

The Greatest Announcement

By Van Yandell

Luke 11: 26-28 "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

Wintertime in western Kentucky is about as unpredictable as anything can possibly be. Apparently the weather is somewhat of a joke in many places. I was in Greenock, Scotland on a rainy day and a Scotsman told me, "We can have all four seasons in twenty-four hours."

We always looked for signs of springtime. Some of the maple trees started budding as early as February but warmer temperatures are definitely not in the near future that early.

A little yellow flower we found in late winter is called a buttercup. Some years they bloomed as early as February. A tradition in our household was, when I found the first buttercups, I picked a few and brought them home to wife Margie.

This action usually got me a kiss on the cheek and a "Thank you baby." Almost as important was those little yellow flowers signified the ending of winter and the approaching spring.

It was like they were God's announcement to us that brighter, warmer times were coming very soon. A very important announcement made in the Book of Luke is God's announcement to Mary that she will be the mother of the Savior of the world.

By His birth, life, death and resurrection, He provided the world with a brighter future. No one in the future or past of humanity has made such a profound impact on mankind as Jesus Christ.

Since the gestation period in humans is nine months, this announcement to Mary took place about the end of March in year one B.C.

The Church of the Annunciation (Basilica of the Annunciation) is in northern Israel in the town of Nazareth. We were there, and deep inside the structure is a spring where it is believed the angel Gabriel (the annunciation angel) appeared to Mary.

I drank from that spring and would like to say had a life changing spiritual experience.

That, however, did not happen with me but I'm told with some, it does. Being in Christ's tomb (tomb of Joseph of Arimathea) was a different story. Such an emotional, spiritual experience I had never had.

Luke 1: 28-29a "And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" But when she saw him, she was troubled."

"Troubled" may very well be an understatement. We can imagine that a young girl having such an unexpected experience would have been emotionally shaken beyond description.

We cannot know exactly Mary's age at the time. Based on cultural history, she was probably in the 13 to 15 year old range. Yes, "troubled" would be a lessened description of her emotional state!

Luke 1: 30-33 "Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And 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."

We find in these verses a very compassionate and understanding Gabriel. Could we see this level of empathy in humanity?

Gabriel explained very clearly and forthright a part of what Mary's experience would be. She apparently knew the prophesy of the coming of a Savior and when she became aware that she would be His mother, a state of emotions likely unparalleled took place within her.

Matthew 1: 23 "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted would mean, God with us."

We are told in this verse that Mary was a virgin, she would conceive, she would give birth to a son and His name interpreted "God with us."

Some claim it is not necessary to know or believe Mary was a virgin and that Christ's birth was a virgin birth. That is untrue! To be the perfect, sinless sacrifice for the sins of the world (Deuteronomy

17: 1) Jesus had to be conceived by the Holy Spirit and virgin born.

A typically born human (fathered by a human male) could not have lived the perfect, sinless life (1 Peter 2: 22) as required for the sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

After Mary received her announcement from Gabriel, she was anxious to visit her cousin Elizabeth and announce to her the encounter and news from Gabriel.

Luke 1: 41 "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."

Elizabeth being pregnant herself was in an emotional state. Her son was to become John the Baptist who in later life would baptize our glorious Savior.

Announcements are important; there's no arguing that point. An announcement Christians must be making is the eternal salvation given to us by Savior Jesus is a free gift received through faith.

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email is vmy3451@gmail.com

Sleep, Academic Performance Go Hand In Hand

Students and sleep are not always compatible. College students have long expressed a tendency to be night owls, but even school-aged youngsters may be reluctant to go to bed on time during the school year.

Parents of school-aged children know that bedtime can be challenging, particularly when moms and dads want to ensure their youngsters get the recommended number of hours of sleep each night.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine advises school-aged children between the ages of six and 12 get nine to 12 hours of sleep per night, while teens are urged to sleep eight to 10 hours per night. Studies have found that when students don't get enough sleep on school nights, their academic performance is likely to suffer.

A 2023 study of first-year college students led by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University and published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that negative outcomes began to accumulate when students received less than six hours of sleep per night.

