

> Advent Sculpture 2016



In October 2016 we began an ambitious project in Sunday Morning Program: to create a living sculpture that would be an abstract representation of the advent story. I started by drawing a sketch, which told the story through simple shapes and helped us to think more symbolically about the elements of the advent story. We asked, what do we imagine when we think of the nativity, and where do these images come from? In an abstract form, the sculpture allowed us to explore different perspectives of advent, and weave our own stories into the larger story.

We made four sculptural elements for the project. The first was the Journey, which represented the journey that Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem from Nazareth in Luke's Gospel. It was made by the prep-grade 6 group from non-woven fabric with paperbark glued to represent footprints in the landscape.

The second element was the Village, which represented Bethlehem and villages everywhere, it also represented the place where Jesus was born. It was made by the YUCY crew out of rolled bark and paper covered wire, mounted on two stands.



The third element was the Gifts, which represented the three gifts given by the wise men in Matthew's Gospel. It represented our rejoicing at Christmas time and the symbolism of gift giving. They were made by the YUCY crew: the stands from willow sticks and wire, and the gifts from polystyrene balls with flowers and leaves pinned on to them.

The fourth element was the Cradle, which represented the place where Jesus lay when he was born. It was made by the prep-grade 6 group in the shape of a coolamon, with papier-mache over wire mesh, lined with paper bark.

The sculpture was made using elements from our own environment, such as bark, leaves and flowers, and the coolamon, allowing us to connect the advent story with our landscape and become part of the story ourselves.

I introduced a new element of the sculpture into the church each week of Advent. We integrated the advent candles with the sculpture and it was used as part of the service. For Advent 4 I also decorated the sculpture with flowers. The sculpture was also used as part of the Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

It was great fun to work with the Sunday Morning Program to create the sculpture. I really enjoyed seeing how everyone engaged with it, both in the process of making, as well as in the worship services.

Simone Alesich

On behalf of the whole congregation the worship committee offers thanks to you Simone for your inspiration and creativity with this project and to Julie for enabling the SMP to participate in the creation of these beautiful sculptures.

