



First Sunday of Christmas—Dec. 28, 2025 10 a.m. *Worship at Zion's Lutheran Church*

Welcome Friends and Guests: As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the "holy innocents" of past generations and of today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us, and carry us as in days of old.

Serving this Sunday:

Worship – Pastors Lisa Rygiel, Julie Wersal & Erin Ogletree
Musicians – Connie Pallone & Mark Nelson
Ushers – Terri Watson & Jo Moss
Communion – Lisa & John Rygiel

Worship: In boundless diversity, we all are made in God's image! If you are visiting or new to our faith family, please sign our guest book and feel free to learn more about us. *Come back and worship each Sunday at 10 a.m.*

Communion: We celebrate open communion. This is Christ's table, all are welcome. You may come forward for the sacraments or cross your arms across your chest for a blessing. Our bread is gluten free and both wine and white grape juice (center of communion tray) are available.

Fellowship: Please join us after worship today for food and fellowship. All are welcome!

Other Information: Large print bulletins are available from the ushers. Restrooms are in the Fellowship Hall adjoining the sanctuary; our ushers can direct you. For pastoral care, call Pastor Lisa at 719-846-7785 or send an email: zionsluth@gmail.com. Additional information about Zion's can be found on our website at: zionsluth.org.



Zion's Lutheran is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) community.

~Gathering~

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

Gathering of Prayers & Call to Worship

Beloved, we have waited, watched, and witnessed the coming of the Christ child. As we gather today on the other side of Christmas, we might be tempted to ask, "What now?"

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

In this season of Christmas, we remember that though Christ has come among us, the good news of freedom for captives, flourishing for the poor, and power returned to the disempowered does not reign in so many places.

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

With Mary and Joseph, we listen for God to show us how to protect and advocate for the vulnerable among us.

We continue to wait and watch for the day that all the earth awaits.

As we gather to worship today, may God bind us together in love, empowering us to live as followers of the Christ child who declare good news wherever we go.

We gather today as people who wait, watch, and work for the day that all the earth awaits. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: #298 *The Bells of Christmas: Det kimer nu til julefest*

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Creator God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also, with you.

Kyrie

Refrain



Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri-e e-lei-son, ev-'ry day.



1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the



2 That we may live out your im-passioned re-sponse to the



3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for



4 For your Spir-it to guide; that you cen-ter our lives in the



u-ni-ty of all; for
hun-gry and the poor; that
friends and fam-i-ly; for
wa-ter and the word; that you



this ho-ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus-tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod-y and blood,



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God..., 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 63:7-9

⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
because of all that the Lord has done for us
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

⁸ For he said, "Surely they are my people,
children who will not act deceitfully,"
and he became their savior
⁹ in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 148

¹ Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

² **Praise the Lord, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³ Praise the Lord, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴ **Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶ **who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹ mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰ **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹ sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹² **young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴ **The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah!**

Second Reading: Hebrews 2:10-18

¹⁰ It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

¹³ And again, "I will put my trust in him."

And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

¹⁴ Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

The holy gospel according to Matthew chapter 2. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,
²⁰ “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³ There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon: Pr. Lisa Rygiel

Hymn of the Day: #292 Love Has Come

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God of grace, you show us mercy not according to our worthiness, but according to the abundance of your steadfast love. Grant us the courage to go into the world and do likewise.

God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

God of abundance, the sun and moon praise you and the shining stars sing of your love. Where we have desecrated your creation, make us into a healing balm for what we have broken.

God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

God of righteousness, when leaders fail to fulfill their calls to enact justice, you suffer alongside us. Propel those in power to see you reflected in the faces of all they serve.

God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

God of life, you claim us as your own and care for us as Christ’s siblings. Pour out your compassion in every place your people suffer and protect them in the palm of your hand, especially today we pray for...God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

God of compassion, you nurture children as the apple of your eye. As you sheltered your son Jesus from Herod’s grasp, shelter all children in danger. As you comforted Rachel, comfort all who have lost children to violence. God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you console those who weep for lost beloved ones. Even as we mourn, we offer thanks for those who have gone before us, trusting in your comfort and protection.

God of Grace. **Your mercy is great.**

With the joy of Christ’s birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also, with you.**

~Meal~

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering

As evident through all of creation, God has given freely to us as we freely give now.

You can give via check or cash, by mail to 510 Pine Street, or online at:

https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/1334741.

Offertory: #275 Angels, from the Realms of Glory, vs. 1

Offering Prayer

Good and loving God...Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Great Prayer of 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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

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

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

God's love is wide. God's table is big. No one is excluded. Come to the banquet, for all is now ready. Our bread is gluten free & both wine and white grape juice are available. God comes to us in worship and song. God also comes to us in silence and stillness.
Please use the time before and after you commune for silent contemplation.

Communion Hymn: # 296 What Child is This

Song of Thanksgiving



☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

Communion Prayer

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and, in this meal, we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

~Sending~

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

Announcements & Special Blessings

Benediction

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart. And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say. Then the work of Christmas begins.

Go in peace, ☩ and may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: #290 Go Tell it on the Mountain

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

~Announcements~

- + **Fellowship:** Please join us after worship today in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and conversation.
- + **The Way Ministry:** At 1 p.m. each Sunday, Zion's welcomes the Way ministry to our fenced lower yard as they offer food and worship to the unhoused and others in need. When weather makes dining outside difficult, the meal will be moved to the Fellowship Hall.
- + **First Sunday Potluck:** We begin 2026 with our first Sunday Potluck on Jan. 4. Join us after worship for food and fellowship as we enter the season of Epiphany.
- + **Worship Assistance:** We are preparing the worship assistance lists for 2026 and are looking for ushers, lectors, communion preparation/clean, and worship assistants. We also need people who are willing to step in when we need a substitute. If you are not on the list and are willing help support our worship services, let Jo Moss know.
- + **Church Directory Updates:** Julie Wersal is working on the Zions 2026 Church Directory. She placed a copy of the 2025 directory in a pink binder in the Fellowship Hall. Please take time to look at that directory and make any changes or updates to your information. If you would like to be added to the directory, there are pages in the back of the binder to add your information. Also, if you would like a new photo, please indicate that in your review as well.
- + **5-Loaves:** Thank you to everyone who helped make our December 5-Loaves feeding ministry a success.
- + **Altar Flowers:** The 2026 Flower Chart is on the door of the Robing Room in the Sanctuary. Please write your name and a few words identifying your donation. A donation of \$35 is requested for flower and can be given using the options outlined for offering.
- + **Save the Dates:** Feb. 1 – Annual Congregational Meeting (after worship & potluck)

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Call to Worship: Written by *Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, June 2025*. Discipleship Ministries. © 2025 Discipleship Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

Benediction (adapted): from the writing of Howard Thurman.