

# Grace Devotion

Week of December 15, 2024

Pastor Fred Young

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## Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

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I had overheard my father and brothers telling stories about God. God would sometimes even choose a special person to receive a message from a divine messenger that would change the course of our history. I don't remember hearing of any women getting a divine message though, at least, not from someone outside of their own family. I guess Sarah and Abraham talked to angels together, but me, I was all alone when the angel appeared to me. I am not sure why

I was chosen though. I thought I was dreaming. What could God possibly want with me? I am a woman, I don't have any influence around here. I am getting ready to be married, and I will become the property of another man, another family. But the angel called me Favored one...God favors me! God is with me. I had no idea what to do with these words and I could not have imagined what kind of message this would be.

What would they think of me if I told them the story of how this angel? Will they think I am crazy? Will I get into trouble? I hope they don't think I am



blaspheming God with this divine announcement. It's not an easy message to hear, though I guess there aren't many easy messages that God has come to announce. But the angel told me not to be afraid.

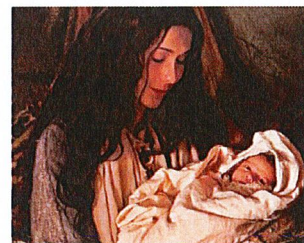
I am going to carry a miracle. I am still not sure how it is going to happen, but I am going to have a child who will grow into the savior of our world. I do find myself wondering about how God thought up bringing a Messiah, a royal king into the world as a baby, especially a family as lowly as ours. Most people don't know they have been chosen by God from birth. I find myself wondering whether or not I should worry about things like whether this baby will survive past his 5 year birthday, unlike so many children born in the world. Or if sickness will weaken him from his job here on earth. Knowing your baby is chosen I don't think will make it any easier when he cries in the middle of the night, or when he falls and scrapes his knee in Joseph's shop.

Joseph...how am I going to tell Joseph? I am frightened that I will be disowned. This news will likely disgrace my own family enough that they would not even take me back. I have to tell them, but this is going to be so hard. Be not afraid...be not afraid... The Angel told me not to be afraid, and now I understand. You see, I went to Joseph, and he already knew, and he's going to keep me anyway! We will walk this road together. I am so proud I have such an honorable husband who listens to God and listens to me. No woman could ask for more!

Nothing is impossible with God. That was the last thing the angel said to me. I believe that now, in ways I never even thought about before. God has come to an ordinary girl like me and changed my life. This promised one, whose kingdom will have no end, imagine what he is going to do for the rest of the world! Miracles are happening everywhere.

**My Soul Magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior!**

PRAYER: God of wonder and miracles, remind us all of the gifts we were created to become. Amen.



Blessings! Pastor Fred

**December 15, 2024**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Welcome/Announcements

Westminster Chimes

Prelude “Mary Did You Know?” ~Emily Femino

**\*\*Song: “What a Glorious Night” #25**

**\*\* Call to Worship**

Lector: We gather together, hearts filled with anticipation for this Advent season.

**Congregation: We are ready to worship in fellowship.**

Lector: During this Advent season we may find ourselves questioning what we are called to do.

**Congregation: Yet, we remain open to the unexpected ways God moves among us, trusting in God’s plan.**

Lector: Help us to notice each of the small blessings in our lives,

**Congregation: Let us rejoice in the hope and promise of what’s to come!**

**\*\* Opening Prayer: (pray silently or aloud)**

**Gracious and Loving God, Open our hearts, as Mary’s was open, to the work of Your Spirit within each one of us. Help us to respond with courage and faith, as Mary did, embracing the possibilities You place before us. Be with us in our worship today, and may Mary’s story inspire us to carry Your light into the world. Amen**

Lighting the Advent Wreath *The Candle for Mary*

Response “What Child Is This” #137 (V1)

**\*\* Sharing the Peace of Christ**

**\*\* Hymn: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” #141**

Celebration of Our Gifts

**\*\* Doxology #625**

**\*\* Prayer of Dedication**

Special Music: Emily Femino “All Is Well”

Joys and Concerns

Praying for Others/Lord’s Prayer

Prayer of Confession/Silent Reflection/Assurance of Grace

**\*\* New Creed**

Hymn: “What Child Is This” #157

Scripture Readings:

