

Seasons of faith

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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Here's the beginning of the church newsletter piece I wrote last week:

I'm writing this on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, the day the church remembers Mary's rather eventful visit from Gabriel. To our 21st-century eyes, it might look like a pretty weird feast. Even if the whole virgin-birth thing doesn't cause any problems for you, it still seems odd to be so committed to the notion that December 25 is Jesus' birthday that you also mark his divine conception exactly nine months before. (Incidentally, it's also the Annunciation of My Daughter Anna; her due date was Christmas Day, though she missed it by many weeks.)

The church calendar can seem fussy, esoteric, oddly specific. There's little historical evidence that Jesus was born on December 25. Yet this date dictates a whole chunk of the year's feasts and fasts, of assigned themes and readings. Why?

Read the rest [on the Holy Covenant UMC site](#).