

Week of December 20, 2020

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,

²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

³² 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 ancestor David.

³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

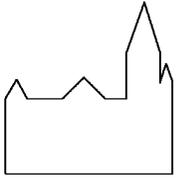
³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God.

³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.

³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."

³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. What did you expect to do during the pandemic that you never got around to doing?
- B. What are some of the more extraordinary stories you've heard from people you ordinarily believe (friends, co-workers, etc.)? Did you believe them?

Bible Study Questions:

1. Why do you think the angel is named?
2. In verse 29, why do you think Mary is perplexed? What do you think is running through her mind?
3. Do you imagine that this is a strictly literal telling of the story, or a condensed telling? How much time do you think elapses as Mary "ponders"?
4. Why do you think that Mary isn't told anything about the role Elizabeth's baby, John the Baptist, will play?
5. Do you think Mary was being presented with a *fait accompli* or a choice? Was it possible for her to say 'no'?
6. How far are you willing to go to answer the call of God? Where are your limits?
7. How could you be more prepared to answer the call of God? In what areas are you least ready if God calls you to serve: Finances? Schedule? Skills?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about ways in which each person can be more ready to respond to opportunities to do good.