Micah 5:2-5a

Luke 1:39-55

Time for the Young at Heart

Message: “Mary”

**\*\*Song: “Glory (Let There Be Peace)” #23**

**\*\* Final Blessing**

Please remain standing to sing “A Choral Benediction”

Postlude “Toccata on ‘Veni Emmanuel’ by James Deaton

**\*\* On the screen      \*\* Please stand, if you are able.**



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Portions of today's worship elements have been taken from the following:  
Shepherd, J. Barrie. *Faces at the Manger*, Upper Room Books, Nashville,  
Tennessee, 1992, pp. 15-22.  
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### Announcements

Thanks to Emily for sharing her gift today!  
December Collections: Mitten Tree

### Upcoming Events

#### Advent Season Series:

December 15<sup>th</sup>: Mary  
December 22<sup>nd</sup>: Angels

#### Christmas Eve Services:

3pm @ Trinity Gettysburg  
5:30pm @ Grace UCC  
8pm @ Trinity Gettysburg

### Financial Information

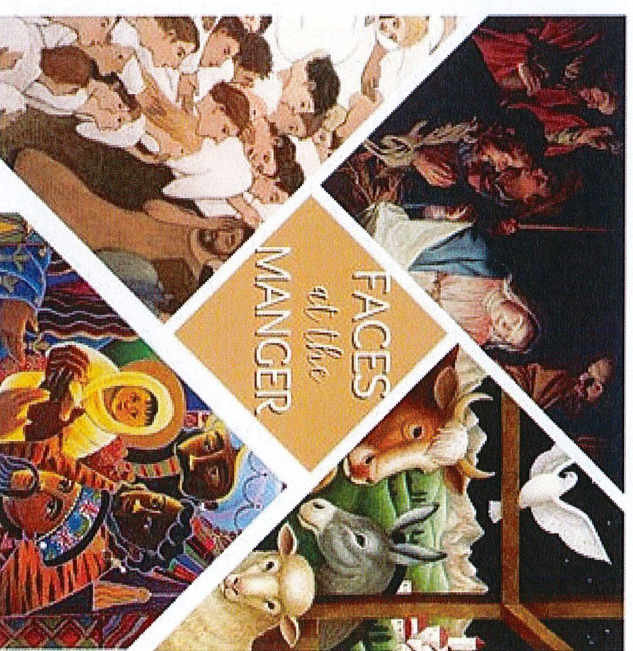
General pledge Oct. 2024: \$2,867.00

*General pledge Oct. 2023 \$3,793.00*

YTD income: \$197,533.53

YTD expenses: \$238,285.07

YTD deficit: \$40,751.54



Grace United Church of Christ  
100 Fourth Street  
Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Thank you for today's Worship Leaders:

Associate Pastor - Amy Fawks

Lector -

Organist and Music Director - Christian Keller

Head Usher — Jenn Weaver

# Luke 1:39-55

## Mary visits Elizabeth



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

holy spirit  
 blessed  
 mother  
 judah  
 womb

zechariah  
 country  
 cousin  
 visit  
 Mary

Elizabeth  
 leaped  
 women  
 lord  
 cry

greeting  
 behold  
 fruit  
 babe  
 joy





## WORD SCRAMBLE!

SKOICOE \_\_\_\_\_

ASTAN ULCSA \_\_\_\_\_

OTH COOLTHACE \_\_\_\_\_

GLIHES SELBL \_\_\_\_\_

LOCARS \_\_\_\_\_

LIMSOTTEE \_\_\_\_\_

BIGGEEDARRN \_\_\_\_\_

SHLITG \_\_\_\_\_

EONGGG \_\_\_\_\_

VAINTYIT \_\_\_\_\_

PURHOLD \_\_\_\_\_

YADNC NECA \_\_\_\_\_

MOWNANS \_\_\_\_\_

BEEEDRCM \_\_\_\_\_

GLANE \_\_\_\_\_

TINCKGOS \_\_\_\_\_



## ANSWER KEY

COOKIES

SANTA CLAUS

HOT CHOCOLATE

SLEIGH BELLS

CAROLS

MISTLETOE

GINGERBREAD

LIGHTS

EGGNOG

NATIVITY

RUDOLPH

CANDY CANE

SNOWMAN

DECEMBER

ANGEL

STOCKING