

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

God brings purpose to our lives, even in the most unexpected disruptions.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:26-38

ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT

1. As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
2. Sometimes life doesn't work out the way we planned or hoped. Our lives have many twists and turns - some for the better and some for the worse. Most of us are no longer on plan A, but plan B, C, D, or Q. What have you discovered in life that speaks to this reality?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

3. Read Luke 1:26-38. What do you notice in the text?
4. What questions do you have?
5. A Jewish girl would usually be pledged to be married around twelve years of age and married one year after that. In this story, Mary would probably have been in her early teens in striking contrast with the age of her relative Elizabeth, who was "well advanced in years (Luke 1:7). What do these stories tell us about God who works through such unlikely people?

LIFE APPLICATION

6. Martin Luther wrote the following about the Christmas story: "Quite possibly Mary was doing the housework when the angel Gabriel came to her. Angels prefer to come to people as they are fulfilling their calling and discharging their office. The angel appeared to the shepherds as they were watching their flocks, to Gideon as he was threshing the grain, to Samson's mother as she sat in the field." The Bible is filled with stories of God disrupting the lives of ordinary people." How might this insight help us think about our everyday life and the potential for disruption by circumstances, others, or even God?
7. Pete Wilson wrote, "Your dreams may not be happening, and things aren't turning out the way you expected, but that doesn't mean your life is spinning out of control. It just means you're not in control. It's in those moments you can learn to trust the only one who has ever had control in the first place." What feels out of control right now? What do you need to do to stop trying to control what you're not able to control anyway?

CHALLENGE

Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant." She was ready to step into whatever God had for her despite having many unanswered questions and plenty of challenges in the future. How can we give ourselves to the Lord as his servants today?