

## THE WAY IT WAS ZECHARIAH – THE LORD IS RENOWNED

December 3 and 4, 2016

*With Zechariah we learn the lesson never to doubt what God can do and to never give up praying.  
God loves it when we put our trust in him.*

**PRESERVICE**

**Congregational Hymn Sing**

**BELLS AND WELCOME**

**OPENING HYMN 702**

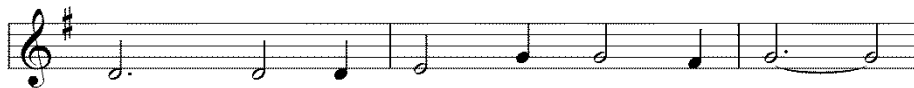
**Prepare the Royal Highway**



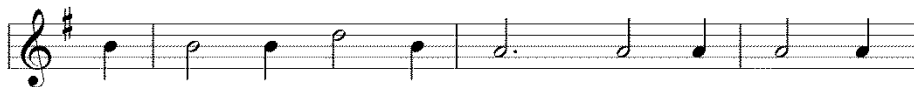
1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: Your  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It



King of kings is near! Let ev - 'ry hill and  
own e - ter - nal King! Palm branch - es strew be -  
greet your prom - ised King! Your King, yet ev - 'ry  
comes from heav'n a - bove. His rule is peace and



val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!  
fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.  
free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, Fore - told in  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall  
All lands, bow down be - fore him! All na - tions,  
So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness



sa - cred sto - ry:  
doubt as - sail you!  
now a - dore him! Ho - san - na to the  
so a - bound - ing:



Lord, For he ful - fills God's Word!

- M The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
- C **And also with you.**

#### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

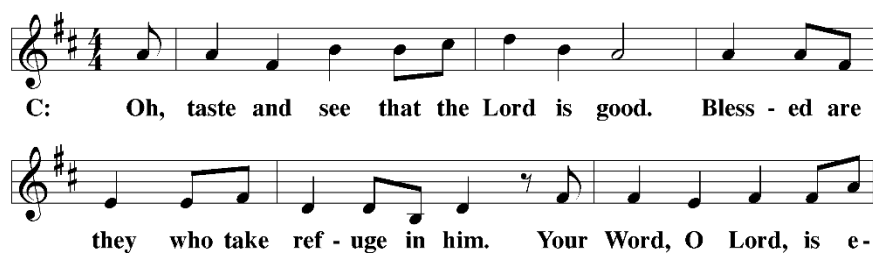
- M We light two Advent candles, remembering Jesus, who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.
- C **We remember Jesus, who came as the promised Messiah. Zechariah received the news that his son, John, would prepare the way of the Lord.**
- M We hear John's call to repent.
- C **We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.**
- M Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.
- C **Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**

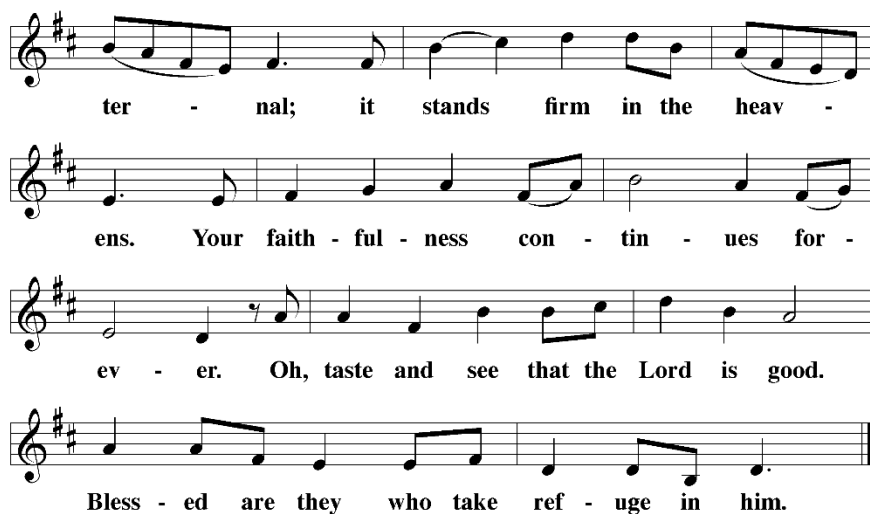
*Two Advent candles are lit.*

- M Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Scriptures prophesied the coming and the message of John the Baptist. Concerning his son, John, the angel said to Zechariah:
- C **"He will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of righteousness—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)**
- M Let us prepare the way for the Lord in our own hearts today by turning to him in heartfelt repentance.
- C **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**
- M God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.
- C **Amen.**
- M In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

