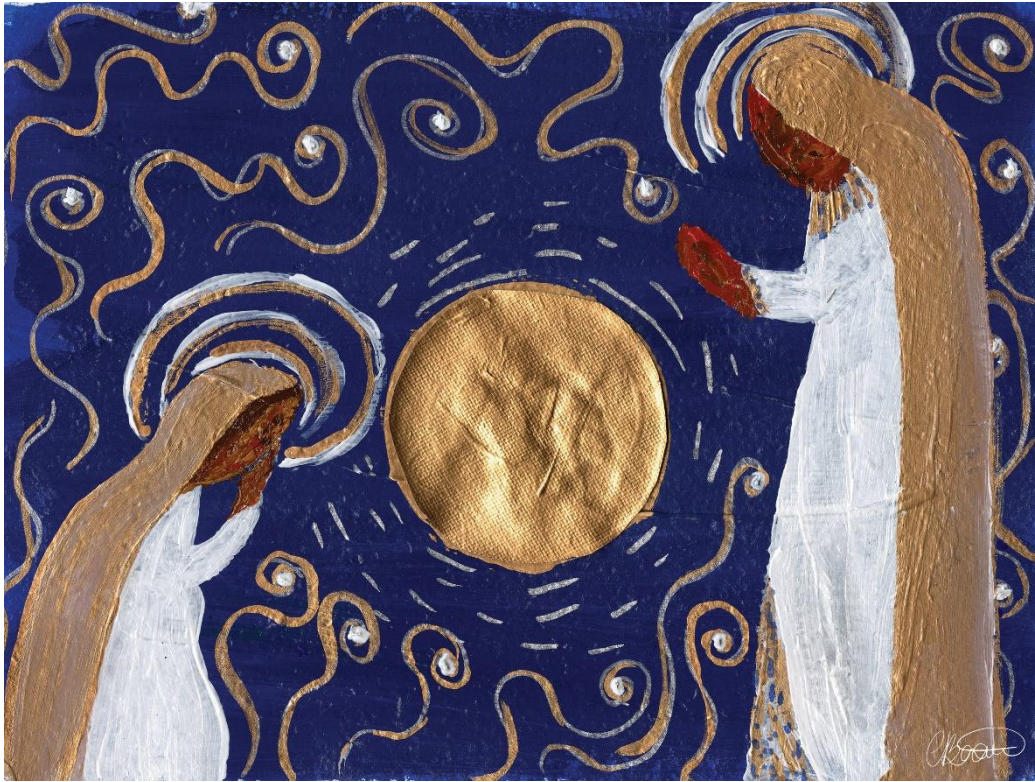


Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church-E.L.C.A.



God meets us in our fear: When the angel Gabriel comes to Mary, she is perplexed and confused – and no doubt, afraid. And yet, the angel's news is: "Do not be afraid." Do not be afraid. We hear this refrain all throughout the Christmas story and remember it is the most common phrase in all the bible. From generation to generation, God shows up in the midst of our fear and uncertainty and confusion. From generation to generation, faithful people have said, "yes," despite apprehension. From generation to generation, our ancestors in faith have accepted the invitation. The prophecy in Isaiah paints a vision of what we work toward when we say "yes": righteousness and equity reign, the wolf lives with the lamb, no harm or hurt shall destroy the earth, a child shall lead the way. This is the vision passed down to us: we must pursue it and make it real.

Second Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 4th, 2022

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church—E.L.C.A.

Ministers:

Pastor:

Prelude Music

Welcome/Announcements

You, All Members of G.A.

Jaime Decker

Gathering

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

P: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, “What are you afraid of?” From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

(Lighting of the Advent Candle)

Hymn

Light One Candle To Watch for Messiah - Verse 1&2

ELW #240

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

Here I Am

(Verse 1) – Blue Sheet

*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 For Illumination

P: Holy God, whether it’s through angels or music, friendships or sermons, study or nature— when you speak, we long to hear it. In a world as chaotic and broken as ours, we could use your words of hope and healing.

C: With gratitude we pray, amen.

Word

First Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might,

the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. ⁹ They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

R:The Word of the Lord **C:Thanks be to God**

Gospel Acclamation

pg. 205

Gospel Reading

Luke 1:26-38

P: The Holy Gospel according to _____ **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born[□] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

P: The Gospel of our Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message

Hymn of the Day

Here I Am

(Verse 2&3) - Blue Sheet

Affirmation of Faith

C: We believe in a God who knows our fears. We believe in a God who says, "Be not afraid." We believe in a God who kicks off her shoes and wades into the muck of our lives with us. We believe in a God who stitches herself to our heels, and invites us to dance. We believe in a God who hemmed stars into the night sky so that we can find our way home, and who sends us friends with open doors, so we can find our way to love. We believe in a God who finds us in our fear and does not leave us alone. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

Prayers of the People

L: Holy God, we take a deep breath in and know that you are here,

ALL: for where two or more are gathered, you are there. You never leave our sides.

L: Like a protective mother hen, or the sun who circles the earth, you carry us with you. So today,

ALL: we bow our heads with tender spirits and ask that once more you would lean in close. Hear our prayers. Buoy our hearts. Send your Spirit rushing through us like a mighty wind.

L: For these days, God, we have much to fear. We fear the return of a COVID variant that could once again shut down the world. We fear the rising tide of violence. We fear global warming. Will our grandchildren have trees to climb? We fear unsettled negotiations and unsigned contracts and what that means for the future of our jobs, our families, and our community. We look at our own lives and are afraid that we aren't making much of a difference, that we aren't valued or appreciated, that we might be forgotten at the end of the day. We fear rejection, we fear grief, we fear the diagnosis and prognosis of an illness, we fear not being enough. We fear the overwhelming power of depression and anxiety stripping away from us the joys of daily living. We fear change. We fear not meeting the church's year end budget and what that means for the future of GA Church.

L: Holy God, the muck of our lives is deep. At times, it feels like we're swimming in it.

ALL: And so we come to you today, because you are a God who said, "Do not fear" 365 times in scripture—once for every day. You are a God who has inserted yourself into the corners of our lives, refusing to let us go, refusing to leave us alone. And so we rest in that. We empty our pockets of our fears and give them to you, trusting that you will hold them tenderly, just as you hold us. You whisper, "Be not afraid." You promise to never leave our side. You call us "Beloved." May that be enough for today. Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn

Christ, Be Our Light (Vs 1,2,5)

ELW# 715

Offering Prayer

L: Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. **C: Amen.**

Meal

Holy Communion

*Great Thanksgiving Pg. 206

*Holy, Holy, Holy Pg. 207

*Words of Institution Pg. 207

*Lord's Prayer Pg. 208

***Invitation to Communion**

P: Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

*Lamb of God Pg. 208

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

*Post Communion Blessing

*** Post Communion Prayer**

P: Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

***Benediction**

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, God has been by our side. From generation to generation, we are not alone. The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon." May it be so. Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

Here I Am

(Verse 4) - Blue Sheet

***Dismissal**

P: Go in peace, with Christ beside you.

C: To share the Good News of God's Word and to serve the community and the world. Thanks be to God.

*Postlude

Bulletin Donated: By Adam & Nancy Wrage, "Happy Birthday Walter!"

Mission Statement of Gustaf 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.

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