

Sunday Worship
December 28, 2025
First Sunday of Christmas



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.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Tayse Family

GATHERING SONG

Red Hymnal #269

Once in Royal David's City

OPENING DIALOGUE

P: Come! Look upon the baby Jesus, cradles in the arms of his mother.

C: **Seeing this wondrous sight, may our hearts be comforted and our spirits filled with peace.**

P: Come! Listen to choirs of angels announcing good news to all people.

C: **Hearing the marvelous song, may we too sing: Glory to God in the highest!**

P: Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart, not as history but as a gift.

C: **Opening our hearts to this great mystery, may Christ be born in us today.**

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: **O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

FIRST READING: Luke 2:1-7

LUTHER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother. . . . What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother! . . . Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. . . . You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to mankind than this, that Christ became man, a child, a babe, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to judge this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save. (*Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, p. 33)

CAROL

Red Hymnal #276

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

SECOND READING: Luke 2:8-16

LUTHER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE SHEPHERDS AND ANGELS

Look at the shepherds. They were watching their flocks by night, and an angel came and made them apostles, prophets, and children of God. . . . This is a great miracle that the shepherds should have believed this message. They might easily have thought to themselves, "Are we two shepherds worthy that the whole host of heaven should be marshaled for us and all the kings on the earth and the dwellers in Jerusalem be passed by?" I know I would have appealed to common sense and I would have said: "Who am I compared to God and angels and kings? It is an apparition." But the Holy Spirit, who preached through the angels, caused the shepherds to believe. They were so strong in the faith that they were worthy to be spoken to by angels and to hear every angel in heaven singing a cantata just for them. This is a pure wonder that enters not into the heart of man. Our God begins with angels and ends with shepherds. Why does he do such preposterous things? He puts a Babe in a crib. Our common sense revolts and says, "Could not God have saved the world some other way?" (*Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, pp. 36, 40)

CAROL

Red Hymnal #282

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

THIRD READING: Matthew 2:1-12

LUTHER'S REFLECTIONS ON HEROD AND THE WISE MEN

When the Wise Men received the divine revelation that the king of the Jews was born, they made straight for Jerusalem, for, of course, they expected to find him at the capital in a lordly castle and a golden chamber. Where else would common sense expect to find a king? But because they were so sure of themselves, the star left them. Then they were sorely tried, and had they relied solely on human wisdom, would surely have said: "Confound it! We have come all this way for nothing. The star has deceived us. The devil has led us by an apparition. If a king had been born, would he not be in the capital and in a palace? But when we come, the star disappears and we find no one who knows anything about him. Can it be that we foreigners should be the first to have news of him in the royal city? Everyone is so cold and unfriendly that no one offers to go with us and show us the child. They do not believe themselves that to them a king is born, and shall we come and find him? How desolate for the birth of a king! If a puppy were born there would be some little stir, and here a king is supposed to be born and everything is so still. . . . Should not the people be singing, capering, lighting lamps and torches, bedecking the streets with roses and mayflowers? What a miserable king we are seeking! What fools we have been to let ourselves start on this quest!" Nature wants to feel and be certain before believing, but grace will believe before she feels. Faith steps gaily into the darkness, trusting simply in the Word. But having come, they decided to inquire of the king before returning. At their report, Herod the king "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Why was Herod terrified and all Jerusalem with him? *He* had good reason to be afraid because he had tyrannized over the Jews for thirty years. . . . Now Herod had a crafty plan. "The Jews," thought he, "will hide the truth from me, but I will find out the town where this king is to be born and also the time, and then if they hide him, I will catch him anyway. I will kill so many babies that he cannot escape." So he called the scribes to him and said, "Where is Christ to be born?" Then perhaps through fear, the scribes answered him that in the Prophet Micah it is written that He should be born in Bethlehem. (*Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, pp. 50-52)

CAROL

Red Hymnal #302

As with Gladness Men of Old

FOURTH READING: John 1:1-5, 14-18

LUTHER'S REFLECTIONS ON WORD MADE FLESH

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify man. Inexpressible majesty will crush him. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm. This is the word of the prophet: "*Unto us* a child is born, *unto us* a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). This is for us the hardest point, not so much to believe that He is the son of the Virgin and God himself, as to believe that this Son of God is ours. That is where we wilt. . . . Truly it is marvelous in our eyes that God should place a little child in the lap of a virgin and that all our blessedness should lie in him. And this Child belongs to all mankind. God feeds the whole world through a Babe nursing at Mary's breast. This must be our daily exercise: to be transformed into Christ, being nourished by this food. Then will the heart be suffused with all joy and will be strong and confident against every assault. (*Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, pp. 33, 16)

CAROL

Red Hymnal #295

Of the Father's Love Begotten

NICENE CREED

P: Let us confess our faith.

C: **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Tayse Family

BLESSING Numbers 6:23-26

P: May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life. May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength. May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world. And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Red Hymnal #288

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

DISMISSAL Luke 7:50

P: Glory to God in the highest!

C: **And peace to God's people on earth!**

P: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*The altar flowers are given to the honor and glory of God
by Judy & Ken Bailey in memory of their mothers.*

*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	Doug Jacobs
Reader	Debbie Weprin
Ushers	Dale & Ginger Schaefer
Greeters	Chuck & Erma Swanson

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!

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.

YOUTH/KIDS SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS and anyone else interested are invited to come to a meeting on **January 5th** at 5:30pm to discuss the future of youth/kids Sunday School.

200th ANNIVERSARY KICK OFF DINNER is January 18th at 11:00. The church is supplying chicken, coffee, water, lemonade and iced tea. Please sign up for either vegetable, fruit or dessert in the fellowship hallway. Bring your own service ware.

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.

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.

OFFERING ENVELOPES are available for pick up in the back of the church. They are in alphabetical order and can be taken home today. **Please do not use the envelopes UNTIL the first weekend in January, the 3rd & 4th.**

New numbers have been assigned to some of the boxes.

THIS WEEK AT ZION

Sunday, December 28	Randall Residence Outreach	
Monday, December 29	10:30 am 3:30 pm	Mission Quilts TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
Tuesday, December 30	10:00 am 8:00 pm	Mission Quilts AA
Thursday, January 1	Happy New Year Office closed	
Sunday, January 4	No Sunday School	

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*