

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue - Rockford, Illinois
December 3, 2023 at 9:15am

www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



PRELUDE “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” *and* “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”

Setting, Nancy M. Raabe

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

Setting Anne Krentz Organ

WELCOME

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ✚ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

God’s covenant is eternal, and God’s blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG "Awake! Awake, And Greet The New Morn" Red Hymnal #242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

And also with you.

Holy one, your light shines in the darkness calling out to us.

Have mercy upon us oh Lord.

Creator of the universe, you star leads us to see the prince of peace.

Lord, have mercy

Holy one, you have walked among us and we have seen a great light.

Christ, have mercy.

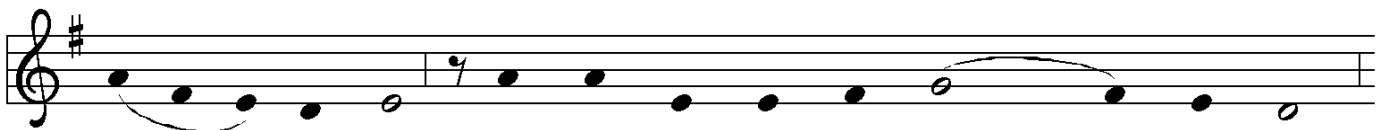
Christ has come. Christ is here. Christ will come again!

Thanks be to God.

SONG OF PRAISE "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (vs. 1, 2)



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud and mai - es - ty and awe



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

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

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

(Congregation reads the bold)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ADVENT WREATH LITURGY ^

Surely God is our salvation;

We will trust and not be afraid,

The light shines in the darkness,

and the darkness shall not overcome the light of Christ.

In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, “Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come” (Mark 13:35).

We wait as people surprised again and again by God who give us light and wakes us up to the work of the holy all around us.

We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

Light the first candle on the Advent wreath

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us; His name is called Emmanuel.
(Repeat)

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 13th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is

near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

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

SERMON Bishop Stacie Fidler

SERMON SONG “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” Red Hymnal #244



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'ring 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!

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 CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

MUSIC & OFFERING

"Choose to Hope"

Marty Haugen

Offering envelopes are available in the pews at your seat to designate gifts toward the ministries of Zion. The Offering Box is near the back, pulpit side and you can also go online at www.zionrockford.com, or you can click on the QR code.

The Prayer Table is available for you to write a prayer request and place on the cross on the table. Prayer requests will be shared with a group of people who pray at Zion. You may take a prayer shawl from the worship space if you would like.



TABLE BLESSING

"Now In This Banquet"

(Song on the next page)

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Now in This Banquet

*1** *2*

Now in this ban - quet, Christ is our bread;
Advent: God of our jour - neys, day - break to night:
Lent: Lord, you can o - pen hearts that are stone;

here shall all hun - gers be fed.
lead us to jus - tice and light.
live in our flesh and our bone.

Bread that is bro - ken, wine that is poured:
Grant us com - pas - sion, strength for the day,
Lead us to won - der, mys - t'ry, and grace,

love is the sign of our Lord.
wis - dom to walk in your way.
one in your lov - ing em - brace.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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 God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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

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.

Holy Communion will be received up front. Please receive the wafer into your hand and take a cup from the communion assistant. The inner ring is grape juice and the outer rings are wine. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. If you would like the individual prepared disposable communion, please come forward.

COMMUNION SONG "I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"

(Song on next page)

Red Hymnal #815

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Let us pray: Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection, you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world. Through Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

"I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

Amen.

THE SENDING

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

SENDING SONG

“People Look East”

Red Hymnal #248



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

SENDING

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”



Around The Tables

December 10, 2023 at 10:15am
Fellowship Hall

**CHRISTMAS IN
ESWATINI, AFRICA
NAHTI GAMA**

(INTERN RACHEL'S HUSBAND)



Sponsored and Held at Zion Lutheran Church - 925 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104



**Christmas Eve
Worship**

**9:30pm String Concert
10:00pm Worship**

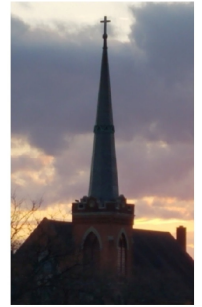


Ruthie's Kitchen

Open Saturdays
1:00-3:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church
964 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104

Because God created everyone....
NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL
BLACK LIVES MATTER
love is love
PEOPLE & PLANET OVER PROFITS
CELEBRATE DIVERSITY
Women's Rights are Human Rights
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - ROCKFORD, IL



WELCA & Food Pantry!

