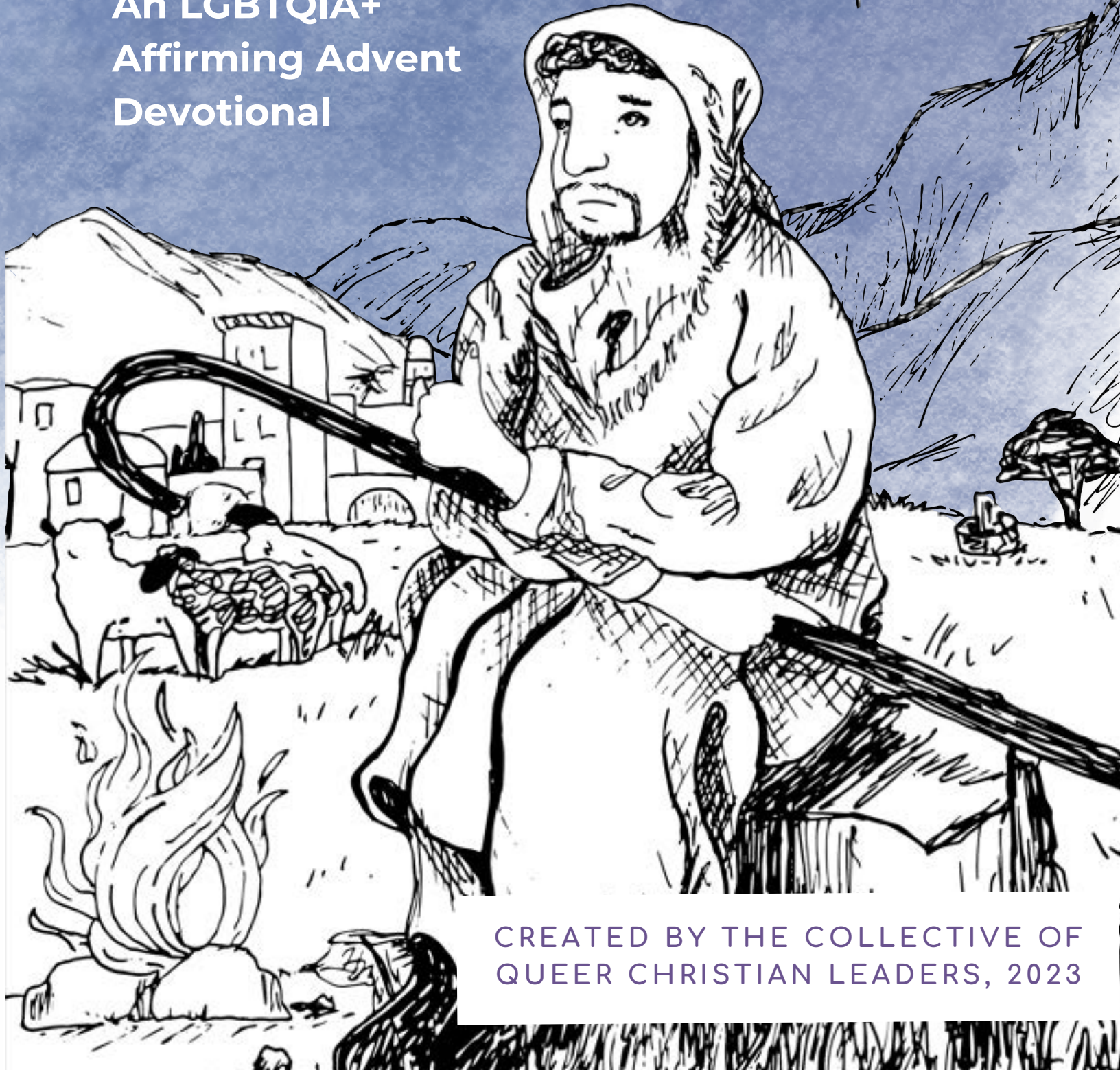
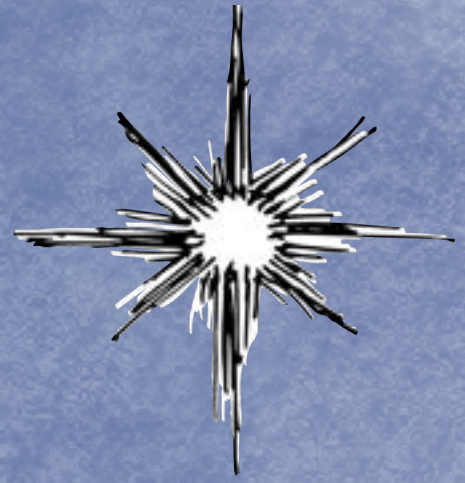


