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Written by Nathanael Vissia

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Written for December 20, 2026
Fourth Sunday in Advent
Lectionary Year B

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38 [**Summary**: *Mary Says Yes to God*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies needed

ASK (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- Can you tell me what an "entrance" is? (It's a doorway; it's what you use to get inside of something)
- What do you think -- Did you use an entrance today to get into the church building? (yes)
- And what do you think you would have done had the entrance to the church building been locked? (knock, look for a key, text/call someone, wait, leave, try another door, break a window to climb in)
- That's a lot of work! Which makes me think that an entrance works a lot better if it's open instead of being shut and locked, right? (right)
- I bring this up because, in a lot of ways, we can be like an open door or we can be a locked door to God.

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- For instance, in today's story, we hear of a conversation that Mary has with a messenger of God (by the way, the word "angel" means: messenger of God)
- In that conversation, the messenger tells Mary that she will give birth to a baby boy that she is to name Jesus.
- And, her son, Jesus, will grow up to be someone who helps people learn about and know God better.
- Once the messenger says all of these things to Mary, did you hear what Mary told the angel?
- Mary said, "Here I am" and "Let it be with me."
- In other words, she was saying, "OK. Sounds good – let's do this!"

- In other words, she was saying, “OK. Sounds good – let’s do this!”
- And because Mary says yes to God’s plan, then Jesus is born.
- But what if Mary had said “No,” to God’s plan? What if she had been like a closed and locked door to God and God’s plan? [*Note: this is meant to be more of a rhetorical question – pause for effect – and then move to the next line*]
- If she had said no to God, then maybe she would’ve named Jesus with a different name. Or maybe she would have raised Jesus differently, with a sense of resentment towards God instead of the excitement towards God that we hear from her in other stories.
- This might sound strange, but things are more difficult for God when we say no to the opportunities that God is offering.
- This is why I asked about the door being locked this morning, to remind us of how things are more difficult when entrances are blocked or locked.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Thankfully, Mary didn't say no to God. Instead, she said yes.
- And, because she said yes, she raised a son who also said yes to God and then invited others (including you and me) to learn how to also say yes to God.
- When we learn to say yes to God, then we, like Jesus and Mary, are better able to be an open door that shares God's love, healing, and light with those who are around us.
- And that’s the good news for today.
- Let’s pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,
Dear God,

Thank you for Mary…
Thank you for Mary…

…who said yes to your plan.
…who said yes to your plan.

Help us to also say yes…
Help us to also say yes…

…to your plan for us and others.
…to your plan for us and others.

Thank you and Amen.