



# Sermon Study Guide for December 19, 2021

*Our Savior Lutheran Church and School*

**Theme:** Joseph had a choice when his fiancé turned up pregnant. He tried to do the 'right thing' by sending her and the child away. But the angel of the Lord made it clear that they needed Joseph to be a loving husband and father, and that he was also wanted in God's plan.

**Getting Started: (sharing with each other)**

1. Our theme this week is 'Unplanned'. What are some ways that you have seen God working in unplanned ways in your life this week?
2. What are some other stories in the Bible that you can think about where something that is unwanted happens, but God works through it?

**In the Word: Matthew 1:18-25**

3. Joseph was a righteous man, a man who knew the law. In his mind and in the law, why was divorcing Mary, sending her and the child away the right thing to do? (See Deuteronomy 22:23-24) What was Joseph trying to do in sending Mary away?
4. What is the connection with the angel calling Joseph a son of David in verse 20? Why does the angel say this, and why is it so important that Joseph be of the line of David?
5. The prophecy in verse 23 comes from Isaiah 7. There are so many prophecies that are fulfilled in Jesus. What other prophecies can you think of that point towards Jesus?
6. The name Immanuel gives us hope and joy this Advent season. There are plenty of other names that Christ can and has been called. What are some of those names, and what peace and comfort do those other names bring to you and your family?

### **Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)**

7. In verse 24, we read that Joseph takes Mary as his wife. Before the dream, Joseph had no thoughts of still marrying Mary, but after an angel of the Lord directed him on the paths of God, Joseph did as the Lord willed. How does this make you think of making decisions in your life, and how can it change how we view when changes happen to our plans?
  
8. Often times we look at things that are unwanted in our lives as obstacles, annoyances, and changes in our plans. Whenever it happens, it isn't great, and we often think that now our plans are destroyed, damaged, and no longer any good. What unwanted situations in your life have turned out to be very good?
  
9. While Joseph may not have wanted all of this to happen, he went with what God commanded him, and took it in stride. How can we see unwanted moments in our lives as opportunities to grow personally and with God?
  
10. Joseph can sometimes be "the forgotten one" in the Christmas season or in the nativity scene. How can we take the example that Joseph gave and use it as a guide? Along those lines, how can we encourage fathers, step-fathers, adopted fathers, or fathers of any kind in their roles to live as godly men?

**Prayer:** Thank God for sending His Son Jesus into the world to do exactly what His name means, to save. Thank Jesus for taking on that humble form of a baby, of a human to come down to this earth to be our ultimate sacrifice. Ask God to guide you this Advent season, to cling to and spread his hope, peace, joy and love to all of your neighbors.

**Next Week:** We prepare for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, when we celebrate the birth of our Lord, the Advent of our King.