

Historic Zion Lutheran Church

DIVINE SERVICE FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

9:00 am Sunday, December 26, 2021

RECEIVING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AT ZION

As intended by Christ and as practiced by the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church throughout her history, "Closed Communion" is observed in this congregation, in which the Lord's Supper is distributed only to those:

- (a) who have been **baptized** in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
 - (b) who have been **instructed** in the truth of Holy Scripture as taught in the Lutheran Confessions, who have been **confirmed** in this Lutheran faith, and who now confess the same doctrines that are taught in this congregation, holding membership in a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod;
 - (c) who **believe that in this sacrament the real body and blood of Christ are truly distributed to them and orally received by them**, bestowing on them the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation;
 - (d) who **sincerely repent** of all their sins, and desire to receive God's forgiveness in this holy meal.
- Guests at our services, before receiving the sacrament, are requested to affirm these facts with one of our pastors. Thank you for honoring our practice. If you are looking for a church home, would like to be a member of Zion, or would like to learn more about the Christian Faith, please speak to one of our pastors about our membership classes.

✙ = appropriate to make the baptismal sign of the cross
When "rise" or "kneel" is indicated, it is appropriate to sit if needed

Greeting And Announcements: *The Lord be with you!* **And also with you!**

[Rise] Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✙ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

The Office of Confession of Sins and Absolution

Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

[Kneel]

*Our help is in the name of the Lord Who made heaven and earth.
I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord. And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✙ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

The Congregation rises, turns towards the entrance of the nave, and faces the Cross of Christ, the reminder of Christ's promise to come and dwell among His people as they are gathered in His name.

Entrance Hymn Come, Your Hearts Burgundy Hymn 375

[All sing stanzas 1 & 2; Women alone sing stanza 3;
Men alone sing stanza 4; All sing stanzas 5 & 6.]

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have
mer - cy up - on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Salutation

And with thy spir— it.

A ——— men!

+ The Office of the Word of God +

Old Testament Reading..... Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15

[After the reading] *This is the word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle of the Day Colossians 3:12-17

[After the reading] *This is the word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God.**

[Rise] **Sequence Hymn We Praise You Burgundy Hymn 382**

[Sing stanzas 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7 only. Omit Stanzas 4 and 5.]

Holy Gospel St. Luke 2:22-40

[*The Gospel is announced.*]

[*The Gospel is proclaimed.*]

Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord!

Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

Confession of Faith (The Nicene Creed)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven

[Bow] **And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, And was made man;**

And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sits at the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets. And I believe in one Holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen!

[Be Seated]

Hymn of the Day Let All Together Praise Burgundy Hymn 389

[All sing stanzas 1 & 2; Men alone sing stanzas 3 & 5;
Women alone sing stanzas 4 & 6; All sing stanza 7; Rise for Stanza 7.]

Sermon

[Rise] Prayer of the Church

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs: [After each petition]:..., Lord, in Your mercy: Hear our prayer.
[After the final prayer]:..., one God, now and forever Amen.

[Be Seated] Offerings, Voluntary

[Rise] Offertory Hymn Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from Thy pres- ence, and
take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store un-to me the joy of
Thy sal-va - tion; and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

+ The Office of the Sacrament of the Altar +

Preface

The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts.

And with thy spir - it. We lift them up un - to the Lord.

