

# Sunday December 23 through Sunday December 30

- ◆ Pastor Robert continues his Advent Season sermon series.
- ◆ The Board of Trustees will be meeting immediately following the morning worship service.
- ◆ UMYF will be canceled for this evening.
- ◆ The special Christmas Eve Holy Communion service will begin at 7 pm on Monday evening.
- ◆ **Merry Christmas to you and yours!** Remember that you are Loved. You are Favored. Your spirit is filled with Mercy and Grace because you are filled with and by Him.
- ◆ All church related activities will be canceled for the remainder of the week. Enjoy your families and friends and please be safe.
- ◆ Pastor Robert will lead worship Sunday morning at 11 am.
- ◆ UMYF is canceled.



## This WEEK at Trinity

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### Sunday December 23

Fourth Sunday of Advent  
10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School  
11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship  
12:00 pm—Trustees Meeting  
5:00 pm—UMYF canceled

### Monday December 24

#### **Christmas Eve**

7:00 pm—Candlelight Communion

### Tuesday December 25

#### **Christmas Day**

### Wednesday December 26

No Choir Practice  
No Prayer Team

### Thursday December 27

No Scheduled Activities

### Friday December 28

No Scheduled Activities

### Saturday December 29

No Scheduled Activities

### Sunday December 30

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School  
11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship  
5:00 pm—UMYF canceled.

## Mary's Song

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul glorifies the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup>And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup>for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me; holy is his name.

Mary says, My "psyche" glorifies the Lord. From the Greek word 'psyche,' science has created Psychology and Psychiatry. In essence, we have turned the SOUL into the study of how we think and the way we feel. God warned us about the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The terminology of Psychosis and Neurosis describes the human condition. What, I ask, does any of this really have to do with the image of God?

Mary says, "and my "pneuma" rejoices in God my Savior. From the Greek word 'pneuma,' science has created a laundry list of terms related to breathing and/or lung conditions. Pneumonia: an infection in the air sacs of the lung. The infection may cause the sacs to fill with fluid. Pneumothorax: air caught between the lung and chest wall. Both conditions may lead to physical death. What, I ask, does any of this have to do with being led by the Holy Spirit?

Mary says, My being gives witness to the Presence of the Lord. Her humble, poor-spirit, rejoices for she is wrapped in the comfort of God's Presence, in her, with her, and through her. (See the sermon on the mount; Matthew 5)

Mary calls the Lord, Savior. Indeed the word means 'deliverer' from sin. But it also means healer. Mary rejoices in the healing of her Soul/Being. What healing? Her soul is healed to reflect the image of God. She has been 'born again' to be led by the Spirit of God, not the spirit of humanity, religion, or institution.

Is it any wonder that Mary's name means "their rebellion." Who is the "their" to which her name refers. "From now on all generations will called me blessed."

During the Christmas Season, we hear Mary's name associated with 'virgin birth,' mother Mary, Jesus' mother... Maybe it's time we remember the power and authority of her name. Her power is rebellious. Her authority is "Favored." The power of her rebellion is the Holy Spirit that "overshadows" her! Her authority comes from "letting it be with (her) according to (God's) word." God's word for her is Favored.

I am told that I favored my dad. People point to the shape of my face, my eyes, and the lack of hair. Notice that favor in this context refers to physical characteristics. To favor God refers to psyche and pneuma. Psyche has to do with being a reflection of God's Spirit; mercy, grace, and love. Pneuma has more to do with the spirit of our words. Therefore, Mary gives breath, rejoices, to being in God's Presence with all her Being. Mary worships in spirit and truth.

The truth of Christmas is that God favors you! Let that sink into your heart and mind and like Mary, you will become known by your 'rebellious' witness.

The Hebrew Religion led her to know right from wrong.  
The Hebrew Community led her to conform to morality.  
The Religious Leaders led her to expect Messiah.  
Religion, Community, and Leadership led her to just the right place, at the right time, to rebel on **their** behalf.

God is Spirit! God is Love! Being Favored makes us Spiritual and Loving. Being Favored makes us appear rebellious to religious people trapped in works (righteous acts) hoping to earn God's favor. Being Favored makes us look rebellious to the community whose moral conformity gives them a self-righteous spirit. Being Favored makes us look like a threat to Religious Leaders. They don't know what to do with people who love **their** enemies. Favored people of God are **their** rebellion. And we shall **BE** until Christ comes again.

One in Christ,  
Robert