



Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024
Pelham Flowerdew
A Pregnant Pause, A Labour of Love
Luke 1:39-56

Advent: the pause before the orchestra plays

Mary sings about....

Political upheaval

He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.
Luke 1:52

Good News for the Poor

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.
Luke 1:53

The gospel before the gospel

He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.
Luke 1:54-55

Love

His mercy [**love**] extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.
Luke 1:50

Biblical love: Promise-keeping loyalty motivated by deep personal care and shown by generous concrete actions of self-giving service

Jesus is the embodiment of God's surprising upside-down loyal love

His actions: serving and welcoming

His teachings: subversive and revolutionary

His death: self-giving and forgiving

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient...But because of his great **love** for us, God, who is **rich in**

mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by **grace** you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:1-2, 4-5

A mother's love is at the very heart of who God is

Three names: Belonging, Beloved, Delightful

Of all the forces in the world, love is the most powerful and most powerless. It is the most powerful because it alone can conquer the final and most impregnable stronghold which is the human heart. It is the most powerless because it can do nothing except by consent.

Frederick Buechner

Look for surprising signs of God's love

Be a surprising sign of God's love





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