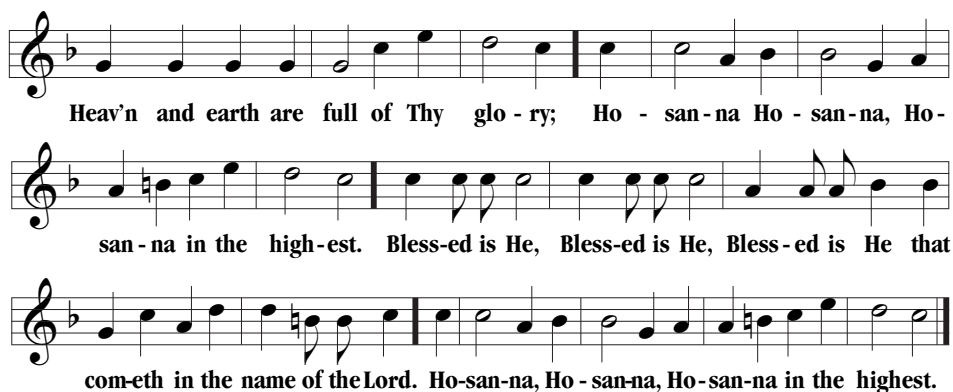
Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

Proper Preface for Christmas, Sanctus

It is truly meet, right and salutary ever more praising You and saying:

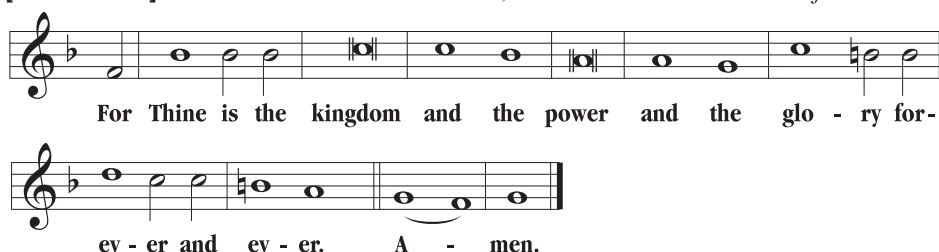
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



Heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry; Ho - san-na Ho - san-na, Ho - san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is He, Bless-ed is He, Bless-ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na, Ho - san-na, Ho-san-na in the highest.

[Kneel] Lord's Prayer

[Pastor chants:] *Our Father who art in heaven; but deliver us from evil.*



For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glo - ry for- ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

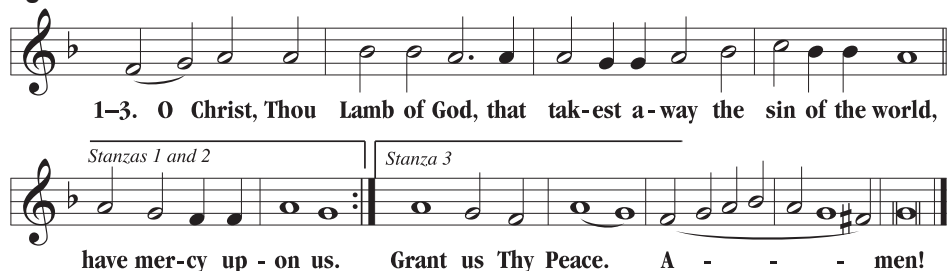
Words of Institution, Pax Domini

The peace of the Lord be with you always!



A - men.

Agnus Dei



1-3. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. Grant us Thy Peace. A - - - - men!

[Be Seated]

Distribution Hymns Come, Thou Long Burgundy Hymn 338

[All sing stanzas 1 & 2; Women alone sing stanza 3; Men alone sing stanza 4; All sing stanzas 5 & 6.]

In His Temple Burgundy Hymn 519

[Rise] Eucharistic Benediction

The Body and Blood of your Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting! ✠ Depart in Peace! Amen!

Post-Communion Hymn In Peace and Joy Burgundy Hymn 938

Post Communion Rite

Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.

Musical notation for the Post Communion Rite. The melody is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note G4. The lyrics "And His mercy endureth for – ev — er." are written below the staff, with a long horizontal line under "ev" indicating a sustained note.

Prayer of Thanksgiving ...now and forever.

Musical notation for the Prayer of Thanksgiving. The melody is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note G4. The lyrics "A — men." are written below the staff, with a long horizontal line under "A" indicating a sustained note.

The Lord be with you.

