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“In the sixth month, 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. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.” (Luke 1:26-33 - NIV)

Prayer: Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of my sins and make me ready for the celebration of Your birth, that I may receive You in joy and serve You always; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. AMEN

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Order of Worship – The Common Service Without L.S. – pg. 15

- Greetings by the Pastor

- Invocation (Liturgy pg. 15)

Opening Hymn **C.W. 23** / TLH 62

- Confession of Sins

- Absolution

- Prayer and Praise (pg. 16)

- Prayer of The Day (pg. 17)

First Lesson – Isaiah 7:10-15 – Immanuel – God With Us.

PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 89 (Lit. pg. 98–Read Responsively)

M: I will sing of the Lord’s great love forever,

C: I will make Your faithfulness known through all generations.

M: I will declare that Your love stands firm forever,

C: that You established Your faithfulness in heaven itself.

M: the heavens praise Your wonders, O Lord,

C: Your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

M: O Lord God Almighty, who is like You?

C: You are mighty, O Lord, and Your faithfulness surrounds You.

M: Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim You,

C: Who walk in the light of Your presence, O Lord.

M: They rejoice in Your Name all day long;

C: they exult in Your righteousness.

M: This is the Word of The Lord.

Second Lesson–Romans 16:25-27 – Mystery – Revealed.

Gospel Lesson–Luke 1:26-38 – Gabriel Sent to Mary.

The Apostle’s Creed – (Pg. 19)

Sermon Hymn: **C.W. 2** / TLH 95

Sermon Text: Luke 1:26-33

Sermon Theme: The Son of The Most High – Born of The Virgin.

"Create in Me" – (pg. 20)

Offering (The plates will not be passed but are at the entrance doors)

Offering Prayer

Prayer of The Church

Lord's Prayer (Traditional Version)

Hymn **C.W. 67** / TLH 76

Collect / Prayer (pg. 25)

Benediction

Hymn **C.W. 57** / TLH 507

SERMON TEXT: Luke 1:26-33

Vs. 26 – In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,

Vs. 27 – to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David.

The virgin's name was Mary.

Vs. 28 – The angel went to her and said, Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.

Vs. 29 – Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

Vs. 30 – But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.

Vs. 31 – You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the Name Jesus.

Vs. 32 – He will be great and will be called the **Son of the Most High** -υιος υψιστου - . The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David,

Vs. 33 – and He will reign over the house of Jacob **forever**; His Kingdom will **never end**.

(-Τησ Βασιλειασ αυτου ουκ εσται **τελος** - . - Τετελεσται - Jn. 19:30)

GREETING: Jesus says, Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life.

Preparations are being made for Christmas.

Gifts are being bought, (even though many Christmas gatherings will be smaller due to COVID-19,) gifts are still being given and sent.

Christmas decorations are still being put up to help brighten peoples spirits during this time of the COVID-19 darkness and physical separation.

Christmas hymns and songs are being sung.

Modified Christmas services are being planned and practices being carried out with needed precautions.

Time – Effort – Expenses - are all being put into action.

How much preparation went into the birth of your Savior – Jesus?

God already began plans and preparation before the creation of the world.

God did not plan the FALL into Sin, but God in His foreknowledge knew what would happen. Thus God's plan for our salvation took root before the creation of the world. (II Timothy 1:8-10)

Then when Adam and Eve fell into sin, God announced to them the 1st Promise of the Messiah, the Savior of Mankind in Genesis 3:15.

Adam took God's Promise seriously as we are told: "**Adam named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all the living.**" (Gen. 3:20)

This confidence of the Promised Savior is also demonstrated when Eve gave birth to their first son Cain, and Eve is recorded as saying: "**With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man.**" (Gen. 4:1)

Unfortunately, Cain was not the one, as we see him kill his own brother Abel. (Gen. 4:8)

God continued to keep His promise of the Savior throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. In His grace, God preserved the human race by saving Noah and his family on the Ark during the world wide flood.