# What are you Waiting for?

---

An LGBTQIA+  
Affirming Advent  
Devotional



CREATED BY THE COLLECTIVE OF  
QUEER CHRISTIAN LEADERS, 2023

# Who We Are

**Our Mission Statement:** A Queer Christian Collective of organizational leaders dedicated to combating white Christian Supremacy through centering Queer people and innovative collaboration.

**Our Vision:** By mobilizing our collective networks in outreach, education, support, and calls to action, we work to uproot white Christian Supremacy for a future where people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions are fully celebrated and liberated in their communities of faith and the public square.



REV. NICOLE GARCIA,  
FAITH WORK DIRECTOR  
WWW.THETASKFORCE.ORG



REV. MELISSA GUTHRIE,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DISCIPLESALLIANCEQ.ORG



ANNABETH (AB) ROESCHLEY, M.DIV,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
JAYLON TASBY  
WWW.BMCLGBT.ORG



REV. DR. KATRINA  
ROSEBORO-MARSH,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OPENANDAFFIRMING.ORG



CAMERON VAN KOOTEN-LAUGHEAD,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MITCHEL LEET  
ROOMFORALL.COM



MICAH MELODY TABERNER,  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
PETER CLARE  
TRANSMISSIONMINISTRY.COM

These participating partners are not a complete list of the members of the Collective of Queer Christian Leaders. To learn more about all of us, visit:  
<https://www.thetaskforce.org/programs/queering-faith/partners/>

# Welcome!

On behalf of the Collective, we're so glad for this opportunity to accompany you and yours through this Advent season. Within these pages, we hope to subvert the traditions that bind us blindly to the prejudice of the past, while offering grounding for the present and hope for the future.

You'll be greeted each day with a devotional by a member of our Collective, or a song, prayer or poem for reflection or meditation on the messages of the season. There's a page for your own wonderings, and opportunities to color, doodle or take notes.

Thank you for being with us. And now, we ask...

