



FROM  
GENERATION  
TO GENERATION...  
*There's room for every story*

**Cover Art: “Genealogy of Christ”** by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman,  
Inspired by Matthew 1:1-17 | Digital painting

While creating this image, I spent a lot of time with the women mentioned in Jesus’ genealogy because I had a resounding echo of shame in my body that I had received from engaging with these narratives in my childhood. Their stories held a heaviness of judgment. In my experience, it seemed the primary function of recounting their lives was to show how broken and sinful they were, and how, despite their brokenness, God was merciful enough to use them. The shame I felt was also personal; along the way, I had internalized the message that as a woman, this was my potential for being a part of God’s story too. I had been handed some harmful, one-dimensional labels that immediately surfaced when I read their names, such as “harlot,” “prostitute,” “seductress,” and “adulterer,” just to name a few. Their importance was not found in the context and particularity of their narratives; instead, they were viewed as rough, oddly-shaped pieces to the puzzle of Jesus’ lineage. I had to do some work to unbind myself from the limitations my church had placed on these stories, and I tried to visit these women with a fresh mind and an open heart. What I realized was that these women—despite the loathsome, corrupt systems they were in—found a way to claim their voice and found enough power to survive.

I was inspired by the composition and movement of the From Generation to Generation... logo. In this image, I chose to represent Christ using a rose at the center of the composition. The women mentioned in the genealogy are imaged as foundational leaves building and upholding Christ. All of the women are looking at the viewer and holding objects to represent the fact that they took their life and survival into their own hands. They were catalysts who propelled the lineage forward. In the bottom left, Tamar holds her father-in-law’s insignia, which represents how she assumes his role as the leader of the tribe of Judah and continues its lineage.<sup>1</sup> Moving counterclockwise, Rahab holds the red cord which she lowered to ensure the safety of her family after supplying Israelite spies enough information to achieve victory in Jericho. Next, Ruth holds the wheat that she gleaned from the field. She knows that she must marry again in order to be protected, and so she takes initiative with Boaz. Bathsheba’s name isn’t even mentioned in Christ’s genealogy; she is referred to as the “wife of Uriah.” She withstands abuse from King David, survives the murder of her husband, and ensures that her son Solomon takes the throne. She takes matters into her own hands, becoming, as scholar Dr. Wil Gafney writes, “the queen mother of the united monarchy of Israel.”<sup>2</sup> Finally, there is Mary who looks adoringly at the rose which represents her son. Here she holds the love and pride of a beautiful lineage that leads to the birth of her son, the Messiah.

These women only wanted to ensure safety for themselves and for their children; in the process they ensured the continuation of the lineage of Christ. Without their brilliance, passion, ingenuity, resourcefulness, creativity, and sacrifice, the lineage would have ended. - Lauren Wright Pittman

<sup>1</sup> Attridge, Harold W. From the footnote for Genesis 38:15-19. The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version. (San Francisco, CA: Zondervan, 2006). 62-3.

*With Christ as the Cornerstone, we will build a church of living stones,  
where every member is a minister and is equipped to express God’s love  
by word and deed to all people.*

*Based on 1 Peter 2:5, 6*

# The Worship of God

First Sunday of Advent

November 27, 2022

## Gathering Music

### Welcome

Chrissy Williamson

† **Opening Hymn 686**      “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

O God, our Help in ages past,  
Our Hope for years to come,  
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal Home!

Under the shadow of Thy throne  
Still may we dwell secure;  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,  
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone;  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

## Lighting of the Advent Candle

Eddy Ng, Ivylynn Spruill, Patsy Chiles, Montana Alston

† *Please rise in body or spirit.*

**Pastoral Prayer**

Christian McIvor

*As our offertory anthem is sung, please feel free to place your offering in the plates on either side of the center aisle in the back of the sanctuary, or you can also give online by scanning the QR code on the back of this worship bulletin.*

**Offertory Anthem**

**"In the Bleak Midwinter"**

CRANHAM;

GBC Choir

Words by Christina Rossetti,

Music by Gustav Holst, arr. Christian McIvor

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan;  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:  
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there;  
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