Cornucopia Food is in short supply of **CEREAL** and it can't be obtained from the Food Bank. Peggy King, Cornucopia Director informs us there is a great need for **CEREAL**! A grocery cart will be in the back of the worship space for donations or you can leave them in the church office. November items: **Soup and Crackers**.



Blue Christmas Worship
December 10, 2023 - 9:15am Worship

Christmas Cantata
December 17 at 9:15am

WOZ—Save the Date

December 12th Tuesday Christmas Luncheon 12:00 Stockholm Inn.
Remember your White Elephant gift. All are welcome!
RSVP Karen K. 815.494.3864



Flower ministry sponsorships are available.

Today's altar flowers are sponsored by
Deb and Neal Tolodxi,
In Memory of their Granddaughter, Destiny Tolodxi, 30th Birthday.

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS004285. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

* Used by permission. Reprinted/Podcast/Streamed with permission under One License #A-726175

* Pattern of Worship—resource from ELW pages 91-93

© Edition current as of 2005. Region Four South Archives, Seguin, Texas. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

^ Adapted from Dr. Lisa Hancock, Director of Worship Arts Ministries

PRAYER CORNER! WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:



- ◇ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Thomas, Pastoral Intern Rachel Perkins, Pastor Emeritus Denver Bitner, the Zion Church Council, Pastor Caleb Uk of the Burmese congregation; the Zion Staff, Zion Outreach Board, Staff and Programs of Patriots Gateway Center, Katie's Cup and Zion Development Corporation.
- ◇ Pastor Cosmas Mujungu of Sepuka Parish
- ◇ Pastor Selvakumar and Arcot Lutheran Church in India and Sepuka/Msisi Church in Tanzania.
- ◇ For the Northern Illinois Synod; North Conference churches; Midtown Lutheran Parish, faculty and students of Rockford Lutheran Schools, Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries.
- ◇ For those who grieve the loss of loved ones: Fred Pierce, Joanne Dornbush, Stephanie Aitken, and John Mahlberg.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Colette Buchert, Yolanda Churchill, Norma Daugherty, Jim Duhigg, Deanna Hartenberg, Vanda Nielsen, Debbie Raymond, Linda Reinhardt, Wayne Spitzer, and Neal Tolodxi.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of thanksgiving to share, please notify Pastor Mike or Pastoral Intern Rachel. The prayer room is upstairs to the left of the sanctuary and is available during office hours and on Sunday before and after worship services.

THE MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM TEAM would like you to donate scarfs, gently used, knit, or crocheted. We will hang them on fences or railings around the church. We will have a little note on them saying "I'm not lost! If you are cold please take me to keep you warm." The back side says "From your friends at Zion Lutheran Church" If you have scarves to donate please drop them off in the office. Thank you



SUNDAY WORSHIP LEADERS

Reader Michael Beert
Musician Mary Shore

OUR WORSHIP SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

<https://www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford>

www.youtube.com/zionrockford

Please subscribe to the Zion YouTube channel

facebook

YouTube

follow us on
twitter

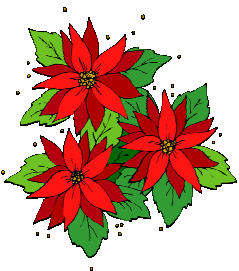
PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES THIS WEEK