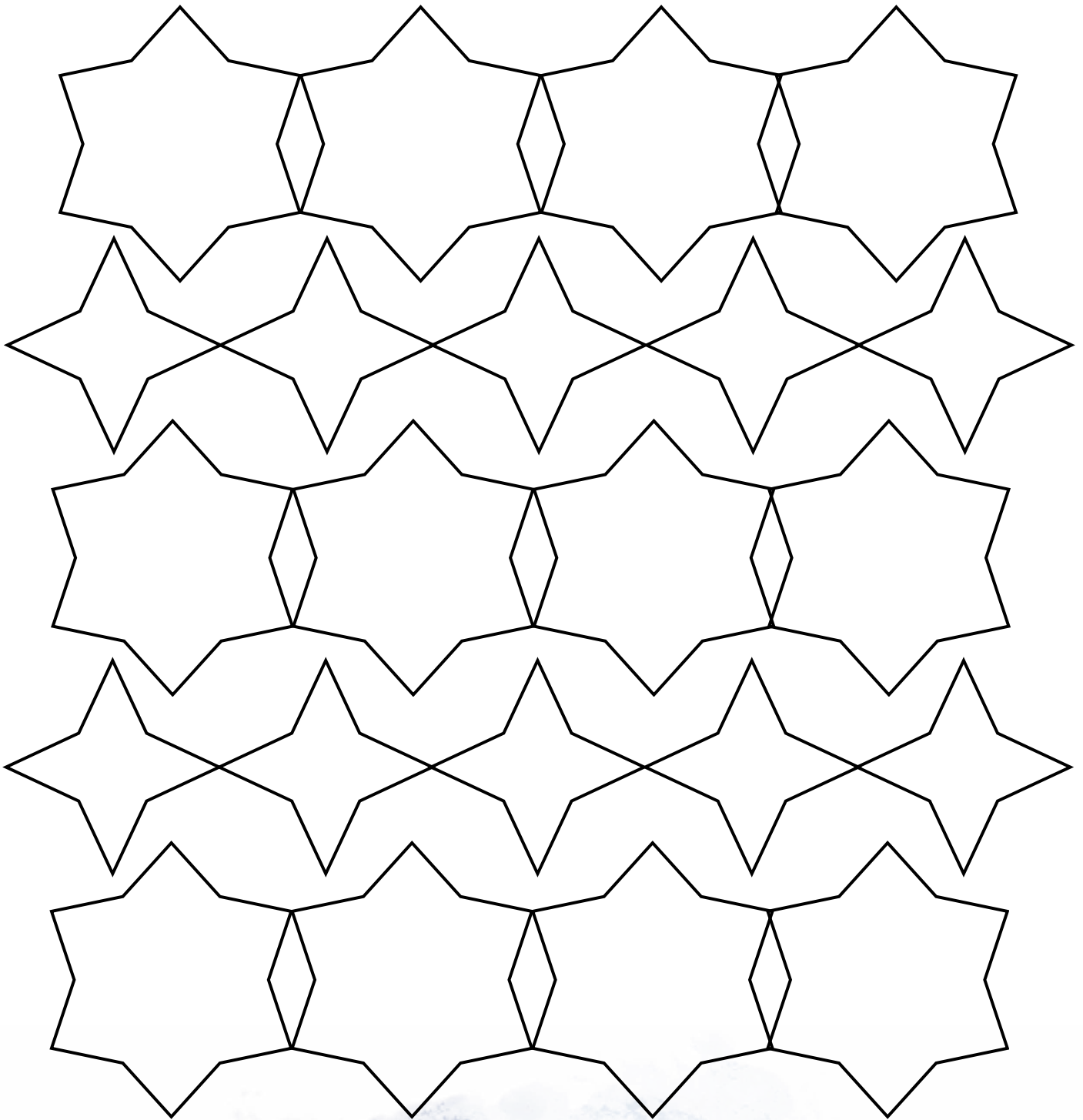
## What are you Waiting for?

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 12/3 Emmanuel                                  | 12/17 Darkness (Longest Night) |
| 12/4 What are we Waiting for?                  | 12/18 Home                     |
| 12/5 "In the Bleak Midwinter"                  | 12/19 Trans Justice            |
| 12/6 Patience                                  | 12/20 "Advent Hymn"            |
| 12/7 "A Noiseless, Patient Spider"             | 12/21 "Blue Christmas"         |
| 12/8 "One Day while Mary Knelt"                | 12/22 Liberation               |
| 12/9 Comfort                                   | 12/23 "First Coming"           |
| 12/10 Hope                                     | 12/24 Acceptance               |
| 12/11 "Hope is the thing with feathers"        | 12/25 Joy                      |
| 12/12 Wholeness                                |                                |
| 12/13 Truth                                    |                                |
| 12/14 "The God We Hardly Knew"                 |                                |
| 12/15 Change                                   |                                |
| 12/16 to Embrace Black LGBTQIAN2S+ Belovedness |                                |



# Wonderings...

AS THIS DEVOTIONAL ACCOMPANIES YOU DAILY, USE THESE STARS TO WRITE A WORD OR THOUGHT, OR DRAW AN IMAGE THAT COMES TO MIND AS YOU REFLECT.



## 12/3- First Sunday of Advent Waiting for Emmanuel



*Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel."*

The words of the prophet Isaiah are at times magnificently hopeful, while hard to believe. As the sun breaks through the storm to create the rainbow, God's sign of promise and pride in the diversity of Her creation comes to us as Her son.

