

Wednesday, December 17

Read Luke 1:26-38. It was in Mary's "Yes" to the angel Gariel that Mary was transformed from ordinary to extraordinary. What does that idea say about you? How would your saying "Yes" to God transform you? What is it that God may be calling you to be and do? What gifts and talents do you possess that God would want you to use in his Kingdom on earth? Contemplate these questions and write your thoughts here.

Thursday, December 18

What do you think of when you read or hear the word "submission?" Do you think of weakness? Do you believe that submission always means that you are giving in to another person or God? Can submission refer to a decisive moment in your life? What do you think of when you read or hear the word obedience? Do you think that you will be punished if you don't obey another? Does obedience mean that another is controlling you? Consider these words, submission and obedience and write your reflections here.

Friday, December 19

Read Luke 1:26-38. Mary's Yes to the angel Gabriel and God meant that she became the God-bearer; she was the one who brought the Christ Child into the world. How would your "Yes" allow you to share Christ in the world? During our Communion liturgy it is often shared that the bread is a symbol of our being the living body of Christ in the world and that the cup means we are forgiven, freed to joyfully serve our God. How are you presenting Christ to the world? Ask for God's wisdom and write your thoughts here.

Message Notes December 14, 2025

Our Advent Pilgrimage – Destination: Nazareth *

- I. Some of the over-arching _____ of this message series.
 - A. First is the difference between a _____ and a _____.
 - B. Second, we have _____ or _____ throughout this Season of Advent.
 - C. Third, we are considering each week the _____ of our human experiences.
 - D. Our thin place destination today is the small village of Nazareth in the _____ part of Israel.
- II. Luke, the author of our scripture for today, often writes about how God works among and with _____ people.
 - A. Nazareth was a very small Jewish village with fewer than five hundred people, _____, shepherds and _____.
 - B. It is fully conceivable that Mary was a _____ in one of the homes of the rich and influential.
 - C. Mary most likely did not anticipate the coming of the _____.
 - 1. Then the _____ shows up and says "Greetings, favored one!"
 - 2. At this point, the **ordinary** Mary becomes **extraordinary**.

*Luke 1:26-38

- III. What transformed Mary from an ordinary teenaged servant into the mother of God is her “_____” to all that the Angel Gabriel had told her.
- Mary is honored because she said _____ to the role God wanted her to play in the history of the world’s _____.
 - The notion of _____ has been _____ or even denigrated many times over.
 - Mary’s submission was a _____ determination in favor of holy obedience; it was an act of _____ and _____.
 - Mary, through this act of submission, became the first _____ of Jesus Christ.
 - She was the first to hear about and _____ Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah and Savior.
- IV. Sanctifying Grace which is the belief that God’s grace _____ works in our lives.
- Mary was sanctified as God _____ her life from a young woman to what is called in the Greek language, *theotokos*, meaning _____ - _____.
 - A couple of lessons that we should consider _____
 - First, if God recognized and knew _____, God can recognize and each of _____ as well.
 - Second, God has an _____ for each of us.
 - Are we willing to _____ that God know us and then accept God’s call onto a _____?
 - There are _____ and _____ when we submit to God’s invitation and will for our lives.
 - No matter the challenges, saying yes to God brings reward of _____ and _____.
 - Saying _____ to that calling means that you can, be a _____ - _____ for the world to witness.

to enhance your understanding of the message
and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, December 15

We’ve discussed through this series of message three major themes: 1) the difference between journeys and pilgrimages, 2) the Biblical mentors and guides that we have encountered and 3) thin places. Look at your notes and review these ideas; perhaps you wrote some additional notes in the little extra space provided. What these interest you the most? Most likely the concept of thin places is the most enduring theme. Think through your life and attempt to identify the thin places in your life. Contemplate these themes and write your reflections here.

Tuesday, December 16

Read Luke 1:26-38. The story of the annunciation is a wonderful demonstration of interaction between a human and a divine being, the angel Gabriel. What many people focus on is the dogma of the Virgin Birth. Scottish Theologian and author, William Barclay wrote that the church does not require our belief in the Virgin Birth. There are many who would disagree with Barclay and yet, some have their doubts. Barclay wrote, “The Jews had a saying that in the mother and the birth of every child there are three partners – the father, the mother and the Spirit of God. They believed that no child could ever be born without the Spirit. And it may well be that the New Testament stories of the birth of Jesus are lovely, poetical ways of saying that, even if he had a human father, the Holy Sprit of God was operative in his birth in a unique way.” Wow! What do you think? How important is the Virgin Birth to your faith? Contemplate these words of Barclay and write your thoughts here.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant

