

## Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

December 9, 2018

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**What If We Weren't Afraid Anymore?**

Luke 1:26-38

### EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

### VERSES FOR MEDITATION AND REFLECTION

<sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."<sup>[a]</sup><sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

<sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>38</sup> 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.

### DISCUSSION

We all tend to have a plan for how we think our life should go, and it is difficult for us not to be goal-oriented, responsible people. Mary's powerful response to her unexpected news should inspire all of us: "*Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.*" v38 Even though we likely won't be visited by an angel with specific instructions on how to live our lives, most of what God wants us to do in our lives is abundantly clear, we just don't listen. Just as in Mary's case, the voice of God is rarely related to the questions with which we are consumed.

***Have you sensed God trying to speak to you about something other than what you have specifically asked Him, as in the example Thomas gave of Sarah starting a prayer group at her office on God's prompting?***

People who are good at discerning God's will in their lives practice listening to God daily, Thomas says. When we learn to listen to God's voice, we can live in a way that is bigger than we can imagine on our own.

***Consider how you are daily listening to God's voice daily – through prayer, devotional time, worship, etc. How can you improve?***

***How can practicing listening to His voice daily can help you better discern His call to you, especially when it does not align with your requests?***

As Christians, the church can be for us a safe spot which helps our lives be predictable. But when Jesus actually gets involved in your life, Thomas says, it can be the opposite of safe and predictable.

***How would it be for you to look at God and be able to say like Mary, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word" ?***

The way that we posture our bodies when we pray – with open hands, arms up, or standing on one foot – can be a great reminder to ask God fewer questions and be open to how He wants to speak to you. ***As you pray during Advent (and beyond), be aware of how you posture yourself so that you can better hear the voice of God.***

### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank you for powerful and majestic example of Mary, who chose to listen to your voice, trusting You to take her away from the plan she had for her own life and to something far greater than she could have imagined. Help us posture ourselves to hear your voice, Lord, that we may live lives more than "fine." Amen*