



MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

402 N. First Street, Lindsborg, Kansas 67456

Office: 785-227-3977

www.melclindsborg.org

mlchurch@mlc.kscoxmail.com

Setting 10

December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord

J.S. Bach

GATHERING

¹Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

²**For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever; you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**

³I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

⁴**'I will establish your line forever, and preserve your throne for all generations.'** ~Psalm 89: 1-4

We are God's people, established from of old.

We are God's people, here today, empowered by the Holy Spirit

To proclaim God's love, To share God's peace,

To worship and praise without ceasing, God Almighty, the babe soon to be born!

Lighting Hymn He Came Down v.4 # 253

GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving and forgiving God, **we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



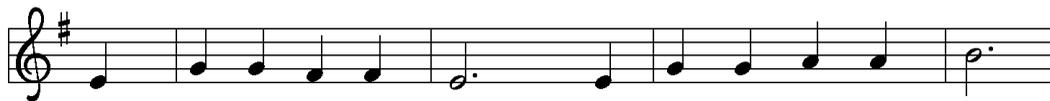
dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

KYRIE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Canticle of Praise



- 1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
- 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
- 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, **Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you." ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God!**

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55

You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly. (Lk. 1:52)

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, ⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.

⁵⁰**You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.**

⁵¹You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,

⁵²**casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.**

⁵³You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,**

⁵⁵the promise made to our forbears, to Abraham and his children forever.

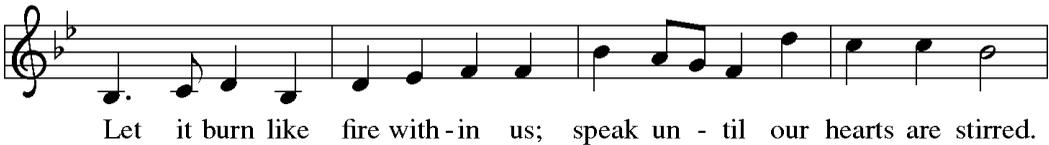
Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God!**

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Glory to you, O Lord.

In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be

impossible with God.”³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

SERMON

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart

1 Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;
2 I ask no dream, no proph - et ec - sta - sies,
3 Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
4 Teach me to love you as your an - gels love,

wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;
no sud - den rend - ing of the veil of clay,
all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
one ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame:

stoop to my weak - ness, strength to me im - part,
no an - gel vis - i - tant, no op - 'ning skies;
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling,
the bap - tism of the heav'n - de - scend - ed dove,

and make me love you as I ought to love.
 but take the dim - ness of my soul a - way.
 Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!
 my heart an al - tar, and your love the flame.

Text: George Croly, 1780–1860
 Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick C. Atkinson, 1841–1897

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths, especially our TACOL partners, St. Bridgett's, Lindsborg Covenant Church, Lindsborg United Methodist Church, the First Baptist Church, Fremont Church, Falun/Salemsborg Lutheran, Bethany Lutheran, and all others in our community. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Offering Prayer

Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray.

Amen.

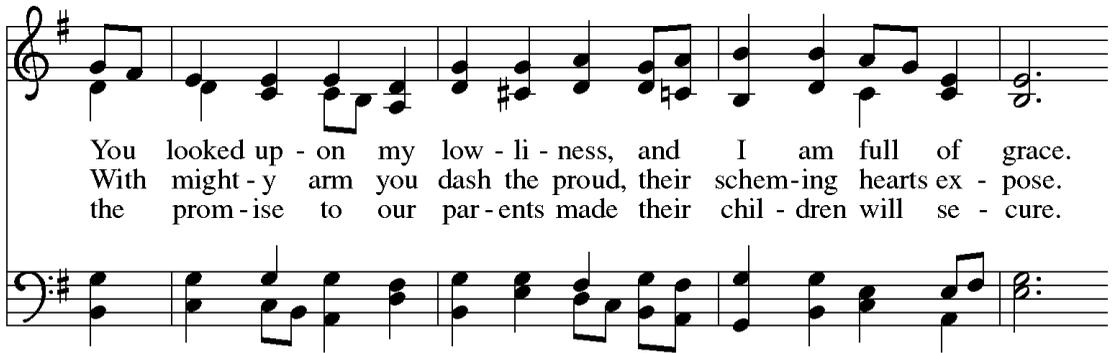
Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✚ now and forever. **Amen.**

