

**“WOMEN OF ADVENT”
“You, Child of Christmas”**

This sermon series has taken us, from Tamar to Mary, through the women of Jesus’ genealogy. It is worth noting none of the women of our study were religious, business, or community leaders. They, in fact, had no authority at all. They were merely children of God, some adopted, and opened themselves to the divine power beyond themselves. We, too, are children of God. We are also invited into full participation of the gospel of Jesus. If we can infer anything from these stories of Jesus’ ancestors, it is we are not required social status, wealth, or position to play a vital role in the bringing of the gospel. We are invited to be a witness to the gospel message, to carry it with us and pass it on to other, to be the next in the ancestry of the gospel. What might it mean to be a Child of Christmas?

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“You, Child of Christmas”**

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

- Howard Thurman

Study Guide

Monday, December 30, 2019 Luke 2:25-35

The first part of our gospel reading is centered around Simeon, a righteous man who was known to be awaiting consolation of Israel. Lead by the Spirit, he came to the temple and happened upon the baby Jesus. He had divine knowledge this baby was, in fact, the promised messiah not just for Israel but for all humanity. Having received the consolation through knowledge of the Christ born, he was at peace and ready for his death. His whole purpose was to witness the Messiah. What have you seen recently as evidence of the arrived Christ?

Tuesday, December 31, 2019 Luke 2:36-38

Verses 36-38 mention Anna, who also witnessed the baby Jesus at the Temple. Scripture doesn't say a great deal about either Simeon or Anna, but what we do know is Anna spent the majority of her life a widow fasting and praying. The author of this gospel saw fit to include her witness to the baby Jesus. She, has no remarkable mention of her eighty-four years until her encounter with the Christ. How long have you waited? Are you willing to wait in prayer for the one moment you might engage with the living God?

Wednesday, January 1, 2020 Isaiah 63:7-9

Today is New Year's Day! It is a day many make resolutions for the New Year. I do. I wonder, whether we make resolutions or not, we might start with gratitude for a God who is ever present. According to this text, the very presence of God is a saving presence. Though we may wait through much duress, or longing, the promised presence of God will always save. When have you experiences such a presence? How might you make room for such a presence in the coming year?

Thursday, January 2, 2020 Romans 8:12-17

We read in Romans how our lineage to Jesus is directly related to our listening to the Holy Spirit. We are heirs with Jesus, and named Children of God again. A little different than the saving message of Isaiah where those in wait and in suffering were hearing a promise of relief, this news comes with a responsibility to live according to God's spirit. Much like many of our families at home, being a member has benefits and expectations. Yes, we live under the saving grace of God, but we are also invited to participate in the kingdom by bearing witness and living according to the Spirit. What opportunities do you have this week to live into the Spirit?

Friday, January 3, 2020 John 17:6-10

In our final reading for the week, we have Jesus making an inclusion for all people to be included in the glorification of the Christ. We are all welcome, we are in on the gospel, we can be a part of the story of Jesus. We do not need to be in a place of social status or wealth (in fact, one could make a case for the opposite!) in order to play our part, but in fact we only need give ourselves over to the will of God. We are already heirs, we are included, and we are welcome into the story. What will be your moment in the story of the gospel? Will it be in the year 2020?