**Fourth Sunday In Advent**

**December 24th 2023 9:30am**



  *Share Read Talk Pray Bless*

**Preparation For Worship:** All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and He rules over the nations. *Psalm 22:27-28*

**Opening Song**  **It Came Upon The Midnight Clear**

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,**

**From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:**

**“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”**

**The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,**

**And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;**

**Above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,**

**And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**And ye, beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low,**

**Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,**

**Look now! For glad and golden hours cCome swiftly on the wing.**

**O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.**

**For, lo, the days are hast’ning on, by prophet bards foretold,**

**When with the ever circling years comes round the age of gold;**

**When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,**

**And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.**

**Yet with the woes of sin and strife, the world has suffered long;**

**Beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;**

**And man, at war with man hears not the love song which they bring;**

**O hush the noise, ye men of strife and hear the angels sing.**

Ministry Spotlight *Share*

**Invocation**

Pastor: We gather today in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: God the Father loved us so much that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever would believe in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

**People: The promised Messiah came! We celebrate the Advent of His coming. Emmanuel is God with us, and Christ will come again! He is the Prince of Peace, and Lord of all!**

 **God is good!**

Pastor: All the time!

**People: All the time!**

Pastor: God is good!

**People: Let us come to Him then with an honest heart to worship Him in spirit and truth.**

**Confession and Absolution**

Pastor: We confess our need of forgiveness, and that God’s forgiveness is the gift that leads to newness of life. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, born in a manger, died on a cross, and risen from the grave: All to redeem us from sin, death, the devil, and our sinful self. As Paul wrote in Romans 3 “This was to show God's righteousness, because in God’s divine forbearance God had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that God is righteous and that God justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.” Acknowledging the promise and call of God to confess, repent and receive forgiveness, we join in the Apostle John’s words:

**People: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**

 **If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and**

 **to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned we**

 **make God a liar, and His Word is not in us.**

 **Lord, have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

**Forgive me of my sins, I pray. *(Reflection for confession)***

Pastor: Jesus laid down His life for our sins to be forgiven. He cleanses us, and calls us clean as we believe and receive His reconciliation. As you have confessed and believed, as a called servant of Jesus our Christ, and according to His Word, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Daily Text

For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord

will arise upon you, and His glory will appear over you. *Isaiah 60:2*

 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to

one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has

taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”  *Luke 2:15*

Let us pray:

**People: God of glory, on this holy day I rejoice with the shepherds at this thing**

**that has taken place, the coming of Your Son into the world as a human**

**baby. Shine into the places where I need to know Your glory. Give me**

**curiosity to seek out Your gift of life. Help me make Christ known to all.**

**Amen.**

**Scripture Lessons** *Read*

First Lesson 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

1 Now when the king lived in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, 2the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” 3And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you.” 4But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, 5“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? 6I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. 7In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’ 8Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. 9And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 16And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.’”

Second Lesson Romans 16:25-27

25Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— 27to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Reader: Please rise for the reading of the Gospel. God has given us Good News.

**People: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. You have the**

 **words of eternal life.** *Psalm 119:105, John 6:68*

Gospel Lesson Luke 1:26-38

26In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” 29But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 30And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32He 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 father David, 33and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” 34And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” 35And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. 36And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. 37For nothing will be impossible with God.” 38And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise be to You, O Christ.**

**Apostles’ Creed**

**People: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

 **I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the**

 **power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary. He suffered**

 **under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended**

 **into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, and**

 **is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge**

 **the living and the dead.**

 **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Sermon Song I Wonder As I Wander**

**I wonder as I wander, out under the sky**

**How Jesus the Savior did come for to die**

**For poor ord’n’ry people like you and like I.**

**I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.**

**When Mary birthed Jesus, all in a cow’s stall,**

**Came wise men and farmers and shepherds and all,**

**And high from the heavens a star’s light did fall;**

**The promise of the ages it then did recall.**

**If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,**

**A star in the sky or a bird on the wing,**

**Or all of God’s angels in heav’n for to sing,**

**He surely could have had it, ‘cause He was the king.**

**I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,**

**How Jesus the Savior did come for to die**

**For poor ord’n’ry people like you and like I.**

**I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.**

**Sermon/Watchword** *Talk --- New, Knew, Next* Pr Knoll

The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name.

**Offering** **Song Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;**

**From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.**

**Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;**

**Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King;**

**Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By Thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;**

**By Thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.**

**Prayers of the Church** *Pray*

***The congregation is invited to join in prayers that include whole Church,***

***the nation, those in need, the parish, additional petitions and special concerns.***

Pastor: Let's join together to pray with Jesus for all that He loves right here, and to the

 ends of the earth. Father, our Father in heaven, You are the present active,

 Creator, and Redeemer of our heart, soul, mind and body.