#### SONG OF PRAISE

Oh, Taste and See





**BAPTISM RATIFICATION** (*Sunday 9:15 am*)

*Adelyn Marie Papa*  
*Daughter of Christopher and Janelle Papa,*  
*born October 5, 2016, and baptized October 6, 2016*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

- M** Let us pray.  
 Stir up our hearts, O Lord to prepare the way for your only Son.
- C** **By his coming give us strength in our conflicts and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world.**
- M** We pray through Jesus Christ, your only Son, our Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.



**FIRST LESSON**

**Zechariah 6:12-15**, Bible page 951  
*The promised Messiah, the Branch, though humble in his beginnings, will build God's church, creating peace and harmony between God and his people.*



The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."  
They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.

The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men  
to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt;  
there is no one who does good, not even one.

*Refrain*

Will evildoers never learn —  
those who devour my people and do not call on the LORD?

You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor,  
but the LORD is their refuge.

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!  
When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,  
let Israel rejoice and be glad!

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,**

**as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

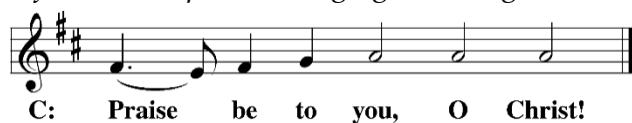
*Refrain*

**GOSPEL**

**Luke 1:5-25; 57-66, Bible page 1024**

*The birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, is foretold.*

*After the Gospel, the congregation sings:*



**APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

#### SERMON

**Zechariah**  
*Pastor Jeffrey Bonack*

#### HYMN RESPONSE 275

**Blest Be the God of Israel**

#### OFFERING

OFFERTORY (*Sunday 7:45 am*)

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**, *String Ensemble*

#### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- M Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.
- C **We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**
- M As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.
- C **Move us to take to heart the words of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."**  
(*Mathew 3:2*)
- M You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.
- C **Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**
- M Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.
- C **Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**

*Special prayers and intercessions.*

M Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer.*

M Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

C **Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN 9, vv. 1, 3, and 5

**Jesus, Your Church with Longing Eyes**

#### CLOSING PRAYER

M Lord Jesus, you purchased us with the price of your own blood.

C **We are yours.**

M May our words and actions honor and glorify you,

C **that your name may be hallowed, your kingdom come, and your will be done.**

M We bless you now and always.



#### BLESSING

M The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.



#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRESIDING MINISTER** (*Sunday 7:45 am*) *Pastor David Kuehl*

**ORGANIST** *Carol Nelson*

# BE ALL IN!

## St. Paul's Congregational Ministry? I'm All In!

Our labor in the Lord has not been in vain! Over 2,600 souls call St. Paul's home. Every week over 1,000 are in worship. Even though our ministry has become increasingly complex, this large congregation is served by a staff that is smaller than it was 15 years ago. We are able to do so much each week in worship, in our Sunday Youth Ministries, and in so many other areas because of the use of the talents and passions of so many volunteers. It is a delight to see these volunteers "all in!"

We are exploring a new position we would call our "**Resident Missionary.**" This pastor position would allow us to better follow up on the many guests coming to our campus and the many non-member families who make use of our school system and our Sunday youth ministries. This additional pastor would allow our other ministerial team members to focus on helping our current members grow closer to Christ. We have requested a grant from the Antioch Foundation to help. Even if we receive the grant, our General Fund offerings will need to **increase by 2% to 3%** to cover the cost of this position.



## St. Paul's School Ministry? I'm All In!

Each week, the Lord allows our 18 called teachers to bring over 300 children closer to Christ.

This past year we were able to add a half-time **Extended Learning Coordinator.** We need to expand this to a full-time position to serve more children in our growing school. We have received one major gift toward this goal. We are seeking a grant from the Antioch Foundation. We are confident our school parents are committed to this ministry and can assume a portion of the cost of the position through a small tuition increase. In addition, our General Fund offerings will need to **increase 1% to 2%** to make this position possible.



