

## Advent 2 Dec 5, 2021

### Story

#### **Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John** Based on Luke 1:5–25, 68–79

Long ago, in the land of Judah, there lived a priest named Zechariah (zeh-kuh-RYE-uh). Zechariah was married to Elizabeth. Zechariah and Elizabeth loved God and lived in God's way. But they were sad; they did not have any children.

One day, Zechariah was praying in the temple (a temple is like a church). He looked and saw what seemed to be an angel with a special message! Zechariah was very surprised!

"Don't be afraid," Zechariah heard. "You and Elizabeth will have a baby! You will call the baby John. John will be a great prophet and help people to live in God's ways." What a surprising message!

Zechariah didn't believe this was possible. Zechariah knew that he and Elizabeth were too old to have children. Zechariah became speechless! He couldn't say anything! Not one word! Not one sound! Not one squeak! What a surprise!

When Zechariah walked outside, people could see he was excited, but he still couldn't talk! What a surprise!

After a time Elizabeth and Zechariah did have a baby. They were very happy. Soon it was time to choose a name. Everyone thought that the baby would be called Zechariah like his father.

"No," Elizabeth said, "The baby's name is John."

When friends and relatives heard that the baby would be called John, they said to one another, "What a surprise!"

Zechariah was still speechless so he took a pen and wrote, "The baby's name is John." And suddenly Zechariah could speak. What a surprise!

God gave Zechariah a special message to speak that day. Holding the baby in his arms, Zechariah began to sing.

You, my little child, will be called a prophet of God.  
You will tell the good news of God's love.  
You will help the people to welcome God's chosen one.  
God's love will shine on us, and we will learn peace

## Questions for thought (teens and adults)

**Read** - Luke 1:68–79

Zechariah had given up hope on receiving the thing he wanted most. When invited to hope again, he asked for proof.

- What inspires you to hope beyond reason?

Perhaps there was a miraculous intervention that caused Zechariah to stop talking. Perhaps the messenger's visit was so traumatic that he lost his capability for speech. There is modern, western medical research to support this idea. Perhaps Zechariah took a vow of silence for a time due to a belief that fulfillment of the promise depended on his response. Monks all over the world participate in this practice.

- What do you think might have caused Zechariah's silence?
- How would your life change if you participated in periods of silence during this Advent season?
- When Zechariah's silence ended, he speaks, perhaps sings, about forgiveness, knowledge, mercy, and love that is timeless and yet present in a new way because of the birth of this child.
- Where have you been silent or silenced?
- What could you say about God's goodness in order to break the silence?

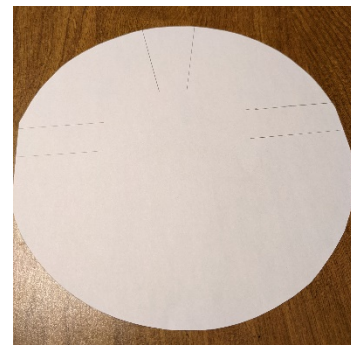
## Paper Plate Angel

Zechariah looked and saw what seemed to be an angel. The angel had a special message. Make a paper plate angel to help you tell the story about Zechariah, Elizabeth, and baby John.

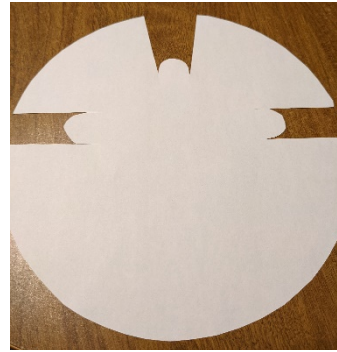
You will need paper plate, scissors, stapler, markers and coloured pencils, glitter glue

### Instructions

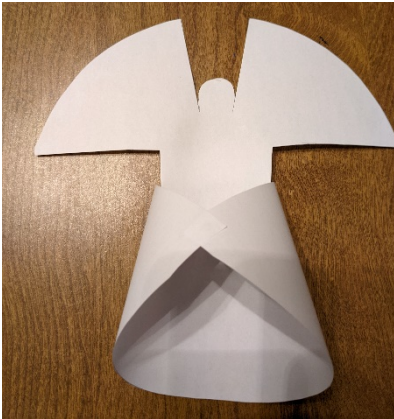
1. Draw cutting lines on the paper plate.



2. Cut along the marked lines and round off the arms and head.



3. Decorate the angel.



4. Connect edges of the skirt and secure with a staple.

5. Flatten crimped edges of the wings

6. Bend the wings back and the head forward slightly.

7. Tell the story of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John. Or use the angel to announce other good news.

