

Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church

1st Sunday in Advent, December 1, 2024

Pastor Caitlin M. Kurtz

Zion's worship services are live-streamed and archived on YouTube. While the focus is always on the worship leaders and the sanctuary at large, your voice and image may be included as part of the recording. If you do not wish to appear on film, please sit in, or under, the balcony and ask an usher for communion to be brought to your seat. If you have any other questions, please speak with Pastor Caitlin. Thank you for your understanding and support in spreading the Gospel message!

Welcome and Announcements and Prelude

**(Congregation please stand as able)*

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: We gather in the name of the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. C: **Amen.**

P: Today, as we confess our sins, we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives. And we accept the sad truth that our limitations often create the conditions for sin.

Silence is kept for confession.

P: Let us pray.

C: God, we want a faith that feels like more than words, but we lack your power to embody goodness. We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to make the food. We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal.

We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger. We have lost our appetites for mere thoughts and prayers, but we fail to match our intentions to our actions. Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence.

P: Brothers and sisters in Christ, God knows you are imperfect. But God did not invite you here today because of what you have done or how you have behaved. God loves you and always cares much more for you than your shortcomings. God forgives all your sins in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. C: **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: ELW 244 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers**

You are invited to face the back of the church for the opening hymn. As the cross is processed into the congregation you may continue to sing toward it.

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.

The bride-groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907 Music: Swedish folk tune HAFTRONES LAMPAFÄRDIG 76 76 D

***LIGHTING ADVENT CANDLE**

L: We light these Advent candles with thanks for what has been, and hope for what is yet to come. As we do, we notice the gifts God has given this week. God, we reach for unreasonable hope;

C: and you prepare an incomparable future.

The Choir sings an Advent verse as the candle is lit.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON *as the children come forward, please join in singing:*

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
 the stars in the sky looked down where he lay; the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16 (*pg. 645 in pew Bible*)

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

After the reading: **Congregation: Thanks be to God**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 25:1-10 (*pg. 436 in pew Bible, also below*)

Leader: To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Congregation: O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.

L: Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

C: Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

L: Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

C: Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

L: Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

C: Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

L: He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

C: All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 (pg. 960 in pew Bible)

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

After the reading: **Congregation: Thanks be to God**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** (tune: *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* #44 green book)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord to whom now shall we go?

Alleluia, Alleluia, Let Your blessings through us flow!

You have words of life eternal, help us to hear them, and to tell all

In your wisdom, make us grow; in your wisdom, make us grow.

***GOSPEL READING:** Luke 21:25-36 (pg. 856 in pew Bible)

Before reading: P: The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke, the 21st Chapter. **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

‘There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

Then he told them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

‘Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.’

After the reading: P: The Gospel of our Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY:** ELW 260 “*The King Shall Come*”

1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,
3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose
4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.

when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.
 but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn - ing sky.
 and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.
 the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.
 Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859–1925
 Music: A. Davison, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929–2003
 Arr. © 1969 Concordia Publishing House

CONSOLATION
 C M

PROFESSION OF FAITH

P: With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C: 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 catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Note: the word “catholic” here means the church around the world.

OUR OFFERINGS: OUR TRUST, PRAYERS & GIFTS

*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(after hearing, “Lord in your mercy,” respond: **Hear our Prayer**)

(after hearing the final prayer petition, “Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.” respond: **Amen**)

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you. **C: And also with you.**

CHOIR ANTHEM

OFFERING WITH OFFERTORY

During this portion of the worship service, we offer to God a portion of what God has first given us, trusting that God will use these gifts to do God's work in the world. We offer thanks to God with financial gifts, song, and prayer. Or you can scan this QR code to go to our electronic giving website: <http://www.zionsjonestown.com/giving/>, where you can choose to give either through PayPal, or Simply Giving, which is our regular electronic offering service, offering both one-time, and regular, automatic options.



*POST OFFERING VERSE (tune: *What Child Is This*)

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;

Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

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***OFFERING PRAYER**

P: Together we pray. Holy Spirit, bless these small gifts we offer.

C: You set the table with plenty of love.

P: Prepare room in your home

C: for my neighbor and me.

P: Prepare a place in your vision

C: for my neighbor and me.

P: Prepare a seat at your table

C: for my neighbor and me.

P: Holy Spirit, you bless these gifts we offer.

C: You set the table with plenty of love.