## Help St. Paul's be "All In!"

We would like to do as much as possible to fulfill our mission to bring more people closer to Christ. Will we be able to cover the normal increases in expenses plus the 3% to 5% increase these two positions would require? **Eighty-five individuals or families have already completed Plans for Giving!** If you haven't done so, please do so as soon as possible. More copies of the **2017 Plans for Giving** are available in the **Welcome Center.**

# WEEKLY CALENDAR

For the week of December 5, 2016

<b>MON</b>	10:00 am 7:00 pm	Walking Club (Trinity Gym) <i>The Story Bible Study</i> (Grace Room)
<b>TUE</b>	9:15 am 9:30 am 10:00 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Ministerial Team Meeting Ladies Bible Study (Grace Room) Walking Club (Trinity Gym) Dorcas Society Christmas Party (Grace Room) Handbell Rehearsal <i>Following the Promise Bible Study</i> (Faith Room)
<b>WED</b>	3:30 pm 4:30 pm 4:30 pm 7:00 pm	Advent Worship Service Soup Supper hosted by Stoney Creek Adult Community Public School Confirmation Classes Advent Worship Service
<b>THURS</b>	6:30 am 10:00 am 6:45 pm 7:00 pm	Sunrise Bible Study (Faith Room) Walking Club (Centennial Gym) Stoney Creek Bible Study (Stoney Creek Adult Community) The Bridge and Contemporary Band Practice
<b>FRI</b>	7:00 am	Food Pantry Gift Staging (Church Library)
<b>SAT</b>	8:00 am 9:00 am 5:00 pm	Men's Breakfast Bible Study (Grace Room) Christmas For Kids (Trinity Café and Gym) Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
<b>SUN</b>	7:45 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 9:45 am 10:15 am 10:45 am 12:00 pm	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion Grace Room Bible Study Kids Club, Boost, and Pulse Youth Ministries The Bridge Communion The Bridge Contemporary Worship Service with Holy Communion Voters' Meeting re: School Choice (Grace Room)

*Note: There is No Youth Ministry Activity or Adult Bible Study on the Sundays of December 25 and January 1.*

## SCHOOL CHOICE VOTERS' MEETING

A voters' meeting, with the single purpose of voting on our entrance into the School Choice program, is scheduled for Sunday, December 11, at noon in the Grace Room. You will find the resolution that will be presented for adoption and an eight-page information packet at the Welcome Center.

## NEW GRACE ROOM BIBLE STUDY - ANGELS AND DEMONS

In a world that seems spiritually apathetic and aimless, we cannot ignore the powerful spiritual forces that are at work. What does the Bible say about these forces and why must we be strong and vigilant? Join Pastor Kuehl on Sundays at 9:15 am for the study of Angels and Demons in the Grace Room for three weeks, beginning December 4.



# ST. PAUL'S NEWS

## BAPTISMS

Brooklyn Marie Buth, daughter of Randy and Jennifer (nee Denk) Buth, was born October 26, 2016. Kelly Lou Lukasavitz, daughter of Calvin and Courtney (nee Loehr) Lukasavitz, was born October 9, 2016. Brooklyn and Kelly will be baptized at the 10:45 am service Sunday, December 4, 2016. We rejoice with Brooklyn and Kelly in their saving faith.

## HOSPITALIZED

Dorothy Bucholtz is in hospice care at St. Ann's Nursing Home, Ruth Kurth at Brenwood Park, and Georgette Meyer at Layton Terrace. Kathy Rasmussen is at Lifecare Homes – Midland Terrace and Payson Vahovick at Children's. James Boldt, Jane Schwartz, and Diane Wedell have returned home.

## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

1015 attended worship services last weekend. 600 were in attendance at Thanksgiving services and 345 at the midweek Advent services.

## PRAYERS REQUESTED

Please pray for the following individuals in their time of need: Dawn Brown, David Burkowitz, Jodie Crosby, Sharon Dreyer, Rick Drobka, Shelly Eggert, Namine Eiche, Monica Gawlik, Daniel Holtz, Dan Italiano, Dawn Jahns, Pat Johnson, Jacob Melso, Sandra Merfeld, Sonia Neuberger, Jeanne Steinbrecher, Alissa Thompson, and Wayne Wardin.