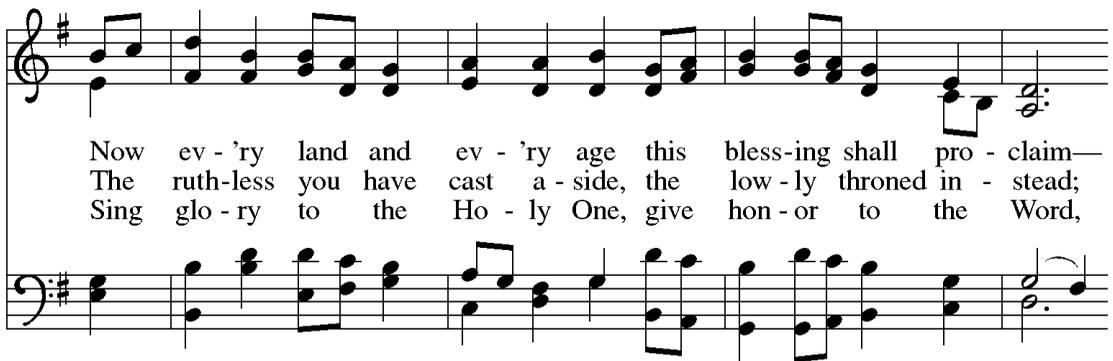
My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness



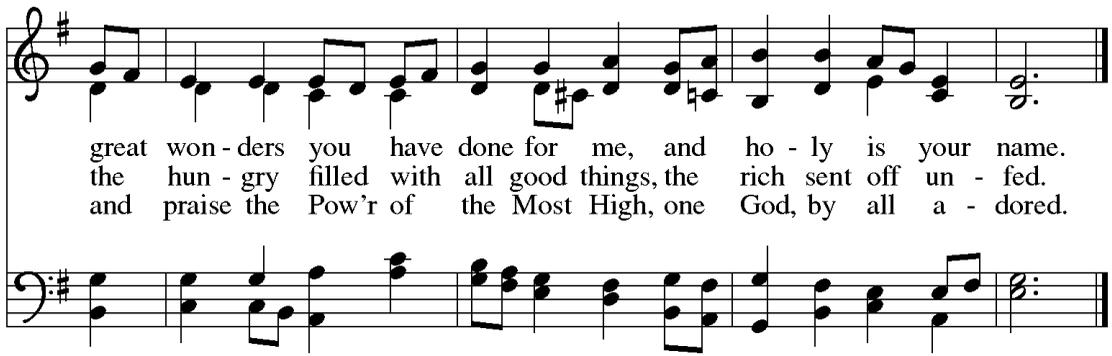
1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav-ior's praise!
2 To all who live in ho-ly fear your mer-cy ev-er flows.
3 To Is-ra-el, your ser-vant blest, your help is ev-er sure;



You looked up-on my low-li-ness, and I am full of grace.
With might-y arm you dash the proud, their schem-ing hearts ex-pose.
the prom-ise to our par-ents made their chil-dren will se-cure.



