

Sunday Worship
December 14, 2025

Joy



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
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WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP CELEBRATION!

Thanks for coming to be with us at Zion Lutheran Church. If you are visiting with us for the first time, will you please fill out a visitor card, available in the pew rack in front of you, and drop it in the offering plate. Whether this is your first visit or you worship here regularly, we are delighted that you chose to share with us. We worship together on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday at 10:00 a.m. If you have a “prayer request” or a “praise report”, please let the pastor know. God bless you on your journey of faith.

INTRODUCTION

A note of joyful expectation marks today’s worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God’s reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ’s advent among us.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Arr. Hayes

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS James 5:16; 1John 1:8-9

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Most merciful God,

C: **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN Red hymnal #244 (v 1-3)

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers

GREETING / PRAYER OF THE DAY 2 Corinthians 13:13

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.**

P: Let us pray . . .

C: **Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE - ELW #240

Light three candles to watch for Messiah

Let the light banish darkness

Lift your heads and lift high

The gateway for the King of glory.

CHANCEL CHOIR Director Bill Jones

Run to Bethlehem

Words: Charlotte Lee Music: Douglas Wagner

THE WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

R: ¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.]]

³Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of

jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 146:5-10

R: ⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;

C: ⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;**

R: ⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the captive free.

C: ⁸ **The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

R: ⁹ The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

C: ¹⁰ **The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

R: ⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

R: The Word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Red Hymnal #257 (v 1 & 7) Isaiah 7:14
O Come O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel

**That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:
Refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

HOLY GOSPEL

P: The Gospel according to **Matthew 11:2-11**

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON Pastor Jaren Summers

HYMN Red Hymnal #264

Prepare the Royal Highway

RESPONSE TO GOD’S WORD

APOSTLE’S CREED

P: Let us confess our faith.

C: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 again 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 (*Response after each petition*) 1 Timothy 2:1-2

P: Lord in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer . . .

OFFERING—Invitation—God’s Work Continues

OFFERTORY SONG #188 *Create in Me a Clean Heart* Psalm 51:10-12

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Your presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your free Spirit.

COMMUNION PREFACE #107 & 108

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts

C: **We lift them to the Lord**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYERS WITH WORDS OF INSTITUTION 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

(This liturgy comes from Hippolytus who was a bishop in Rome writing around 215 AD. Hippolytus was recording the liturgy as it had been practiced up to that point, having been handed down by the apostles. Today we are celebrating communion as it was celebrated over 1800 years ago!)

LORD’S PRAYER Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION *(All who confess Jesus as their Lord and Savior and believe in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament are invited to receive Holy Communion.)*

BLESSING Numbers 6:23-26

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN Red hymnal #267

Joy to the World

DISMISSAL Luke 7:50

P: What is the mission of Zion Lutheran Church?

C: **The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is:
"Serving Christ through serving others."**

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Prepare the Royal Highway

Arr. Burkhardt

*The altar flowers are given to the honor and glory of God
by Kathy & Gary Groth in memory of Tom Beyl & honoring 6 grandchildren.*

*Prayer concerns for Zion's prayer chain may be submitted
using a 'Prayer Request' card from the pew rack.*

In Helpful Service

Pastor	Jaren Summers
Communion Assist	Linda Holt
Reader	Linda Holt
Ushers	John & Dianne LeGros
Greeters	Dale & Debbie Rudisill

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ZION'S 200TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2026 On the table in the narthex there are two forms; a schedule for the activities planned for 2026 and a member questionnaire. **Please fill out the questionnaire and place it in the box on the table.** Thanks!

MISSION OF THE MONTH: ELCA GOOD GIFTS

On the Christmas tree in the narthex, you will find ornaments that have pictures of animals and other needed items for those in need throughout the world. For example, you may pay for ten chicks for \$10, honeybees for \$20, seeds and gardening tools for \$50, a clinic visit for a child for \$10. You can also donate any amount of money and the Women of Zion can put the money toward a more expensive animal - like a goat for \$50!

Please take an ornament and return it with a check made payable to Women of Zion. Please place your check in the basket on the table in the narthex by December 31st. Any questions contact Deb Keppel.

PLENTY OF OPENINGS FOR ALTAR FLOWERS IN 2026 The chart to sign-up is posted. The cost is \$45 for 2 bouquets again. Please indicate what they are in celebration or memory of and the colors you want. We can only chose colors, not the type of flower.

2026 CALENDARS are available in in the Narthex. The cost is \$15. There is an envelope on the table for the money. This is a fundraiser for youth gathering fund.

BACK BAY MISSION—FIRST OFFICIAL MEETING The first official mission trip meeting will be help on **Sunday, January 25th**, immediately after worship service. All those interested in participating are warmly welcome to join us in the adult Sunday school room. All those 16 and over that would like to attend please come as we being planning this meaningful outreach opportunity.

THIS WEEK AT ZION

Monday, December 15	10:00 am	Cheer Plate Assembly/Delivery
	10:30 am	Mission Quilts
	3:30 pm	TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
Tuesday, December 16	10:00 am	Mission Quilts
	5.30 pm	Bible & Brew - Chaffee's
	8:00 pm	AA
Wednesday, December 17	10:00 am	Women's Fellowship
	7:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal

Staff

Jaren Summers, *Pastor*; Bill Jones & Susie Gray, *Choir Directors*;
Lori Sebastian, *Organist*; Jessica Dorn, *Christian Education Director*;
Annette Calicoat, *Office Admin*; Sue Rambeau, *Treasurer*; Tina Putnam, *Custodian*