

# STRANGER THINGS

**Episode One**  
**The Case of the Missing Voice**

**welcome to long beach alliance church**  
**september 11, 2016**

# MEN'S RETREAT LBAC MEN

## Hume Lake Men's Retreat October 20-23, 2016



Contact Mike Comstock  
comstock7@verizon.net  
562.505.8389

Spots are filling up; don't miss out!  
**HUMELAKE.ORG/MENS**

**Q. Read Genesis 18:1-8. What are the "stranger things" in this Bible story?**

**Q. Read Genesis 18:9-15. What is strange is this part of the story? Why would God appear to Abraham & Sarah to share such simple news?**

## The Next 50 Update

LBAC's Facility Renovation Fund

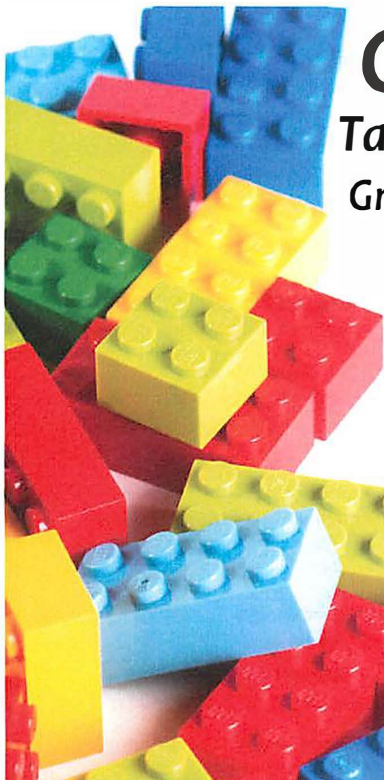
**\$0**

**\$54,626 (73%)**  
Current Progress Toward Goal

**\$75,000**  
Next 50 Goal

Visit <http://www.lbac.org/our-church/giving>  
for information about giving online, and  
for more detailed giving information!





# Growth Groups

Take Your Next Step @ LBAC!  
Groups Begin Meeting This Week!  
September 12-16!

Come to the Sign-Up Table  
Located in the Courtyard  
For more info. today!!



## AWANA IS BACK!!



### AWANA's Year Opening Night

This Wednesday, September 14 • 6:30PM-8:00PM

All ages welcome (PreK-12<sup>th</sup> Grade)! Online Reg. Open!

[www.lbac.org/ministries/childrens-ministries/awana](http://www.lbac.org/ministries/childrens-ministries/awana)

## LBAC Year-to-Date Financial Report

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget %</u>
Weekly:	\$12,236.37	\$9,015.53	73.7%
Month-to-Date:	\$12,236.37	\$9,015.53	73.7%
Year-to-Date:	\$12,236.37	\$9,015.53	73.7%
Disbursed YTD: \$4,080.87		GOF Balance: \$5,555.50	

# LBAC's Church Family Calendar & Events

## Sunday, September 11

- 9:00AM Worship Celebration 1
- 9:00AM Foundations Youth Meeting
- 10:00AM Mind the Gap (Courtyard)
- 10:45AM Worship Celebration 2
- 12:00PM Deacon Meeting
- 12:15PM Growth Group Leaders Meeting
- Luke & Tammy Schaub's Home
- 6:00PM Perspectives

## Monday, September 12

- 7:00PM Compulsive Eaters Anonymous

## Tuesday, September 13

- 7:00PM Governing Board Meeting
- 7:00PM Junior High & High School
- Youth Group/Core Groups

## Wednesday, September 14

- 6:30PM AWANA Year Opening Night!

## Friday, September 16

- 6:30AM Men's Bible Study
- 8:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

## Saturday, September 17

- 8:00AM AWANA Leadership Conference
- @ Mid-Cities Baptist Church

## Sunday, September 18

- 9:00AM Worship Celebration 1
- 9:00AM Foundations Youth Meeting
- 10:00AM Mind the Gap (Courtyard)
- 10:45AM Worship Celebration 2
- 6:00PM Perspectives

## MISSIONS

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/missions>

Join us for Perspectives & Serving the World!

## GROWTH GROUPS

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/growth-groups>

Mid-week Bible Studies for all Adults

GROUPS BEGIN SEPTEMBER 12-16!

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/childrens-ministries>

Sunday Mornings

Gospel Project @ 9:00AM & 10:45AM

## AWANA

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/childrens-ministries/awana>

Year Opening Night This Week!

