

intertwined inceptions

*written upon realizing that the first days of
Chanukkah and Advent coincided this year*

- by Avery Arden

four tall tapers
ring round a fifth
on their bed of pine branches

eight tall tapers
proudly flank the ninth
along their branching arms

and one candle
lights another

upon an altar draped
in royal purple.

where passersby may glimpse
through windowpanes.

we marvel at

the Word made Flesh —
the miracle of
Yes:

“a great miracle happened here” —
the miracle of
Enough:

“I, Most High sovereign, *will* become
the lowest, weakest, poorest one!”

a mighty army brought to shame
by one small hammer in God’s name

“I’ll bear my own Creator in my womb
— with joy, let it be done!”

and a pittance of oil stretched
across eight days’ flames...

we remember

the stronghold of her stomach

the stronghold of the sanctuary

stretched around
the Son of God:

retaken and restored
by that dedicated band

seed of Divinity
growing in a womb-dark sea...

who’d rather die
than forsake their Lord.

we praise!

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum
et exultavit spiritus meus
in Deo salutari meo*

*Baruch atah Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha-olam
asher kid'shanu b-mitzvotav*

God casts down
the mighty from their thrones,
lifts up the humble,
fills the hungry with good things,
and sends the rich away empty!

G-d brings up
the poor out of the dirt;
from the refuse piles
G-d raises the destitute
to seat them with the nobles!

we await

the Kin-dom of God —
the world made whole!
a table set for all!

tikkun olam —
the righting of the world!
and we must play our role.

we join

we wait

we eat

we praise

and the candlelight

and the candlelight

and the candlelight extends
a hand to shadow —
scoops her up into a flickering dance
across the walls

across the panes

across our upturned faces

and singing fills the darkness round and full
and singing fills the darkness round and full

and rises to the One who blesses
all