

# ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

319 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Albion, Nebraska 68620 www.zionalbion.org + office @zionalbion.org+ 402-395-2043 Office Hours: Mon-Thurs: 9am-4pm; Fri: Office Closed

#### December 21, 2025 + FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today we conclude our Advent worship series, Yet in Thy Dark Streets Shineth. In this last service, we travel with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem to the place where the imminence of God's presence, the hopefulness of God's coming, and the faithfulness of God's promises are so wonderfully clear. Our time in this place reminds us that Jesus is the fulfillment of our faith and the beginning of new life for us.

#### + GATHERING +

#### **Prelude**

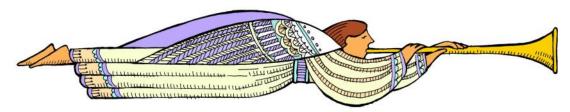
(The prelude is a call to silent, personal preparation for worship.)

#### Welcome

Welcome to Zion Lutheran Church in Albion! We offer a warm welcome to all who are worshipping in person or by way of Vyve Cable Channel 21 and Facebook Live. We hope that you encounter a word of God's grace and love in this worship service.

Holy Communion will be celebrated today. At the table of our Lord Jesus Christ, God nourishes faith, forgives sin, and calls us to be witnesses to the Gospel. All who are baptized and believe in the real presence of Christ are welcome to share in the Lord's meal. Holy Communion will be distributed in person or by pre-packaged elements. If you are uncomfortable coming forward, please pick up the communion elements as you enter worship. We will partake of the sacrament as directed by the pastor within the worship service. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with an usher. Gluten Free wafers are available on request.





# The Fourth Sunday of Advent

### **Confession & Forgiveness**

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** 

God is light;

in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him, yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus purifies us from sin.

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and one another.

(Silence for meditation & self-examination)

Most holy and almighty God,

we have sinned against you by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

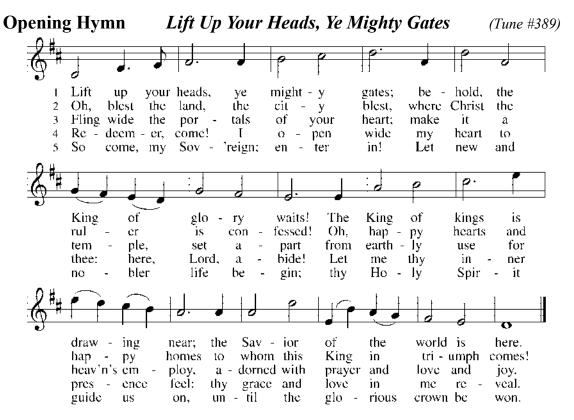
We have not loved you with our whole heart, and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We have run from your ways

and embraced the darkness of this present evil age.

Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, your only Son, and our only Savior.

Friends in Christ, if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In Jesus' name, you are forgiven and loved with an everlasting love! May the glory of the Lord continue to shine upon us all. Amen.



Text: Georg Weissel, 1590-1635; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878 Music: T. Williams, Psalmodia Evangelica, 1789

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# **Advent Litany**

O Splendor of Eternal Light:

Arise and come, O Sun of Righteousness!

O KING OF THE NATIONS, come!

You are the only joy of every human heart; you bring together peoples long apart.

O Cornerstone:

Save us, whom you fashioned from the dust!

O EMMANUEL, come!

You are the King of creation, the Hope of all nations, the Savior of all.

O King and Lord: **God-with-us, come!** 

# **Apostolic Greeting**

From the one who is, who was, and who is to come, from the Almighty Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit: grace, light, and peace be with you all.

And also with you.

#### **Hymn of Praise**

## How Far is it to Bethlehem?

Choir

How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far? Shall we find the stable room lit by a star? Can we see the little Child, is He within? If we lift the wooden latch, may we go in?

May we pet the creatures there, oxen or sheep?
May we peek like them and see Jesus asleep?
If we touch His tiny hand, will He awake?
Will He know we've come so far just for His sake?

Great Kings bring precious gifts but we do not, sweet smiles on our little lips are all we've brought. For God in His mother's arms slumbers so deep, on this humble bed of straw, sleep, Jesus, sleep. How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far?

#### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

**Advent Family** 

Last week we lit the candle of Joy.

We light it again, along with the candles of Hope and Peace as we remember that Christ will come again as Immanuel, God with us, to bring us everlasting peace and joy.

The fourth candle of Advent is the Candle of Love.

This light is meant to remind us of the love that God has for us.

Jesus shows us God's perfect love. He is God's love in human form. **He is Immanuel, God with us.**  The Bible says that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Love is patient. Love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful or conceited, rude or selfish.

Love is not quick to take offense, it keeps no records of wrongs, it does not gloat over other people's troubles, but rejoices in the right, the good and the true.

There is nothing that love cannot face, there is no limit to its faith, to its hope, to its endurance. **Love never ends.**" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

We light this candle today to remind us of God's perfect love in Jesus Christ.

