



Out On a Limb Week 4 –Mary Spiritual Formation & Discussion Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

"Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.
Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah."
Matthew 1:16

"In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee,²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David.²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

²⁹Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

³⁴Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

³⁵The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. ³⁶What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. ³⁷For the word of God will never fail."

³⁸Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her."

Luke 1:26 -38

Reflection Questions:

- Who is one person who has shown you God's love and light?

- What stood out to you from Sunday's service? How did you sense God encouraging and challenging you through the songs, the message, and being with others as part of the church? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Read Luke 1:26-38.
 - What do you notice about God?
 - What do you observe about the angel?
 - What do you notice about Mary?
- Chip asked several questions and offered several observations about Mary and her story. Take a moment to reflect and consider (out loud or write it down):
 - Why did God choose Mary for this task?
 - What qualified Mary for this task?
- Read this quote out loud: "God does such extraordinary things through such simple, ordinary obedience."
 - How have you observed this in your life?
 - How does this encourage you and challenge you in your current life situation?
- What was your reaction to the artwork, "Mary Consoles Eve"? (If you want to view it again, google the name.) What stood out to you in the imagery?
- Do you see yourself as someone who is a "Christ-bearer?" Why/why not?
- How might you show Jesus to others this week?
- Is there anything else from this teaching that you want to explore more?
- Take time to pray as you close your reflection or discussion, asking God to help you act on what he has asked you to do.

Advent - How can you stay connected to God in the midst of this season?

We have put together a list of Advent and Christmas resources, including Bible reading plans, devotionals, books, and video devotionals for families. Let this season be grounded in Jesus and his story by choosing one tool to use either on your own or with friends or family. Learn more at www.wschurch.org/advent.

Visit www.wschurch.org/resources to see additional tools and resources.

Message Main Points and Scripture:

- Matthew 1:16 – "...Joseph was the husband of Mary. And Mary was the mother of Jesus, who is called the Messiah."
- Luke 1:26-28 - "...God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!"
- Luke 1:28 - "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!"
- Luke 1:29-33 – "Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel, forever; his Kingdom will never end!"
- Luke 1:34 – "Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."
- Luke 1:35-37 - The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God."
- Luke 1:38 - "I am the Lord's servant," Mary said. "Let it happen to me as you've said." And then the angel left her.

- Why did God choose Mary for this task?
- God didn't choose Abram because he was special. He was special because he was chosen by God.
- What *qualified* Mary for this task?
- Luke 1:38 - "I am the Lord's servant. Let it happen to me as you've said."
- *"Here I am, God—I'm your servant."*
- God does such extraordinary things through such simple, ordinary obedience.
- Image: [Mary Consoles Eve]