

Youth Worship Lesson – December 20, 2020

WE PREPARE WITH LOVE

Focus Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

Youth issue:
Does God really speak to
people?

Purpose: To look at how God's message of love was given in the past and is experienced again in Christmas

Preparation

Worship Table – purple or blue cloth

Pictures for Bible story and activity materials at the end of the lesson.

Lighting of the Christ Candle: We light this candle to remember that God is always with us.

Opening Prayer

O God, help us to pass on your message of love this Christmas.

Let your love shine through us, in what we do, and in what we say, to all the people that we meet. Amen.

Introducing the Theme

We're going to start today with a game. **(Give each person a piece of chart paper and a marker.)** You have three minutes to list as many ways as you can of getting a message across to a group of people. Record your answers on the chart paper. (Allow time for this, then have each person hang up their sheet.) Let's look at your answers. **(Discuss the answers. If they didn't think of it, you may want to add some ideas such as highway signs, airplanes trailing a banner, or signs on hot air balloons.)**

Yes, there are a lot of ways to send messages. **(Show a church bell ornament or picture of a church bell.)** Do you know what bells had to do with sending messages in olden times? If someone had a special message to deliver to the people, they would ring the town bell. Then everyone would gather to hear the important message. Bells on Christmas cards, on our Christmas trees, and in our Christmas music, have a message for us. They remind us that Jesus came to bring us a special message of love from God.

Exploring the Theme

Think for a moment. In lots of Bible stories, God tells the people what they should do, or how they should live. But how? How does God send messages to the people? **(through the prophets, such as Isaiah; through dreams, like Joseph in Egypt; through prayer, like Moses; through Jesus)** We're going to read about some more messages and messengers that are related to the Christmas story. (Read and discuss each passage.)

Luke 1:26-38

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And, having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" However, when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Moreover, behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- Who is God's messenger in this story? **(the angel Gabriel, verse 26.)**
- What was God's message? **(that Mary would have a baby boy, whom she was to name Jesus, verse 31)**
- What description is given of the messenger? **(he is called an "angel")** Look up "angel" in the Bible dictionary. What does it mean? **(messenger)**

Luke 2:8-15

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the LORD appeared to them, and the glory of the LORD shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the LORD. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the LORD has told us about."

- What was the message in this story? **(the Messiah has been born today, verse 11)**
- What description is given of the messengers? **(angels)**

Matthew 2:11-12

And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

- This story is different. Who is the messenger here? **(God, in a dream, verse 12)**
- What is the message? **(do not return to Herod)**

Mary's baby grew to be a man, and he was also part of God's message to us. This message was sent in person. God sent Jesus to tell us a message of love and to show us how to live in God's way.

How do we hear God's messages today? How does God send messages to us? **(through the Bible; through leaders, teachers, ministers and spiritual mentors; through our consciences; through friends and other people who may be like "angels" for us; through prayer and spiritual experiences in nature, dreams, etc.)**

What experiences have you had where you thought God might be trying to tell you something? **(Give time for silent reflection. Discussion is optional.)**

God also wants us to be messengers, to share God's love with others. That is what Christmas is all about – sharing the good news of God's love. It's also why we send Christmas cards. Christmas cards tell the Christmas message of God's love. It's also why we decorate our homes with bells and angels, and why we give to others. We are called to be Christmas messengers.

Memory Verse: "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" Luke 1:28

Integrating the Theme – Christmas Messages

Bring pieces of poster paper and markers. We have talked a lot this morning about messages. We're going to make posters with Christmas messages on them. You can work on your own or with your parents. Choose a single sentence Christmas message. Consider all that we have talked about during Advent, such as John the baptizer calling on people to prepare and change their ways or Mary's Song of Praise. Print your message on the paper to create a poster.

Closing Prayer

Dear God,

May the spirit of Christmas fill all your hearts with love.

May you leave here with the glory of the Lord's love inside each one of you here today.

Amen.

Whole People of God is copyright © Wood Lake Publishing Inc.



Unit 3

Preparing and Celebrating
November 29, 2020 to January 10, 2021