

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24, 2025

10:00pm

Christmas Strings Concert (9:30pm)

Rachel Handlin, violin

Brandon Lamm, violin

Hannah Lamm, violin

Michael Beert, cello

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL - Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CHRISTMAS CONFESSION

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

God-with-us,

we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter, claiming there is no room when we have plenty. We have made power and wealth our idols, while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.

We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging. Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace.

Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant us the grace to begin again.

Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin, through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us. Amen.

Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, ✝ forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

Red Hymnal #283

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2. The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest. *Refrain*

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning.
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. *Refrain*

CHRISTMAS LIGHT

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

And also with you.

We light the Christmas candle to remember that the light shines in the darkness,

And the darkness shall never overcome the light of Christ.

You are set free to follow the star that leads to the manger, that leads to the cross and empty tomb!

Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth! Amen!

Let us hear the message of the angels tonight!

It is the will of God that our ears are open to hear the message of the angels and see the messengers all around us.

We toil and struggle in the fields and tune out the song of the angels that praise God.

Open our ears to the praise of the angels. Shine upon us this night as we join the angels' praise!

SONG

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be; which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

3. Come to Bethlehem and see, Him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray, Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

ADVENT WREATH LITURGY

Tonight, we gather to remember with the prophet Isaiah: *For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this (Isaiah 9:6-7).*

We gather to once again bask in the glory that visited a stable and a manger, shepherds watching their flocks, and a young couple cradling the newborn Messiah.

We light the Christ candle as a sign of the glory that came among us in unexpected places and to unexpected people, that we may be people who seek and follow the glory of the Christ child here and now.

Light the center candle of the Advent wreath.

SONG

“Emmanuel”

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

(Repeat)

MUSIC “Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” Arr. by Dennis Allen

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

R: Word of light. **C: Word of Hope.**

SONG “Away in a Manger” Red Hymnal #278

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

2. The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay,
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

SECOND LESSON: Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

R: “Word of light.” **C: Word of Hope.**

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
3. No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years, are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above;
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king, And peace to all the earth!
3. How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but, in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

SERMON

Pastor Michael Thomas

SONG

"The First Noel"

Red Hymnal #300

1. The first Noel the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

2. They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray. Gathered with all who seek the Christ child, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need. Lord in your mercy...

Hear our prayer.

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

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

MUSICAL OFFERING

“O Holy Night”

Adolphe C. Adam

Jodi Beach

Offering envelopes are available at your seat to designate gifts
toward the ministries of Zion.

The Offering Box is by the piano and prayer table.



A CAROL SETTING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

PREFACE (Tune: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*)

Oh, may the good Lord be with you.

And, may the Lord be with you, too.

Lift your hearts to God in praise.

To the Lord our hearts we raise.

Let us offer praises true.

It is fitting so to do: gratefully we sing to the Lord, our King!

PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all of creation, the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (Tune: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord! God of Hosts, by all Adored!

Heav'n and earth cannot contain all the glory of your name!

Hail, Hosanna, God Most High! Blest is He who now draws nigh

In the name of God the King! Hallelujahs glad we sing:

Hail, Hosanna! Praises due be forever, Lord, to You!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We gather tonight living under the reign of God. We recall anew the words of Jesus when he gathered with his disciples before he died. As they were eating, 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 it is 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.

COMMUNION

“Love Has Come”

Red Hymnal #292

1. Love has come—a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

2. Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.
Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.

3. Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas; Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

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

Amen.

Let us pray: God of wonder, in Jesus we behold the light of the world come near. As you have come among us now, send us out in joy, hastening to share the good news of your love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit dwelling among us now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Red Hymnal #281

1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright; Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

(Please raise your candle for verse three)

3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

BENEDICTION

Christ is with us; Christ is within us; Christ is under us!

Christ is behind us; Christ is before us, Christ is beside us.

Christ will comfort and restore us; Christ is above us, Christ is in the quiet; Christ is in our hearts, minds and body. We are the body of Christ created,

forgiven and set free to do mercy, love justice.

Let us walk humbly with the holy one.

AMEN!

POSTLUDE



Merry Christmas!

Zion Lutheran Church

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2025 Poinsettia Garden / Joy Fund

Christmas Blessings to Everyone at Zion!



We have contributed to the Christmas "Joy Card" in lieu of sending Christmas cards to our friends at Zion. These monies will be given to Cornucopia Food Pantry.

Allen Floyd	In Memory of Marsha Wurtlin, and Gene & Ginny Kyle
Sue Drilling	In Memory of Bill & Hazel Drilling
Deb & Neal Tolodxi	In Memory of Larry Hall, Destiny Tolodxi and Loved Ones
Betty & Les Morgan	In Honor of Our Family
Ann Harkabus and Pat Lyman	In Memory of Carolyn, Rudy and David Larson
Ann Harkabus and Pat Lyman	In Memory of Dorothy Graham
Laurie & Mark Pellant	Merry Christmas to All
Carlson Family	In Memory of Dick & Jean Carlson, John & Erma Carlson, and Oscar & Hilma Johnson
Ken & Mary Franzen	In Memory of Loved Ones
Nancy & Natalie	In Memory of their parents, Chet & Mary Anderson
Deanna Hartnenberg	In Memory of Richard Sibley, and Ruthie Fairchild
Pastor Mike & Tammy Thomas	Merry Christmas to All!