Sunday	9:15am	Worship—Guest Preacher, Bishop Stacie Fidler, NIS
	10:15am	Mini-Lucia Fest—Fellowship Hall
Monday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:30am	Book Study—Library
Tuesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
Wednesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	8:00am	Bible Study—Stockholm Inn
	5:00pm	WOW—Fellowship Hall
	5:00pm	Private Music Lessons—Choir Room
Thursday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:00am	Miss Carly’s Sandwich Making—Kitchen
	4:00pm	Katie’s Cup Board
	6:00pm	Sustainability Movement Meeting—Fellowship Hall
Friday	9:00am	Private Music Lesson—Youth Center
Saturday	1:00pm	Ruthie’s Kitchen—St. Bernadette
	2:00pm	Private Event—Youth Center

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

December 10	9:15am	“Blue Christmas” worship with prayer
	10:15am	Around the Tables-Christmas in Eswatini presented by Nathi Gama, in the Fellowship Hall
December 17		Zion’s Christmas Cantata at 9:15am worship Church Christmas Party in Fellowship Hall
December 19		Zion Partner’s Christmas Party at Noon, Fellowship Hall
December 24		Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship at 9:15am Christmas Eve Worship, 10:00pm (Sunday) with 9:30pm String Quartet Concert
December 28		Bag Fluffing—Youth Center
December 31		First Sunday of Christmas Worship at 9:15am

Poinsettia Garden



Remember or honor your loved ones and help us beautify Zion’s Sanctuary by sponsoring a poinsettia plant for our Christmas Garden. All sponsors will be listed on an insert in our Christmas Eve bulletins. Please fill out an order form (in the back and return to the office by Monday, December 4, 2023 (firm deadline).

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue - Rockford, Illinois
December 3, 2023 at 9:15am

www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



PRELUDE “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” *and* “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”

Setting, Nancy M. Raabe

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

Setting Anne Krentz Organ

WELCOME

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

God’s covenant is eternal, and God’s blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG "Awake! Awake, And Greet The New Morn" Red Hymnal #242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

And also with you.

Holy one, your light shines in the darkness calling out to us.

Have mercy upon us oh Lord.

Creator of the universe, you star leads us to see the prince of peace.

Lord, have mercy

Holy one, you have walked among us and we have seen a great light.

Christ, have mercy.

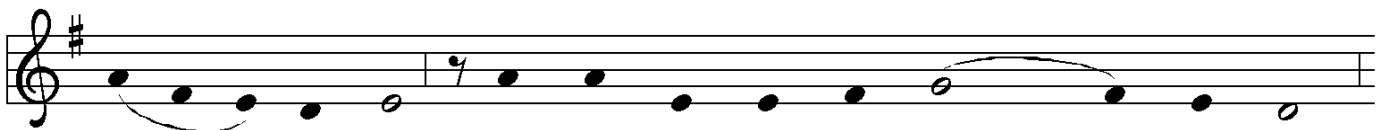
Christ has come. Christ is here. Christ will come again!

Thanks be to God.

SONG OF PRAISE "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (vs. 1, 2)



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud and mai - es - ty and awe



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

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

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

(Congregation reads the bold)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ADVENT WREATH LITURGY ^

Surely God is our salvation;

We will trust and not be afraid,

The light shines in the darkness,

and the darkness shall not overcome the light of Christ.

In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, “Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come” (Mark 13:35).

We wait as people surprised again and again by God who give us light and wakes us up to the work of the holy all around us.

We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

Light the first candle on the Advent wreath

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us; His name is called Emmanuel.
(Repeat)

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 13th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is

near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

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

SERMON Bishop Stacie Fidler

SERMON SONG “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” Red Hymnal #244



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!

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 CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

MUSIC & OFFERING

"Choose to Hope"

Marty Haugen

Offering envelopes are available in the pews at your seat to designate gifts toward the ministries of Zion. The Offering Box is near the back, pulpit side and you can also go online at www.zionrockford.com, or you can click on the QR code.

The Prayer Table is available for you to write a prayer request and place on the cross on the table. Prayer requests will be shared with a group of people who pray at Zion. You may take a prayer shawl from the worship space if you would like.



TABLE BLESSING

"Now In This Banquet"

(Song on the next page)

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Now in This Banquet

*1** *2*

Now in this ban - quet, Christ is our bread;
Advent: God of our jour - neys, day - break to night:
Lent: Lord, you can o - pen hearts that are stone;

here shall all hun - gers be fed.
lead us to jus - tice and light.
live in our flesh and our bone.

