



**December 24, 2023, Fourth Sunday of Advent
Traditional Worship Service**



Zion
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church

*Zion matters to the
community by
showing the love of
Jesus Christ.*

**STAFFED CHILD
CARE**

Available during
worship service.
Infant thru
Kindergarten.

WIFI = Zion Guest
No password required

www.zion-nc.com

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[@zionnorthcanton](https://www.facebook.com/zionnorthcanton)

The Advent Wreath

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

Sundays and Seasons, Augsburg Fortress

Welcome from Presiding Minister (PM)

*Please stand as you are able
Turn to follow the cross as it processes through the worship space
Welcome Jesus into our presence*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



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
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



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

Congregation responses are in bold print

Four candles are lit as the following prayer is read

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior.

Amen

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism,
as the presiding minister begins.*

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.

Silence is kept for reflection

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

Let us pray,

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

A reading from 2 Samuel:

(2 Samuel 7:1-11,16, Pew Bible, New Testament,
page 219)

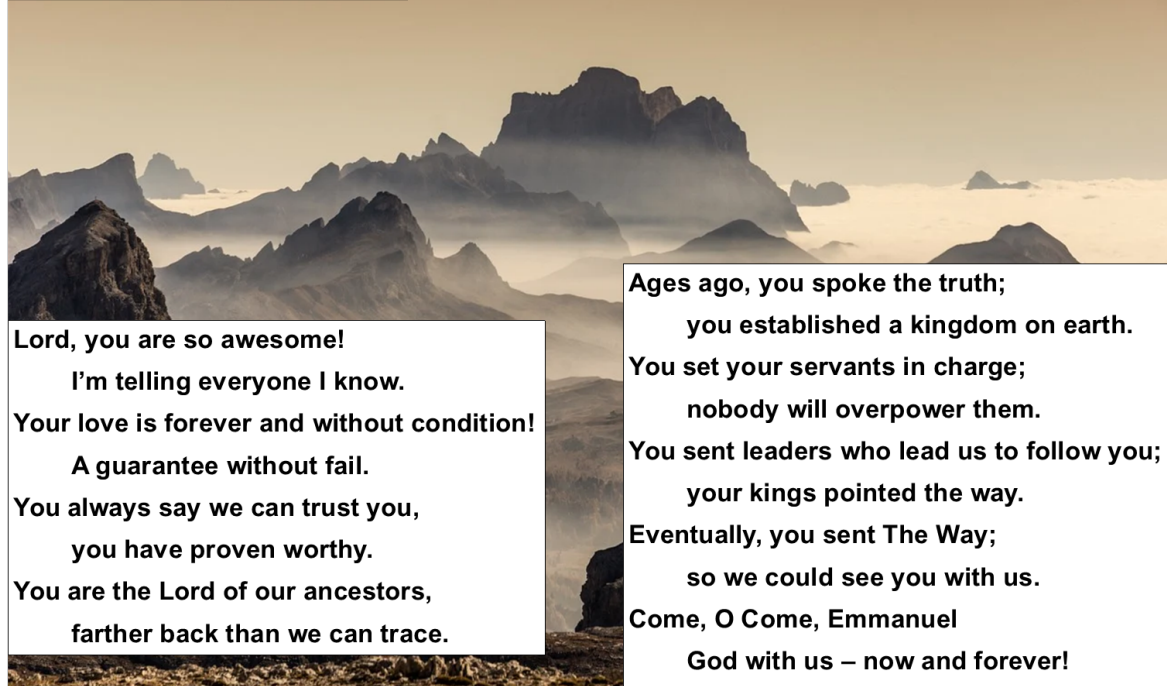
The reading concludes with:
Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God

Psalm Paraphrase
(Read responsively
the indented lines)

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Paraphrased by Pastor William

Photo by rotonnara at Pixabay.com



Lord, you are so awesome!
I'm telling everyone I know.
Your love is forever and without condition!
A guarantee without fail.
You always say we can trust you,
you have proven worthy.
You are the Lord of our ancestors,
farther back than we can trace.

Ages ago, you spoke the truth;
you established a kingdom on earth.
You set your servants in charge;
nobody will overpower them.
You sent leaders who lead us to follow you;
your kings pointed the way.
Eventually, you sent The Way;
so we could see you with us.
Come, O Come, Emmanuel
God with us – now and forever!

