

December 24, 2023 ~10:00 a.m. French River Lutheran Church, ELCA Duluth, MN

Reverend Kimberly Sturtz ~ Presiding <u>Worship Assistant</u>: Dave Edblom <u>Lector</u>: Mary Ann Sironen <u>Altar Guild</u>: Lynne Compton <u>Musicians</u>: Organist – David Fiebiger; FRLC Choir

## Welcome to all in Jesus' Name!

LARGE PRINT worship folders are available from an usher. A family restroom and nursery are to the left of the sanctuary. To contact the pastor or church office, you are invited to complete a pew card and return the information portion either to an usher or by way of the offering plate. Please keep the bookmark and worship with us again! We appreciate electronic devices set on "mute" during the service.

#### Bold print signals places where the assembly speaks in unity in worship.

\*Indicates where to stand as you are able in body or in Spirit.

#### Prelude:

## **Organist:** David Fiebiger

#### Welcome/Announcements:

#### ————GATHERING——— The Holy Spirit gathers us together as people of God

#### \*<u>Greeting</u>:

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.** 

#### \*Gathering Hymn: The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

**ELW 265** 



Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924 Music: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

## \*Lighting the Advent Candle: Fourth Sunday of Advent: Joy

#### \*Candle Lighting:

Joy to the world! Our God is now coming to bring us "good news." May we sing songs of praise and gladness. We know that our Savior reigns. Let us light the Candle of Joy. (Light the fourth purple/blue candle)

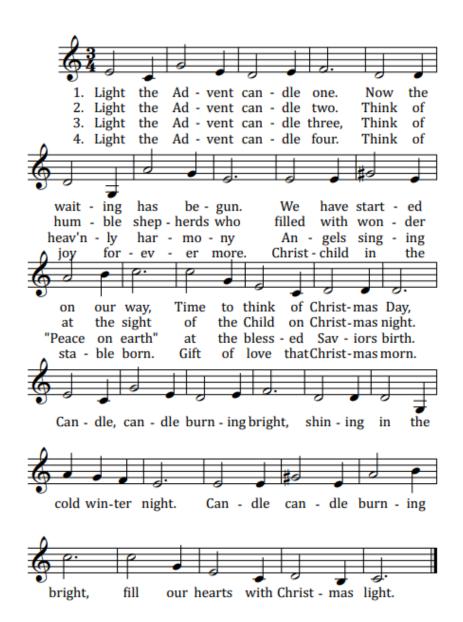
### \*Advent Song: All Verses

(See

## Advent Song

~Mary Lu Walker Insert)

Mary Lu Walker



## \*<u>Responsive Litany</u>:

Standing now on this side of the passages of scripture, **the sacred words that these past twelve months have held for us all,** we think of Mary, at the ending of the birthing and bringing forth: **after the angel and let it be,** after Elizabeth and blessed is she, **after angels and shepherds and alleluias:** the quiet joy surrounding us all **Holy Pondering. Holy Treasuring.** Just like Mary, we treasure all these words and ponder them in our hearts. **as we cross into the light of joy, this blessed Christmas Eve Day**.

Paraphrased from Richardson, Jan. Through the Advent Door: Entering a Contemplative Christmas (pp. 100-101). Wanton Gospeller Press.

## \*Prayer of the Day:

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

## FRLC Choir Anthem: "Advent Medley"

**Arranged By: David Fiebiger** 

----WORD-----

## God speaks to us through scripture, preaching, and song.

A reading from 2 Samuel:

Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.

## First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying,

#### **Mary Ann Sironen**

"Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

## Psalm: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing. (Ps. 89:1) Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness. For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever; you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens. "I have made a covenant with my chosen one: I have sworn an oath to David my servant: 'I will establish your line forever, and preserve your throne for all generations.'" <sup>19</sup>You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people: "I have set the crown upon a warrior and have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand will hold him fast and my arm will make him strong. No enemy shall deceive him, nor shall the wicked bring him down. I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him. My faithfulness and steadfast love are with him, and he shall be victorious through my name. I will set his hand on the sea. and his right hand on the rivers. He will say to me, 'You are my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

A reading from Romans:

Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

## Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

## \*Gospel Acclamation: "Celtic Alleluia"

(The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.)