Bread that is bro - ken, wine that is poured:
Grant us com - pas - sion, strength for the day,
Lead us to won - der, mys - t'ry, and grace,

love is the sign of our Lord.
wis - dom to walk in your way.
one in your lov - ing em - brace.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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 God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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

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.

Holy Communion will be received up front. Please receive the wafer into your hand and take a cup from the communion assistant. The inner ring is grape juice and the outer rings are wine. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. If you would like the individual prepared disposable communion, please come forward.

COMMUNION SONG "I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"

(Song on next page)

Red Hymnal #815

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Let us pray: Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection, you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world. Through Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

"I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✝ remain upon you now and forever.

Amen.

THE SENDING

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

SENDING SONG

“People Look East”

Red Hymnal #248



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

SENDING

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”



Around The Tables

December 10, 2023 at 10:15am
Fellowship Hall

**CHRISTMAS IN
ESWATINI, AFRICA
NAHTI GAMA**

(INTERN RACHEL'S HUSBAND)



Sponsored and Held at Zion Lutheran Church - 925 Fifth Avenue – Rockford, IL 61104



**Christmas Eve
Worship**

**9:30pm String Concert
10:00pm Worship**

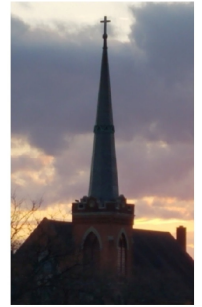


Ruthie's Kitchen

Open Saturdays
1:00-3:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church
964 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104

Because God created everyone....
NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL
BLACK LIVES MATTER
love is love
PEOPLE & PLANET OVER PROFITS
CELEBRATE DIVERSITY
Women's Rights are Human Rights
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - ROCKFORD, IL



WELCA & Food Pantry!

Cornucopia Food is in short supply of **CEREAL** and it can't be obtained from the Food Bank. Peggy King, Cornucopia Director informs us there is a great need for **CEREAL**! A grocery cart will be in the back of the worship space for donations or you can leave them in the church office. November items: **Soup and Crackers**.



Blue Christmas Worship
December 10, 2023 - 9:15am Worship

Christmas Cantata
December 17 at 9:15am

WOZ—Save the Date

December 12th Tuesday Christmas Luncheon 12:00 Stockholm Inn.
Remember your White Elephant gift. All are welcome!
RSVP Karen K. 815.494.3864



Flower ministry sponsorships are available.

Today's altar flowers are sponsored by
Deb and Neal Tolodxi,
In Memory of their Granddaughter, Destiny Tolodxi, 30th Birthday.

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS004285. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

* Used by permission. Reprinted/Podcast/Streamed with permission under One License #A-726175

* Pattern of Worship—resource from ELW pages 91-93

© Edition current as of 2005. Region Four South Archives, Seguin, Texas. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

^ Adapted from Dr. Lisa Hancock, Director of Worship Arts Ministries

PRAYER CORNER! WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:



- ◇ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Thomas, Pastoral Intern Rachel Perkins, Pastor Emeritus Denver Bitner, the Zion Church Council, Pastor Caleb Uk of the Burmese congregation; the Zion Staff, Zion Outreach Board, Staff and Programs of Patriots Gateway Center, Katie's Cup and Zion Development Corporation.
- ◇ Pastor Cosmas Mujungu of Sepuka Parish
- ◇ Pastor Selvakumar and Arcot Lutheran Church in India and Sepuka/Msisi Church in Tanzania.
- ◇ For the Northern Illinois Synod; North Conference churches; Midtown Lutheran Parish, faculty and students of Rockford Lutheran Schools, Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries.
- ◇ For those who grieve the loss of loved ones: Fred Pierce, Joanne Dornbush, Stephanie Aitken, and John Mahlberg.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Colette Buchert, Yolanda Churchill, Norma Daugherty, Jim Duhigg, Deanna Hartenberg, Vanda Nielsen, Debbie Raymond, Linda Reinhardt, Wayne Spitzer, and Neal Tolodxi.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of thanksgiving to share, please notify Pastor Mike or Pastoral Intern Rachel. The prayer room is upstairs to the left of the sanctuary and is available during office hours and on Sunday before and after worship services.