***THE 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.

P: God, yours was the First Thought; before any human lived or knew your name, you whispered, and creation built itself around your words. Before your ancient people knew the depth of your love, you promised them goodness, and led them to freedom.

C: Your love grows unseen.

P: Before the world knew your face, your own child was born in a quiet stable.

C: Your love blooms in the dark.

P: Before we knew the depth of your love, your child died, crucified, and you forgave, and new life grew in the grave.

C: Your love echoes in the silence.

P: Once you made Mary agelessly blessed. Once you transformed turncoat disciples into the family of the forgiven. You wrote the words for their hope, and they sang the song of joy. What you have done for them you have also done for us. So we sing your praise.

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** (Tune: *Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella*)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly One God of pow - er, God of might. Heav'n and
earth are full of your glor - y. Ho - sa - na in the high - est. Blessed! Blessed
is the one who comes Blessed! Blessed! in the name of God.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

On a night of betrayal, Jesus pulled close friends closer to eat with them one last time. He 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. Jesus, we remember you died. **C: We remember.**

P: We remember God's love sparked life in your dead body.

C: We remember.

P: We remember you shall return to empty every grave.

C: We remember.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Grounded in these promises, we pray the way 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: Come, taste the goodness of God's mercy and marvel in what God has done for you.

This is the Lord's table where all are welcome. At the ushers instruction, you are invited to come forward, pick up either a pre-filled grape juice cup, or empty communion cup, and kneel or stand at the communion railing. (gluten free wafers are available for those who need that, please let Pastor know when you are communing) Here, you will first receive the bread, and then either a blessing of your grape juice, or the wine poured into your glass. After consuming both elements, return to your seat by the side aisle, placing your empty glass in the tray.

*Those who are worshipping at home this morning are invited to **pray this prayer**, trusting that Christ's spiritual presence is with you at all times and places. If you would like Pastor Caitlin to bring communion to your home, call her at 717 865 3652 and she will be glad to do so.*

"Loving Jesus, since I cannot at this moment receive you in bread and wine according to your promise in the sacrament of Holy Communion, I ask you to come to me in Spirit. Feed me, for I am hungry; strengthen me, for I am weak; enliven and sanctify me with Your sacred Body and Blood. Deliver me from all sin and make me always obedient to Your commands. Let me never be separated from You, my Savior, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit live and reign one God forever and ever. Amen."

LAMB OF GOD (tune: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give_ us your
peace. Pre- pare us to re- ceive_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-
joice! Re- joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra - el.

COMMUNION HYMNS: (blue book)

#633 *Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

#630 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

#262 *Wait for the Lord* (next) (repeat as needed)



Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community Music; Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
Text and music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, admin. GIA Publications, Inc. WAIT FOR THE LORD 88

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER AND SENDING OF COMMUNION

P: God, what you have planned for us unfolds slowly.

C: Your love is often unrecognizable, unappreciated, gentle and unnoticed.

P: But in this place we have noticed that which we often don't see.

C: We have tasted your unspoken goodness. And now we will magnify your love.

P: In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

C: We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.

***BENEDICTION**

P: This world longs to know that God’s love is more than words. Here, you have shared the advent of God’s goodness, a foretaste of the feast to come. You carry the blessing of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now go into the world, expecting God’s justice, and nurturing God’s peace.

C: God, we will magnify your love.

***SENDING HYMN: ELW 715 Christ, Be Our Light**

As the cross is processed to the rear of the sanctuary as we sing, you are invited to turn your body towards the rear, symbolic of our desire to follow Christ out into the world.

1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

Refrain
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
 dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your
 church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957 Music: Bernadette Farrell Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell, admin. OCP Publications CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT 98 96 and refrain

***DISMISSAL**

P: Go in peace, Christ is with you. **C: Thanks be to God!**

We're glad you're here! Whether today is your first day at Zion's, or your thousandth, we're glad you're here, and we look forward to worshipping with you. If you're new, or it's been a while, we invite you to fill out one of the "We're glad you're here" white envelopes located in the pew back to ensure our records are correct, and so we can connect with you further. Completed cards can be placed in the offering plate. Thank you, and welcome!

This week we especially remember in our prayers: Kelly, Stephen, Miriam, Dean, Jeff, Peggy, Val, Brooke, Chris, Jeanne, Randy, Pastor Ted Hummel, hurricane victims and all victims of violence.

