**May It Be to Me According to Your Word**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 1:26-38

**The Big Idea**

Mary serves as a great example of making room in our lives for Jesus in order to experience his presence and transformation. This advent let’s consider how we might actively make room for Jesus throughout our days.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. The encounter with Mary and the angel is obviously a very familiar one to many of us. What struck you about the passage and that encounter in a fresh way this year?

2. We discussed the angel’s greeting to Mary: “you who are highly favored . . . you have found favor with God.” Consider your default assumption about God’s favor towards you. Do you generally think of yourself as having God’s favor? Or his disapproval? Or his disinterest? Etc? How does that play out in your relationship with him?

3. On Sunday we were encouraged to practice actively inviting Jesus into the various moments of our days. What has your experience of practicing that been like this week so far? What has proved challenging, and what has been fruitful?

4. Is there a particular situation or area of life where you’d like to invite Jesus in more actively during the Advent season?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

 A. Our theme this advent is preparing room/making room in our lives for Jesus.

B. Revelation 3:20: “Behold I stand at the door and knock”

1. In the Laodicean church, other good things (wealth, success, fashion, medicine) had crowded out Jesus and he had slowly (and probably unintentionally) been pushed to the outskirts of their lives

2. He was asking to be invited back to the center of their lives. They needed to make room for him again.

 3. Their danger is our danger, especially during the Christmas season

II. Mary’s Encounter with the Angel

A. The holy God shows up in the most unextraordinary place (Nazareth) to a very ordinary girl (Mary)

B. The heart of the angel’s message is the coming of the Messiah

“Son of God, throne of his father, David, his kingdom will never end”: This is very messianic language that Mary would understand as a good Jew.

 C. And this Messiah will be a divine creation of the Spirit of God

 “The Holy Spirit will come upon you/overshadow you”

 So this is God’s Son in a one-of-a-kind way

 D. Mary’s exemplary response: “I am the Lord’s servant”

 1. Mary makes room for Jesus literally in her body

 2. Mary makes room in her life for Jesus as he grows up

-This means unknowns, dangers, griefs, frustrations but also adventure, joy, meaning, salvation

III. Our experience of Jesus

A. The gospel is that what God did physically in Mary (birthing his Son in her) he wants to do spiritually in each of us

B. John 14:23: “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

C. Colossians 1:27: “God has now chosen to make known the glorious riches of his mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

D. Ephesians 3:16-19: “I pray that God may strengthen you through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

IV. Our Advent Practice

A. Prepare Him Room

1. Practice actively inviting Jesus into the various moments of your days

2. Answer Jesus’ invitation in Revelation 3:20 to open the door and invite him into the center not as a one-time act, but as a regular daily practice

3. Invite him into your moments of joy, moments of sadness, moments of anxiety, moments of temptation, and moments of guilt

C. What keeps us from inviting Jesus into our moments more intentionally?

1. Some moments may seem too mundane and ordinary. Yet, Jesus came to the most ordinary place (Nazareth) and the most ordinary person (Mary)

2. We’re afraid of losing control by inviting Jesus in. Mary, too, may have been afraid of losing control (which is exactly what happened), so we have to trust that Jesus will do things better than we will.

3. We’re afraid of greater intimacy with him. We know our sin and all the ways we fall short, and we sense his disappointment and disapproval, so we keep him at a distance. We need to be reminded of the angel’s greeting to Mary: “You who are highly favored. You have found favor with God.” In Christ, the favor of God now rests on us. So we can trust his acceptance of us and his good intentions for us, and that can give us more freedom to invite him into our lives more deeply.