

## **What do you fear?**

### **In the time of Herod, we long for God to break in**

Zechariah and the Angel by Hannah Garrity Inspired by Luke 1:5-13

Within the political landscape of Herod's time, hope was not on the horizon—that's the point. And Elizabeth had been barren for many years. This miracle visited her—in her body, in her womb— because it was so unexpected. In this piece, I imagine the angel in a female form arriving close to Zechariah in the darkened Temple, surprising him by her presence. His reaction is a fearful one in this image. He leans away, squints his eyes, and covers his head. He protects himself from her, from her presence, from her power, from her words, from her gaze. He hides. The incense swirls around them. In contrast to his fear, her message is one of hope: long-yearned-for-joy and family security. Here the angel's message is represented by the doves and the stars. Her message flows into his space with the same power that invoked his fear. I imagine Zechariah lets his guard down then, and listens to her in shock. I imagine he takes in her words, lets his arm down, meets her gaze, and holds onto joy, despite his ongoing apprehension. In this image, I placed my paper lace over a cyanotype print, which is created using photosensitive paper, objects, and sunlight. The cyanotype didn't work the first time; I had to paint the light-sensitive solution again and then expose the print for longer in brighter daylight. I really needed plexiglass to hold my branches and leaves tightly to the paper, but I didn't have it. Nonetheless, the final print reflected the flow of energy in this text. The movement in the cyanotype is horizontal—perfect for the lateral conversation between the angel and Zechariah. Pine needles created shapes that appear to reiterate the angel's words as they are leaving her mouth toward Zechariah's ear. These words, this unexpected and miraculous hope, are the focal point in the text and the art. In the cyanotype, there are deep blues with silhouettes of leaves and stems, but nothing so powerful as these words, these pine needles creating a high-contrast focal point. God is breaking in. —Hannah Garrity

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