Musical notation for the Lord's Prayer. The melody is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note G4. The lyrics "And with thy spir — rit." are written below the staff, with a long horizontal line under "spir" indicating a sustained note.

Bless we the Lord.

Musical notation for the Blessing. The melody is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note G4. The lyrics "Thanks be to God." are written below the staff.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✚ give you peace.

Musical notation for the Benediction. The melody is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note G4. The lyrics "A-men, A-men, A - men." are written below the staff.

During the Recessional, the Congregation turns and faces the Processional Cross, the symbol of Christ's promise to remain with and lead His people as they now go and live in the world in His name.

Recessional Hymn O Sing of Christ Burgundy Hymn 362

Postlude

Readings for the First Sunday after Christmas

The Old Testament Reading is Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15

The LORD said to Moses, “Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.”

Then Moses said to the people, “Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place. ...

“When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals that are males shall be the LORD’s. Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. And when in time to come your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall say to him, ‘By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the males that first open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’”

The Epistle is Colossians 3:12-17

Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Gospel is Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present

him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Hymns for the First Sunday in Advent

LSB332 Savior of the Nations, Come

Ambrose of Milan

Text: (sts. 4-5, 8) © 1978 Concordia Publishing House; (sts. 3, 6-7) © 2006 Concordia Publishing House; Used by permission. LSBHymnLicense.net #100012381.

1. Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.
2. Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh—Woman's offspring pure and fresh.
3. Here a maid was found with child, Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown: God was there upon His throne.
4. Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man, His heroic course began.
5. God the Father was His source, Back to God He ran His course.
Into hell His road went down, Back then to His throne and crown.
6. For You are the Father's Son Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
By Your mighty pow'r make whole All our ills of flesh and soul.
7. From the manger newborn light Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides; In this light faith now abides.
- △ 8. Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be Now and through eternity.

LSB335 O Bride of Christ, Rejoice

Danish, c. 1600

1. O bride of Christ, rejoice; Exultant raise thy voice
To hail the day of glory Foretold in sacred story.

Refrain: Hosanna, praise, and glory!
Our King, we bow before Thee.
2. Let shouts of gladness rise Triumphant to the skies.
Now comes the King most glorious To reign o'er all victorious.
Refrain
3. A humble beast He rides, Yet as a King presides;
Though not arrayed in splendor, He makes the grave surrender.
Refrain

4. The weak and timid find How meek He is and kind;
To them He gives a treasure Of bliss beyond all measure.
Refrain
5. Then go thy Lord to meet; Strew palm leaves at His feet;
Thy garments spread before Him And honor and adore Him.
Refrain

LSB350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come Johann Gottfried Olearius

1. Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, Only hope for sinful mortals!
Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.
Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.
2. Enter now my waiting heart, Glorious King and Lord most holy.
Dwell in me and ne'er depart, Though I am but poor and lowly.
Ah, what riches will be mine When Thou art my guest divine!
3. My hosannas and my palms Graciously receive, I pray Thee;
Evermore, as best I can, Savior, I will homage pay Thee,
And in faith I will embrace, Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.
4. Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown, Bring us blessing and salvation,
That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.

LSB343 Prepare the Royal Highway

Frans Mikael Franzén

Text: © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*; Used by permission. LSBHymnLicense.net #100012381.

1. Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory Foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!
2. God's people, see Him coming: Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!
Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!
3. Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him!
Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!

4. His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding:
Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!

The First Sunday after Christmas



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

2313 Hanna Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46803 260-744-1389

pastor@zionfw.org, church@zionfw.org | website: www.zionfw.org

The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is to be the body of Christ gathered at Hanna and Creighton in Fort Wayne, Indiana to:

- Receive Christ's gifts in baptism, preaching, teaching, and the Eucharist;
- Reach out to those who do not know the love of God in Christ;
- Reveal Christ's love for the world through acts of kindness and mercy toward all.

