

the child to be born will be called holy — the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

The Word of God



Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2026

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. With your great might, give us your help, that whatever is hindered by our sins may be speedily accomplished by your grace; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹When the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ²the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” ³And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.” ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no

Lessons for Next Week: Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 111;
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

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* The Book of Common Prayer verse numbers for this psalm are different from the numbering in the ESV.

more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,
¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel.
And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the
LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

¹⁶“And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever
before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

Psalm 89:1-5 [19-29]

¹Your love, O LORD, forever | will I sing;*
from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.

²**For I am persuaded that your love is estab- | lished forever;***
you have set your faithfulness firmly | in the heavens.

³I have made a covenant with my | chosen one;*
I have sworn an oath to Da- | vid my servant:

⁴**I will establish your | line forever,***
and preserve your throne for all | generations.”

⁵The heavens bear witness to your won- | ders, O LORD,*
and to your faithfulness in the assembly of the | holy ones;

¹⁹**[You spoke once in a vision**
and said to your | faithful people:*

“I have set the crown upon a warrior
and have exalted one chosen out | of the people.

²⁰I have found Da- | vid my servant;*
with my holy oil have I a- | nointed him.

²¹**My hand will | hold him fast***
and my arm will | make him strong.

²²No enemy | shall deceive him;*,
nor any wicked man | bring him down.

²³**I will crush his | foes before him***
and strike down | those who hate him.”

²⁴My faithfulness and love shall | be with him;*,
and he shall be victorious | through my name.

²⁵**I shall make his domin- | ion extend***
from the Great Sea | to the River.

²⁶He will say to me, ‘You | are my Father;*,

my God, and the rock of | my salvation.’

²⁷**I will make | him my firstborn***
and higher than the kings | of the earth.

²⁸I will keep my love for | him forever;*,
and my covenant will stand | firm for him.

²⁹**I will establish his | line forever***
and his throne as the | days of heaven.”]

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my
gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the
revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but
has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has
been made known to all nations, according to the command of
the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith — ²⁷to the
only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a
city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man
whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s
name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings,
O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹But she was greatly
troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting
this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid,
Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you
will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call
his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of
the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne
of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob
forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴And Mary
said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵And
the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore