tapping into a wonderful worship series created by *A Sanctified Art* – a ministry to support worshipping communities in integrating art and creativity into their spiritual practices. <https://sanctifiedart.org/about>

To give you a sense of our journey together this season, our series is: “From Generation to Generation,” and what excites me most is that rather than following a specific Gospel text throughout all of Advent, we will instead seek a more clear, chronological storyline of the events leading up to and following Christ’s birth. We’ll learn more, through this series, about the many people involved in this story. So, we are focusing on readings from both Matthew and Luke, alongside wisdom from the Book of Isaiah, in an attempt to hear the full scope of the Christmas story.

The stories, scriptures, and traditions of the Christmas season have been passed down to us throughout the generations. Many of us enter this season with a swell of memories and emotions as vast as the cultural and religious rituals this holiday holds. Like a tapestry woven throughout time, the Christmas story weaves us in – to remember how God has shown up in the past, to continue the work of collective liberation, to behold the presence of God in flesh and bone.

The text that inspired this series comes from Luke 1: 48b-50 – part of the prayer of Mary, or the song/canticle/hymn of praise, spoken by Mary as she is speaking to her cousin, Elizabeth – both of them with child.

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.*

*His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.*

Despite the challenges and vulnerability she faced, Mary could glimpse the scale and scope of the good news she was part of bringing forth. This good news transcends time and space—it was and is bigger than just her. Christ is coming for collective liberation: God’s redemption is at work for years to come. Therefore, the promise is meant to be lived out and passed on from generation to generation.

We encourage you to pay attention to each of the characters in these familiar narratives and ask yourself:

What did each person pass on or contribute?

How did they either participate in God's liberation and love—or try to thwart God's justice?

What can we learn from them, and what is our role now?

What will we pass on to the next generation?

The root word of “generation” is “gen” meaning “origin” or “birth.” Our theme is also a call to action:

What are we being called to generate or bring forth?

What have your ancestors and those who have come before you passed on for you to continue?

Who are the spiritual elders in our community who planted the seeds for the things that are now blooming?

What seeds are we planting for the future?

From Generation to Generation... reminds us of the ways our lives, histories, actions, and stories are interconnected and woven together. The work of God is always unfolding—in and through us. This Advent, may you remember that you belong—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won't let you go.