Propheesied to break through the disaster and violence, this miracle seemed then and perhaps still now to be impossible. God's love, however, infinitely calls each of us worthy.

By sending Her only son to be with us, knowing what that will ultimately mean shows Her persistence. He would become like his siblings in every respect, each and every one of us.

That love for us, in all our queerness and transness, through failures and fighting is the ultimate faithfulness to God, whose grace sends these signs to help us believe.

Prayer: *God, as we remember how you came to us to abide with us once more, may we find wonder close by each day of this season. **Amen.***

Mitchel Leet, Room for All

---

## 12/4- What are we Waiting for?>

I was waiting for my five-year-old to fall asleep so I could subtly slide out of her bed to begin writing about what I'm waiting for.

I attempted my escape too soon. Her small arm grabbed mine and she muttered, "I want Mama." How could I leave her side after this sweet plea? Many nights are full of whining or bartering. "Just one more book..."

With one hand on her face and an arm draped over her back, I paused. I waited right there.

Another parent inspired and convicted me when asked what their favorite age of their child had been. "Right now," they responded. "Right now."

My newest journal is spiral bound with blank pages – no lines, lines are confining – and the cover is a swirl of abstract watercolors with these words: “In the waiting, keep creating.”

May these days, may every day, be the advent of full life for every body. Right now.

What are we waiting for?

Rev. Melissa Guthrie, Alliance Q

---

## 12/5- “In the Bleak Midwinter”- Christina Georgina Rossetti

“In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone: snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign: in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb, if I were a wise man I would do my part, yet what I can I give him, give my heart.”

---

## 12/6- Waiting for Patience

In Luke 1:26-38, the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary and told her she would bear a son. After Gabriel left, Mary traveled to spend time with Elizabeth. Mary knew she had to wait for her son to grow within her and she didn’t want to wait alone.

She sought out the support she needed to patiently wait for her son to arrive.

Prayer: *Oh, Lord, give us the wisdom to seek out support when we need to wait patiently for that for which we pray...a job, a relationship, a place to call home or peace. Let us not be frozen in fear but give us the patience to find the way forward with the help of those whom you put into our lives. Amen.*

Rev. Nicole Garcia, National LGBTQ Task Force

---

## 12/7- "A Noiseless, Patient Spider"- Walt Whitman

"A noiseless patient spider,  
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,  
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,  
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,  
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,  
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,  
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to  
connect them,  
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor  
hold,  
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul."

---

## 12/8- "One Day While Mary Knelt"- Frederick Anthony Abair

"One day while Mary knelt in prayer She saw an angel standing  
there. His glory filled the dwelling place. He said to her, "Hail,  
full of Grace!"

Now Mary feared and bowed her head, "Oh, do not fear," the  
angel said, "For God shall send His Son to thee. His holy Mother,  
thou shalt be."

Then Mary spoke the blessed word: "Behold the Handmaid of the  
Lord. As thou hast said, so be it done." The Son of God became  
her Son."

---

## 12/9- Waiting for Comfort

This time of year has always been special, as we celebrate the  
anniversary of my adoption on December 21st. I was born into a  
troubled situation, and my parents didn't hesitate to bring me  
home.

Like a parent, God comforts us as we face trouble, and prepares  
us to comfort others.

May we always be in a state of waiting for those times.

LGBTQIA+ young people experience familial rejection and  
homelessness disproportionately. In the Trevor Project's 2022  
National Survey of LGBTQIA+ youth, they found that 16% of  
youth ran away because of mistreatment, and 14% were kicked  
out by their parents.

Organizations like Point Source Youth and True Colors United step into the role of easing pain amid distress by clearing the way for access to safe, affirming housing and supportive services. Their training programs make it possible for all of us to step up to support youth in need of comfort.

By stepping up and reaching out, we can completely change the course of a young person's life, as my parents did when they took in a three week old they'd love unconditionally.