September 14 • 6:30PM-8:00PM

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/student-ministries>

JH & HS Foundations ~ Sunday's @ 9:00AM

JH & HS Core Groups ~ Tuesday's @ 7:00PM

## WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/womens-ministries>

Woman To Woman Mentoring

Contact: sherylnnelbac@gmail.com

Lydia House Meals Ministry

Contact: robbi@apabrandu.com

Women Connecting with Missions

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month @ 7:00PM

Crafty Women

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month @ 10:00AM

## MEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/ministries/mens-ministries>

Contact: mensministry@lbac.org

## long beach alliance church offices

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[www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch](http://www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch)  
church office hours: tuesday-friday, 12NOON-5:00PM

## church staff team

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# STRANGER THINGS

Episode One: The Case of the Missing Voice  
Long Beach Alliance Church • September 11, 2016 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.**

**Isaiah 40:8**

## ***1) Distinguished & Dignified Sorrow***

- A) The story of Zechariah & Elizabeth is both about a couple, but more subtly, is also a story about God's special people, the Jews (Luke 1:5-25). As you read this story, you are reading both the real history of two people, and the real history of a nation.**
  
- B) Zechariah is from the priestly line, as is his wife Elizabeth (1:5). They are not only distinguished by their lineage, but also by their dignified behavior and dedication to God (1:6). Finally, Zechariah & Elizabeth have been faithful for a lifetime (1:7). They represent the best Israel has to offer, a wonderful couple.**
  
- C) Despite their stellar heritage and righteousness, Zechariah and Elizabeth also carry great sorrow & shame because they do not have any children (1:7). For a people blessed by God to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28), not having a child was considered a reproach and shameful (cf. Jeremiah 22:30).**

## ***2) God Does A Very Strange Thing***

- A) Like Zechariah & Elizabeth, Israel (the Jewish nation) was also old and barren. Under the rule of a foreign nation (Rome), with an egomaniacal puppet King (Herod), and a religious leadership mostly concerned with tradition & rules (Luke 1:8-10).**

- B) With no warning whatsoever, God suddenly sends a 'text message from Heaven' (also known as an "angelic messenger") into the middle of Zechariah & Elizabeth (and Israel's) barren world (1:11). Zechariah is terrified by the appearance of the angel (1:12), but then things get even more strange!**
- C) The angel announces the good news that Zechariah's prayers have been heard; Elizabeth is going to have a baby boy! A father normally names their child (note 1:62), but the angel tells Zechariah the boy is to be named John (1:13, God is gracious).**
- D) Additionally, the angel pronounces God's blessing and joy for Zechariah & Elizabeth, and for Israel (1:14-15). John, like his parents, will be great before God (distinguished & dignified).**
- E) God's Holy Spirit will have powerful influence on John from conception. John is divinely commanded to abstain from alcohol (1:15) a rare commitment associated with special service to God. In other words, God's Spirit will be Israel's abundance, their exclusive influence (1:17, Isaiah 40:3-8)!**

### ***3) Zechariah/Israel's Faithless Heart***

- A) In the one of the greatest moments in his life, Zechariah, the epitome of Israel's most faithful servants, verbalizes his faithless doubt to the angelic messenger (1:18).**
- B) Zechariah's doubt is met with swift and thundering judgment by the angel, now revealed as Gabriel (Daniel 8 & 9), whose words are from the very throne of God (Luke 1:19). Because of Zechariah's lack of faith, God removes his voice (and Israel's); rendered silent until God's certain word is fulfilled (1:20-23).**
- C) Zechariah heads home mute, but was, no doubt excited (☺). But even Elizabeth hides her pregnancy for five months (1:24-25), hardly allowing herself joy in believing God's amazing blessing!**

# Growth Group Guide Week 1 • Luke 1:5-25

## Stranger Things: The Case of the Missing Voice

### Ice Breaker

- If you have new members, have them introduce themselves.
- Share with your group one thing you did this summer that you've never done before.

### In-Depth

- Before we look at today's Bible passage, let's discuss the nature of the Gospels. In what ways are the gospels similar to and different from other types (genres) of literature (e.g. historical narrative, biography, epistles, etc.)?

### Read Luke 1:5-25

Discuss the characters and events with your group

1. v12-13: What prayer of Zechariah's is being answered?

2. v14-17: Gabriel's announcement contains both bad news (currently) and great news (yet to come).

List both:

Bad News

Great News

3. v18: Is Zechariah's unbelief baffling or understandable?

In what ways does his reaction mirror that of Israel?

4. How does Gabriel's response to Zechariah mirror God's response to Israel's long history of unfaithfulness?

### Making It Relevant

1. Have there been instances in your life, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, where God delayed answer to your prayer to fit HIS timing?

What lessons can we learn from these?

2. Are there examples in your life where you were like Zechariah—seeing God at work and yet remaining blind to or skeptical of His faithfulness?

How can we prevent it from happening again?