DECEMBER 20, 2026
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

taking faith home

God favors the peasant girl Mary.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 1:26-38	The birth of Jesus foretold
Monday	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	The Lord's message to David
Tuesday	Romans 16:25-27	Paul's closing prayer
Wednesday	Luke 1:46b-55	Mary's song of praise
Thursday	Luke 2:1-20	The birth of Jesus
Friday	John 3:11-16	For God so loved the world
Saturday	Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	God's promise to David
Sunday	Luke 2:22-40	Jesus presented in the temple

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

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." **Luke 1:30-31 (NRSVUE)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:
Lord God, just as you favored your servant Mary, grant all of us faith and trust in your power to bring salvation to all through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:
With this food we receive your steadfast love, O Lord; with our mouths we proclaim your faithfulness to all generations through Jesus. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:
May the love of God bless you with the good news of Jesus' birth.

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The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson. For a brief description, go to: https://milestonesministry.org/history-of-the-four-keys/.

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DECEMBER 20, 2026

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Wait for the Lord

taking faith home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Tell or think about a recent mountain high and valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When have you received special attention from friends or family?
- What does it mean to you that our Savior was born from a young peasant girl?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 1:26-38.

When the angel came to tell Mary that she would become the mother of God's Son, he said that God favored her. God's favor—grace—is unconditional kindness and blessing. In the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, God gave favor to Elizabeth, an older woman who could not have a child, Mary, a young peasant girl, and shepherds who were the first people to share the good news of Jesus' birth. These people were no more special than the rest of us, but God gave them the remarkable gift of being part of the story of Jesus, the Son of God and king of the whole world. We, too, are given God's favor and blessings. How has God come to you with divine favor?

Pray: **God, thank you for your favor and blessings in our lives. Help us share your blessings with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

SERVICE

During this Advent season, think of those who are not favored in our society, like people in need. How can you show God's love to them through an act of kindness?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

From your nativity set, hold each piece in silence for a moment, passing them around as needed. Then place the pieces back in the scene. Have Mary and Joseph arrive first, followed by the shepherds, and then the wise men. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope, the second one of peace, the third one of joy, and the fourth one of love.

Pray: **God, thank you for showing us love even when we are afraid like Mary. Give us hope, peace, joy, and love as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.**

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