Prayer: *Our Heavenly Parent, thank you for the family that chooses and comforts us. Amen.*

Mitchel Leet, Room for All



---

## 12/10- Second Sunday of Advent Waiting for Hope

Verses 46 to 55 in the Gospel of Luke, commonly referred to as "*The Magnificat*", are part of Evening Prayer or Vespers, said daily by millions across the world. When I recite verse 48 (NRSV), "*for they have looked with favor on the lowly state of their servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,*" I have hope that the Lord will look to me and you and all of creation, with love for Mary was no one special, but the Lord chose her as the Lord has always chosen the imperfect to do their work. The Lord created the heavens and earth in love and devotion.

Prayer: *Each of us is chosen to be vessels of your love for each of us are created in love. We bask in your love so we can be beacons of hope in this broken world. Amen.*

Rev. Nicole Garcia, National LGBTQ Task Force

---

## 12/11- "Hope is the Thing with Feathers"- Emily Dickinson

"Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words and never stops - at all.

And sweetest in the Gale is heard and sore must be the storm  
That could abash the little Bird that kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chilliest land and on the strangest Sea,  
Yet never in Extremity, it asked a crumb of me."

---



## 12/12- Waiting for Wholeness

*Romans 8:22-23 "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies."*

The Matthew account of the Nativity has always fascinated me as the only gospel which depicts the Star of Bethlehem. It has often left me imagining just how long before Jesus' birth the heavens must have declared the coming miracle. Just as the stars shone out in anticipation of the coming King, long before the birth of Jesus, creation was groaning in anticipation of being made whole.

Many trans people are deeply familiar with creation's longing. Before I even had the language to describe myself as transgender, I remember sensing profound incompleteness—a lack of shalom in how I related to my body, to God, and to the world. Deep within me, my spirit groaned inwardly, longing desperately to express myself as God's daughter.

Whether in trans people aching for wholeness in our bodies or families yearning for restored relationships, in Advent we are reminded of the continual groan of creation for shalom. Yet through those often painful moments of longing, God conceives miraculous and unexpected ways of being we once may have never thought possible!

*Prayer: Spirit of God, we yearn with all of creation for shalom. Grant us perseverance and awaken in us new possibilities.*  
**Amen.**

Micah Melody Taberner, Transmission Ministry Collective

---

## 12/13- Waiting for Truth

*John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me".*

In this Advent season, we find ourselves waiting for many things: for acceptance, for understanding, for love, and for justice. As queer individuals and allies, we understand the significance of truth, both in our personal lives and within our communities.

Jesus proclaimed, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." As we navigate a world that sometimes questions our identities and experiences, we take comfort in knowing that our ultimate truth is found in the Divine. Christ's truth is not exclusionary; it is a love that embraces and celebrates diversity.

We are on a path toward understanding and acceptance, and Christ walks beside us. In the moments when truth and justice seem distant, may we find solace in knowing that the Divine is our constant companion on this journey.

Prayer: *Loving God, as we wait for truth, we invite your presence to be with us. Grant us strength to walk boldly in the light of your love, and may we be a beacon of truth and acceptance in a world in need of both. **Asé and Amen.***

Jaylon K. Tasby, Brethren Mennonite Council

---

## 12/14- "The God We Hardly Knew"- Óscar Romero

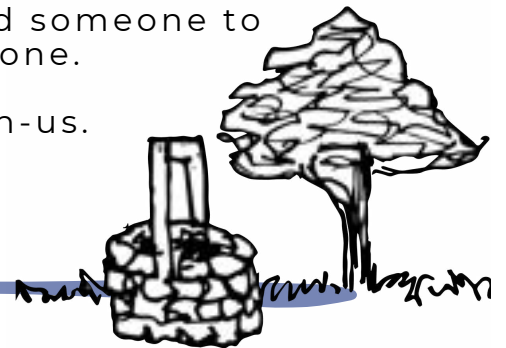
"No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor.

The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God- for them there will be no Christmas.

Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, Will have that someone.

That someone is God. Emmanuel. God-with-us.

Without poverty of spirit  
there can be no abundance of God."