## \*<u>Gospel</u>: Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to *Luke 1:26-38*. Glory to you, O Lord.

In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

**Children's Sermon**:

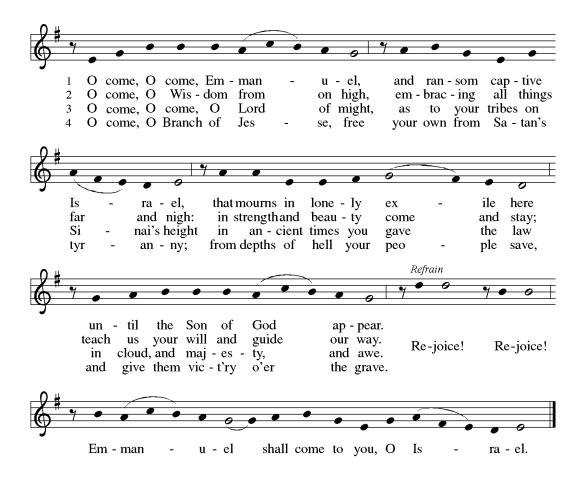
#### **The Reverend Kimberly Sturtz**

#### <u>Sermon</u>:

#### **The Reverend Kimberly Sturtz**

#### \*Hymn of the Day: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

V. 1-4; ELW 257



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Text: *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent. Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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\*<u>Nicene Creed</u>: With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

\***Peace**: The Peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you**. (*Please share this peace with your neighbors.*)

## Prayers of the People:

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

## (A brief silence.)

You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into a thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Merciful God,

## receive our prayer.

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.** 

You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God,

## receive our prayer.

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill (*especially all who are on our prayer list and those we pray for whether silently or aloud*). Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,

## receive our prayer.

You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.** 

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.** 

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.** 

## \*Offering Prayer:

(Please stand as you are able as the offering is brought forward. If you did not place your offering in the plate as you entered the sanctuary, feel free to hand it to an usher upon dismissal. During the week, offerings may be placed in the secure lockbox by the lower doors [slot is right of the door]. Mail and online giving are also available. Thank you for your generous support of our ministry together!)

God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.** 

## 

## \*<u>Thanksgiving for the Word</u>:

(The presiding minister leads one of the following or another appropriate prayer.) Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise. By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.** 

#### \*Lord's Prayer:

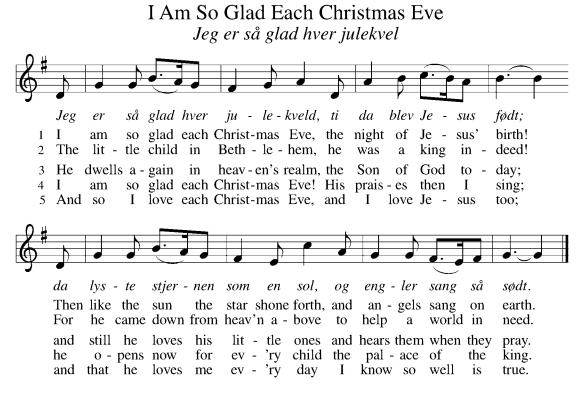
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

——————————————————————————————————————
God blesses us and equips us as disciples sent into the world
* <u>Blessing</u> :
The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit 🕂 remain upon you
now and forever.

Amen.

#### \*<u>Sending Hymn</u>: "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve"

ELW 271



Text: Marie Wexelsen, 1832–1911; tr. Peter A. Sveeggen, 1881–1959 Music: JEG ER SÅ GLAD, Peder Knudsen, 1819–1863 Text © 1932 Augsburg Publishing House

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## Dismissal: Go in peace. Keep awake. Thanks be to God.

(Please remain in your pew/chair until the pastor processes to the narthex and you are invited by an usher to depart.)

#### Postlude:

## **Organist:** David Fiebiger

## Thank you for joining us from wherever you are. Remember, you are beloved and blessed!

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#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

<sup>†</sup>Extending sympathy to the family & friends of Pr. Art Solberg who passed away on December 12. A Celebration of Life will be held on January 22, 2024 at 2 p.m. at Hosanna! Church, 9600 163<sup>rd</sup> St. W. Lakeville, MN 55044.

<sup>+</sup>Extending sympathy to the family & friends of Rita Cook who passed away on December 5. A Celebration of Life will be held in the Spring.

<sup>+</sup>Extending sympathy to the family & friends of Paul Bernard Peterson who passed away on December 3. A private service was held.

