

First Day of Christmas, 12/25 – A Partridge in a Pear Tree



Scripture: So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” **Luke 2:4-14**

We start and end with the partridge in the pear tree. And in each successive verse we repeat this refrain: “And a partridge in a pear tree.” **The partridge has been identified as Jesus the Christ...**the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega. The other notable symbol here is the pear tree. It is living and fruitful as life in Christ always is. And the fruit is not just for us but for us to share in our corner of the world. This image parallels the image of the Tree of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden. And this becomes the Tree of Life which is one of the ribbons that runs throughout scripture from Genesis to Revelation. In addition, it is noteworthy that partridges are not usually at home in pear trees. As I ponder that notion it reminds me that God, in the form of Jesus, came to live among us, in a place not God’s home, to bring love so that we might be closer to God. What is around you today to remind you of this image? A bush with snow and a cardinal? A Bradford Pear tree with sparrows? Find an image that will perpetually remind you of the Christ in your midst.