



Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church - E.L.C.A.

First Sunday in Advent

Sunday, November 30th, 2025

Theme: The Power of Yes

In this liminal time, there are so many reasons to not say yes. Even the small yeses in our daily lives feel riskier somehow. Decisions about where we put our money, our time, our energy, our confidence, and our faith feel more important than ever during these volatile times. We come from a history of people who said yes. Throughout the story of the people of God, brave and faithful, everyday people said yes to God. In Advent, these yeses are even more significant. What does it take to get to yes? Why does it matter? Why does it matter that we believe this? This is a story that we tell, that isn't just on a page or in ancient tales, but one that lives in our bones, and calls to us to say our own yes when we are called into what God is doing now.

Call to Worship

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved. **C: Amen**

CANDLE-LIGHTING (Altar Guild Committee)

We light one candle for one God, The one who comes to us as a baby, swaddled and wailing. We light one candle for one hope, one light, one salvation. We light one candle to say YES to the invitation to participate in the story of God's people.

CANDLE LIGHTING HYMN

Light One Candle To Watch For Messiah

ELW #240 vs.1

CALL TO CONFESSION

Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best. However, fear can also be harmful. For so many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make sinful choices in our lives—choices such as building walls or tearing others down. Today, in confession, we ask for mercy and pray for guidance. As we confess, we come before an entirely merciful and loving God who says to us, "Do not be afraid." Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Patient God, you know just how often we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love. You know just how often we allow fear to take the place of logic, fanning unhealthy fires in our lives. You know just how often we tuck your words, "Do not be afraid" on dusty shelves and in the back of closets, stubbornly holding onto our own point of view. Forgive us for giving fear the microphone. Silence the voices of scarcity, shame, and rejection, which spark and feed so much of our fear, to recenter us in love. With hope we pray, amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

P: Family of faith, even when we forget God's words, God does not forget us. Even when we lose our way, God does not lose us. Even when we fall short or make mistakes, God forgives and holds onto us. We are known, forgiven, and loved. **C: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

He Came Down

ELW #253 vs 1-2

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord God, We have grown so jaded, that we hardly even look for the miracles anymore. Open our eyes, that we might see your good work in new ways, Amen.

READING

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the

commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. ⁸ Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. ¹⁰ Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹ Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know that this will happen? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." ¹⁹ The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur." ²¹ Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering at his delay in the sanctuary. ²² When he did come out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³ When his time of service was ended, he returned to his home. ²⁴ After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, ²⁵ "This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people." ²⁶ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ²⁷ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ²⁸ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ²⁹ But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." ³⁰ They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." ³¹ Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ³² He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. ³³ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ³⁴ Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ³⁵ All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For indeed the hand of the Lord was with him. ³⁶ Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: ³⁷ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. ³⁸ He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his child David, ³⁹ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁴⁰ that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. ⁴¹ Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered his holy covenant, ⁴² the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us ⁴³ that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁴⁴ in holiness and righteousness in his presence all our days. ⁴⁵ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to

prepare his ways, ⁷⁷ to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸ Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, ⁷⁹ to shine
upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”
⁸⁰ The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared
publicly to Israel.

MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

He Came Down

ELW #253 vs 3-4

APOSTLE’S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Response: **Receive Our Prayer.**

OFFERING

Ways To Give Offering: In Person, Venmo and Online www.galutheranchurch.org



Because you give...
we worship, fellowship, learn, serve and grow.
Thank you for your generosity!

OFFERING SONG

Give Thanks

Gray #170

OFFERING PRAYER

God of every good gift, We offer what we have back to you, knowing that your son is the greatest gift we will ever receive. Grant us glad and generous hearts, ever and always, Amen.

Communion Prayer/Words of Institution

LORD’S PRAYER

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: At this table, Christ invites us to step into God’s power of Yes—to say Yes to hope stronger than despair, Yes to mercy wider than our mistakes, Yes to a Savior who meets us in bread and cup. Come,

you who are weary. Come, you who rejoice. Come, you who are still searching. Your presence here is already a Yes. Come to the table of grace where the Power of God’s Yes meets our open hands.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

(All Are Welcome to Receive Communion Here at GA Church)

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: Christ Jesus, You have fed us with love incarnate, and we are utterly changed. Send us forth from this meal to be forces for change in this world, as we find the YES within each of us, **C: Amen.**

BLESSING

May God bless you with courage, as you seek the YES within you; May Christ be born again in every risk you take for the sake of the world; And may the Holy Spirit remind you, again and again, that you are never alone, and that you are loved beyond measure. **C: Amen.**

SENDING HYMN Wait For The Lord ELW #262 x2

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, live in hope
All: and share the Good News of God’s Word and serve the community and the world.
Thanks be to God.

Mission Statement of Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.

Matthew 22:39 ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament. *From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted and live streamed by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #35904. CCLI# 3138595 and #21256999*

A Thrill of Hope: Advent in a Box Volume 2 Written by: Nate Crary & Rev. Miriam Samuelson Roberts
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