

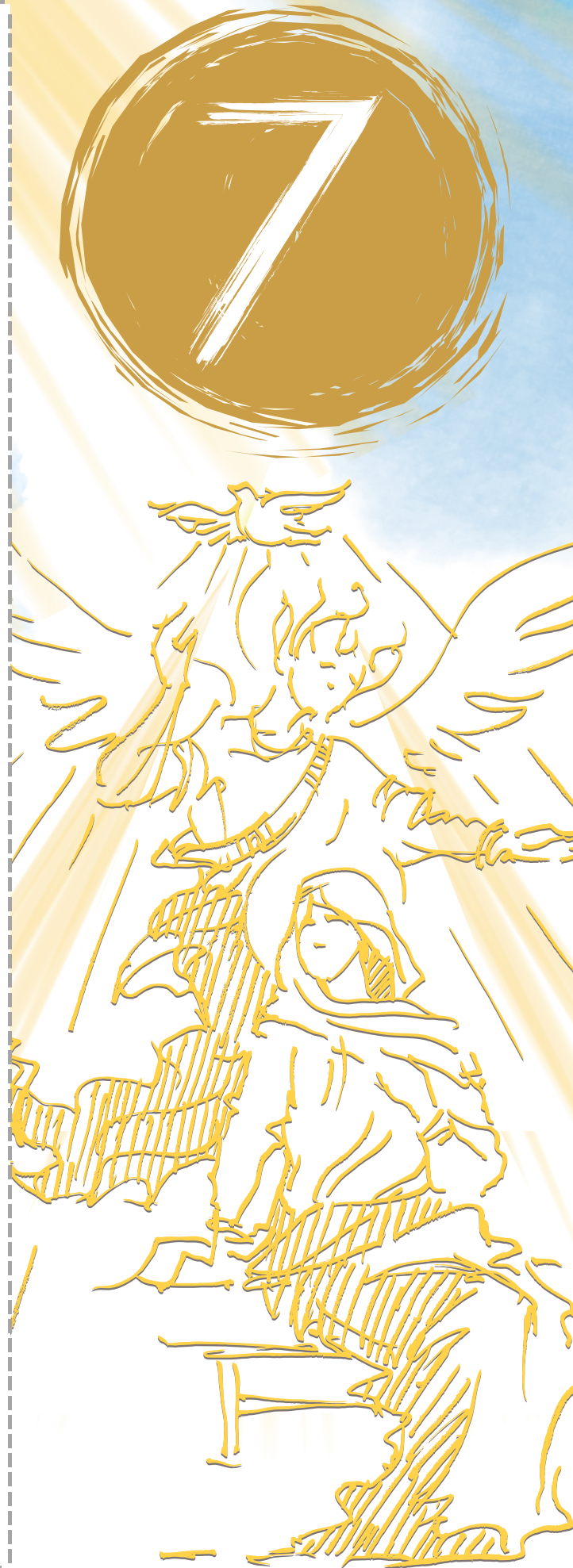
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

He 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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

-Luke 1:26-35



**We've spent this first week learning some of the prophecies that foretold of Jesus' birth, now on this seventh day of Advent, we begin to see them fulfilled!**

**Let's unpack some of the meaning in these verses by examining the culture at that time. Do you know what it means to be betrothed to someone? Today when two people want to make a promise to marry one another, the man will offer the woman a ring, and if she accepts it, they'll be engaged. It's like a promise to marry one another soon! Then they will plan a wedding together. They'll set the date, book the venue, pay for food, decorations, a photographer, all sorts of things. When the day arrives, they'll stand in front of all their guests and say their vows to one another. Then the officiant will pronounce them husband and wife, and they will begin living together as a married couple, two people coming together as one.**

**Things worked a little differently in Bible days. Parents would usually arrange marriages for their gown children, and when the parents had found a suitable match, they would agree on a betrothal. The betrothal is similar to an engagement, but it was legally binding. To make it official, the groom would take a sip from a cup and then offer the bride the cup to sip from as well. If she took a sip, it was a sign that she accepted the offer. From then on, the two were considered legally married, but would not come together as husband and wife until after the groom had gone to prepare a new home for them to start their lives together. When the groom's father decided the new home was suitable, the groom would return to the bride to get her for their wedding feast! They would celebrate for 7 days straight! It was a huge and wonderful celebration!**

**Well Mary was betrothed to Joseph, so while they were legally married, they had not come to live together as husband and wife yet. So Mary fulfilled the prophecy of being a virgin, and the Lord fulfilled the prophecy by performing the miracle through the Holy Spirit bringing baby Jesus into Mary's womb.**

**What an incredible blessing to receive!**

**On the next page, color the picture of Mary and the Angel.**