The Pastoral Ministry At Zion

Senior Pastor

Rev. Douglas D. Punke, MDiv (341-5397)

Field Worker:

Erik Saunders, Patrick Jackson

The Teaching Staff At Lutheran South Unity

Sheila Nehrenz, Principal (744-0459)

Teachers:

Gene Koch, Yvonne Schwantz, Barry Chrzan,

Danielle Ramsey, Merideth Tourney, 3rd vacant,

John Fink, Hannah Maresh, Cathie Wakeland, Natalie Reynolds

The Support Staff

Organist and Director of Parish Music:

Michael Hollman, MM

Church Office Manager:

Melvia Culpher

PRAYERS FOR TODAY

- + For the church and those experiencing persecution around the world
- + For those who serve our Lord at home and abroad, especially our fieldworkers Erik Saunders and Patrick Jackson
- + For our nation; for our leaders, our military, including Trevor Manning and James Hall, and our health care workers
- + For our schools, especially Lutheran South Unity School (accreditation and call committees), Concordia Lutheran High School, and Concordia Theological Seminary
- + For those who travel
- + For the aged and the homebound, including Jackie Schieferstein, Juanita Moore, Everett Beck, Helen Russell, Cheryl Silvers, and Doris Yerger
- + For those who are near death
- + For the ill, distressed, and those suffering affliction, including Hailey & Aaleyah Horn, LCMS First VP Peter Lange, Lucille Brandt, Susan Kaiser, Kathy Vlot, Willodean Bates, Kevin Leininger, Julie Ganaway, Paul Dolde, Walt Ostermeyer, Sherry Freeman, Jeff Springer, Gloria Gonzalez, Willie Manning, Dick Hollman, Louisa Porter, Louise Petrillo, Marianne Billings, Warren & Joan Messmann, Maurice King, Ron Rastl, Marlow Hogan, and Jenny Hobby
- + For God's blessing on all godly marriages
- + For the gift of life and for length of days
- + For the gift of rebirth by water and the Spirit
- + For those who mourn the death of loved ones
- + In remembrance of the faithful departed
- + For our communicants and for a fruitful use of the most Blessed Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood

IN THE SERVICE TODAY

Today is the Divine Service for the First Sunday after Christmas. Please complete an attendance/communion card, including the names of all children, and indicate if you are communing. Non-members, please read the back of the card.

CALENDAR

December 26, 2021 thru January 1, 2021

SUN.	9:00 AM	Divine Service NO Adult Bible Study, Sunday School, or Catechesis today or next Sunday Church Office closed	Church
MON.		No Admin Council	
TUES.			
WED.	5:30PM	Wednesday Divine Service	Church
THURS.			
FRI.	7:00 PM	New Year's Eve Divine Service	Church
SAT.	11:00 AM	Private Confession	Church

January 2, 2021

SUN.	9:00 AM	Divine Service	Church
	10:30 AM	Ninth Day of Christmas Party	Bauer Hall

ZION ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDUCATION HOUR: Adult Bible Class, Sunday School, and Junior Catechesis are on hiatus for the Christmas season. They will pick back up on January 9th. Enjoy a little Christmas break, basking in the glory of the Incarnation of Christ.

THANK YOU: the church staff would like to thank you for the Christmas gift. It is a blessing to us, but you are more so. God bless all your Christmas activities and gatherings.

NINTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS PARTY will be held after Divine Service next Sunday, January 2nd, 2022, in Bauer Hall. Please stay for the fun; also, please bring some sweet breads/holiday pastries to share with fellow members. Thank you.

FLOWER CHART FOR 2022 is up and ready; so please feel free to stop and sign up for flowers. You may also talk to Rosie Albersmeyer or Carolyn Wallschlaeger.

ENVELOPES have been hidden away, but you may still pick up your envelopes. Please see Julie Ganaway for your envelopes.

GIVING STATEMENTS will be ready for pick up on January 9th before or after service. Check with Julie Ganaway for these.

