

# Sermon Title: Here am I

- Luke 1:26-38
- Setting: Fourth Sunday in Advent, reflecting on Mary's response to the angel's message

## Discussion Points / Points to Ponder:

1. **Reimagining Mary:** How do various depictions of Mary, from traditional to modern interpretations, impact our understanding of her role and character?
2. **Mary as Model:** Explore the contrasting views of Mary as either a contemplative figure or a strong, questioning woman. How do these perspectives influence our perception of her as a model for discipleship?
3. **The Mystery of Election:** Reflect on the idea that God's choices are often beyond human comprehension. How does Mary's ordinariness illustrate the mystery of being chosen by God?
4. **Humanity of Mary and Jesus:** Discuss the significance of Mary's ordinariness in ensuring Jesus' genuine humanity. How does this factor into the overall plan of salvation?
5. **Saying 'Yes' to God:** Delve into the importance of Mary's willingness to say 'yes' to God's calling. In what ways does her response serve as a model for our own obedience to God's plans?
6. **"Here am I":** Compare Mary's response to other biblical figures like Moses, Samuel, and Isaiah. What similarities exist in their reactions to God's callings? How does their willingness to surrender influence our understanding of faith?
7. **Unconditional Faith:** Explore the transformational power of unconditional faith. How does laying down our defences and offering discipleship without conditions change us and allow God to work through us?
8. **Making Christ Present:** Discuss how our responses to God's callings can facilitate the birth of Christ in our lives and in the world. How does Mary's 'Here am I' inspire us to recognize and serve Christ in others?

## Alternative Questions:

1. How does the varying portrayal of Mary in art and theology, from contemplative to feminist, affect our perception of her role in the biblical narrative?
2. Discuss the significance of Mary's ordinariness in the context of her role as the mother of Jesus. How does her normalcy contribute to Jesus' humanity?
3. Reflect on the concept of God's 'mystery of election' and how it is exemplified in Mary's story. How does this challenge our understanding of God's selection of individuals for specific tasks?
4. In what ways does Mary's willingness to say 'yes' to God's calling serve as a model for our own obedience? How can we emulate this attitude in our lives?
5. Compare Mary's response to God's calling with the responses of Moses, Samuel, and Isaiah in the Old Testament. What commonalities do you see in their reactions, and how do they resonate with our own experiences of God's callings?
6. Explore the transformative power of unconditional faith, as highlighted in Mary's response. How does this type of faith change individuals and enable God to work through them?