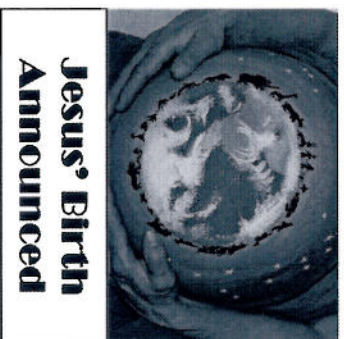


God's Story™ Our Story

December 18, 2016



Devotion: Use this resource at home to guide your household's daily devotions. You can do this alone or with others; in the morning, during the day, or at night. Find a routine that works best for you.

Pray: Light a candle and open your devotion time with a prayer.

Nothing is impossible with you, O Lord. Gladden our hearts with your promises, and do not let us keep silent about all you have done for us. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.

Reflect: Reflect on the key verses from Sunday's reading.

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name."
Luke 1:46-49

Study: Study the reading and consider the background.

It's all spinning out of control. Here is Mary, unmarried, now pregnant, but with the Son of God? There's nothing else to do but take refuge at her cousin's, where two women share a common bond and a mutual experience of God's miracles on earth.

Consider: Consider this theme for the week's text.

Mary spoke on behalf of a nation united in its anticipation of something better.

Read: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding of Sunday's text. After the reading, ask the follow-up questions.

Sunday: *Jesus' Birth Announced*, Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]

Monday: *Introduction to Luke*, Luke 1:1-4

Tuesday: *An Angel Tells Zechariah of John's Birth*, Luke 1:5-25

Wednesday: *Mary's Song*, Luke 1:46-56

Thursday: *Birth of John the Baptist*, Luke 1:57-66

Friday: *Prophecy of Zechariah*, Luke 1:67-80

Saturday: *Birth of Jesus (Christmas Eve)*, Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]

How will Jesus' arrival change the course of human history?

Connect: Connect in conversation with others in your household. Discuss the following questions, or simply check in with "Highs" and "Lows."

What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

What can you do to help mothers-to-be prepare for the arrival of their babies? How can your community of faith support them as they raise their children?

When have you had to wait for someone or something that had the potential to change your life? What did you do to prepare for its arrival?

DO: By acting on what we learn we make God's word come alive. Do the following activity this week.

Put together a new baby care kit for expectant parents or those waiting on adoption in your community. Be creative about what you include in the kit. How will your kit support the new parents? How will it support the baby? How will it lift up God's love for the family?

Bless: Close your devotion with a blessing.

May God bless whatever you are anticipating in your life. Amen.