(Advent Family lights four candles as the hymn is sung.)





Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926

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Music: Aaron Williams, 1731-1776

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#### **Advent Prayer**

Let us pray... (A brief silence is kept.)

Loving God,

we thank you for your gift of love

brought to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send us your Spirit to prepare our hearts to receive him.

Bless our worship as you help us to hear and do your Word.

We ask this in the name of the coming Christ. Amen.

#### + WORD +

# **Old Scripture Reading**

1 Samuel 16:1,10-13,21-22

A reading from First Samuel.

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have

provided for myself a king among his sons."

<sup>10</sup>Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup>Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." <sup>12</sup>He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." <sup>13</sup>Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

<sup>21</sup>And David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul loved him

greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. <sup>22</sup>Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight." The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.** 

#### Psalm 23

Let us read Psalm 23 together.

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

he leadeth me beside the still waters.

<sup>3</sup>He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil:

for thou art with me;

thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil;

my cup runneth over.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

# **New Testament Reading**

Matthew 2:1-6

A reading from Matthew.

<sup>1</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Alleluia Verse ELW setting 10



Holy Gospel John 7:37-44

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.** 

<sup>37</sup>On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, <sup>38</sup> and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" <sup>39</sup>Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified.

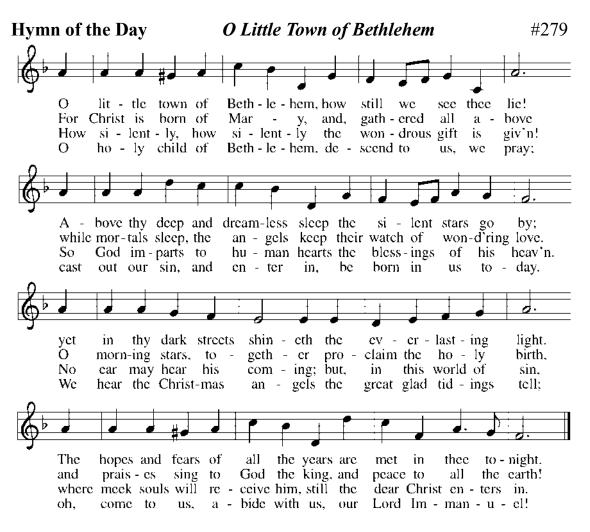
<sup>40</sup>When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." <sup>41</sup>Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? <sup>42</sup>Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" <sup>43</sup>So there was a division in the crowd because of him. <sup>44</sup>Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Time Sermon

Bethlehem

8



Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893 Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908 Public Domain

#### Nicene Creed

Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith...

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.

#### **Prayers of Intercession**

P In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

#### A brief silence is kept.

- L In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of grace, hear our prayer.
- P The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace, hear our prayer.

- L You send your saving grace and peace to the nations.

  Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good.

  May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors.

  God of grace, hear our prayer.
- P When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill, especially... God of grace, hear our prayer.
- L Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support.

  Bless young children and new parents.

  Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them.

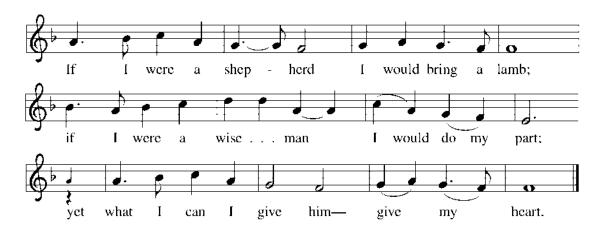
  God of grace, hear our prayer.
- P Here other intercessions may be offered either aloud or in silence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**
- L We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service.

  Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your in love. God of grace, hear our prayer.
- P Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.

#### **Peace**

The Peace of Christ be with you always. And also with you.





Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894

Music: Gustav Holst, 1874-1934

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#### + MEAL +

## **Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.



# **Proper Preface**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

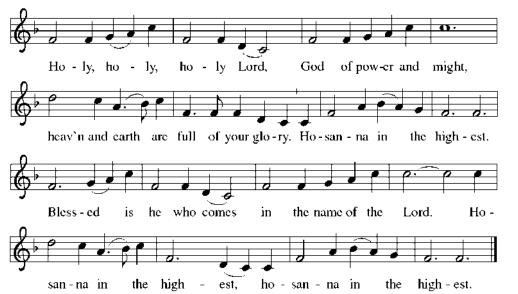
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new

in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## **Eucharistic Prayer & Words of Institution**

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup

we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us. Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** 

# Lord's Prayer

Let us pray together as Jesus taught us...

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,

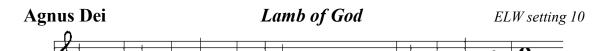
as we forgive those who trespass against us;

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.





