

MUMC At-Home Worship: December 6, 2020

Fear not! As we continue with the Christmas story today, we look to the story of the angel inviting Mary to be the very mother of God and might consider how we, too, are invited to take part in bringing Christ to life on earth. In such a strange year, I am thankful for the snow and lights, the carols and the decorations, all of which seem a wonderful reminder that the story of God is continuing to unfold around us and Christ is still with us. Thank you for worshipping with us this week!

-Pastor Dillon

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

Almighty God, calm our spirits and prepare our hearts for the celebration of your birth this year. Remove our fear, we pray, and replace it with peace. In Christ's name, Amen.

Hymn: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*, United Methodist Hymnal #196 [watch/listen here](#)

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. You've likely heard this story before! Sometimes, familiarity with a passage of scripture can keep us from truly encountering it when reading. Take a moment to slowly re-read this passage. Did you notice anything new or surprising? How does this scripture make you feel?
2. Perhaps the most astounding part of Mary's encounter with the angel is her ready answer, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." How do you imagine you might respond if in her position? How might we cultivate such a willing readiness to step into the seemingly impossible plans God has for us?
3. Before telling Mary, "Don't be afraid," the angel says, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" While fear is a natural and expected emotion for Mary, she chooses to trust in God's presence and agrees to play a part in this wonderful story. How might we recognize Christ's presence with us yet today, so our fears do not hold us back from rejoicing in the unfolding of God's story?

Hymn: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*, United Methodist Hymnal #216 [watch/listen here](#)

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, United Methodist Hymnal #234 [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer: Coming Christ, we offer ourselves to your hands, thankful for the invitation to go beyond our fear and participate in your story here on earth. Grant us an inner peace, forever steady in your presence with us. Amen.

(Blow out the candle)

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
United Methodist Hymnal #196

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" words: Charles Wesley, 1744; music: Rowland H. Prichard, 1830. Both are in the public domain.

Luke 1:26-38 Common English Bible

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God."

Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Scripture quotations noted CEB are taken from the Common English Bible, copyright 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming
United Methodist Hymnal #216

1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-gone was the night.
2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore to men a Savior
When half-gone was the night.
3. This Flower, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load.

"Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming" sts. 1-2 are 15th cent. German, trans. by Theodore Baker, 1894; st. 3 from The Hymnal, 1940. Music is by Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesang, 1599, harm. By Michael Praetorius, 1609. St. 3 © 1940, 1943, renewed 1971 The Church Pension Fund

O Come, All Ye Faithful
United Methodist Hymnal #234

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

2. God of God, Light of Light eternal,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created,

[Refrain]

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"

[Refrain]

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;

[Refrain]

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" words and music are by John F. Wade, 1743 and are in the public domain.