---

## 12/15- Waiting for Change

*"Somebody once asked could I spare some change for gas?  
I need to get myself away from this place. I said, "Yup," what a  
concept, I could use a little fuel myself, and we could all use a  
little change..."*

- "All Star" by Smash Mouth

I don't know if this is the first ever Advent devotional to use Lyrics from 1999's "All Star," but there can't be many out there. When I was asked "what are you waiting for," my first thought was "change." When I thought of change, this lyric came to mind.

I enjoy the humor in it, the singer misunderstanding the request. He's clearly being asked for money for gasoline, but makes it a philosophical request for spiritual fuel and change as growth. Setting aside the implication that the person left misunderstood is clearly in economic distress, it raises for me an interesting point. How often have I asked or wished for change (political, personal, economic, social, etc)? How many times have I misunderstood someone else's request for change? How often do I not understand the implications of what I'm requesting?

How often am I asking for change that leaves someone else without what they need?

I don't have answers, but in this season of Advent, I find myself asking myself these kinds of questions more often. As we wait for change, let us reflect on what we're asking for, what we need, and what those we're in community with might need as well.

*Prayer: God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. **Amen.***

Cameron Van Kooten Laughead, Room for All

## 12/16- Waiting to Embrace Black LGBTQIAN2S+ Belovedness

This advent, I am waiting for a world where Black LGBTQIAN2S+ people can freely express their authentic selves, unburdened by the weight of discrimination and prejudice. I wait for the quenching of my longing for this community to be embraced with open arms that provide love, support, and experiential understanding and reparations. I await for when our Blackness and queerness are fully celebrated and affirmed. I await a time when society acknowledges our inherent worth and provides equitable opportunities for our flourishing. So, as we reflect on the power of waiting and longing for God's transformative love this Advent Day, let us center our reflections on the experiences of Black LGBTQIAN2S+ individuals, recognizing their unique hopes and aspirations during this sacred time. As people of faith, we are reminded of the teachings of Christ, which call us to embody justice and compassion. As we anticipate the arrival of hope and peace, let us actively work towards dismantling systems that marginalize and oppress Black LGBTQIAN2S+ individuals, making deferred hope and peace at hand.

*Prayer: Fill us with a spirit of care and generosity, that we may be agents of justice, change, and compassion. well. **Amen.***

Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh, Open & Affirming Coalition

## 12/17 Third Sunday of Advent Waiting for Darkness (Longest Night)

Winter solstice approaches  
here in the northern plane.  
I am here, watching the sky,  
waiting.

I am waiting for the sun to set,  
the longest eve,  
the quiet depth,  
disrupted it may be by city  
electrified.

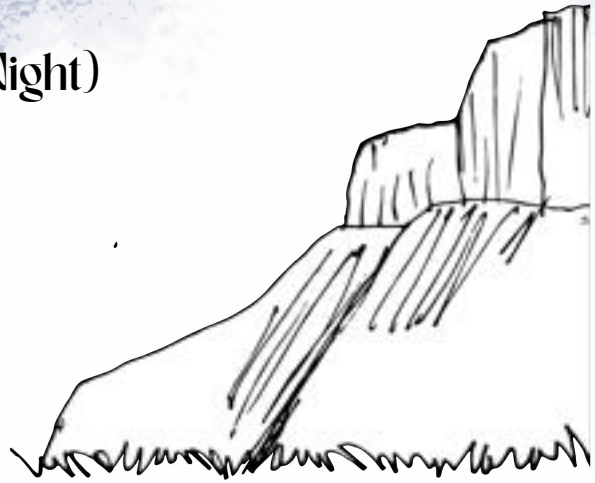
I am waiting for the stars to wink  
and the half-moon to smile across the lake.  
But it is not their light I crave.

The dark is what I greet, what I hallow in this hour.  
A reverence acquired, yes —  
my life unlearning the love of  
only what's white and bright.

Solstice reorients me,  
teaching ancient wisdom:  
to seek the shadow,  
to sit with grief,  
to dwell in mystery,  
generativity.

