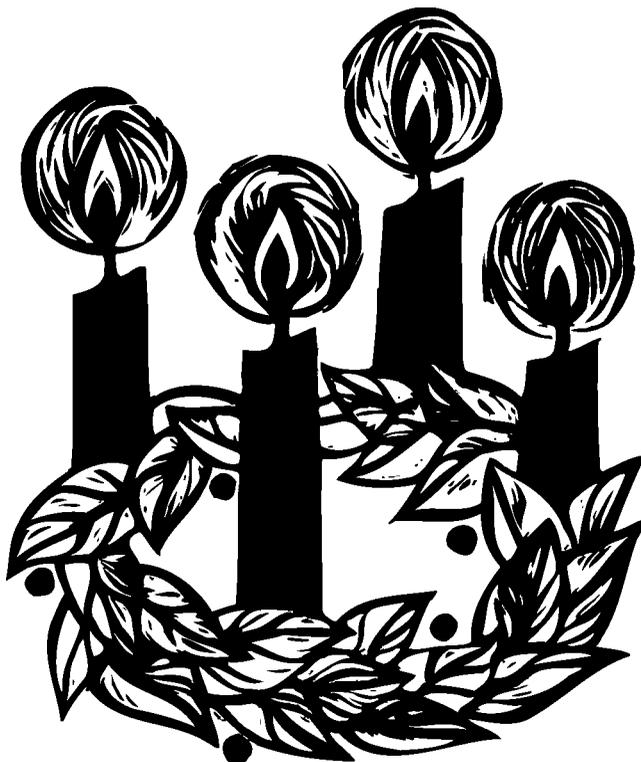


ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lewistown, Montana

December 6, 2020



Welcome to worship today!

In this season of pandemic, our congregation is following the guidelines of the Central Montana Health District and the Montana Synod.

If you have or recently had a fever, cough, or shortness of breath please do not worship in the church today.

Due to the rising number of active COVID cases in Fergus County **face coverings are required throughout the worship service.**

If any of these conditions is not possible for you, our worship services are available online: Zion Website: <http://www.zionlewisownelca.com/worship/video-services>

YouTube Channel: Zion Lutheran Church, Lewistown, MT

Zion Lutheran Church (ELCA)
December 6, 2020 Second Sunday of Advent

Introduction to the day

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

*(*Stand)*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Blessed be God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

C **Amen.**

P Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Loving and forgiving God,

C **we confess that we are held captive by sin.**

In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.

We have not welcomed the stranger;

we have not loved our neighbor;

we have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God.

Wake us up and turn us from our sin.

Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

P People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, ✚ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

*We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you called light into being,
and you set light in the sky to govern night and day.*

*In a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night
you led your people into freedom.*

*Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ;
may your Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;
for you are merciful, and you love your whole creation,
and with all your creatures we give you glory,
through your Son Jesus Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever. Amen*

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts,

C **Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,

that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,

their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,

when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, word of life.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8**

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

MUSICAL OFFERING

***NICENE CREED**

P With the whole church let us confess.

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 God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

We pray for our leaders who light the way of Christ for your church. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, musicians, teachers, and council members. Embed your word in their hearts.

As your body we pray.

C **Wait with us. Watch with us. Hear our prayers.**

L We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Give elected leaders, medical personnel, social workers, teachers, and caregivers the compassion and courage to serve as you have empowered them.

As your body we pray.

C **Wait with us. Watch with us. Hear our prayers.**

L We pray for the people in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Inspire us to comfort those who grieve, to be a companion to all who are lonely or depressed, and tend those who are sick or struggling, especially those listed in our bulletin and those we name now in our hearts.

Gather all people in your healing embrace.

As your body we pray.

C **Wait with us. Watch with us. Hear our prayers.**

P Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

***PEACE**

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (vs1 & 2)*

1 *Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descending
comes full homage to demand.*

2 *King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.*

***OFFERING PRAYER**

L Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

***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.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P 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, he 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.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray 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.**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here.
Come, eat and drink.

COMMUNION SONG *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs 1 & 2)*

1 *O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.*

Refrain

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

2 *O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way.* *Refrain*

COMMUNION

Please remain seated communion will be brought to you.

***TABLE BLESSING**

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his
grace.

C **Amen**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the
hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and
to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and
Lord.

C **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

MINISTRY OF ZION

*BLESSING

P Even as we wait, watch, and wonder, God is with us.
Almighty God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
C Amen

*DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

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Serving Us:

Pr. Lynne Ogren

Pianist: Rhonda Kepner

Usher: Scot & Tatum Solberg

Lectors: Chelsea & Emma Solberg

Communion Assistants:

Dale, Gail Kurns & Shayla Solberg

Disciples: All the Baptized

Website: www.zionlewistownelca.com

Contact us: 538-5082 zionelca@midrivers.com

Welcome! Before worship, you are invited to read and reflect.

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Jessie Stewart, Carmen Larson, Dianne Kaldor (Meryl McKenna's sister), Russ Hodge, Bill Steele

Homebound Members: LaVerna Conard, Mary Westburg, DeAnn Paulson, Dorothy Adcock, Bob Papp, Harriet Irish, Don Pfau, Marv Mathison

Social Concern of the Month for December

This month’s Social Concern is The Salvation Army. Here in Lewistown and the surrounding area the local Salvation Army is exclusively a social service agency led by a committee of people from various churches. There are a number of volunteers who take calls on the Salvation Army cell phone for requests such as motel rooms for those who are traveling through town, rent assistance, gas to get folks to the next place, and more. The primary source of funding comes from the annual Red Kettle Drive in December

The Good Gifts tree is up and full of ornaments! If you would like to honor a loved-one or friend and in-turn help others in need, you can purchase an ornament(s). Please make your check out to Zion and note “Good Gifts” on the memo line. Cards are available on the table next to the tree.

Week of 12/06 – 12/13/2020

Tue	11:30am	Rachel Circle
Wed	6:45am	Men’s Bible Study
	Noon	Men over lunch at the Elk
	3:30pm	B.L.A.S.T.
	3:45pm	Confirmation
Thur	9:00am	Quilting
	Noon	Women’s Podcast
	6:15pm	Stephen Ministry Zoom Meeting
Sun	9:30am	Advent 3 Worship

Zion will be ringing the **Salvation Army bell** on December 14 & 15 from 10am-7pm at Albertsons. Signup sheeting will be on the table in the narthex.

Trust Scholarship Applications are available on the narthex table. Applications must be returned to Zion by December 9th. Questions call the office 538-5082. The Committee would like to thank all who contributed to the Scholarship Fund this past month. Over \$9000 was raised to help support Zion's students wishing to further their education after high school. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Serving on Staff:

Secretary: Falan Aanenson

Bookkeeper & Communications Coordinator: Lynn Franz

Sunday School Superintendent: Falan Aanenson

Rainbow Choir Director: Debby Shobe

Custodians: Kent & Nina Yunker