## CALL NEWS

Thursday, December 1, 2016

Dear members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

Praise be to God, whose infinite wisdom provides comfort and guidance throughout our lives.

Over the past weeks, I have had the responsibility and opportunity to look at two divine calls – my current call to St. Paul's and the present call to Wisconsin Lutheran School in Racine. Similar in the mission to provide a high quality, Christ-centered education, both calls ask me to use my gifts and talents to serve and honor the Lord and the Church.

As I struggled over this deliberation, I took comfort from the words of Proverbs 3:5-6. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight."* It is at times like this, when life is comfortable and settled, that God reaches out and teaches us to truly trust Him.

After much prayerful consideration, God's direction and guidance has led me to return the call to teach and lead at WLS. I am trusting that this is the decision the Lord lead me to make and how he wants me to use my gifts at the present time.

While it is sad to think about leaving a school without a teacher and leader, I take comfort knowing that everything is in God's hands, and He will provide a qualified teacher and leader for the Wisconsin Lutheran School's ministry. I am excited to continue my ministry here at St. Paul's, and pray that I am able to continue to help St. Paul's move their ministry forward, and bring children closer to Christ.

Respectfully submitted in HIS service,

Jeffrey W. Wetzel  
St. Paul's Lutheran School - Fifth Grade Teacher

# CHRISTMAS AT ST. PAUL'S

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2016

**SOEL Christmas Program:** Thursday, December 15, 5:30 pm

**Lutheran Elementary School Christmas Services:** Thursday, December 22, 5:00 and 7:00 pm

**Christmas Eve Services:** 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, and 10:30 pm

**Christmas Day Traditional Services:** 7:45 and 9:15 am with Holy Communion

**Christmas Day Contemporary Service:** 10:45 am with Holy Communion (no Bridge service)

**New Year's Eve Service:** 5:00 pm with Holy Communion

**New Year's Day Traditional Service:** 7:45 and 9:15 am

**New Year's Day Contemporary Service:** 10:45 am (no Bridge service)

*\*\* There will be no Wednesday worship services on December 21 and 28.*

## SOUP SUPPER – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Our soup suppers continue this Wednesday between the Advent worship services from 4:30 to 6:30 pm in the Grace Room. The soup supper this Wednesday will be hosted by Stoney Creek Adult Community. A free will offering will be gathered at the soup supper.

## HOST THE DECEMBER 14 SOUP SUPPER

The Wednesday, December 14, soup supper is still available for hosting. To volunteer please contact Tammy Miller at (414) 422-0320, ext. 111, or [tmiller@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:tmiller@stpaulmuskego.org).

## CHRISTMAS FOR KIDS Saturday, December 10, 9:00 am

Children age 3 through 12 are invited to enjoy a Christmas message, singing, crafts, games, and puppet show from 9:00 am until noon in the Trinity Café and Gym. The children are asked to bring a non-perishable food item as their ticket for the event. Parents may stay if desired or go and enjoy some kid-free shopping! Register by going online at [stpaulmuskego.org/Christmas-for-kids-registration](http://stpaulmuskego.org/Christmas-for-kids-registration), by completing the back of the Connection Card, by signing up at the Welcome Center, or by emailing Dr. Joel Nelson at [jnelson@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:jnelson@stpaulmuskego.org).

## CHRISTMAS FOR TEENS UNDER GOD

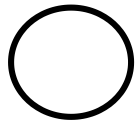
Ho-Ho-Hope you come to the first annual TUG Christmas Party! Wear an ugly sweater for a chance to win a gift basket! Bring something silly or that you really just don't want to see laying around your house anymore, wrapped or in a gift bag, and you will get something silly or that somebody else doesn't want to see lying around their house anymore in return! But most importantly, bring your holiday cheer and celebrate the happiest time of year with us - Sunday, December 18, at 6:15 pm, at the MUG (Muskego Urban Gathering Place). See you there!

## REMEMBERING ST. PAUL'S HOMEBOUND AT CHRISTMAS

Since many of you like to remember our homebound members with a card, note, or phone call at this time of the year, a list of our shut-in members has been placed at the Welcome Center. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Kuehl or any visitor who serves on our Homebound Visitation Ministry Team. Their names and numbers are included on the roster.

