



KNEELING IN BETHLEHEM

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ADVENT



THE COMING OF GOD

Our God is the One who comes to us
in a burning bush,
in an angel's song,
in a newborn child.

Our God is the One who cannot be found
locked in the church,
not even in the sanctuary.

Our God will be where God will be
with no constraints,
no predictability.

Our God lives where our God lives,
and destruction has no power
and even death cannot stop
the living.

Our God will be born where God will be born,
but there is no place to look for the One who comes to us.

When God is ready
God will come
even to a godforsaken place
like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch . . .
for you know not when
God comes.

Watch, that you might be found
whenever
wherever
God comes.

YESTERDAY'S PAIN

Some of us walk into Advent
tethered to our unresolved yesterdays
the pain still stabbing
the hurt still throbbing.

It's not that we don't know better;
it's just that we can't stand up anymore by ourselves.
On the way to Bethlehem,
will you give us a hand?

THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS



WE SEEM TO FORGET

What concerns me,
what lies on my heart,
is this:
That we in the church
papered and programmed
articulate and agenda-ed
are telling the faith story
all wrong,
are telling it as though it happened two thousand
years ago
or is going to happen
as soon as the church budget is raised.
We seem to forget that Christ's name is Emmanuel,
God with Us,
Not just when he sat among us
but *now*,
when we cannot feel the nailprints in his hands.

GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD

The story of Jesus Christ is this:

The people of this earth waited for a Messiah . . . a Savior . . .
and only God would send a little baby king.

The child grew and began to question things as they were,
and the man moved through his days and
through this world,
questioning the system of kings and priests
and marketplace.

He was called the New Creation
the New Covenant
the Son of God
who brought to all who listened
who saw
who understood
change and new life.

But kings and corporations and churches of this world
work very hard
to keep things as they are out into forever AMEN.

And so they killed him:

he who said, Love one another,
he who said, Feed my sheep,
for they didn't want to share their bread and their wine.
Now the story should have ended there
except that the story has always been
that our God is the God of the covenant.

The Good News is that
in spite of our faithlessness
God is faithful
and Jesus Christ was resurrected,
for God so loved the world
that he gave his only begotten Son
that whoever believed
might have everlasting Life.
Listen, you who have ears to hear.
Listen, and sit down to bread and wine with strangers.
Feed his sheep. . . . Love one another,
and claim new life in his name.