



December 1, 2023

-Pastor Rebecca-

Luke 1:24-45 *The Voice*

24 Shortly after his return, Elizabeth became pregnant. She avoided public contact for the next five months.

Elizabeth: 25 I have lived with the disgrace of being barren for all these years. Now God has looked on me with favor. When I go out in public *with my baby*, I will not be disgraced any longer.

26 Six months later in Nazareth, a city in *the rural province of Galilee*, the heavenly messenger Gabriel made another appearance. This time the messenger was sent by God 27 to meet with a virgin named Mary, who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David himself. 28 The messenger entered her home.

Messenger: Greetings! You are favored, and the Lord is with you! [Among all women on the earth, you have been blessed.]

29 The heavenly messenger's words baffled Mary, and she wondered what type of greeting this was.

Messenger: 30 Mary, don't be afraid. You have found favor with God. 31 Listen, you are going to become pregnant. You will have a son, and you must name

Him "Savior," or Jesus. 32 Jesus will become the greatest among men. He will be known as the Son of the Highest God. God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David, 33 and He will reign over the covenant family of Jacob forever.

Mary: 34 But I have never been with a man. How can this be possible?

Messenger: 35 The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The Most High will overshadow you. That's why this holy child will be known, *as not just your son, but also as the Son of God*. 36 *It sounds impossible*, but listen—you know your relative Elizabeth has been unable to bear children and is now far too old to be a mother. Yet she has become pregnant, *as God willed it*. Yes, in three months, she will have a son. 37 So the impossible is possible with God.

Mary (deciding in her heart): 38 Here I am, the Lord's humble servant. As you have said, let it be done to me.

And the heavenly messenger was gone. 39 Mary immediately got up and hurried to the hill country, in the province of Judah, 40-41 where her cousins Zacharias and Elizabeth lived. When Mary entered their home and greeted Elizabeth, who felt her baby leap in her womb, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Elizabeth (shouting): 42 You are blessed, *Mary*, blessed among all women, and the child you bear is blessed! 43 And blessed I am as well, that the mother of my Lord has come to me! 44 As soon as I heard your voice greet me, my baby leaped for joy within me. 45 How fortunate you are, *Mary*, for you believed that what the Lord told you would be fulfilled.

Also see Luke 1:1-24, 46-80

message notes:

How does a weary world rejoice?

- We _____ where _____ (vs.18)
or where _____ (vs. 25)

Reflection questions: What is weary in you that needs relief? What about in the world?

- We _____ with _____ mission.
(vs. 38)

Reflection questions: Think of a time it seemed like you and God were really collaborating together. What did it feel like? What might be a divine invitation for you this Advent?

- We _____ into life-giving _____ that
_____. (vs. 41-42)

Reflection questions: If joy is fundamentally rooted in connection, how might you prioritize these in a healthy way this Christmas season?