

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2020

BY DEREK WEBER, ADAPTED

WEEK FOUR

ADVENT WREATH: Luke 1:26-38

Tim Everhart

*²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth,
²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.
²⁸ And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."
²⁹ But she was very perplexed at this statement, and was pondering what kind of greeting this was.
³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.
³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.
³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;
³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."
³⁴ But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"
³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God.
³⁶ And behold, even your relative Elizabeth herself has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called infertile is now in her sixth month.
³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."
³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, the Lord's bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word."
And the angel departed from her.*

Luke 1:26-38

Reader One: We live on the brink every day. We stand on the threshold between this world and the next one. We live and move between the ordinary and divine, between the mundane and the mystery. Too often, we forget to look up and see the angels in our living room. We forget that the love we give and live is a sign of eternity, God with us... right now.

Reader Two: Luke tells us that God's favor came to a girl, an ordinary girl. It might have been you or your daughter; it might have been the girl down the street or your grandchild. The messenger of God came and greeted her and said, "The Lord is with you." What a gift and a promise: Emmanuel, God *is* with us.

Reader One: We light these candles with peace in our hearts for the promise of proximity, the nearness of God. Even when we forget to listen, to lean into that Presence, God is as close as our own breath. This, in a confused and confusing world, is a Peace that passes all understanding. It is the Peace that indeed knows Jesus is coming.

Reader Two: O Come, O Come Emmanuel. Please join in singing the sung response:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
(Refrain to O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)