A reading from Romans:

(Romans 16:25-27 Pew Bible,
New Testament, page 126)

The reading concludes with:
Word of God, Word of Life
Thanks be to God

Please stand as you are able

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The holy gospel according to St. Luke
Glory to you, O Lord

(St. Luke 1:26-38, Pew Bible
New Testament, page 43)

The reading concludes with:
The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Please be seated

Children's Time with Pastor

Sermon

Please stand as you are able

Savior of the Nations, Come

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;

Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Savior of the Nations, Come". It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment line on a bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

AM: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence for personal prayer

You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill. Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Thank you for the life of our birthday siblings,
Linda Lancashire, Hannah Venable, Lester Brown, Gary Horton and Robert Henderson

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.
Amen.

The Offering of our tithes, gifts and sacrifices is gathered for the mission of Christ's church, including the care of those in need.

ELECTRONIC GIVING

Scan QR code for mobile giving

PC = <https://onrealm.org/ZionLutheranChurchNC/give/now>

Smartphone = <https://abundant.com/ZionLutheranChurch/MobileGiving>



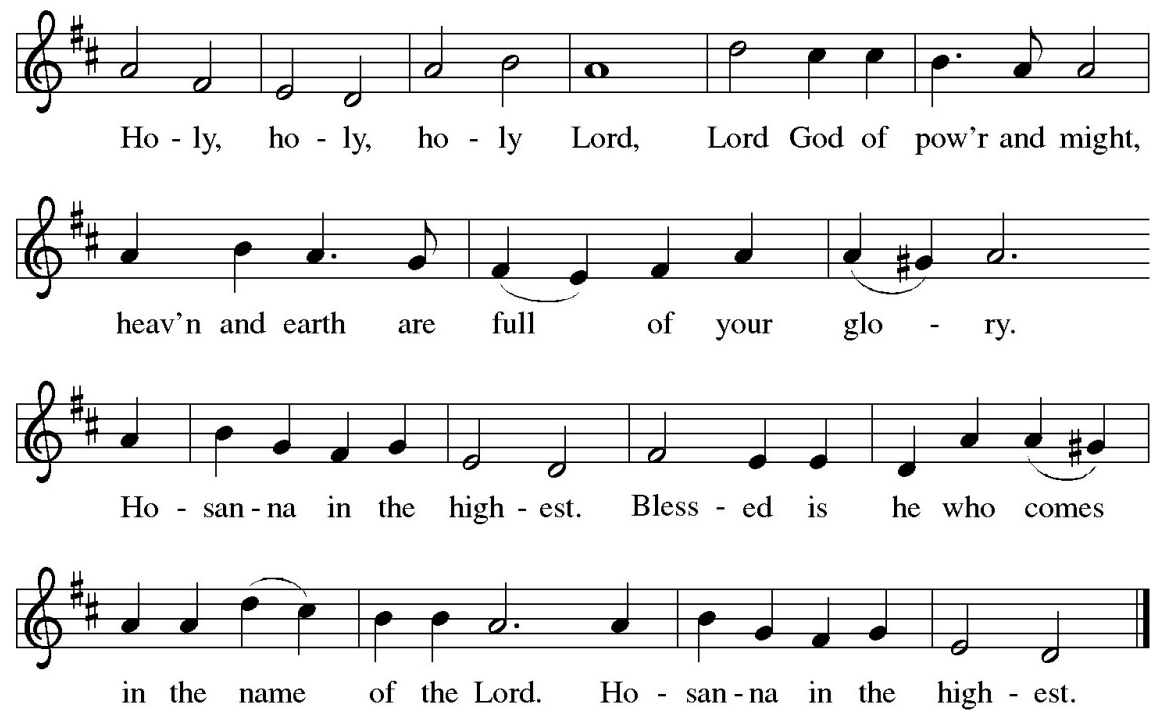
AM: Let us enthusiastically pray our prayer of stewardship, Holy Lord,
I gladly return, for your work, a portion of your abundant provision to me. All that I have is yours alone, entrusted Lord, to my care. Amen.

PM: 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.

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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

Words of Institution - Please look up, Pastor will be speaking these words

Remembering his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

Amen.

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.

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together, Come Take your place at the table.
Thanks be to God!

The Lord's Supper (Communion) at this congregation is practiced as an open table – all are welcome. Jesus said this is his body and blood given and shed for you; come receive the loving grace God provides for you.

Those who do not commune may come forward for a blessing, for all are loved by God. Children who commune at their home congregation are encouraged to commune here today too.

Gluten Free wafers available. Request at time of receiving communion.

Please be seated

Communion Music: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen

AM: Let us pray,

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Announcements

Please stand as you are able.