Now ev-'ry land and ev-'ry age this bless-ing shall pro-claim—
The ruth-less you have cast a-side, the low-ly throned in-stead;
Sing glo-ry to the Ho-ly One, give hon-or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
 the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.
 and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

Text: *With One Voice*, 1995, based on the Magnificat
 Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
 Text © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.
 Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Johannes Brahms

Messiah Lutheran Church
 11/30/2020

| | Actual Nov-20 | Actual Jan - Nov 20 | Budget Jan - Nov 20 |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Revenue | \$8,692.64 | \$142,970.41 | \$135,905.00 |
| Expenses | <u>14,237.45</u> | <u>142,984.44</u> | <u>150,977.80</u> |
| Surplus (Deficit) | <u><u>-\$5,544.81</u></u> | <u><u>-\$14.03</u></u> | <u><u>-\$15,072.80</u></u> |
| Reserve Balance | <u><u>\$70,284.07</u></u> | | |

Members, Friends, and Family for Whom We Pray

Members of Messiah:

Rolland Christenson, Donna Forsberg, Walli Ellis, Betty Peterson, Gloria and Gene Holdsworth, we pray especially for the family of Har Shogren

Friends of Messiah

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Donna Stejksal | Daniels' friend | Karla Goewert | Friend of Kirsten Bruce |
| Denise | Pari Ford's mother | Orin Shogren | Har's brother |
| Bill Stephenson | Joy Janis's brother | Danielle | Robbie Peterson's |
| Dawn | Sharon Hoffman's Daughter | VanDeVyvere | granddaughter |
| Dorothy Carmichael | Friend of Messiah | Krista Bahler | Betty Peterson's Niece |
| Erin Erb | Friend of Sherry Peterson | Betty Finney | Sharon Hoffman's friend |
| Stephani White | Betty Holcombe's daughter | Meghan Presley | John & Margaret Presley's daughter |

Serving the U.S.A.

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Alex Klapp | Betty Russin's grandson | Vicki Charboneau | Elaine Eller's granddaughter |
| Ben Youngquist | S Hoffman's nephew | Jeremy Guy | Hensley's son-in-law |
| T.J. Paulsen | Barb Malm's child | | |

Serving the U.S.A. Overseas

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Daniel & Miranda Norland | Randy/Gretchen's son & wife |
| Luke Hammontree | Daniel's grandson |

Seminary

Kaylie Ines

Please pray for all affected by Covid-19: Healthcare workers/administration/staff, residential staff and residents, those who seem unaffected and those who are currently aware they are infected and are fighting the virus. Also, we pray for all who are being negatively affected by the virus and it's social disruption.

WIDER CHURCH NEWS: BY JEANNE AHLERS

As any year comes to an end, it's only natural to look ahead to the future. After a year like this one, it might seem to view it with apprehension rather than with hopes. But life goes on, and the coming year mightn't be completely bleak.

Among those looking ahead is Central States Synod Bishop Susan Candea. In a recent letter, she quoted from a Monastic liturgy: *Cite pusilanimens confortamini. Ecce Dominus Deus noster veniet.* Which translates to "Tell the timid to take heart. The Lord our God will come!"

The end of a calendar year means the beginning of a new one. The church will begin 2021 with a number of dates and opportunities. Rostered ministers' annual reports and parochial reports from congregations will be due by February 15. These help the synod in providing resources and supports. On March 29 in Salina, Episcopal Colleagues and Bishops will take place with worship services and time for fellowship beginning at 10:00 a.m. Similar services will take place in Topeka on March 30 and in Columbia, Missouri, on March 31. Boundary Training for all rostered ministers and SAMS will be held in April, and the Synod Assembly will be online on June 4-5, beginning on Friday evening and conclude Saturday afternoon.

These are just a few of the forthcoming events. There will be a lot to look forward to in 2021!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alter flowers are gifted through Advent by Helen and Steve Gregert in memory of Roger and Ruth Thor and Kathleen Coons.

Christmas Eve Worship will be hosted in two ways.

We are providing a “worship at home book” that you may use with your family. The book will have words and times for you to light candles, if you like. There will be a file online with carols for you to sing with as you go through the service. You may request these through the office, pick one up in the entry way to the church, or have it sent to you on email. Families with children will have packets to be delivered to their homes which will include tangrams to make the different parts of the nativity. You will need scissors to cut them out. 😊

Also, we will have an online worship video, also to be found on the web page, where a bulletin may be found and the sanctuary will be the location. Pastor and the Worship leaders pray you will find meaningful worship this holy night for yourself and your faith. May you be healthy, dear Church, as we honor God and one another by staying home.

