# DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



#### TEXT SUMMARY

Our Advent sermons all come from the first chapter of Luke's gospel. Our first text, <u>Luke 1:26-31, 34-35</u>, tells us the story of the announcement to Mary, a young teen virgin betrothed to Joseph, that she will give birth to the Christ-child.

You can see an excellent introduction to this text in this <u>video from Walking the Text</u>.

## INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- 1. Our text opens with the word "in the sixth month." Sixth month of what? (see context)
- 2. Angels are rarely named in biblical narrative.
  - · What is this angel's name?
  - Where else have we seen this angel appear?
    What other important events has this angel been involved in? (see Daniel 8, 9, and earlier in Luke 1)
- 3. What does the angel call Mary?
- 4. What is Mary's initial reaction? Why does she react in this way?
- 5. The angel's reaction to Mary's confusion is the most-often repeated command in all Scripture. What is it?
- 6. Why is the angel's announcement to Mary so alarming? What does the Law of Moses stipulate as the punishment for adulterers? (See Deut 22)
- 7. What special title will be given to Mary's son? (We see that title appearing twice, in two different forms, in verses 32 and 35).

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### **DISCUSSION** (INTERPRETATION):

- 1. Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, was struck dumb for asking how he could know that Gabriel's announcement to him could be true (see Luke 1:18-20). Mary asks a similar question: how she could become pregnant without being with a man, yet she is given an explanation and is not punished. What is the difference between the two questions, that one would be met with judgment and the other with grace?
- 2. Why does it matter whether Mary was a virgin when Jesus was conceived, even when he was born (see Matt 1:25)?

### SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

CS Lewis describes the setting for our story this way: "The process [of God's selection] grows narrower and narrower, sharpens at last into one small bright point like the head of a spear. It is a Jewish girl at her prayers. All humanity (so far as concerns its redemption) has narrowed to that."

And that's all she was, a teenage Jewish girl at her prayers, when God's messenger interrupts her prayers to change her life – and ours.

We rightly reject the Roman Catholic view of Mary that elevates her too highly. So because of Roman exaggeration, we tend to overlook a vivid picture of discipleship, but we can see in this episode what it means to follow Jesus (even before He was born!)

What is there in Mary's response that you want to emulate in your own spiritual life?