

**Kailua Christian Church (UCC)**  
**Second Sunday of Advent – December 4, 2022**  
**“Finding Peace When Life Gets Tough”**  
**Scripture: Luke 1:26-38**  
**Pastor Alpha Goto**

**Scripture Reading for Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022 Luke 1:26-38**

**The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

<sup>29</sup>Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

<sup>34</sup>“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

<sup>35</sup>The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup>Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup>For no word from God will ever fail.”

<sup>38</sup>“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

**Morning Message: “Finding Peace when Life is Tough” Luke 1:26–38**

Catholics & Greek Orthodox hold Mary, mother of Jesus in high esteem. But we Protestants hardly ever talk about Mary. So today on this 2nd Sunday Advent theme: “Peace” we are going consider Mary. Mary is so often pictured w such a saintly, ethereal, peaceful pose. However, when you look closer at Mary’s script, she is a lot like you & me. So, we look at 5 ways we are like Mary and ways we can find peace when life gets tough.

1. LIKE MARY, I HAVE THINGS IN MY LIFE THAT SEEM\_\_IMPOSSIBLE\_\_.

Maybe for you what seems impossible is just doing your job, health problems seem impossible, impossible to change habits. Some things just seem impossible.

Luke1:26, 27: ‘God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. “ “Galilee”-

far north Israel (it's the boonies) and "Nazareth" (tiny hick town in boonies ) So God sent His "super Angel" Gabriel least likely place, least likely person, a young homeless girl in the boonies.

Isaiah 7:14 says this is prophecy fulfilled: "...The virgin will give birth to a son & he will be called Immanuel."

I think the "virgin birth" and Mary's virginity signals the total impossibility of her baby and point being: God always does the impossible. No matter what circumstances God fulfills His plan in the unlikeliest way and God does impossible all the time. This means that your broken relationship can be restored, your sobriety can be restored, your defects can be changed, God does the impossible and God does miracles it's His specialty. God will use you to make world better.

But after hearing the angel's words...

2. LIKE MARY, I CAN BE \_\_\_CONFUSED BY GOD'S PLAN\_\_\_. And not just confused...

Mary was \_\_\_TROUBLED\_\_

Luke 1:29a: "Mary was greatly troubled at his words..."

"troubled" is a very intense verb. It means deep turmoil, distraught. You ever feel that way?

Mary was \_\_\_ALARMED\_\_

Luke 1:29b "...& wondered what kind of greeting this might be. "

"wondered" is used 25x in Scripture. It means trying figure something out, but after that still puzzled.

Mary wondering about the Angel: where are you from? What this is all about?

Mary was \_\_\_QUESTIONING\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:34: "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" Angel: "You will bear the Messiah" Mary: "That's impossible!" You ever feel like that?

God says "Trust Me & things will get better; you will get the desire of your heart" "Oh really? I'm working 3 jobs, not no health insurance, no house, no husband (wife) it's impossible!" But when we start to question God's love for us; we start to doubt God's plan for us.

3. LIKE MARY, GOD TELLS ME THAT I AM \_\_\_HIGHLY FAVORED\_\_\_\_\_.

Luke 1:28: "Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Peace be with you, highly favored woman! The Lord be with you!" Term: "highly favored" is only used 1 other time in Bible in Ephesians.1:6: "Let us praise God for His glorious grace (favor & mercy), for the free gift He gave us in His dear Son!"

God graces us with the free gift of salvation that's why the baby Jesus was born, to give Himself for us on Cross so we can reunited with God, personally & forever.

4. LIKE MARY, I'M TOLD THAT FOR GOD \_\_\_ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:35, 37: "The angel answered her, 'The Holy Spirit will come to you, & the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the Holy Child developing inside you will be called the Son of God... For nothing is impossible w God.' "the Holy Spirit will come to you": this is the power of the Risen Christ the disciples received at Easter. "the power of the Most High": The transforming, transcending power of God is ours! and this all made possible by" the Holy Child developing inside you".

So how I do apply this? Receive it, it's a free gift from God. Accept it into your life. How?

5. LIKE MARY, I CAN CHOOSE TO \_\_\_ SURRENDER TO GOD'S WILL \_\_\_

Luke 1:38: "I am The Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word be me be fulfilled."

Luke.1:46-47, 49: "& Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, holy is His name."

You've heard: "Let go & let God"? That's what Mary does. It sounds good but saying "yes" to God does not mean everything goes all smooth. For Mary things were not easy: Joseph freaked out, he was going to divorce her, she gave birth in a barn, lived as a refugee in a foreign country...etc. Life for Mary was not easier, but it was better. Because in hardships, chaos: she had purpose, order, destiny and the miraculous power of God with her.

Chances are good that between now & Christmas, you will encounter some hardship, stress, chaos.

I have a suggestion: every time you heard someone say "Merry Christmas", remember Mary and God's presence and promise and peace and HAVE A \_\_\_\_\_ 'MARY CHRISTMAS' \_\_\_\_\_ !

And remember: no matter how tough things get, how impossible life seems- God loves us, we are highly favored, and God is still in control, God has a plan, God still is our Savior. We too are called to surrender our burdens to our Messiah and when we do, God's loving favor & grace overflow the banks. Amen!