



**advent**

**Sabbath Poem: "1986, I"**  
**by Wendell Berry**

**Slowly, slowly, they return  
To the small woodland let alone:  
Great trees, outspreading and  
upright,  
Apostles of the living light.**



**Patient as stars, they build in air  
Tier after tier a timbered choir,  
Stout beams upholding weightless  
grace  
Of song, a blessing on this place.**

**They stand in waiting all around,  
Uprisings of their native ground,  
Downcomings of the distant light;  
They are the advent they await.**



**Receiving sun and giving shade,  
Their life's a benefaction made,  
And is a benediction said  
Over the living and the dead.**

**In fall their brightened leaves, released,  
Fly down the wind, and we are pleased  
To walk on radiance, amazed.  
O light come down to earth, be praised!**



**When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?”**

**Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”**

**+ Matthew 11:2-6**



WHAT DO YOU  
**FEAR?**



A silhouette of a person standing in a dark, misty environment, holding a lantern that illuminates the scene. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, and the light from the lantern creates a bright, circular glow in the background. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and contemplative.

WHAT DO YOU  
**FEAR?**

Even in our fear, we  
are called forward.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."



“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea...

– Luke 1:26-39 (NIV)



The word of the Lord came to me  
(Jeremiah), saying,

“Before I formed you in the womb I  
knew you,  
before you were born I set you apart;  
I appointed you as a prophet to the  
nations.”

“Alas, Sovereign Lord,” I said, “I do not  
know how to speak; I am too young.”



WHAT DO YOU

**FEAR?**



But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.

Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”

– Jeremiah 1:4-10 (NIV)





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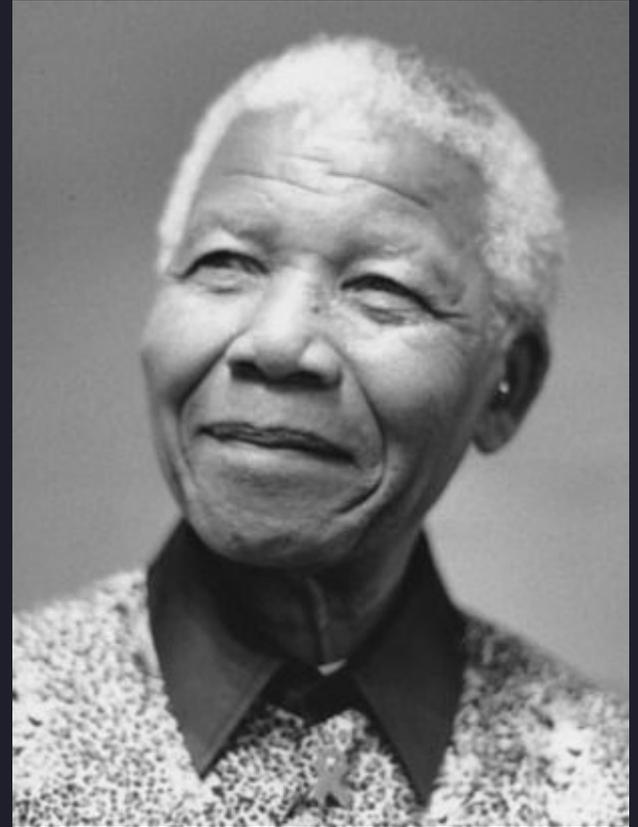


WHAT DO YOU  
**FEAR?**



**“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”**

**– Nelson Mandela**



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“If we are absolutely grounded in the absolute love of God that protects us from nothing even as it sustains us in all things, then we can face all things with courage and tenderness and touch the hurting places in others and in ourselves with love.”

–James Finley, *Intimacy: The Divine Ambush*





WHAT DO YOU  
**FEAR?**



**“Just as Advent is a time of waiting for the arrival of Christ, the Eucharist is a constant source of expectation and longing for Christ’s presence in our lives. Every time we participate...we are reminded of the Incarnation. We remember how Christ became Emmanuel, ‘God with us,’ humbling himself to be born in a manger. Similarly, in the Eucharist, Jesus humbles himself again to be present among us, hidden under the simple elements of bread and wine. Through the Eucharist, Christ continues to be with us, nourishing our souls with his love and grace.”**

**- Dcn. Jay W. VanHoosier**

