

DEAR FRIENDS,

The festival of Advent gives us four weeks to prepare for the birth at Christmas of the God of Love who is the Light of the World. We celebrate because every year our need for a light greater than our own increases; one that can renew us and bestow warmth of courage to our hearts and spiritual illumination upon our heads, just as those who first witnessed the birth of the Child so long ago were profoundly transformed.

We wish you and those you love all the blessings of joy and good health as newborn shepherds and kings!

Liza Joy Marcato ✦ ✦ ✦
Gisela Wielki

O ORIENS

E vidi lume in forme de riviera Paradiso XXX; 61

First light and then first lines along the east
To touch and brush a sheen of light on water
As though behind the sky itself they traced

The shift and shimmer of another river
Flowing unbidden from its hidden source;
The Day-Spring, the eternal Prima Vera.

Blake saw it too. Dante and Beatrice
Are bathing in it now, away upstream...
So every trace of light begins a grace

In me, a beckoning. The smallest gleam
Is somehow a beginning and a calling;
"Sleeper awake, the darkness was a dream

For you will see the Dayspring at your waking,
Beyond your long last line the dawn is breaking".

by Malcolm Guite

The image on the front was created by artist Linda Richardson. She writes:

How often do you hear the word 'Dayspring' used in common parlance? It is such a beautiful word meaning 'dawn'. Here it is in Luke 1:76-79: **'And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dayspring from on high will break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.'** (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

I labored over this small painting using acrylic paint, ink and watercolor to try to get that ephemeral light that only a very few astronauts have ever seen with their own eyes. The great blue Earth turns away from the darkness of the void and is lit by the Sun, the archetype of God, and Malcolm Guite's poem is so full of expectant joy and peace – 'the darkness was a dream'. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says, 'We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience'.

CONTACT US

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RECEIVE UPDATES

Email your contact information to:

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THANK YOU FOR DONATING!

The work of The Christian Community depends upon the support of its members and friends. You may donate in person at church, by mailing checks to our Treasurer at the address listed on the front, through Zelle or on our website via PayPal. (Zelle is preferable to PayPal, as no fees are charged to anyone).

We appreciate all of your weekly donations, monthly pledges and special gifts!

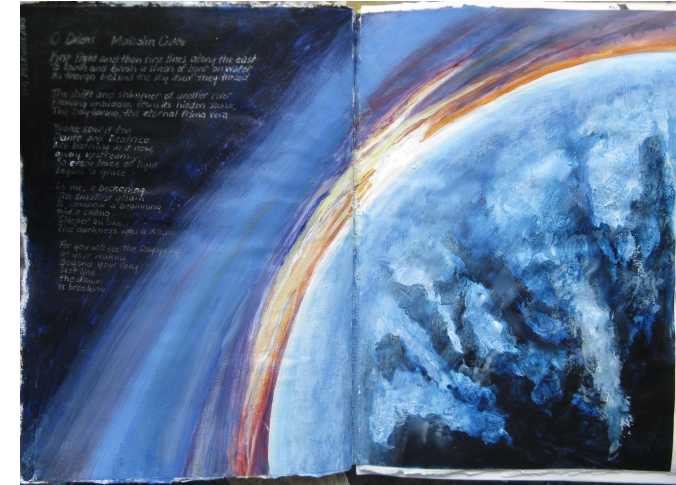
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For questions about finances or leaving a LEGACY, contact our Treasurer Jonathan Hilton.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas comes down to us in the darkness of midnight. In the stillness and quiet it comes, when the clamor of the day has ceased and the world is holding its breath. Then the candles of the stars light up, the moon's lamp illumines the wide spaces of the dark, and in the magical hours of their shining, that is born which is new and which comes only at one season in the year. Christmas brings the mystery of birth, in which from the world-heights the living force is born that renews existence. Throughout the Holy Nights, from Christmas Eve until January 6th, we can feel the mood of blessing and watch without and within the happening of the mystery.

by Evelyn Francis Capel



O Oriens (O Dayspring—the fifth O Antiphon for Advent) by Linda Richardson

ADVENT+CHRISTMAS+EPIPHANY PROGRAM 2022-2023

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WEEKLY SERVICES

Our communion service, **The Consecration of the Human Being**, is celebrated twice a week:

Sunday 11:00 AM

Wednesday 10:00 AM

...And all twelve days of Christmas! (see schedule)

For Children & Families

Sundays 9:30-10:30 AM Story, song, activities & Sunday Service for children.