<u>Coming Up</u> :			
12/24 Sun: 10a – 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent;			
Worship In-Person/Online: Rev. Kim Sturtz;			
11:15a – Coffee Fellowship			
4p – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service; In-Person & Online			
12/25 Mon: Merry Christmas!			
<b>12/26 Tues: 9a – Bulletin Deadline;</b> 7p – AA			
12/27 Wed: 9a – Parables Assembly; 7p – Choir			
12/28 Thurs: 9a – Outreach; 11a – Hospitality			
12/31 Next Sun: 10a – Lessons & Carols			
Worship In-Person/Online: Phil Jensen			
11:15a – Coffee Fellowship			

Your 2024 offering envelopes can be picked up near the usher's stand. If you didn't get a box and want one, please contact Kay Libby, Financial Secretary, at 218-390-3281.

## FRLC Annual CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 21, 2024 following the 10:00 AM worship service ("Snow Date" is Jan. 28). How will you serve the congregation and God's Kingdom in 2024? Prayerfully consider this question for elected and appointed positions of leadership! The Christmas special offering will be given to the Damiano Center and to Union Gospel Mission.



It's that time of year again, **Annual Reports are due!** Please submit your FRLC Annual Reports (Microsoft Word document in <u>Tahoma 12 pt font</u>) to <u>frlc5310@gmail.com</u> **no later than Friday, December 29.** Submitting prior to the due date is greatly appreciated and thank-you to those who have already submitted. Thank-you, Tiffany ~FRLC Secretary



## Welcome to French River Lutheran Church

You are welcome; to keep this bulletin however, we recycle when possible so you may leave it on the ushers' stand.



**Immediate**: Family & friends of Pr. Art Solberg; Family & friends of Rita Cook; Family and friends of Paul B. Peterson; Carol Pearson; Bonnie Smrstick; prayers for peace and comfort both as she travels to be with Dennis as he is nearing the end of his journey.; Deb Sodomka (cousin of Bill & Susie Lannon).

**Long-Term**: Phil Strom, for Parkinsons; Julie Moe-Hommerding; 5-year-old great niece of Susie Lannon (heart surgery 6/26/17, still not healthy); Kathy Johnson (Carol Leppala's friend); Bruce Sundberg; Angela Debelak, (niece of Gail Johnson) is currently in remission from for her brain cancer and recovering slowly; please continue to pray for no recurrence.; Alex Peterson – military service; David Peterson (brother of Paul Peterson); Todd Sironen.

# WHEN SUBMITTING A NAME TO THE TELEPHONE PRAYER CHAIN, PLEASE INDICATE IF IT IS PERMISSABLE TO LIST IN THE BULLETIN.

Called by the Spirit	December 24 AM/PM	December 31
Worship Leader	Rev. Kim Sturtz	Phil Jensen
Lector	Skipper Sironen	FRLC Youth
Altar Guild	Lynne Compton	Brita Aug
Ushers	Dick &Marilyn/Sue & Steve	T.B.D.
Counters/Worship	Sue Baker/Dave Edblom*	Sheila Laiti/
Assistant*	Haeli Pettis*	Haeli Pettis*
Coffee Fellowship		Don Mattson
Prayer Chain	Babs Strom 218.525.6200	

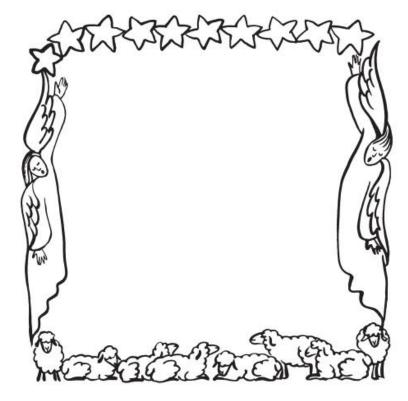
French River Lutheran Church, 5310 Ryan Rd, Duluth, MN 55804<br/>Church: (218)525-5659; frlc5310@gmail.com<br/>Pr. Kim Sturtz: (218)393-7444; frlcpastorsturtz@gmail.com<br/>Office hours vary so please call ahead.<br/>FRLC webpage: www.frenchriverlutheran.org.FRLC webpage: www.frenchriverlutheran.org.FRLC Mission: "To live and love as God commands, accept His grace,<br/>and share the Good News."Watch services at FRLC anytime! YouTube live streaming of the service at<br/>https://www.youtube.com/c/FrenchRiverLutheranChurch

This link is also found on our church homepage and Facebook group. If you are unable to watch it live, you can view it any time after the service by following the same link.