Authors of the study noted that previous studies in animals showed that memories formed during the day were consolidated while



animals slept but forgotten when those animals' normal sleep patterns were interrupted. The researchers behind the study identified a notable decline in students' grade point averages when they received less than six hours of sleep, suggesting humans' ability to learn and remember what they've learned in a given day is compromised if they don't get enough sleep that night.

School-aged youngsters typically get more than six hours of

sleep per night, but if they're falling short of AASM recommendations, those students' academic performance could be adversely affected. With that in mind, parents can try various strategies to get children to bed on time.

- Stay consistent with bedtime. A firm bedtime can reduce the likelihood that sleep disruptions will affect

how children perform in the classroom. If children are staying up three hours past their weeknight bedtime on Friday and Saturday, then they're less likely to want to go to bed on time on school nights. A little flexibility on the weekends might not upset the apple cart, but try to maintain a consistent bedtime throughout the week.

- Help kids calm

down before bed. A winding down period leading up to bedtime can help kids fall asleep more quickly and might even make them less resistant to bedtime. Avoid particularly energetic activities directly before bedtime. Calmly reading a book and picking clothes out for the next day of school are calm activi-

ties that can get kids' bodies ready for sleep.

- Avoid confrontation. Parents are urged to let it go if kids aren't falling right asleep but are still being cooperative at bedtime. Kids might want to keep reading to themselves after Mom and Dad say goodnight, and that's alright so long as children aren't continually getting out of bed or getting riled up. Eventually kids will tire out when engaging in a calm, pre-sleep activity, so parents should not grow upset and confront kids who are behaving but not falling asleep right away.

- Create a positive sleep environment. Young children will resist sleep if it sounds like their parents and siblings are having a grand old time without them. Parents typically go to great lengths to ensure kids' bedrooms are conducive to sleep, but it's also important to maintain a peaceful setting throughout the rest of the house once children go to bed.

Sleep and school are inextricably linked, and parents can do much to ensure kids get the rest they need to do their best in the classroom.

PUBLIC NOTICE

BID NOTICE

The Union County Board of Education will receive sealed bids until 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 17, 2026, for:

Instructional Supplies
Maintenance Supplies
Office Supplies
Transportation Fuel
T-Shirts, Polos, Sweatshirts

Bid forms and specifications are available at www.union.ky-schools.us or may be obtained from:

Amy Morris, Director of Finance or
Rhonda Gibson, Finance Specialist
Union County Public Schools
4500 US Hwy 60W
Morganfield, KY 42437
Telephone: 270-389-1694

Conflict of interest, gratuities, and kickbacks are defined in KRS 45A:445 and as provided in KRS 45A:455 are absolutely prohibited. Violations of these codes are punishable by penalties as set forth in KRS 45A:990. 4/8c

ELECTION NOTICE

May 19, 2026 Primary Election

ABSENTEE VOTING BY MAIL

For voters who are eligible for an Absentee Ballot by mail, the ballot can be requested by visiting www.govoteky.com or by calling the County Clerk's office at (270) 389-1334.

- Mail-in absentee ballots can be requested through the options above from April 4 thru May 5.
- Voters **should not** request a mail-in ballot if they intend to vote in person.
- After the voter has completed their ballot, it can be returned two ways. Ballots can be returned either in-person in the drop box at the Union County Clerk's Office at 100 W Main St. in Morganfield (the Court House) or through the mail. **If returned by mail, the postage on the return envelope should be \$1.90.**
- Make sure you sign **BOTH** the inner golden flap as well as the outside return envelope!
- All ballots must be received by 6:00 P.M. on Election Day.

GARRICK THOMPSON
Union County Clerk

ELECTION NOTICE

PRIMARY ELECTION EXCUSED
ABSENTEE BALLOT

DROP BOX LOCATION

Union County Clerk's Office
Union County Courthouse
100 W. Main St.
Morganfield, KY

Union County Board of Elections will offer ONE drop box for deposit of excused mail-in absentee ballots for the May Primary Election for voters choosing not to mail their ballot back to Union County Clerk's Office. It is located inside the north entrance of the Union County Courthouse and will be available during regular business hours, weekdays, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. **ALL excused mail-in absentee ballots MUST be received by 6:00 P.M. on Election Day, May 19.**

GARRICK THOMPSON
Union County Clerk