

Greetings Merging Waters,

December 16th, 2021

As we approach the 4th Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Love, we find ourselves once again in uncertain times. The Omicron variant is becoming a great concern, climate change is throwing wild weather and added danger back at us in the world, tragedy strikes near and far and we grieve with those who have lost loved ones and livelihoods to the brokenness of this world. And yet this week we hear a voice of one who would have been somewhat disadvantaged by her world, Mary, singing a song of hope and justice. This song has shaken the pillars of established power and calls into question all systems of oppression and exploitation. To this day it challenges all those who are privileged at the expense of another. And we are inspired by the words that the narrative credits to our sister Mary. As one who was not elite but certainly in a family respected in the community to find herself unmarried and single this young woman had the courage to accept God's love and let the Divine found in humanity - in the life of her child, the life of all - inspire her to dreams of justice and equity. The love she felt in her connection with that Divine spark lights in her a fire for justice for those who are even less advantaged than she.

In the face of all those who stand up for justice despite insurmountable odds, in the spirit of [Luke 1:39–55](#), and seeing the events that happen in the world often at the hand of human agency, let us consider some questions:

- What does the love you receive inspire in you?
 - In your actions?
- How have you shared the love found in your journey of faith with others?
- With messages from media, TV, and society telling us that it is in objects that we find Christmas, how do we ground ourselves in the true meaning of Christmas, in the love of the Divine found in humanity?
- What love do we show others and ourselves when we forego immediate gratification and instead embrace actions that would lead to a more loving world for us all?

I look forward to continuing our Advent journey this week and into the New Year as we embrace God's ways of love.

Peace and love,
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