

“The Light Shines in the Darkness”

Dear friends,

We stand on the edge of Advent—a season that reminds us that we wait, often amid great darkness, for the gift of God’s life to be birthed within and among us again and again. With so much violence storming the region I’ve called home for more than ten years, I stand in great need of remembering the promise that stands at the beginning of the Gospel according to John: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it (1:5).”

This gift of Immanuel, God with us, seems more miraculous and mysterious than ever to me. How can the Holy One be with us in this unholy mess of war and destruction? And yet this is the truth we know through scripture. The cries of parents mourning the brutal state-sponsored murder of their infants are part of the birth narrative. Somehow, through Immanuel, the Holy One is with us, not only to comfort us but also to call us and fill us with all that is needed to join him in midwifing the just reign of God’s ways into the here and now. “The kingdom of God has come near,” Jesus tells us. “Repent and believe the good news (Mark 1:15).”

As challenging as it might be to believe that God is near amid so much pain, violence, and destruction, I’m praying for the grace to believe and the courage to join our Lord in his work of bringing God’s just reign into full view here on earth as it already is in the heaven lies around us. May this Advent and Christmas Season be a time for God’s life to be birthed again in your life and spirit and may this rebirth fuel you to join in God’s transforming work in this world.

I remain so very grateful for your partnership in our shared call to be of service to our Lord at such a time as this.

With much gratitude,

Elmarie

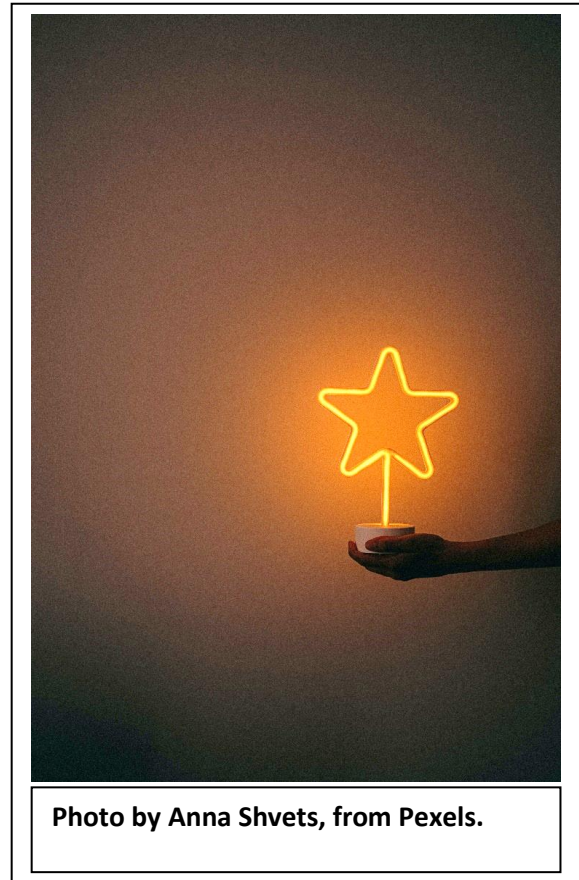


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