## PROVIDE A CHRISTMAS MEAL

Our Food Pantry Team will be distributing food to needy families within our congregation and community the week before Christmas. If you know of a family in need or if your family would benefit from a Thanksgiving food basket, please contact Coordinator Steve Graham at [steve0828@hotmail.com](mailto:steve0828@hotmail.com) or 262-232-0928 or Pastor Kuehl at [dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org) or 414-422-0320, ext. 121.



# GroupWork

Bible Study Discussion Starters

*Life application materials for us in Connector Groups, home devotions, and other small groups.*

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*Group Work for the weeks leading up to Christmas will correspond to our special sermon series titled, "The Way It Was: A First-person Recounting from Those Who Were There." As we reflect on Isaiah, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary, A Shepherd, and Joseph may the Holy Spirit prepare our hearts for Christ's coming.*

## SERVING THE LEGENDARY AND GRACIOUS GOD

1. Have you ever prayed to God for something and...
  - Gotten a pretty quick answer? Have yet to receive an answer? Quit praying for an answer? Explain.
2. What's your honest feeling about the, "power of prayer?"
3. Review the familiar Advent verses of Luke 1:5-25. Define the...
  - Setting. Characters. Plot. Conflict. Resolution. Theme.
4. Read Psalm 103. If God's people (including Zechariah) believe these wonderful words, then why do angels bring such anxiety to those who see them?
5. Consider these names:
  - Zechariah means, "The Lord is legendary." Why is this a great name for a priest upholding Old Testament tradition?
  - John means, "The Lord is gracious." Why is this a great name for the messenger and forerunner of New Testament fulfillment?
  - How can these names and the ministry of the men to whom they were given, help you to understand the salvation story from beginning to end?
  - How could you give witness to others of the legendary and gracious nature of your God?
6. Zechariah and John served God full-time because they were divinely appointed to do so. In WELS ministry, pastors, teachers, and staff ministers serve God full time by virtue of their divine calls.
  - Could you ever see yourself serving God like this? Explain.
  - Why would encouraging a child to enter full-time ministry be a good thing?
7. Zechariah was struck dumb/silent because of fear and doubt in God's promise.
  - Have you ever been unwilling/unable to speak to others about Jesus because of fear and doubt? Explain.
  - How could you become a more courageous and confident servant of the legendary and gracious God?

**PRAY:** Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. He has raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of his servant David. Through his holy prophets he promised of old that he would rescue us from the hand of our enemies and enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. (*Song of Zechariah*)



## NoteSheet

Sermon Outline

Take notes during the sermon to help you remember the main points

Luke 1:5-25 (page 1024)

### Zechariah—The Lord Is Legendary!

#### 1. A His-story Maker

My life story is H\_\_\_\_-story—the story of the legendary things God has done.

Though Elizabeth and I lived a good life, our prayers for a child went u\_\_\_\_\_.

My first mistake—I g\_\_\_\_\_ u\_\_\_\_. I thought having a child was no longer possible.

#### 2. A Prayer Answerer

Then God sent an a\_\_\_\_\_ to remind me that he did not give up on me.

Know that your prayers will be h\_\_\_\_\_ and a\_\_\_\_\_.

#### 3. A Mission Giver

In his grace God not only gave me a son; he gave my son an amazing m\_\_\_\_\_.

What kind of mission does God have in store for your children or grandchildren?

#### 4. A Miracle Worker

I'm ashamed to say that I didn't b\_\_\_\_\_ the angel.

Know that nothing is too h\_\_\_\_\_ for God. Whatever it is, just ask!

#### 5. A Promise Keeper

God keeps every promise. H\_\_\_\_\_ him to his promises. He loves that!

John = "The Lord is g\_\_\_\_\_." God was about to fulfill his greatest promise.

Who can keep us from singing his praise?

#### Next Steps

- **God Keeps His Promises.** What promises has God made to you that you need to hold on tightly to this week? Jot them down and put them in your Bible. When you pray, boldly remind God of his promises. He loves it when you put your trust in him.
- **Tell Your Story.** What amazing prayer has God answered in your life? It's His-story to be shared. Look for opportunities to share the story of what our legendary God has done for you.
- **Take Up the Mission.** Prepare the way for the Lord. Invite someone you know who does not know Jesus to come to worship with you this Advent/Christmas season.