Call or text Rev. Liza Joy Marcato for info.

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CONTEMPLATION GROUP

Everyone welcome anytime!

Contemplating the Second Coming of Christ
with Rev. Liza Joy Marcato

Weekly Wednesday, 11:00 AM—12:30 PM

Weekly Contemplation of Festival Prayers & the Second Coming of Christ, after the service + coffee!

ADVENT

November 27—December 24

Sunday, November 27

9:30 AM Children's Advent Garden: Wreath lighting, story, and singing for all ages!

10:20 AM Sunday Service for Children

11:00 AM The Consecration of the Human Being will be celebrated for the first time (in a new translation of the 'Act of Consecration of Man')

12:00 PM Potluck Lunch

12:45 PM Advent Window Stars Workshop—all welcome!

Sunday, December 4

12:00 PM Potluck Lunch

12:45 PM Preparing the Manger of the Heart, An Advent Reflection, by Liza Marcato

Friday, December 9

6:00 PM Advent Young Adults Evening at the church with Rev. Liza Marcato. Call/text for more information, 413-854-8875.



Sunday, December 11

12:00 PM Light Refreshments

12:30 PM Who is Mary Magdalene? An Exploration in the Gospels and other Early Christian Texts with Faith DiVecchio

Wednesday, December 21

11:00 AM Christmas Preparation gathering—join in the fun and help get everything ready for the Holy Nights! Cookies and hot cider provided!

THE FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS & THE TWELVE HOLY NIGHTS

December 24—January 5

Saturday, December 24

10:30 PM Lighting the Christmas Tree & Singing Carols

The Threefold Christmas Blessing

The three services of Christmas at Midnight, Dawn and Daytime create together a whole picture of the birth of the child Jesus and the coming of the Christ. The Midnight and Dawn services are experienced only once a year. The Day service continues to sound from the altar throughout the twelve days of Christmas. **Please feel warmly welcomed to celebrate with us as you are able!**

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

I. Midnight Service December 24/25 at 12:00 AM

II. Dawn Service December 25 at 8:00 AM

III. Daytime Service December 25 at 11:00 AM

-and-

10:20 AM Special Christmas Service for Children —Parents, please confirm attendance! (text Rev Liza: 413-854-8875)

December 26—January 5 + DAILY SERVICE

The Consecration of the Human Being will be celebrated daily at 10:00 AM; 11:00 AM on Sundays, & Jan. 1

Substance of Earth,
Essence of Light,
Grace of Heaven,
In us unite.

L. Francis Edmunds

Wednesday—Friday, December 28—30

11:00 AM The Holy Family In Us: Mother, Father, Child in One Join Revs. Liza Marcato & Gisela Wielki for a three day contemplation on finding Christmas within!

Sunday, January 1,

12:00 PM Special New Years' Day Meal & Singing by the Christmas Tree

Thursday, January 5

11:00 AM Help transform the church for Epiphany



Nativity by Gentile da Fabriano

EPIPHANY

January 6—February 4

Friday, January 6

11:00 AM The Consecration of the Human Being

Sunday, January 8

12:00 PM Three Kings' Coffeetime

12:30 PM Join us for **We Are the Stars That Sing...**

Epiphany Thoughts & Poetry Sharing to Inspire Us in the new year! Bring an inspiring poem to share that serves as a star for you.

Sunday, January 22

12:00 PM Community Potluck Lunch

12:45 PM "...And if you are willing to accept it..."

An Introduction to Reincarnation and Christianity,
a Talk by Rev. Liza Marcato