🕆 We're glad you worshiped with us today. Thanks be to God! 节

Jesus' birthday is almost here! All 4 candles in the Advent wreath are lit.

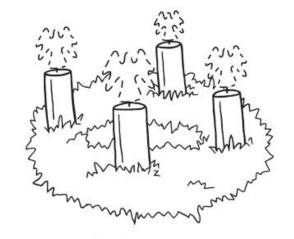
## In this frame, draw or write what your family does on Christmas Eve to celebrate.





- Today is the 4th Sunday in Advent.
- During Advent we hear the good news—Jesus is coming!
- Angels visited Mary and Joseph to tell them the good news.

#### Find and trace the angels near the Advent wreath. Then trace the dotted lines to write today's Gospel message.



You will have a son named Jesus.

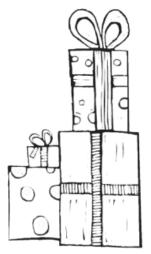


"Don't be afraid... You are going to have a son, who you'll name Jesus... He will be God's son."

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Angels surprised Mary and Joseph with this message: they would be Jesus' parents! What surprising news have you heard recently?

Draw or write about those surprises.



The angel Gabriel came to share the good news.

Connect the dots and meet Gabriel for yourself!





## Advent Words



Angel. What did the angel tell Mary to name her baby?



Decorations. How is your worship space decorated?



Voices. How can you use your voice to praise God?



Everyone. God sent Jesus for everyone. Who can you tell about Jesus?



Nazareth. Nazareth was Mary's home. Where do you live?



Tree. Evergreens remind us that God always loves us. Can you see a Christmas tree?

## The Wait Is Nearly Over

The angels have announced that Jesus is almost here! Finally, all 4 candles are lit on the Advent wreath.

What else have you been waiting for over the past 3 weeks?

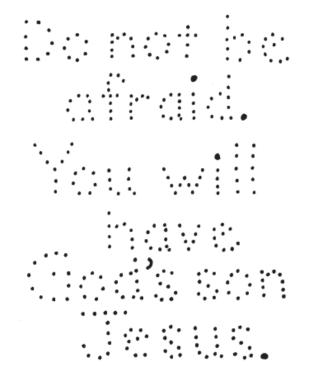




- · Today is the 4th Sunday in Advent.
- During Advent, we share the good news—Jesus is coming!
- Angels make an appearance during Advent.

## The Angel's Message

Color in the spaces with dots to discover the angel Gabriel's message to Mary.

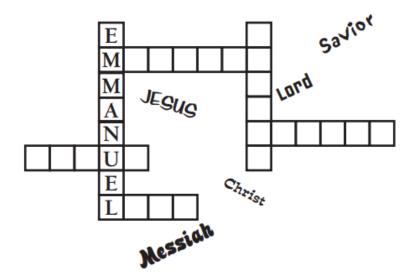


#### What's in a Name?

We use many different names for Jesus. Each name has a special meaning. Emmanuel means "God with us." God is with us in Jesus.

Find a place for each of Jesus' names in the puzzle spaces.

Which names for Jesus do you hear in worship today? Listen closely to the hymns, prayers, sermon, and Bible readings. Circle each one listed when you hear it, and write down additional names for Jesus you hear.

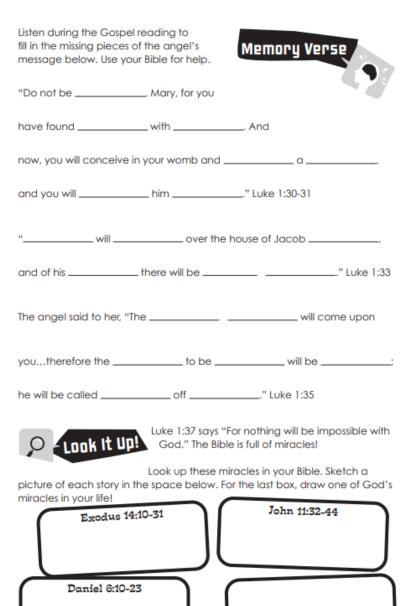


The story of the angel's visit is different in each of the gospels. The Gospels of Mark and John do not even include angels in the story-they both start with John the



Baptist, after Jesus is born. Check out chapter 1 of Matthew to see how this gospel tells of the angel's visit.

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ADVENT 4