**† Doxology for Advent**

VENI EMMANUEL;

Words by Thomas Ken, 15th Century French Melody

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise Christ, all people here below;  
praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
praise Triune God, whom we adore.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**Prayer of Dedication**

Gary Hollingsworth

**Scripture Reading**

Isaiah 2:1-5, Matthew 1:1-17

Carla LeNoir

**Sermon**

*"There's Room for Every Story"*

Steven Fuller

# Silent Reflection

## Invitation

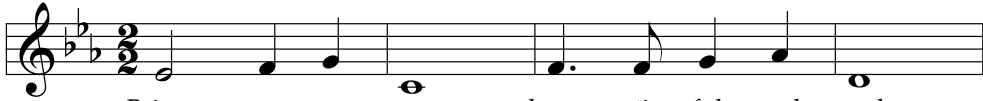
Chrissy Williamson

## † Musical Response

### “Bring Many Names”

WESTCHASE;

Text by Brian Wren, 1986, rev.,  
Music by Carlton R. Young, 1987



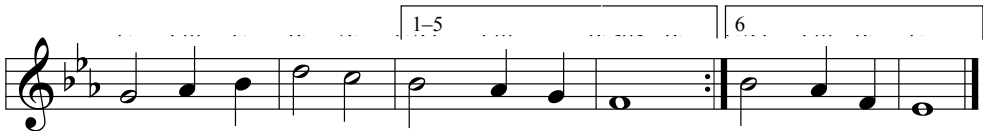
1 Bring man - y names, beau - ti - ful and good,  
2 Strong moth - er God, work - ing night and day,  
3 Warm fa - ther God, hug - ging ev - ery child,  
4 Old, ach - ing God, gray with end - less care,  
5 Young, grow - ing God, ea - ger, on the move,  
6 Great, liv - ing God, nev - er ful - ly known,



cel - e - brate, in par - a - ble and sto - ry,  
plan - ning all the won - ders of cre - a - tion,  
feel - ing all the strains of hu - man liv - ing,  
calm - ly pierc - ing e - vil's new dis - guis - es,  
say - ing no to false - hood and un - kind - ness,  
joy - ful dark - ness far be - yond our see - ing,



ho - li - ness in glo - ry, liv - ing, lov - ing God.  
set - ting each e - qua - tion ge - ni - us at play:  
car - ing and for - giv - ing till we're rec - on - ciled:  
glad of good sur - pris - es, wis - er than de - spair:  
cry - ing out for jus - tice, giv - ing all you have:  
clos - er yet than breath - ing, ev - er - last - ing home:



Hail and Ho - san - na! Bring man - y names!  
Hail and Ho - san - na, strong moth - er God!  
Hail and Ho - san - na, warm fa - ther God!  
Hail and Ho - san - na, old, ach - ing God!  
Hail and Ho - san - na, young, grow - ing God!  
Hail and Ho - san - na,

great, liv - ing God!

## **Celebrating Community**

Anna Beth Cross

## **Benediction**

Steven Fuller

## **Postlude**

“Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella”

Pam Weis

Traditional French Melody,

arr. Patricia Lou Harris

Thank you to Cranberry Tree Farms for their gracious donation of wreaths  
and for the beautiful Chrismon trees in the Sanctuary.

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by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)



## Reverend Steven T. Fuller

Joining us in worship on this first Sunday of Advent is our guest preacher, Reverend Steve T. Fuller. Steven grew up the son of a Baptist preacher in Raleigh. He earned his masters of divinity from Wake Forest University, where he met his good friends, Chrissy Tatum and Justin Williamson. In his life of ministry, he has served Methodist, Moravian, and Baptist congregations, most recently as pastor of First Baptist Church of Gastonia, NC. He currently works as an editor for a research group tackling public health issues across the country. It was through a friend at Wake

Forest that he met the woman who would become his wife, Chase Fuller. Chase is a family practice PA-C, and together they have three children, Wake, Beckon, and River, whose names reflect their family's desire to be awake to the work of the Spirit around them, hear God beckon them toward a faithful future, and dive into the river of faith that flows ceaselessly throughout Creation.

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