THE MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM TEAM would like you to donate scarfs, gently used, knit, or crocheted. We will hang them on fences or railings around the church. We will have a little note on them saying "I'm not lost! If you are cold please take me to keep you warm." The back side says "From your friends at Zion Lutheran Church" If you have scarves to donate please drop them off in the office. Thank you



SUNDAY WORSHIP LEADERS

Reader Michael Beert
Musician Mary Shore

OUR WORSHIP SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

<https://www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford>

www.youtube.com/zionrockford

Please subscribe to the Zion YouTube channel

facebook

YouTube

follow us on
twitter

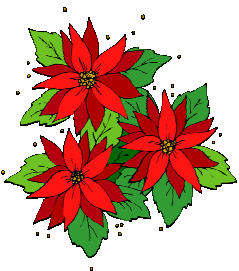
PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES THIS WEEK

Sunday	9:15am	Worship—Guest Preacher, Bishop Stacie Fidler, NIS
	10:15am	Mini-Lucia Fest—Fellowship Hall
Monday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:30am	Book Study—Library
Tuesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
Wednesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	8:00am	Bible Study—Stockholm Inn
	5:00pm	WOW—Fellowship Hall
	5:00pm	Private Music Lessons—Choir Room
Thursday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:00am	Miss Carly’s Sandwich Making—Kitchen
	4:00pm	Katie’s Cup Board
	6:00pm	Sustainability Movement Meeting—Fellowship Hall
Friday	9:00am	Private Music Lesson—Youth Center
Saturday	1:00pm	Ruthie’s Kitchen—St. Bernadette
	2:00pm	Private Event—Youth Center

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

December 10	9:15am	“Blue Christmas” worship with prayer
	10:15am	Around the Tables-Christmas in Eswatini presented by Nathi Gama, in the Fellowship Hall
December 17		Zion’s Christmas Cantata at 9:15am worship Church Christmas Party in Fellowship Hall
December 19		Zion Partner’s Christmas Party at Noon, Fellowship Hall
December 24		Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship at 9:15am Christmas Eve Worship, 10:00pm (Sunday) with 9:30pm String Quartet Concert
December 28		Bag Fluffing—Youth Center
December 31		First Sunday of Christmas Worship at 9:15am

Poinsettia Garden



Remember or honor your loved ones and help us beautify Zion’s Sanctuary by sponsoring a poinsettia plant for our Christmas Garden. All sponsors will be listed on an insert in our Christmas Eve bulletins. Please fill out an order form (in the back and return to the office by Monday, December 4, 2023 (firm deadline).

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue - Rockford, Illinois
December 3, 2023 at 9:15am

www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



PRELUDE “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” *and* “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”

Setting, Nancy M. Raabe

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

Setting Anne Krentz Organ

WELCOME

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

God’s covenant is eternal, and God’s blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG "Awake! Awake, And Greet The New Morn" Red Hymnal #242



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

And also with you.

Holy one, your light shines in the darkness calling out to us.

Have mercy upon us oh Lord.

Creator of the universe, you star leads us to see the prince of peace.

Lord, have mercy

Holy one, you have walked among us and we have seen a great light.

Christ, have mercy.

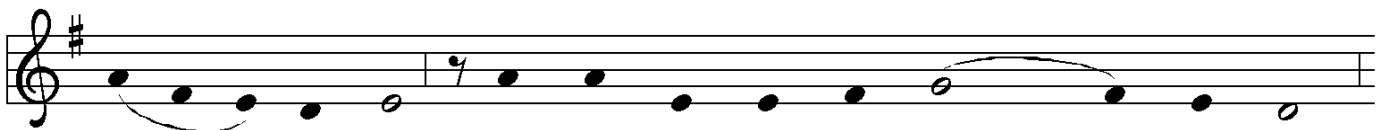
Christ has come. Christ is here. Christ will come again!

Thanks be to God.

