

GOOD NEWS – GREAT JOY #1

12/5/2021
Sunday a.m.

Luke 1:5-38;

SLIDE 1 – COVER SLIDE

SLIDE 2 – GOOD NEWS of GREAT JOY

- Gospel Good News – Christmas Spirit
- Ready to receive – expectant – heart, soul, mind, spirit, etc...
 - Not based on circumstances or appearances – based on truth of Word

SLIDE 3 – CHRIST'S 1st & 2nd ADVENT

- ADVENT = Arrival or 'coming' *Latin* – 'Adventus'
- 4-week preparation & celebration time leading up to Christmas, w/1 candle/wk
- 2-fold ADVENT – remembering Christ's 1st Advent, prepping for 2nd Advent

SLIDE 4 – 400 YEARS OF SILENCE

- The Intertestamental Period – from last prophetic writing til Gospels
- No prophets, no 'words from God', no 'holy writings'
 - Only pseudo-pigrapha & non-canonical/Deuterocanonical writings
- Promises of the prophets – but its been 12+ generations w/no news

SLIDE 5 – LUKE 1:5-25 – ZECHARIAH

SLIDES 6-13 – LUKE 1:11-20

- Priest of Levi, division of Abijah; married to Elizabeth; no kids (stigma);
- assigned by casting lots to serve in the temple/burn incense – great/rare honor
- Zechariah – gripped w/fear – common response to angelic messenger
- Followed by encouragement – don't be afraid: your prayer has been heard

SLIDE 14 – ZECHARIAH'S RESPONSE

- Zechariah's response: how can this be? I'm OLD, Liz is OLD
 - Burden of knowledge rests on Zechariah →
 - Levite priest – serving before the Lord – has to know his stuff
 - Israel's history – **Genesis 12** – promise to Abraham & Sarah
 - Aged 100 & 90 – miraculous blessing for them & whole world
 - This is our heritage – the origin story of the WHOLE Jewish people
 - We can't do it – I'm old; she's old → disappointment, failure, curse(?)
 - Prayers (un)answered for years – delays? Issues?
- Gabriel's response: I am Gabriel. I stand in the Presence & I was sent to bring you this Good News;
 - b/c you didn't believe me/my words, you will be mute til they're fulfilled
 - Faith comes by hearing, hearing by Word of God - & vice-versa (doubt)

SLIDE 15 – LUKE 1:26-56 – MARY

SLIDES 16-22 – LUKE 1:26-38

SLIDE 23 – MARY’S RESPONSE

- Mary – young woman betrothed (engaged+) to Joseph –
- Gabriel – greetings you who are highly favored!
 - Mary – troubled at the greeting – who, me? What? I’m just a girl...
 - Don’t be afraid – you have favor w/God; conceive & give birth → Jesus
- Mary’s response – “How is this supposed to work? I’m a virgin.”
 - Mary is not expressing doubt – it’s WONDER? How can this work?
 - Gabriel’s explanation – HS, power of Most High; Holy One, Son of God
 - Elizabeth – miracle baby in old age – sign –
 - “For no word from God will ever fail”
- Mary’s response – “I am the Lord’s servant, may your word to me be fulfilled.”

SLIDE 24 – HOW’S YOUR HEART?

- Zechariah – doubt, worry, ‘mature response’, hard-hearted, seen too much life, too much disappointment (aka shame, unable to carry on family line, unfruitfulness, curse of barrenness), hope is hard, hopeless, can’t ‘go there’
- Mary – wonder, inexperience, child-likeness, hope, room for miraculous, openness to God’s miracles even when don’t ‘get’ them
- Wonder, child-like faith, hoping again; expectancy; trust; let God be God

SLIDE 25 – WHAT ARE WE DOING WITH THIS?

- Heart checks: how do I tell where my heart is?
- How do I respond to God’s leading? Good News of Great Joy?
- w/o regard for circumstances – God is inviting us to embrace Him & His plans

SLIDE 26 – PSALM 16:5,6

SLIDE 27 – THE BLESSING – NUMBERS 6:22-27

- **Numbers 6:22-27** *The LORD bless you & keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you & be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you & give you peace.” So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”*

SLIDE 28 – PRAYER IS AVAILABLE