**Study notes – Significance in Season, 11th December 2022**

**Welcome**

* Have you ever encountered an angel? *or* If you were having dinner with Jesus and could ask him only one question, what would it be?

**Worship** – **Luke 1:46-55**

* Read Mary’s song of praise in these verses and use them to lead you into prayers of praise and worship.

**Word – Luke 1:26-38, Significance in Season:**

* The significance of listening – to God, to ourselves and to others
* The significance of asking – asking questions can help deepen faith and can also lead to God revealing more of his plan
* The significance of obeying – obedience is not easy, it can be joyful but can also be painful. Ultimately, it is the calling of those who seek to serve the Lord.

**Passage discussion questions (choose a few…)**

* Based on the evidence of the text, what is the transition in Mary’s attitude that we see over the course of this passage?
* Is it significant that Mary did not immediately speak or react, but first took time to listen to the angel Gabriel’s message?
* How important is it that, having been told she would “give birth to a son…the Son of the Most High” Mary then asks a question?
* Do you think it was significant for Mary to hear that her older relative Elizabeth, was also due to give birth to a son?
* What do we learn about Mary from her statement in verse 38?
* What are the most significant lessons that we can draw out of this passage?

**Reflection and application questions (choose a few…)**

* Based on our reflection around the text of Luke 1:26-38, what are the most significant things for us as individuals/as a church in this season?

**PTO**

* Based on what you hear and see around you, “What is it that the church/The Church needs to change in order to better relate to the society in which we are living?”
* How can we create and embody “safe spaces”, where people can encounter “the sacred”?
* Are there any particular habits you have/places you go to which help you to listen to God?
* Do you agree that asking questions of God can help to deepen faith and understanding? Where is the line between expressing doubt and seeking to build faith?
* Why is it that obedience can sometimes be so difficult?
* “Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs through loving channels to the glory of God”. How do you understand this quotation?
* To what extent do we see Jesus himself modelling the significance of listening, asking and obeying?
* Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” To what extent is our part in God’s mission ultimately all about reaching “the lost”?
* “No matter what task God has called us to do, our ministry touches a whole world if we are truly serving the Lord.” Do you agree with this quotation?

**Prayer suggestions**

* Spend some time together in silent “listening prayer”, perhaps sharing anything you hear from God, if appropriate?
* Ask God to show you (and us as a church) the things which are most significant in this season…
* Pray for all those you are aware of in need – ill-health, difficult circumstances, relationship challenges
* Pray for Jan and family, next of kin to Alan Grimsey who died this week.
* Continue to pray for the Fuller family.
* Pray for Analice and the work of YFC in reaching young people with the Gospel.