SONG OF PRAISE "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (vs. 1, 2)



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud and mai - es - ty and awe



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

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

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

(Congregation reads the bold)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ADVENT WREATH LITURGY ^

Surely God is our salvation;

We will trust and not be afraid,

The light shines in the darkness,

and the darkness shall not overcome the light of Christ.

In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, “Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come” (Mark 13:35).

We wait as people surprised again and again by God who give us light and wakes us up to the work of the holy all around us.

We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

Light the first candle on the Advent wreath

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us; His name is called Emmanuel.
(Repeat)

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 13th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is

near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

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

SERMON Bishop Stacie Fidler

SERMON SONG “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” Red Hymnal #244



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!

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 CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

MUSIC & OFFERING

"Choose to Hope"

Marty Haugen

Offering envelopes are available in the pews at your seat to designate gifts toward the ministries of Zion. The Offering Box is near the back, pulpit side and you can also go online at www.zionrockford.com, or you can click on the QR code.

The Prayer Table is available for you to write a prayer request and place on the cross on the table. Prayer requests will be shared with a group of people who pray at Zion. You may take a prayer shawl from the worship space if you would like.



TABLE BLESSING

"Now In This Banquet"

(Song on the next page)

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Now in This Banquet

*1** *2*

Now in this ban - quet, Christ is our bread;
Advent: God of our jour - neys, day - break to night:
Lent: Lord, you can o - pen hearts that are stone;

here shall all hun - gers be fed.
lead us to jus - tice and light.
live in our flesh and our bone.

Bread that is bro - ken, wine that is poured:
Grant us com - pas - sion, strength for the day,
Lead us to won - der, mys - t'ry, and grace,

love is the sign of our Lord.
wis - dom to walk in your way.
one in your lov - ing em - brace.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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 God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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

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.

Holy Communion will be received up front. Please receive the wafer into your hand and take a cup from the communion assistant. The inner ring is grape juice and the outer rings are wine. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. If you would like the individual prepared disposable communion, please come forward.

COMMUNION SONG "I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"

(Song on next page)

Red Hymnal #815

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Let us pray: Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection, you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world. Through Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

"I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✝ remain upon you now and forever.

Amen.

THE SENDING

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

SENDING SONG

“People Look East”

Red Hymnal #248



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

SENDING

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”



Around The Tables

December 10, 2023 at 10:15am
Fellowship Hall

**CHRISTMAS IN
ESWATINI, AFRICA
NAHTI GAMA**

(INTERN RACHEL'S HUSBAND)



Sponsored and Held at Zion Lutheran Church - 925 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104



**Christmas Eve
Worship**

**9:30pm String Concert
10:00pm Worship**

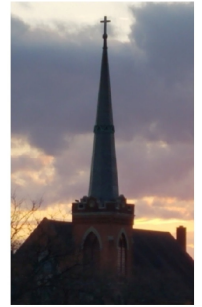


Ruthie's Kitchen

Open Saturdays
1:00-3:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church
964 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104

Because God created everyone....
NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL
BLACK LIVES MATTER
love is love
PEOPLE & PLANET OVER PROFITS
CELEBRATE DIVERSITY
Women's Rights are Human Rights
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - ROCKFORD, IL



WELCA & Food Pantry!

Cornucopia Food is in short supply of **CEREAL** and it can't be obtained from the Food Bank. Peggy King, Cornucopia Director informs us there is a great need for **CEREAL**! A grocery cart will be in the back of the worship space for donations or you can leave them in the church office. November items: **Soup and Crackers**.



Blue Christmas Worship
December 10, 2023 - 9:15am Worship

Christmas Cantata
December 17 at 9:15am

WOZ—Save the Date

December 12th Tuesday Christmas Luncheon 12:00 Stockholm Inn.
Remember your White Elephant gift. All are welcome!
RSVP Karen K. 815.494.3864



Flower ministry sponsorships are available.

Today's altar flowers are sponsored by
Deb and Neal Tolodxi,
In Memory of their Granddaughter, Destiny Tolodxi, 30th Birthday.