God called Abraham away from his homeland in the Ur of the Chaldeans. (Gen. 12:1-4)

[Abraham's father Terah had actually left the Ur of the Chaldeans previously and was staying in Haran when the Lord appeared to Abraham in Haran after the death of Terah, the father of Abraham. (See Genesis 11:27-32)]

God's words of preparation and promise to Abraham were: "**I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse; and ALL PEOPLES on earth will be blessed through you.**" (Gen. 12:2-3)

God then continued to renew the promise through the O.T. Prophets.

As Jacob blesses his sons, we have this Messianic prophecy as Jacob blesses his son Judah. **Genesis 49:10** – "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between His feet, until He comes to Whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is His."

The prophet **Micah 5:2** – "**But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me One Who will be ruler over Israel, Whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.**" The Savior would be born in Bethlehem.

The Prophet **Isaiah 7:14** – "**Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel.**"

Did you ever start planning for something long in advance, and then before you know it – BOOM! – the day arrives? A Birthday party – Plans for Retirement – A family reunion – The Christmas Celebration.

The time frame from the 1st promise of the Savior in Genesis 3:15 until the angel Gabriel made this announcement to the Virgin Mary is just over 4,000 years. God's people were waiting a long time.

Now – BOOM! - the announcement has come. The Virgin Mary will conceive and give birth.

Vs. 31 – **You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the Name Jesus.**

Vs. 32 – **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.** -υιος□υψιστου□ -.

May is confused, since she was a virgin, and she asks: **How will this be?** (Lk. 1:34)

The answer which the angel Gabriel gives Mary is beyond human comprehension as Gabriel says: “**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High - Και δυναμις υψιστου επισκιασει σοι - will overshadow you. So, the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God.**” (Lk. 1:35)

We then see Mary’s humble attitude as she responds: **Vs. 38** – **I am the Lord’s Servant (δουλος). May it be to me as you have said.**” -δουλος - = Slave

Mary simply trusted the Word of God as delivered by the angel Gabriel. And it came to pass. The Child conceived in her was Fully Human, just as He is Fully God.

Conceived by the Holy Spirit, yet the Seed of a Woman, Jesus is Fully Human, yet Without Sin.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, **yet without sin.**

Mary is the Theotokos = The God Bearer. The Mother of God, yet she is not to be worshiped.

Mary herself exclaimed in her song: The Magnificat: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Lk. 1:46-47)

Who is this Mary? She is simply a young virgin woman, whom the Lord found favor with.

She was not born into earthly nobility.

She was pledged to be married to a man named Joseph who was a carpenter.

And yet she gave birth to the Son of God.

When Mary changed the diapers of the baby Jesus, she was changing the diapers of God.

When Mary carried Jesus in her arms she was carrying God.

When Mary kissed the face of Jesus, she was kissing the face of God.

God Who humbled Himself and became flesh and blood – Fully Human – For your sake and for mine, and for the sake of all Mankind of all time.

It was Jesus Who went to the Cross of Calvary and died the death that we deserve so that we have heaven where there is no more sin or death or sorrow or pain or crying.

That is your God and Savior, His Name is Jesus and He has saved His people from their Sin.

It is His birth that we celebrate. It is because of Jesus that we have Christmas.

It is because of Jesus the Christ that we celebrate Christmas!

PREPARATIONS for our Salvation were made by God Himself!

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we celebrate the 1st coming of our Savior.

Before Jesus ascended into heaven he said: **“In My Father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to PREPARE a place for you. And if I go and PREPARE a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”** (Jn. 14:2-3)

In the Book of Revelation Jesus says “Behold, I am coming soon!” (Rev. 22:7)

It has been over 2,000 years!!!! We wait, we trust, we pray, we study Scripture.

Jesus will come. We have heaven. Are you prepared for Christ’s 2nd coming?

AMEN!!!