



# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 21, 2025**

*Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.*

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## **GATHERING**

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

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### **PRELUDE**

***Comfort, Comfort Ye My People***

Arr. Paul Manz  
One License #10-351.9

***Hark, the Glad Sound!***

Arr. Paul Manz  
One License #10-002.2

***Reprise***

Arr. Paul Manz  
One License #10-9950

### **WELCOME**

### **ADVENT HYMN**

***Christ, Be Our Light*** RED ELW #715  
(Vs. 4)

- 4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone. *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**

**Kamps Family**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.  
In your Son, Emmanuel,  
you have shown us your light  
and saved us from the power of sin.  
Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.  
Increase our longing for your presence,  
that at the celebration of your Son's birth  
his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst,  
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.**

## **CONFESSION 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.**

## HYMN

*Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* RED ELW #244  
(Vs. 1 & 4)

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,  
and let your lights appear;  
the evening is advancing,  
and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising  
and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;  
at midnight comes the cry.
- 4 Our hope and expectation,  
O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for,  
o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted,  
we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption  
that sets your people free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907  
CCLI #3739583

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

**With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

Amen.

## CHOIR ANTHEM

*Candles of Advent*  
One License #253656  
Ashtyn Bullert—Violin

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16**

*An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!*

<sup>10</sup> The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also?” <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- <sup>17</sup> **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**
- <sup>18</sup> And so will we never turn away from you;  
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- <sup>19</sup> **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

**SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7**

*Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.*

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

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

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 1:18-25**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."*

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON ON THE STEPS**

### **SERMON**

#### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* RED ELW #257  
(Vs. 1 & 2)

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

## **Refrain**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain***

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite

Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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## **WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS**

### **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.**

Let us welcome *these sisters and brothers* in Christ to this community of faith.

**We rejoice with you in the life of baptism.**

**Together we will give thanks and praise to God  
and proclaim the good news to all the world.**

## 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

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## OFFERING

*Gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

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## OFFERING

***How Far Is It To Bethlehem?***

Arr. Paul Manz  
One License #10-360.2

## OFFERING HYMN

***We Give Thee but Thine Own*** RED ELW #686  
(Vs. 1)

- 1 We give thee but thine own,  
whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is thine alone,  
a trust, O Lord, from thee.

Text: William W. How, 1823-1897, alt.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Nourishing God,  
**you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.**  
**Receive these gifts from what you have first given us,**  
**to satisfy all who hunger for your day of grace,**  
**that we may rejoice and be for the world**  
**signs of your kingdom come.**  
**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**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.**

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## **SENDING**

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

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## **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**

*Soon and Very Soon* RED ELW #439  
(Vs. 1 & 4)

**Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,**  
**Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,**  
**Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,**  
**Hallelujah, Hallelujah,**  
**We're goin' to see the King!**

No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

Andrae Crouch  
CCLI #11249

## DISMISSAL

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

## POSTLUDE

*Good Christian Men, Rejoice*

Arr. Wilbur Held  
One License #11486



### Acknowledgements:

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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!

**Welcome to our new members:** Alex & Cassidy Battcher and Kevin Kamps.

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

**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 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.

**Feed My Starving Children** is scheduled for Wednesday, December 31 from 12-1:45pm. We will leave Zion at 10:45a. Sign up sheet is in the Fellowship Room.

**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.

**Thursday Adult Bible Study** schedule change

Tuesday, December 23 at 10:00a

Tuesday, December 30 at 10:00a

Zion Lutheran Church  
814 West Brooks St. P.O. Box 371  
Arlington, MN 55307  
Church: 507-964-5454  
Email: [zion.elca.814@gmail.com](mailto:zion.elca.814@gmail.com)  
Web: [zionarlington.org](http://zionarlington.org) // YouTube: Zion ELCA Arlington MN

## Worship Assistants

### **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

### **December 24**

Usher: Jan Wark, Scott Bergs  
Peg Kamps, Adilyn Kamps  
Greeter: Starla Schilling  
Acolyte: Jack Ruehling  
Reader: Laurie Stern  
AV Team: Tim Michaelis &  
Joe Prasad  
Altar Guild: Jackie Alsleben  
Bread Maker: Larry Schiroo  
Paraments: Larry Gieseke

### **December 25**

Usher: Volunteers please  
Greeter: Volunteers please  
Acolyte: Jeremiah Vazquez  
Reader: Mary Sylwester  
AV Team: Matt & Jan Giesen  
Altar Guild: Bruce & Mary Kallhoff  
Bread Maker: Larry Schiroo  
Paraments: Larry Gieseke

### **December 28**

Usher: Diane Wink, Francis Rowe  
Cindy Vazquez, Jeremiah Vazquez  
Greeter: Jane Scharpe  
Acolyte: Cooper Heeren  
Reader: Brad Danielson  
AV Team: Matt & Jan Giesen  
Paraments: Larry Gieseke

## **Pastor Gretchen Pierskalla**

952-237-1060  
pastor@zionarlington.org

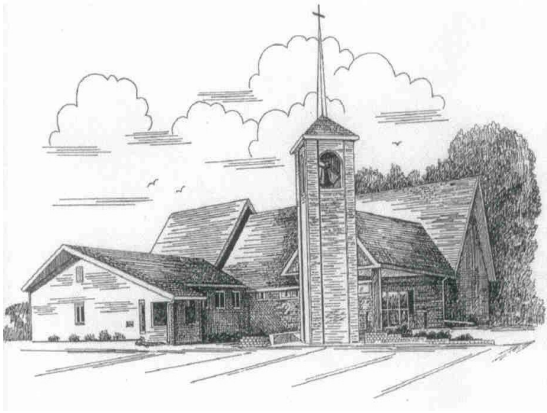
Hours for the week of December 21

Monday, December 22—1p-4p

Tuesday, December 23—11a-4p

Or by appointment

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



## *Zion Lutheran Church ELCA*

### This Week at Zion:

Sunday, December 21	8:15a 9:00a	Zion Choir Rehearsal <b>Worship</b> New Member Sunday
Tuesday, December 23	10:00a	Adult Bible Study
Wednesday, December 24	5:00p	<b>Worship w/Holy Communion &amp; Candle Light</b>
Thursday, December 25	9:00a	<b>Worship w/Holy Communion</b>
Sunday, December 28	9:00a	<b>Worship</b>

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

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