If you would like to give your offering online you can do so on our website at <https://www.melclindsborg.org/giving>. We are grateful for your generous support.

Please pray for **USD 400 and all teachers, students, administrators, and staff**, that they might remain healthy and mindful of best health practices, that learning be deep and strong, and the all might benefit from the community of learning.

Advent messages will be posted on the Messiah Facebook page each Wednesday in Advent. Please watch for our last one this Wednesday. They may get to be posted on our website as well, Pastor is uncertain of the technology. 😊

As Covid numbers in our area are skyrocketing, **our worship has returned to recorded only**. Please watch the website for the youtube link each Sunday morning at 9:30.

Cookies for Christmas!



There is nothing better than homemade cookies and treats at Christmas time! The Messiah Lutheran Church Council will provide each congregation household with a special container of fresh treats on **Sunday, December 20th from 2-3 PM.** Drive through the north church parking lot to pick up your container of goodies!

DECEMBER 20, 2020
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



God favors the peasant girl Mary.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sunday | Luke 1:26-38 | The birth of Jesus foretold |
| Monday | 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 | The Lord's message to David |
| Tuesday | Romans 16:25-27 | Paul's closing prayer |
| Wednesday | Luke 1:46b-55 | Mary's song of praise |
| Thursday | Luke 2:1-20 | The birth of Jesus |
| Friday | John 3:11-16 | For God so loved the world |
| Saturday | Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26 | God's promise to David |
| Sunday | Luke 2:22-40 | Jesus presented in the temple |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus." **Luke 1:30-31 (NRSV)***

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord God, just as you favored your servant Mary, grant all of us faith and trust in your power to bring salvation to all through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

With this food we receive your steadfast love, O Lord; with our mouths we proclaim your faithfulness to all generations through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Psalm 89:1)

A Blessing to Give:

May the love of God bless you with the good news of Jesus' birth.

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Wait for the Lord

WEEKLY MILESTONES CARING CONVERSATIONS

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When have you received special attention from friends or family?
- Think of someone you have valued as a friend. In what ways do you value them?
- The angel Gabriel describes Mary as favored. What does it mean to you that God has given the world our Savior and Lord Jesus through Mary, a young peasant girl?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 1:26-38.

In verses 28 and 30 the angel Gabriel says that Mary is favored, that is, Mary experiences the undeserved kindness of God. In Luke 2:40 and 52 the child Jesus is also described as favored. Divine attention comes to a young virgin to deliver Jesus, the Son of the Most High. The beginning of the Gospel of Luke tells of Elizabeth, a barren woman who gives birth, Mary, a peasant girl who gives birth to the future king in the lineage of David, and of shepherds in the field who will be the first evangelists of the good news of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:18). The message is clear: with God all things are possible, and as with Mary, our faithful response is, "let it be with me according to your word" (v. 38). Mary is the model of the life of faith that acknowledges that God has done great things for her. As we prepare to enter the season of Jesus' birth, we are met with God's favor and blessings for us as well. How has God come to you with divine favor?

Pray: **God of undeserved kindness, give us faith to trust that with you all things are possible through Christ Jesus our Lord, Son of the Most High God. Amen.**

SERVICE

During this Advent season think of those who are not favored in our society. For example, the homeless are poor, hungry, and in need. In what ways can you show God's love to them through an act of kindness?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

From your nativity set, hold each piece in silence for a moment. Then place the pieces back in the scene. Have Mary and Joseph arrive first, followed by the shepherds and then the wise men. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope, the second one of peace, the third one of joy, and the fourth one of love. *Say this Bible verse: **For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*** (John 3:16)

Pray: **Lord God, thank you for showing us love even when we are afraid like Mary, the mother of Jesus. Give us hope, peace, joy, and love as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.**

In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org