COVID-19 UPDATE AT ZION: *Please read this update if you want information on COVID. I'm not making oral comments regarding COVID unless some protocol needs changing.* Allen County will still be in the red this week on the State's coronavirus website. Our two-metric score should be 2.5, but it has to be that for two consecutive weeks for the map to change colors. The county positivity rate has decreased to 14% as of 12/14, and weekly cases per 100,000 residents is down close to 500 (12/19). The hospital census is headed down — good news. It's mainly for the sake of our hospitals and hospital workers that we want to keep the positivity rate low — so that they're not overwhelmed. The seven-day average daily deaths due to COVID is at still at 2. The Delta variant remains the main culprit of our woes at 99.8% — Omicron has made an appearance, but it is only at 0.1% of infections. The percentages of breakthrough infections, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to increase slowly. They're now 2.675%, 0.053%, and 0.028%, respectively. These numbers probably underestimate the number of breakthroughs, but even if two infections go undetected for every one detected, the vaccines are still very effective, and there is little evidence of side effects. If you haven't done so, please consider being vaccinated and/or boosted. Visit www.coronavirus.in.gov/vaccine/ for your eligibility and to schedule your vaccine or booster.

MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE God promised David an everlasting kingdom, and He came through with Jesus, Son of David. Thus, David praises God: 2 Samuel 7:22— "Therefore you are great, O LORD God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears." Last week's verse was John 20:31.

RIGHT TO LIFE OF NORTHEAST INDIANA has organized busses to Washington D.C. for the National March for Life on Friday, January 21st. Visit www.ichooselife.org/resources/events/upcoming-events and scroll down to find out more information about the Life Defenders bus trip or the Family trip and to register.

LSSI has hit a milestone of 120 years of service. How appropriate in this Holy Season to remember those less fortunate by giving to this Lutheran agency dedicated to helping just such people. You may contribute by visiting their website www.lssin.org/give and making a contribution to LSSI.

CAFETERIA HELP NEEDED — Candy Terrell, our school cook, is in need of some help getting lunches ready for our students at Emmaus. Please contact her for more details and information at Emmaus Lutheran School, 260-459-7722, ext. 1014 or 260-348-9655. If you know someone who enjoys working in the kitchen and would like to work part time, please share this information with them. Thank you!

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For the family of God's Priestly People at Zion

God calls His own people a "Royal Priesthood." God makes us kings and queens, princes and princesses who are bound together by the Holy Spirit in Baptism for the Christian benefit of each other. Priests **PRAY** -- They talk to God about their neighbor! Priests **TEACH** -- They talk to their neighbor about God! Priests **OFFER SACRIFICES** -- They offer to God the sacrifice of broken and contrite hearts; they offer their bodies and work as holy services to God for their neighbors. Join in this priestly work of prayer with your fellow members.

Morning Prayer

Luke 2:22-40

Matthew 2:1-12

Matthew 2:13-23

Luke 1:1-25

Luke 1:26-38

Luke 1:39-56

Luke 1:57-80

DAILY LECTIONARY

First Sunday after Christmas

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Evening Prayer

Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15

Isaiah 51:17-52:12

Isaiah 52:13-54:10

Isaiah 55:1-13

Isaiah 58:1-59:3, 14-21

Isaiah 60:1-22

Isaiah 61:1-11

THE DAILY PETITIONS OF THE CHURCH

[Daily] **O Lord, have mercy upon us. O Christ, have mercy upon us. O Lord, have mercy upon us.** Let us pray:

[S] For the joy of the Resurrection among us; for true and godly worship throughout the world; for diligent preaching and hearing of God's Word of Law and Gospel; for our pastors; for the teachers and students of our Sunday School; for our Bible Class leaders and their students; for our catechumens; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[M] For workers; for the unemployed; for farmers; for seasonable weather; for businesses small and large; for our leaders, federal, state and local; for the economic welfare of the nations on earth; for peace in our world; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[T] For the tempted; for the addicted and despairing; for the tortured and oppressed; for the lonely; for the sick, the hospitalized, and the needy; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[W] For fathers, mothers, and families; for those adults who must rear their children alone; the teachers and students of Lutheran South Unity School and Concordia Lutheran High School; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[T] For the Church and her pastors; for the training of ministers of the Word; for missionaries of the Church; for the leaders of the Church, including Matthew, our synod president, and Daniel, our district president; for those who have not heard the Gospel; for the fruitful use of the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[F] For the preaching of the Cross; for those persecuted for the sake of Gospel; the confession of the orthodox Lutheran faith in our community; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[Sat] For faithfulness unto life's earthly end; for the revival of those who have withered in the faith or fallen away; for the dying; Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer. Amen!**

[Daily]

The Our Father

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Second Sunday after Christmas

1 Kings 3:4-15

Ephesians 1:3-14

Luke 2:40-52

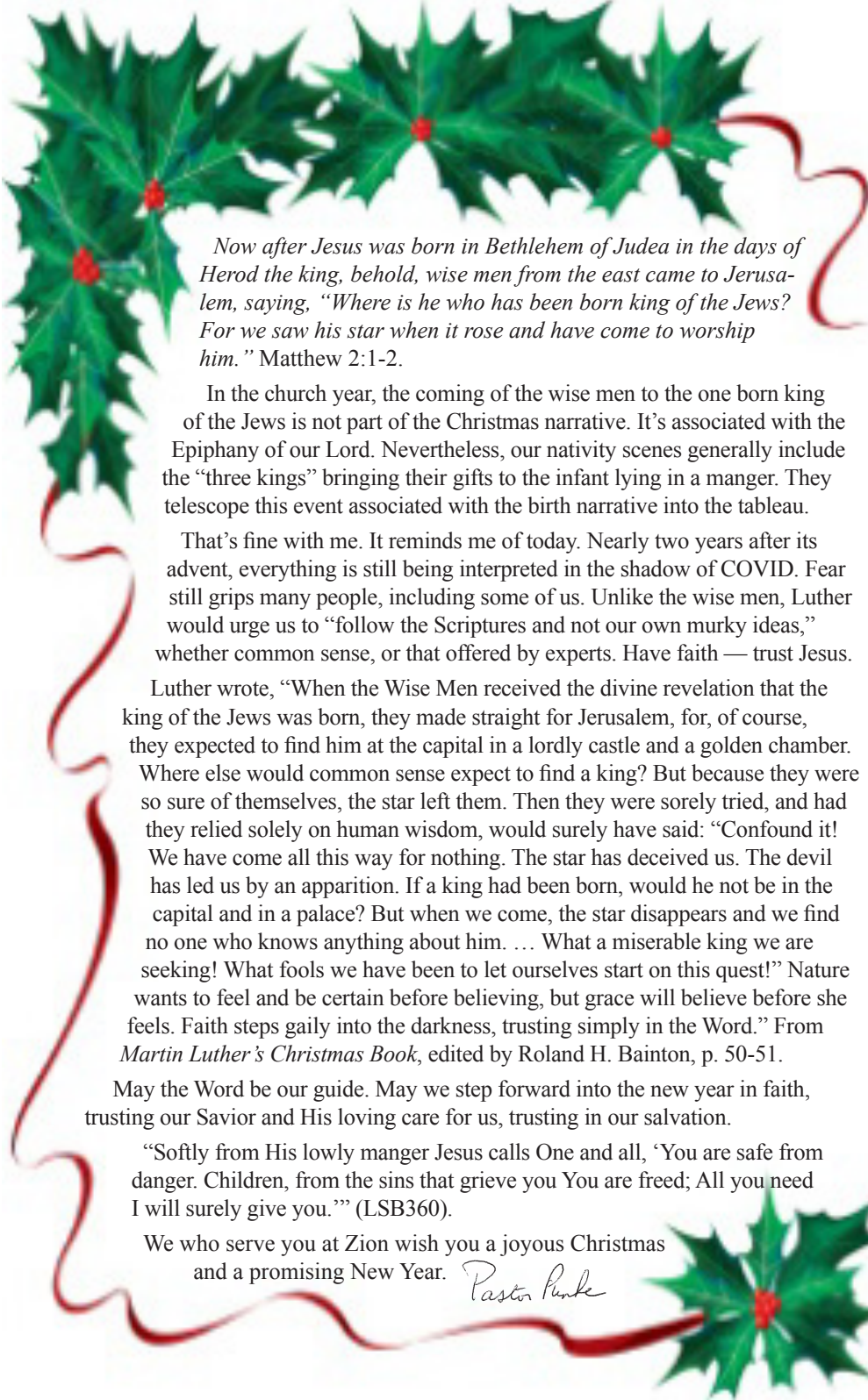


What Doctor Luther Says:

About an Amazing Announcement Received with Faith

Luke says that [Mary and Joseph] were amazed at these things: that this aged holy man [Simeon] stood in front of them in the temple, took the infant into his arms and joyously talked about him in such glorious terms, namely, that he should be a light for all the world, a Savior of all people, a glory to all Israel, and that he himself had such a high opinion of him that he would gladly die, having seen the child. It is certainly something to be amazed at, to have such things said there publicly by the eminent man in that public, sacred place; for it was, after all, a poor, insignificant baby—the child's mother was poor and humble, and the father Joseph was not rich. How could this infant be regarded as if it were the Savior of all people, the light of all Gentiles, and the honor and glory of all Israel? After the child's true nature