*Oh, Spirit of the blessed dark,  
Fertile presence hovering over the deep,  
be seed in the earth, life in the tomb,  
liberating promise born in the beauty of night.*

Annabeth (AB) Roeschley, MDiv, Brethren Mennonite Council



---

## 12/18 Waiting for Home

Over the past year, 19,000 asylum seekers have arrived in my home city of Chicago from the southern U.S. border. Many are sleeping on police station floors as they wait for more permanent shelter. In response to the city's attempts to create better support infrastructure, there is active backlash in many neighborhoods to the idea of sharing a home with these new arrivals.

This response reflects a common scarcity mindset. Often, we think of home as a fortress to keep people out, rather than a sanctuary to welcome people in.

Like many queer Christians, I've spent much of my life looking for both physical and spiritual home. As I've deconstructed my faith, I've come to understand home as less a place and more an orientation: a radical openness to others in caring community.

This Advent, how can we practice the openness that will allow others to find home?

Prayer: *Jesus, help us be home to each other. **Amen.***

Peter Clare, Transmission Ministry Collective

## 12/19- *Waiting for Trans Justice*

During the Advent season, we reflect upon the theme of waiting, anticipating the arrival of divine love and justice. Yet, for many Trans/Non-Binary/Gender Expansive individuals, this waiting is layered with unique challenges and hopes. Just as the world waited for the coming of Christ, there are many Trans/Non-Binary/Gender Expansive individuals waiting for their voices to be heard, their identities to be affirmed, and their rights to be recognized.

In this season of Advent, these individuals are waiting for a world that embraces their authentic selves, free from discrimination and violence. They yearn for a time when society unequivocally honors their inherent dignity, affirms their identities, and respects their pronouns. They wait for churches and communities to genuinely extend open arms of acceptance and inclusion and their spiritual journey is celebrated. So, as we meditate, let us reflect on the prophetic words of Isaiah 61:1-4, which speak of liberation and restoration.

Just as Christ came to bring good news to the oppressed, we are called to be agents of transformation. Let us work towards dismantling the systems that perpetuate hate and advocate for justice and equality. Let us commit ourselves to creating spaces where our trans/non-binary/gender expansive siblings can express their full selves, finding solace, love, and affirmation.

Therefore, as we prepare for the coming of Christ, may we actively work towards a world where all Trans/Non-Binary/Gender Expansive people are seen, valued, and celebrated. May our actions reflect the love and inclusivity of Christ, as we strive for a society that embraces the beautiful diversity of gender identity. This is what I am waiting for.

Prayer: *Loving Creator, help us create spaces where all individuals are celebrated and cherished. **Amen.***

Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh, Open and Affirming Coalition

## 12/20- "Advent Hymn"- Christina Georgina Rossetti

"This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
These Advent nights are long;  
Our lamps have burned year after year  
And still their flame is strong.  
'Watchman, what of the night?' we cry,  
Heart-sick with hope deferred:  
'No speaking signs are in the sky,'  
Is still the watchman's word.

One to another hear them speak  
The patient virgins wise:  
'Surely He is not far to seek' -  
'All night we watch and rise.'  
'The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim;  
Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him.'

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night;  
We will not let Him go  
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight  
And summer smite the snow:  
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove  
Shall coo the livelong day;  
Then He shall say, 'Arise, My love,  
My fair one, come away.'"



---

## 12/21- "Blue Christmas"- Rev. M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed

"They say all is calm and all is bright,  
but our spirits toss and turn and our hearts are not glad.

They say angels echo a joyous strain, but our thoughts are  
looping on what we have lost.

They say a place was made in a manger for a wondrous child,  
but there are empty spaces in our beds, vacant chairs in our  
workplaces; we reach for the phone to call a familiar voice that  
will not answer.

Our anger points us towards what should not yet be gone.

Institutions prize profit over people, illness and war break  
bodies and spirits, The last of a species, even now, breathes its  
final breath.

We rage against systems that are made for death instead of life.  
Our grief is love with nowhere to land.

We go door to door but there is no place for it to stay.