Every Week at Zions: @ 10:30 Worship, 9:15 Sunday School
Wednesday night 5:30 meal, 6:15 Rejoicing Spirits worship, 6:50 Bible Study

This Week at Zions:

Dec. 3, Tuesday @ 9:00 am Quilting

Dec. 4, Wednesday @ 5:30 community meal, 6:15 pm Rejoicing Spirits worship, 6:50 Bible Study, 7:30 adult choir rehearsal

Next Week at Zions:

Dec. 8, Sunday @ 9:15 am Dudes & donuts and Women of the Word meet

Dec. 8, Sunday @ Caroling to homebound following worship & cong. meeting

Dec. 10, Tuesday @ 9:00 am Quilting

Dec. 11, Wednesday @ 5:30 community meal, 6:15 pm Rejoicing Spirits worship, 6:50 Bible Study, 7:30 adult choir rehearsal

Advent begins today. This year we are taking an in-depth look at the traditional themes of "Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love" and considering how each of these are "more than words"--not just something we say, but a promise we can trust. Advent devotionals based on this theme are available by the usher's stations.

DEADLINE TODAY!! Touching Tomorrow Endowment Fund: Applications can be found on our website or on the bulletin board outside the Church Office. Completed applications are due by December 1 and can be submitted via email to zions@comcast.net, or by placing your application in Jim Gill's "Endowment" mailbox, located outside the Church Office.

Zion's annual meeting will be held Sunday, December 8 after worship. At this meeting we will elect new Council members and approve a spending plan for 2025. Copies of the proposed spending plan, together with a document explaining the IMPACT of this plan, are available near the usher's stations.

"Joy to the world the Lord is come!" Help us proclaim this good news through Christmas caroling! Following worship and the congregational meeting on Sunday, December 8, a group from Zion's will share a quick meal together and then carol to our local homebound members, Spang Crest, and Cedar Haven. YOU are invited to join us in making a joyful noise and spreading cheer! Questions? Contact Joanna Guldin-Noll.

Angel Tree gifts for students in the NL School District: Wrapped gifts with attached angel tag must be returned to Zion's by Sunday, December 8.

Looking ahead, on Christmas Eve we will also be collecting diapers and wipes for JOY Pantry, if you'd like to give in this way. THANK YOU for your generosity and care.

2025 offering envelopes are ready for new members and people who have recently used envelopes to give. Envelopes are located on the windowsill outside of the Church Secretary's Office. If you don't see your name and would like an offering envelope, please contact Kerri Price or the Bonny, Church Secretary.

Worship Bags for Children have been refreshed! These bags are designed to help young ones engage in the worship service, and are now divided by age (0 - 4 and 5+) They can be found in the upstairs narthex area by the double doors. After worship, please return them there. If they need new materials, please place them by the mailboxes outside the secretary's office.

Adoption Swaption, a local, non profit, Christian organization that helps foster and adoptive families with children's clothing, toys, food, and more, has outgrown the current building in Lickdale and is looking for another building with parking spaces in the local area. If you know of a church or other establishment that has space to rent, would you please contact Pastor Caitlin.

The Kitchen/Pastor's Office Roof Replacement has been completed! We're grateful that we had the funds available to do this work immediately, and now ask for your help replenishing the Capital Fund. Gifts can be made through Simply Giving, PayPal, or marked 'Capital fund' on your offering checks. Thank you!

Serving at Zion's	Today	Next Sunday
Lector	Ann Kulp	Stephanie Livingston
Prayer	Christine Techky	Linda Wenrich
Children's sermon	Stephanie Livingston	Terry Ludwig
Comm. Assts.	Noel Strattan, Linda Toth	Deb Long, Kelly Rittle
Greeter	Elaine Ludwig	
Acolyte	Gracie Bucks	Nolan Anspach
Crucifer	Logan Livingston	Xander McQuaide
Altar Guild	Merkel family	Strattan/Wenrich
Elevette	Tom Frey	Ann Kulp
Dec. Ushers	Rob McQuaide, Xander McQuaide, Logan Livingston, Al Reiner	

MUSICIAN: Maryann Guldin SOUND: Houser family ZION'S OFFICE: 717-865-2848 zions@comcast.net	VIDEOGRAPHER: James Cascarino PASTOR: Caitlin M. Kurtz PASTOR'S OFFICE: 717-865-3652 pastorckurtz@gmail.com
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November Council highlights are available on the large bulletin board in the gathering area.