became known, all this no longer seems to be so amazing. But when nothing of the sort was known, it did look very strange indeed, and the poor little infant was so greatly unlike the mighty, grand being, as Simeon described him. But Joseph and Mary believed it, which is at once the reason for their amazement. Had they not believed it, Simeon's statements would have been a matter of contempt rather than amazement for them, and they would have appeared false and of no use. Therefore such amazement glorifies the noble and great faith of both Joseph and Mary.

Luther's Works, 52:102-3.



Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:1-2.

In the church year, the coming of the wise men to the one born king of the Jews is not part of the Christmas narrative. It's associated with the Epiphany of our Lord. Nevertheless, our nativity scenes generally include the "three kings" bringing their gifts to the infant lying in a manger. They telescope this event associated with the birth narrative into the tableau.

That's fine with me. It reminds me of today. Nearly two years after its advent, everything is still being interpreted in the shadow of COVID. Fear still grips many people, including some of us. Unlike the wise men, Luther would urge us to "follow the Scriptures and not our own murky ideas," whether common sense, or that offered by experts. Have faith — trust Jesus.

Luther wrote, "When the Wise Men received the divine revelation that the king of the Jews was born, they made straight for Jerusalem, for, of course, they expected to find him at the capital in a lordly castle and a golden chamber. Where else would common sense expect to find a king? But because they were so sure of themselves, the star left them. Then they were sorely tried, and had they relied solely on human wisdom, would surely have said: "Confound it! We have come all this way for nothing. The star has deceived us. The devil has led us by an apparition. If a king had been born, would he not be in the capital and in a palace? But when we come, the star disappears and we find no one who knows anything about him. . . . What a miserable king we are seeking! What fools we have been to let ourselves start on this quest!" Nature wants to feel and be certain before believing, but grace will believe before she feels. Faith steps gaily into the darkness, trusting simply in the Word." From *Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, edited by Roland H. Bainton, p. 50-51.

May the Word be our guide. May we step forward into the new year in faith, trusting our Savior and His loving care for us, trusting in our salvation.

"Softly from His lowly manger Jesus calls One and all, 'You are safe from danger. Children, from the sins that grieve you You are freed; All you need I will surely give you.'" (LSB360).

We who serve you at Zion wish you a joyous Christmas
and a promising New Year.

Pastor Pank