So we welcome the sun setting early, for only the longest night can tend to this sorrow; only the bluest hues can meet us in this ache.

The collective grief of the world is too much to comprehend, so we speak the names of the ones we know. We light candles for all this love we still have burning.”

---

## 12/22- Waiting for Liberation

*Isaiah 61:1 “The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.”*

This passage comes from the Revised Common Lectionary for the Third Sunday of Advent, traditionally centered on the theme of joy. The prophet’s liberating promises are certainly cause for renewed joy, especially for the original audience. This part of Isaiah was likely written when the Jewish people were in exile under Babylonian rule. Can you imagine the mixture of disbelief, hope, exhaustion, and joy those hearing the promises of freedom must have felt? Advent reminds us of that tension—holding onto the promises of coming liberation, even in the most difficult of times.

Many years later, these are the same words Jesus declares fulfilled as he begins his ministry. As God moves into the mission of liberation, so too are we called to follow. We wait and long for liberation and yet that waiting is not passive. We must participate in the ongoing work of dismantling sources of oppression so those held captive to unjust systems may go free.

*Prayer: Spirit of God, grant us boldness and courage to follow you into the work of liberation. **Amen.***

Micah Melody Taberner, Transmission Ministry Collective

---

## 12/23- “First Coming”- Madeleine L’Engle © Crosswicks, Ltd.

“He did not wait till the world was ready,  
till men and nations were at peace.  
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,  
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.  
He came when the need was deep and great.  
He dined with sinners in all their grime,  
turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.  
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.  
To a world like ours, of anguished shame he came,  
and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,  
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.  
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh  
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane  
to raise our songs with joyful voice,  
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,  
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!"



## 12/24- The Fourth Sunday of Advent, Christmas Eve Waiting for Acceptance

There's a Christmas Eve that lives in the back of my head. I had just begun my transition, and my mom was pastor to a congregation that was already uncomfortable with my "self-avowed, practicing homosexuality". The atmosphere there was tense and we decided it was better for me to miss the service.

Rejection is an integral part of the Christmas story. My father read me *Nine Days to Christmas* every year, which tells the story of a little girl named Ceci's first year celebrating las posadas in Mexico.

Lodging was denied to María and José, even though the people of Bethlehem could see their great need. During las posadas, children process through the streets with their attendants for nine nights, bearing cuetlaxochitl or the light of candles. Each home rejects them entry.



La Sagrada Familia stands outside homes in the cold, singing songs, asking to come in. They are refused time and again, until the group arrives where they are accepted, where prayer, song, food and a piñata is shared.



That Christmas Eve, I flipped through our copy of this childhood favorite with a heavy heart. I didn't know then that the day would come when I was accepted in a church, there were just a few that turned me away first. María, already in labor, didn't know if or where they'd receive shelter, but God provided it, in the most unlikely of places.

The struggle to make room for the arrival of baby Jesús is emblematic of exactly why he was sent— to reshape the world, and make room for all.

Prayer: *God who knows and meets us in all our need and waiting, be with us and our loved ones in our rituals as we remember that Holy Nochebuena. **Amén.***

Mitchel Leet, Room for All

## 12/25- Christmas Day Waiting for Joy

In Luke 2:8-20, an angel visited shepherds to announce the birth of the Messiah. The angel did not speak with the high and mighty, but the lowly. Shepherds were the lowest of the low, yet they were chosen to hear the Good News first.

After the shepherds had spoken with Mary and seen the child, in verse 20 (NRSV) "*The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising*" for they were filled with joy—the joy of possibilities. The message left to us by the child born two millennia ago was simple—we are to love.

Love our Creator, love ourselves, and love each other.

Prayer: *Oh Lord, may we listen to your message of love and revel in the possibility of changing the world with your love for us. It is only with love, compassion, and understanding can we bring the joy of your kin-dom to this world. **Amen.***

Rev. Nicole Garcia, National LGBTQ Task Force



# Merry Christmas!



FROM THE COLLECTIVE OF  
QUEER CHRISTIAN LEADERS