

Family Christmas Eve Worship

December 24th 2023 5:00pm

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people *Luke 1:68*

OPENING CAROL

Mary’s Little Boy Child

Long time ago in Bethlehem so the Holy Bible say,
Mary’s boy child, Jesus Christ was born on Christmas day.
Hark! Now hear the angels sing. New King’s born today.
And man will live forevermore because of Christmas Day.

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, they saw a bright new shining star,
And heard a choir from heaven sing the music came from a-far.
Hark! Now hear the angels sing. New King’s born today.
And man will live forevermore because of Christmas Day.

Now Joseph and his wife, Mary came to Bethlehem that night.
They found no place to bear her child, not a single room was in sight.

By and by they found a little nook in a stable all forlorn,
And in a manger, cold and dark, Mary’s little boy child was born.
Trumpets sound and angels sing. Listen to what they say,
That man will live forevermore because of Christmas day.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: *(John 1:1-4)*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of all. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

People: The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Pastor: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made him known.

People: God is good!

Pastor: All the time!

People: All the time.

Pastor: God is good!
(Romans 3:19-26)

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in God's sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

People: But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation or sacrifice & intercession by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in God's divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show God's righteousness at the present time, so that God might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Thank you Jesus.

**Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.
Forgive me for my sins, I pray. (Reflection for confession)**

Pastor: Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us, and has given His only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called servant of Jesus our Christ, and by His authority, I announce God's grace to all of you, and the forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. To all who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God, and give His Holy Spirit. Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved. Grant this, O Lord, unto us all.

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 night 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.

ANTHEM

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ³You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

New Testament Lesson

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

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 2:1-14

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he

was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

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

O Holy Night

**O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.**

**A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;
Fall on your knees, oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!**

**Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand;
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the wise men from Orient land.**

The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials born to be our Friend;
He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger.
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace;
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name;
Christ is the Lord, oh, praise His name forever!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim.

SERMON

Pr Knoll

The Mighty One Has Done Great Things For Me, And Holy Is His Name

OFFERING SONG

The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

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: **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 CAROL

Silent Night

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Savior, is born! Christ the Savior, is born!**

Interlude

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

SHARING OF PEACE AS WE GO IN GOD'S PEACE

THE PRESENCE OF ALL who have come to celebrate Christmas adds to the joy of worshipping the Lord on this glorious night. Welcome, friends! May the full meaning of Christmas be real to us all...now and always. Visitors, check the shelf outside the church office for our newsletter & brochure about our church.

ALTAR FLOWERS are giving to the glory of God and in loving memory of Vernon and Shirlene Wiedenhaft from Lori Wiedenhaft.

BLANKETS in December is a long-time mission of Zion. Blankets are needed all over the world (including here in America in times of disaster). For years we have sent blankets away as part of our preparation for Christmas. Parents & grandparents have sent a blanket in honor of each child or grandchild. Families have given blankets as gifts in thankfulness for blessings. Blankets are used for warmth, for ground cover, for shelter from sun and rain, & often as a makeshift 'suitcase' for personal possessions. Use mission envelopes provided in the newsletter & available on the shelf outside the office to support this ministry.

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.

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.*

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 green 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	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
	11:30am	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

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