- O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a way;



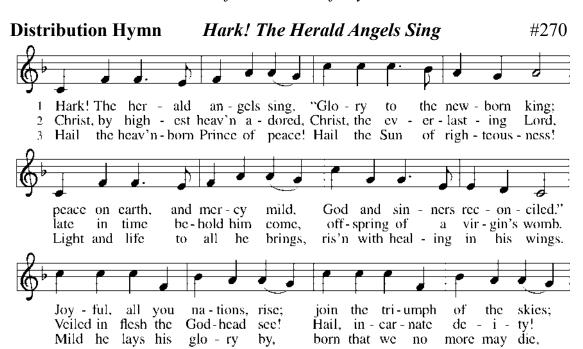
you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray, you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray, e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

#### **Distribution**

If you are joining us from home or are taking communion from your seat:

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.

The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen.



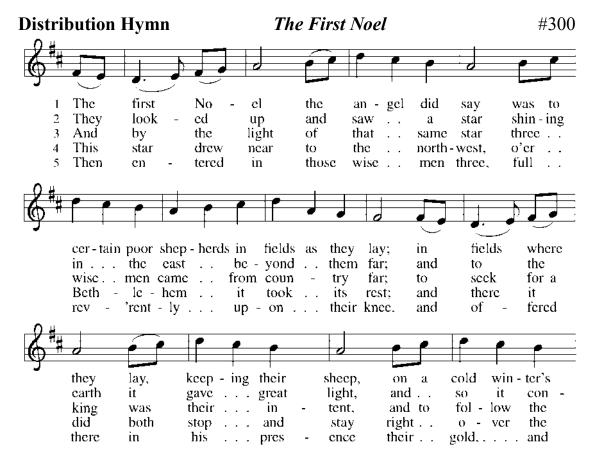
Hymn continues on the next page.

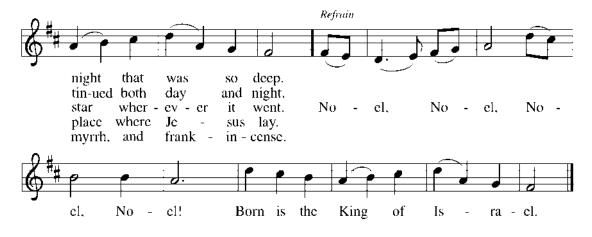


Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915

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Text: English traditional

Music: English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

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## **Table Blessing**

May the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his light and grace. **Amen.** 

#### **Post-Communion Prayer**

Let us pray... (A brief silence is kept.)

God our host,

at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.

Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### + SENDING +

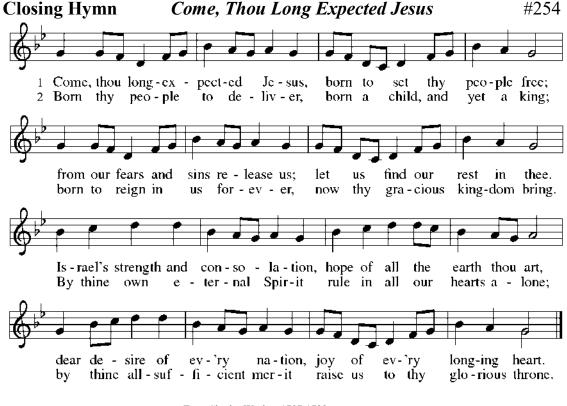
#### Announcements

**Benediction** 

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you in every dark place and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with the brightness of his everlasting light, and grant you peace.

Amen.



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835

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#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



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In our world today, the rulers of nations have many titles. There are kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers, and many others.

In biblical times, there were also many kinds of rulers. Let's find some kings and queens in the Bible. Use the graph below to figure out their names. To find out more about them, look up the verses listed.

1.	The first king on earth.	_	_	_	_	_	_
	(Genesis 10:8-12)	1,5	1,6	1,7	2,5	2,8	2,7

2.	Anointed king by Samuel.	_	_	_	_
	(1 Samuel 8-10)	2,6	1,8	1,9	2,9

- 3. Beloved king of Israel. 2,7 1,8 3,5 1,6 2,7
- 4. Very wise king of Israel; a writer. 2.6 2.8 2.9 2.8 1.7 2.8 1.5

Example: 1.5 = N

- 5. Jewish girl, became queen of Persia.  $\frac{3,8}{3,8}$   $\frac{2,6}{3,7}$   $\frac{3,8}{3,8}$   $\frac{3,6}{3,8}$   $\frac{2,5}{3,8}$
- 6. Xerxes' queen; means "beautiful women."  $\frac{1}{3.5} \frac{1.8}{1.8} \frac{1}{2.6} \frac{1}{3.8} \frac{1}{3.7} \frac{1}{1.8}$
- 7. David's wife; Solomon's mother.  $\frac{1}{3.9} \frac{1}{1.8} \frac{1}{3.7} \frac{1}{3.8} \frac{1}{2.6} \frac{1}{3.8} \frac{1}{3.6} \frac{1}{3.9} \frac{1}{1.8}$
- 8. Bad queen of King Ahab. 4,6 3,6 4,7 3,6 3,9 3,6 2,9

