



THIRD SUNDAY OF
ADVENT

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Sweet Hour of Prayer

Arr. Arthur E. Bergman

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I Love To Tell the Story

Arr. E. L. Ashford

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Abide with Me

Arr. Timothy Matthews

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WELCOME

ADVENT HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light RED ELW #715

(Vs. 3)

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed. *Refrain*

Refrain

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.**

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

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LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Krueger Family

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom
and waters would break forth in the wilderness.
Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.
Strengthen our hearts
as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.
May he give water to all who thirst,
for he is our light and our salvation.
Blessed be God forever.
Amen.

ADVENT HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light RED ELW #715
(Refrain Only)

Refrain

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.**

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,
we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.

† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God,
**and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in
your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: **Isaiah 35:1-10**

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
 and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD,
 the majesty of our God.]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
 and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
 “Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.
 He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
 He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55

^{46b} My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
⁴⁹ you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.
⁵⁰ **You have mercy on those who fear you,**
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ You have shown strength with your arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
⁵² **casting down the mighty from their thrones**
and lifting up the lowly.
⁵³ You have filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ **You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**
to remember the promise of mercy,
⁵⁵ the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PLEASE RISE FOR THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia RED ELW page 174

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
 who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord RED ELW #286
(Vs. 1 & 2)

**1 Your little ones, dear Lord, are we,
and come your lowly bed to see;
enlighten ev'ry soul and mind,
that we the way to you may find.**

2 With songs we hasten you to greet,
and kiss the ground before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night
that gave you birth, our soul's delight.

Text: Hans A. Brorson, 1694-1764; tr. Harriet Krauth Spaeth, 1845-1925, alt.
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CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Song—*In a Little Stable*

Song—*Twinkle, Twinkle Christmas Star*

HYMN

Away in a Manger RED ELW #277

(Vs. 1)

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.**

Text: North American, 19th cent.
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

THE PEACE

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

More Precious Than Silver

Arr. Lynn De Shazo
CCLI #11335

OFFERING HYMN

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful RED ELW #182

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

Nourishing God,
**you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.**
Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

HOLY HOLY HOLY

RED ELW page 207

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus Christ took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying, “Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in 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 sins. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

COMMUNION

(Zion practices an open table. God welcomes everyone to come forward. Young children may receive bread and a blessing. If you prefer not to receive, fold your hands and receive a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available; please ask your servers. Come to the Lord's table and share in the feast!)

LAMB OF GOD

RED ELW page 146

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION BLESSING

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

May God who comes among us,
Father, ⁺ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

People Look East RED ELW #248
(Vs. 1 & 3)

- 1 **People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Guest, is on the way.**

- 3 **Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Star, is on the way.**

Text: Eleanor E. Farjeon, 1881-1965

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Hark, the Glad Sound!

Arr. John Purifoy
One License #52163



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Weekly Announcements



Please keep these family, friends and members in your prayers: Dilshad & Sonya Perani, Gary Revier, Deb Otto and Marlene Fure

Welcome Guests!

Please sign the visitor book in the entrance to the sanctuary.

We are glad you are here!

Thank you to the Sunday School for sharing the Christmas story with us. Thank you to Scott Bergs, Brenda Danielson and Cindy Vazquez. Readers: Daphne Hazelwood, Murdock Krueger and Emmilia Wark.

Hunger Jar for the month of December is designated to Feed My Starving Children

Nativity Set Stroll

Thank you to everyone who shared their nativity sets with us. Also thank you to those who helped in anyway.

Elephant Joe's Coffee—We still have Elephant Joe's coffee for purchase. Christmas is coming. Great gifts!

New Member Sunday—Sunday, December 21—See Pastor Gretchen.

Christmas Pictures—We would love to see your family's Christmas Card. Please share a copy with the church office by email or place the picture in Stacy's door mailbox and it will be returned to you. The pictures will be added to the announcement slides that are shown before the worship service.

Directory Updates—Please get any updates including physical address, mailing address, phone number or email address to Stacy. We are starting to look ahead to the Annual Report.

Nominating Committee—is still looking for a council secretary, two for the nominating committee and a Sunday School Superintendent. Please consider serving on one of these positions. See Larry Gieseke, Joe Prasad, Nancy Mathwig, Wendy Kube, Jane Scharpe or Pr. Gretchen.

No one likes change!

Save your change and bring it to ion on December 21 to make a whole lot of noise in the buckets for Clattering Coins for Christ!
Change is a good thing ~ this will go to Feed My Starving Children.

Jack Noennig and the Community Strings present: Angels Among Us.
Sunday, December 21 at 3pm & 7pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Glencoe. Sam & Ashtyn Bullert will be participating.

2026 Offering Envelopes will be looking different this year. As a cost savings, this year we will provide each family with 15 non-individualized envelopes in their church mailbox. Additional envelopes will be available in the last slot of our mailboxes. When filling out the envelope, please remember to put your name on the envelope, these envelopes are not numbered as in the past. If you do have envelopes from this year (2025) you can continue to use those into the new year.

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Worship Assistants

December 14

Usher: Tim & Stacy Haggemiller
Wayne & Ann Werner
Greeter: Larry & Pam Schiroo
Acolyte: Alice Foss
Reader: Jane Scharpe
AV Team: Matt & Jan Giesen
Altar Guild: Wayne & Ann Werner
Bread Maker: Jane Scharpe
Paraments: Larry Gieseke

December 21

Usher: Larry Klunder, Nick Schiroo
Dale & Laurie Stern
Greeter: Nick Schiroo
Acolyte: Taylor Johnson
Reader: Starla Schilling
AV Team: Joe Prasad &
Elton Hazelwood
Paraments: Larry Gieseke

Pastor Gretchen Pierskalla

952-237-1060
pastor@zionarlington.org

Hours for the week of December 14
Or by appointment

Stacy's Office Hours
Monday, 9:00a-1:00p
Tuesday —Thursday, 2:30p-5:00p



Zion Lutheran Church ELCA

This Week at Zion:

Sunday, December 14	8:15a	Zion Choir Rehearsal
	9:00a	Worship w/Holy Communion
		Sunday School Christmas Program
Wednesday, December 17	4-5:30p	6th, 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation
	6:30p-8	9th Grade Confirmation
Thursday, December 18	10:00a	Adult Bible Study
Sunday, December 21	8:15a	Zion Choir Rehearsal
	9:00a	Worship
		New Member Sunday
		Clattering Coins for Christ

LSS Meals on Wheels Monday—Friday 9:00a—12:00p