PM: Let us enthusiastically commit to our mission as we pray,

Lord, my hope and strength comes from you. Open my eyes and heart to become the person you want me to be; a person who cares for the widows and orphans, feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, frees the oppressed, and visits the sick and imprisoned. Give me and this congregation a vision to make a difference in our community. Enliven me to spread the good news of your Son. I pray this all for Jesus's sake. Amen.

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.

Turn to follow the cross as it processes through the Worship Space.
Then follow it out to join in God's work.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

Go in Peace. Keep Awake.
We will with God's help.

Please join in fellowship with coffee and donuts immediately following!

Postlude: *Joy to the World*

Today's Worship Leaders

Assisting Minister: Linda Weidenbach
Acolyte: Ava Medina
Accompanist: Carol McKimm
Audio/Visual Technicians: John Rhodes and Paul Bagocius
Chancel Guild: Jayne Schrader and Sally Bunyan
Child Care Attendant: Amelia Milek
Presiding Minister: Rev. William C. Weidenbach Jr.
Reader: Mark Denman
Trustees: Randy Elsass and Darlene Milavickas
Flowers by: Peggy Ingalls in loving memory of John Ingalls

December 31, 2023 Worship Leaders

Assisting Minister: Not needed today
Acolyte: Kenadi Medina
Accompanist: Carol McKimm
Audio/Visual Technicians: John Rhodes and Paul Bagocius
Chancel Guild: Darlene Milavickas
Child Care Attendant: Amelia Milek
Reader: Nick Cignetti
Trustees: John Long and Brian Milek
Worship Leader: Jim Fidler



We pray this week for Kay and those affected by wars. Contact Jayne Schrader at prayer@zion-nc.com

Luke 1:26-38
Stewardship Moment from Pastor William



Stewardship in the Gospel
God sends a messenger to Mary to bring her good news; you will bear my son and he will make a difference in the world. Jesus was born to bring God's love to the whole world. Jesus is the expression of God's abundantly overflowing love and compassion.

Stewardship in our Community
Those who know that God's love and compassion is for them lead a life of peace and confidence in times of trouble, conflict and challenges. Those who know God's love and compassion is for all people lead a life that makes a difference for the world.

Stewardship in practice
Making a difference in the world is the hallmark of a true follower of The Way (Christ). This week, seek a way to make a difference. Find a way to live more sustainably. Seek a way to eliminate one-use products. Find a way to share some of your abundance with those in need. Choose kind words to speak about others; particularly those with whom you do not agree.

Luke 1:26-38
Gospel Message from Pr. William

Photo by garten-gg at pixabay.com



God sends Gabriel to give a message to Mary; you are to have my son and his name shall be Jesus, which means The Lord saves. Names were important to the ancient followers of God; sometimes, like with Jesus, their names described the job the child was to live into. Consider the work you do for Christ, the actual work you do to expand his kingdom. What name would describe the work you do? Might there be a better name to which you could live into?

The Weekly News of Zion Lutheran Church

**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION**

December 31

No Adult Christian Ed
No Bible Adventure

A SERVICE OF

**Lessons
& Carols**

December 25 9am

CHRISTMAS EVE

Candlelight

SERVICE

DECEMBER 24TH, 7PM

**Office will be closed
December 25 & 26
In observance of
Christmas**



Let us pray for you

This week we pray for:
Kay and those affected by the wars. Submit your prayer requests
to Jayne Schrader at Prayer@Zion-NC.com

The Weekly News of Zion Lutheran Church, continued



**1st & 3rd Tuesday
Every Month**
9:00 am—Setup
12:00 pm—Hot Meal
1:00 pm—Distribution



Courses for **lay people** who want to be more deeply rooted and grounded in love.

Intro to the Old Testament
Thursdays - 6:00-9:00pm / Dec. 14 - Jan. 25

The course runs for 5 weeks and the cost is **\$65/course**.
For more information visit:
<https://www.neos-elca.org/growing-in-faith.html>




**Wednesday Casual
Worship Service
7:00 pm**




**Zion's
Shared
Goods**

**Monday, January 15 - 5-7pm
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 12-2pm**



**EARN 5%
CASH BACK**
For Your Local Non-Profit Group!

**Time to turn in your Acme Receipts!
Dated August 1, 2023-February 14, 2024!
Collection jars in Equal Exchange &
narthex**



**Volunteer Opportunities for
Food Pantry &
Shared Goods**

**Friday, December 29, 2023
9 - 11 am**

**Monday, January 15, 2024
9 - 11 am**

Call the office for information or to sign up



**NO ZOOM
BIBLE
DISCUSSION
THURSDAY**



**Property Ministry Meeting
Tuesday, December 26, 7pm**