**People:** **Thank You Lord, that in You we are made a part of Your great salvation of**

 **all that You have created. You have made us Your redeemed children. We**

 **join today with all those throughout the world who follow You, and pray**

 **that Your kingdom would come, and Your will would be done among us as**

 **it is in heaven.**

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

***The prayers conclude with these words…***

Pastor: You are our God, and we are Your people... Thank You that You hear our

 prayers, and work in all things for the good of those who love You. To You be all

 glory, honor, and praise.

**People: Amen.**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Pastor: Lord, remembering Your love and Your life we pray as You taught us to pray:

**People: 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**

**Benediction** *Bless*

Pastor: Now, may the Lord bless you and keep you.

 May He make His face shine on you, and be gracious unto you.

 May the Lord look upon you with favor, and give you His peace.

**People:(Sung)Amen. Amen. Amen.**

**Blessing:** Child of God, the Mighty One has done great things for us and holy is His

Name.

Pastor: Our worship continues,

**People: our service begins!**

**Closing Song**  **He Shall Reign Forevermore**

**In the bleak mid-winter all creation groans**

**And for a world in darkness frozen like a stone**

**Light is breaking in a stable for a throne**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**Unto us a Child is born**

**The King of kings and Lord of lords**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**If I were a wiseman I would travel far**

**And if I were a shepherd I would do my part**

**But, poor as I am I will give to Him my heart**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**Unto us a Child is born**

**The King of kings and Lord of lords**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**Here within a manger lies**

**The One Who made the starry skies**

**This Baby born for sacrifice**

**Christ, The Messiah**

**Into our hopes, into our fears**

**The Savior of the world appears**

**The promise of eternal years**

**Christ, The Messiah**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**Unto us a Child is born**

**The King of kings and Lord of lords**

**And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore**

**SHARING OF PEACE AS WE GO IN GOD’S PEACE**

**Welcome To Worship At Zion.** We are pleased to have you join us. *If you are a visitor* please check the shelf outside the office for our newsletter and brochure.

**Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God in loving memory of Vernon and Shirlene Wiedenhaft from Lori Wiedenhaft.

**The 2024 Altar Flower Chart** is up in the hallway. You may sign up for one or two vases. The cost per vase is $22.50 per vase or $45.00 for both vases. Please indicate whether it is in honor or memory of an individual or special event.

**The December Newsletter** is available on the tables across from the Chapel and Lounge, on the shelf outside the church office and also on the desk in the library. *Please remember: We no longer have a way to find out if you have moved. Call the church office with new addresses and/or phone numbers.*

**The Mission of the Month for December** is blankets for Church World Services. See the article in the December newsletter. Use the Mission of the Month envelopes to support this mission.

## Offering envelopes for 2024 will be mailed to your homes as soon as they are received. If you do not receive them by the first Sunday in January there are offering envelopes on the shelf outside the church office that may be used. Please remember to put either your name or your envelope number on them.

**Thank you to Turn Key Auto** for their oil change fund raiser to benefit the food program. Your support of this ministry is greatly appreciated.

**Worship at Zion**

 **Sunday 24 Dec 5:00pm**  Family Christmas Eve Worship

 **7:00pm**  Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve Worship

 **Monday 25 Dec 10:00am** Christmas Day Worship

 **Saturday 30 Dec 5:00pm**  Chapel Service

 **Sunday 31 Dec 8:00am** Worship

 **9:30am** G.I.F.T. Worship

 **11:00am** Swahili/English Worship

**POINSETTIAS** to decorate the church this Christmas Season are given by:

In thankfulness for His grace from Cheryl & Dave Lebakken

In thankfulness for the family members who helped us believe in Jesus and are now with Him.

Merry Christmas from Diane Mueller and family

In thankfulness for family and to the glory of God from Bob and Sherrie Burgdorf

In thankful Christmas joy to all from Don & MaryBeth Deike

In memory of our family members no longer with us from Bob & Sue Green

In loving memory of Kelly and Shelby Derr from the Les & Sue Derr family

In memory of Allen Zietlow from his family

In memory of Rufus and Ann Tadych, Sandra Tadych, Greg Tadych, and Don and Iva Knoblauch

from Don and Cheryl Knoblauch

In memory of Bernard, Mabel, Barb, Doug and Don Zarling from Gloria Coonen

In memory of Beatrice Ziegelbauer from Mark and Barbara Hannan

In memory of Harry & Eutha Bremer and Aunt Ruby Hartman from the Bremer family

In loving memory of Betty Kaltenbach from her family

In memory of their fathers, Harlan Swanson and Ken Boldt from Connie & Greg Boldt

In memory of loving husband, father and grandfather Vernon Staerkel from his family

In memory of Emery and Betty Nelson from their family

**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**A Charter Member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ**

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