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS004285. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

* Used by permission. Reprinted/Podcast/Streamed with permission under One License #A-726175

* Pattern of Worship—resource from ELW pages 91-93

© Edition current as of 2005. Region Four South Archives, Seguin, Texas. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

^ Adapted from Dr. Lisa Hancock, Director of Worship Arts Ministries

PRAYER CORNER! WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:



- ◇ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Thomas, Pastoral Intern Rachel Perkins, Pastor Emeritus Denver Bitner, the Zion Church Council, Pastor Caleb Uk of the Burmese congregation; the Zion Staff, Zion Outreach Board, Staff and Programs of Patriots Gateway Center, Katie's Cup and Zion Development Corporation.
- ◇ Pastor Cosmas Mujungu of Sepuka Parish
- ◇ Pastor Selvakumar and Arcot Lutheran Church in India and Sepuka/Msisi Church in Tanzania.
- ◇ For the Northern Illinois Synod; North Conference churches; Midtown Lutheran Parish, faculty and students of Rockford Lutheran Schools, Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries.
- ◇ For those who grieve the loss of loved ones: Fred Pierce, Joanne Dornbush, Stephanie Aitken, and John Mahlberg.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Colette Buchert, Yolanda Churchill, Norma Daugherty, Jim Duhigg, Deanna Hartenberg, Vanda Nielsen, Debbie Raymond, Linda Reinhardt, Wayne Spitzer, and Neal Tolodxi.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of thanksgiving to share, please notify Pastor Mike or Pastoral Intern Rachel. The prayer room is upstairs to the left of the sanctuary and is available during office hours and on Sunday before and after worship services.

THE MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM TEAM would like you to donate scarfs, gently used, knit, or crocheted. We will hang them on fences or railings around the church. We will have a little note on them saying "I'm not lost! If you are cold please take me to keep you warm." The back side says "From your friends at Zion Lutheran Church" If you have scarves to donate please drop them off in the office. Thank you



SUNDAY WORSHIP LEADERS

Reader Michael Beert
Musician Mary Shore

OUR WORSHIP SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

<https://www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford>

www.youtube.com/zionrockford

Please subscribe to the Zion YouTube channel

facebook

YouTube

follow us on
twitter

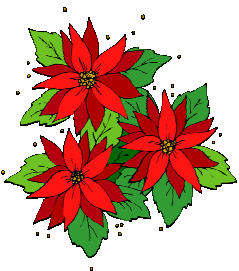
PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES THIS WEEK

Sunday	9:15am	Worship—Guest Preacher, Bishop Stacie Fidler, NIS
	10:15am	Mini-Lucia Fest—Fellowship Hall
Monday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:30am	Book Study—Library
Tuesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
Wednesday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	8:00am	Bible Study—Stockholm Inn
	5:00pm	WOW—Fellowship Hall
	5:00pm	Private Music Lessons—Choir Room
Thursday	8:00am	RVC ESL—Marander Room
	9:00am	Miss Carly’s Sandwich Making—Kitchen
	4:00pm	Katie’s Cup Board
	6:00pm	Sustainability Movement Meeting—Fellowship Hall
Friday	9:00am	Private Music Lesson—Youth Center
Saturday	1:00pm	Ruthie’s Kitchen—St. Bernadette
	2:00pm	Private Event—Youth Center

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

December 10	9:15am	“Blue Christmas” worship with prayer
	10:15am	Around the Tables-Christmas in Eswatini presented by Nathi Gama, in the Fellowship Hall
December 17		Zion’s Christmas Cantata at 9:15am worship Church Christmas Party in Fellowship Hall
December 19		Zion Partner’s Christmas Party at Noon, Fellowship Hall
December 24		Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship at 9:15am Christmas Eve Worship, 10:00pm (Sunday) with 9:30pm String Quartet Concert
December 28		Bag Fluffing—Youth Center
December 31		First Sunday of Christmas Worship at 9:15am

Poinsettia Garden



Remember or honor your loved ones and help us beautify Zion’s Sanctuary by sponsoring a poinsettia plant for our Christmas Garden. All sponsors will be listed on an insert in our Christmas Eve bulletins. Please fill out an order form (in the back and return to the office by Monday, December 4, 2023 (firm deadline).