

SCRIPT for Session 2: Waking Up to the Divine Now

By Janice MacLean

"I don't feel very Christmassy." Have you said that? I have. Perhaps I say it every year.

We bring big expectations to the journey to Bethlehem. And that is a good thing. It means we have seeds of hope in us. We expect this story to touch something in us. We know this nativity will inspire or support us on our life journey — if only we can connect with it. So, every year we invest ourselves in those things we hope will usher us into "the Christmas feeling."

We have our traditions. We have our unique ornaments. We have our special recipes. We have our favourite carols. We await our most-loved movies. We anticipate visits with our beloveds. We go to church for a Silent Night. We light candles.

And it is all good. It is very good. It helps us get ready.

And yet, it is often not quite enough. Our longing stretches to a thin place of disappointment. Our desires for a meaningful journey dissipate in the busyness that can overwhelm us. Our special intentions become, somehow, routine. The familiarity of tradition becomes drab. The lights aren't perfect enough and the hope and dreams are upset by life that happens. And there is always that one carol we are not fond of, and we hear it unendingly!

Perhaps we forget that the story of incarnation is not just about a birth in Bethlehem. There was Divine Radiance at the moment of creation and Presence entered matter. Incarnation is the story of God embodied in all matter; God indwelling in all created material.

When I first read Logion 77 in the Gospel of Thomas my heart leaped.

"Jesus says
I am the light
shining upon all things.
I am the sum of everything,
for everything has come forth from me
and towards me everything unfolds.
Split a piece of wood, and there I am.
Pick up a stone, and you will find me there." (Lynn Bauman translation)

This is such a beautiful saying reminding us that everywhere we look is a burning bush, sacred ground, holy fire, the great I AM speaking forth. This is incarnation.

But there's more.

What incarnation is saying is that the I AM Presence dwells, not only in creation's burning bushes — not only in Jesus, but in all. All in all.

Everything belongs. Even the disappointments, the not-quite-perfects, the special intentions gone awry, and the annoying carols. Seriously, incarnation is happening all around us. Every moment.

And that's why we come to every Christmas so full of hope. We know this. We know that the I AM became conscious in Jesus. It takes the story of a Child born in a manger, to wake us to the possibility that this moment, this mundane moment is afire, alight, with potential.

We'll probably say it again, “*I don't feel very Christmassy.*” And isn't that great!

We can use that moment to pause when we hear ourselves saying it to remind ourselves: This is incarnation. This is real. Everything belongs. Everything can be consciously transformed.

We listen and hear our Living Teacher say: “Here I am. You will find me even here. You will find me in the good news and bad, in the hope and in the pain, in the joy and in the sorrow, in all of life. All in all.”