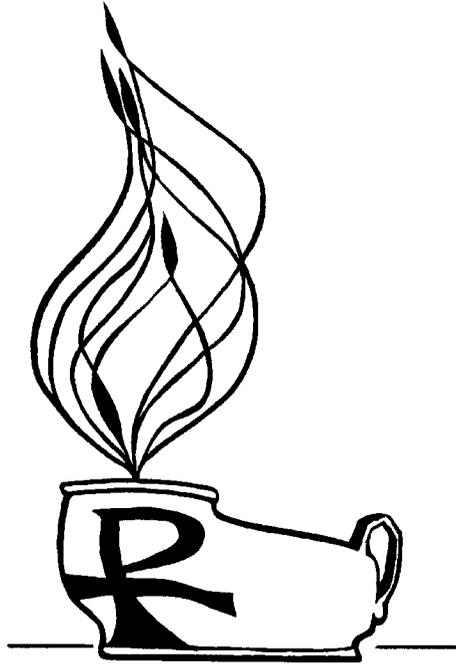


ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lewistown, Montana
December 13, 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 13, 2020 Advent 3

Introduction to the day

“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

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 the wills of your faithful people,

C **Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed
by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; 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 61:1-4, 8-11

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

A reading from Isaiah.

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the LORD love justice,

I hate robbery and wrongdoing;

I will faithfully give them their recompense,

and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,

and their offspring among the peoples;

all who see them shall acknowledge

that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,

my whole being shall exult in my God;

for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,

he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,

and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,

and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,

so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise

to spring up before all the nations.

Word of God, word of life.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28**

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

P The holy gospel according to John.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make straight the way of the Lord,'"
as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

MUSICAL OFFERING

***NICENE CREED**

C With the whole church 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 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&6)*

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.*

6 *O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. 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**

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

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Serving Us:

Pr. Lynne Ogren

Pianist: Meryl McKenna

Ushers:

Lector:

Communion Assistant: Karen Combs

Disciples: All the Baptized

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

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Jessie Stewart, Carmen Larson, 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.

Congratulations to Jayson and Debby Shobe on the birth of their new grandson Woodrow son of Kari and Whitt Weingart.

Russ Hodge’s memorial service will be live streamed at 11:00am December 17. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to Russell's favorites Zion Lutheran Church, Fergus County Aging Services, Boys & Girls Club of Lewistown, or a charity of your choice.

Thank you to Mary Althoff and Sharon Nordahl for the beautiful poinsettia in memory of Vonnie Ortgies.

Week of 12/13 – 12/20/2020

Wed	6:45am	Men’s Bible Study
	Noon	Men over lunch at the Elk
	Noon	Trust meeting
	3:30pm	B.L.A.S.T.
	3:45pm	Confirmation
	7:00pm	Advent Worship Video (Facebook and YouTube)
Thur	9:00am	Quilting
	11:00am	Live Stream Russ Hodge Memorial service
Sun	9:30am	Advent 4 Worship

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

Thank you to all who have purchased lefsa and wreaths. There are two wreaths still available for purchase. They will be on a table in the Narthex. Cindy Giese's quilt was won by Linda Kjørstad. The profit from the mini bazar (Approx. \$1700) will be used for community and ELCA benevolence.

Serving on Staff:

Secretary: Falan Aanenson

Bookkeeper & Communications Coordinator: Lynn Franz

Sunday School Superintendent: Falan Aanenson

Custodians: Kent & Nina Yunker

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