

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fourth Sunday in Advent – December 20, 2020

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

- Luke 1:30–37 –

During catechism class, as we were studying the Second Article of the Creed, we turned to this passage in Luke's Gospel. "What does it mean that St. Luke tells us that Mary was a virgin?" I asked the group of sixth through eighth graders.

"It means that she doesn't eat meat," answered Madyson.

After I wiped away the tears of joy and laughter at Madyson's innocence, I explained the real meaning of Mary's virginity.

Throughout biblical history there have been many, many miracles to ponder. The miraculous conception and birth of the Messiah is, however, one of the greatest (the greatest being the resurrection). We've heard the story of Isaac's birth to a barren Sarah and marveled at God's goodness. We know the similar story that accompanies this one, of John's conception and birth to aging and barren parents. But never had a virgin conceived and given birth! The meaning of this is that God would do whatever God had to do in order to bring salvation to a sinful humanity. Unable to live up to the Law, God provided the necessary grace in his one and only Son, Jesus.

To some, this story may sound like ancient mythology - a young maiden is visited by a god and becomes impregnated, giving birth to another god. It's easy to dismiss if we think of it that way. But we are talking about the one, true God here, not one of a mythical pantheon that helps explain war, tragedy, weather, etc. Our God is the God who fashioned the whole creation out of nothing (ex nihilo), and who breathed life into dust to make the first human. With God, nothing is impossible! Nothing!

This is good news for us on many levels! On a spiritual/salvation level - it is the answer to our sin. On a physical level, it means that God is capable of handling all our needs. Do we believe this news? Mary certainly did. Amen.

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NEW! Livestreaming Service

Bible Lutheran is now livestreaming the 10am worship service every week.

This allows those who cannot come to the building to participate in the service in "real time" by accessing a video livestream through a link on the website. The service is also recorded and posted on the website (worship page) for viewing at any time.

www.biblelutheranchurch.org

The Sunday bulletin and children's bulletin are posted on the website each week and can be downloaded and printed out.

The "family service" sheet is no longer be available.

If you need help accessing the Livestream Service, call Pastor Dave: (912) 661-8735.

The Only Wise God

Find the 30 bold words from Romans 16:25-27 (ESV)

W N D D C P E W V G A R Y C C
S A O Y F L I B B C F E R D I
H T G O B S I G C C A V O T T
Q I R A E P I O P C V E L S E
F O R E V E R M O R E L G I H
B N D F N D G N I H C A E R P
R S R E I G T L E K C T F H O
I N A N S E T C E O N I L C R
N M G G R O N H M P Y O E L P
G U Y C E F E L M E X S N W B A
O H E S I S A C M N H O P N O
N S T D T N J E S U S G G B Y
L Q E I D E Z W R I T I N G S
Y B L L A N R E T E D N E M A
O L O N G F H Y T U O B A H G

Now to him who is **able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ**, according to the **revelation** of the **mystery** that was kept **secret for long ages** but has now been **disclosed** and through the **prophetic writings** has been made **known to all nations**, according to the **command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith** — to the **only wise God be glory forevermore** through Jesus Christ! **Amen.**

The Announcement

Find the 41 bold words from Luke 1:26-33 (ESV)

F O R E V E R G E Y D C H D W
R E I G N N A D N L E O V A O
U O Y T T B N W O T H N I V M
N A Z A R E T H R A T C R I B
H B E I F O N D H E O E G D S
I R E O R R U X T R R I I V U
G L U H E J R B S G T V N O S
H N T C O E S G L S E E N E E
D I S S H U N K D E B E N J J
W I E T O I S D I E D T O A D
D P A B T M P E L N R O S C R
H F E E L I L A G O G O G O O
I A E D I A R F A K H D V B L
R R E M A N G E L F Q E O A V
G R O V A F Y R A M H K B M F

In the sixth month the **angel Gabriel** was sent from God to a city of **Galilee** named **Nazareth**, to a **virgin betrothed** to a man whose name was **Joseph**, of the **house of David**. And the virgin's name was **Mary**. And he came to her and said, "**Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!**" But she was **greatly troubled** at the saying, and tried to **discern** what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be **afraid**, **Mary**, for you have **found favor with God**. And **behold**, you will **conceive** in your **womb** and **bear a son**, and you shall call his name **Jesus**. He 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 father David**, and he will **reign** over the house of **Jacob forever**, and of his **kingdom** there will be no **end**."