**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, WOODLAND, MI**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19, 2021**

**\*If you are listening in your car, please tune your radio to FM 87.7\***

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRELUDE**

**Gathering**

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

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: LOVE**

Last Sunday we lit the candle of Hope, remembering the hope which comes in Christ, the candle of Peace, remembering God’s dream of a peaceful world, and the candle of Joy, remembering the Spirit within us who brings joy. Today we light the fourth candle of Advent, the candle of Love. Scripture tells us “There is no fear in love, for perfect love casts out fear.” (1 John 4:18). God created this world in love and this world will end in the love of God. God’s love pervades all aspects of this life. From birth to death, pain to delight, strangers to lovers, God’s love is there. We light this candle in Love.

**On this day, we remember God is Love.**

(Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah Instrumental)

**OPENING PRAYER**

Stir up our hearts, O God, to prepare a pathway for your Christ. By his coming speak peace to your people and turn our hearts toward you, that your saving grace and splendid glory may dwell in all the earth; through Jesus Christ, whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who looks upon us in compassion,

forgives our sin, and heals our lives.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Have mercy, O God,

**against you, you alone, we have sinned.**

**In your compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt.**

**Create in us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit.** **Do not cast us away, but fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us. Amen.**

As tender as parent to child, so deep is God’s compassion for you.

As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God’s love for you.

As far as east is from west, so far God removes your sin from you, renewing your life through Jesus Christ. Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

**Blessed be God forever.**

**Gathering Song“Away in a Manger” ELW 277**

Timeline

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**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**

Let us pray together.

**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**First Reading**    **Micah 5:2-5a**

A reading from Micah.

2But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
  who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
 from you shall come forth for me  
  one who is to rule in Israel,  
 whose origin is from of old,  
  from ancient days.  
 3Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
  when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
 then the rest of his kindred shall return  
  to the people of Israel.  
 4And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
  in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
 And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
  to the ends of the earth;  
 5aand he shall be the one of peace.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm Luke 1:46b-55**

46bMy soul proclaims the greatness **|** of the Lord,  
  47my 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:**  
 49you, 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.**   
 51You 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.**  
 53You 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 prom- | ise of mercy,**  
 55the promise made **|** to our forebears,  
  to Abraham and his chil- **|** dren forever.

**Second Reading**   **Hebrews 10:5-10**

A reading from Hebrews.

5Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,   
 “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,  
  but a body you have prepared for me;  
 6in burnt offerings and sin offerings  
  you have taken no pleasure.  
 7Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’  
  (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”  
8When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), 9then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. 10And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia**

**Gospel** **Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

39In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” [  
  46And Mary said,   
 “My soul magnifies the Lord,  
  47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
 48for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.  
  Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
 49for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
  and holy is his name.  
 50His mercy is for those who fear him  
  from generation to generation.  
 51He has shown strength with his arm;  
  he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
 52He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
  and lifted up the lowly;  
 53he has filled the hungry with good things,  
  and sent the rich away empty.  
 54He has helped his servant Israel,  
  in remembrance of his mercy,  
 55according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
  to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”]

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN’S PROGRAM**

**Hymn of the Day “The Friendly Beasts”**

Text

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**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.**

\*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

**prayers of Intercession**

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God’s presence.

*A brief silence.*

Nurturing God, you give us life and care for our every need. Use the church’s gifts and ministries for your service, bringing your word to all who seek your transforming grace. We pray especially for Ascension Lutheran Church and Rev. Michael Wernick. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, you proclaim your boundless love for all that you have made. Renew barren lands, polluted waters, and melting ice caps. Make us servants of your creation that brings forth abundant life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Righteous God, you bring down the mighty and lift up the lowly. Strengthen those who seek justice. Bless the work of community organizers, activists, journalists, and all who call our attention to imbalances of power. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you proclaim your love and mercy. Show your lovingkindness to teen parents and those who are pregnant. Comfort any struggling with infertility and those who await test results, are in treatment and hospice care, and others in need. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, you fill the hungry with good things. Bless the feeding ministries of this congregation and community. Guide us to share your bounty with those who hunger or live in poverty. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Faithful God, you stir up the hearts of those who love you. We give you thanks for those who, like Mary, were courageous in their witness (especially). Give us such courage until that day when you fulfill all things. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering & Offering song**

Timeline

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**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray. God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is sure. Word and water, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Receive the gifts we bring, and nourish us to proclaim your abiding love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.

**Amen.**

**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.**

**Sending SonG “O Little Town of Bethlehem ” ELW 279**

Diagram, schematic

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**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SERVED TODAY:**

**Musician: Martha Yoder**

**Elder: Paul Meade**

**Trustee: Mike Johnson**

**Offering Counters: Mary Makley & Martha Yoder**

**Safety Person: Diane Griffin**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* **Men’s Coffee:** Wednesday morning men’s coffee will not meet again until after the New Year.
* **Heating:** Now that we are in the heating season, please close all the doors to the sanctuary and fellowship hall when they are not in use. The Sunday School classroom doors need to stay open, as does the door from the Fireside Lounge to the Sunday School area. Thank you.
* **Thank you!** Terry and I wish to thank the congregation for the beautiful memorial gift to remember our dear Foxy. ~Pastor Becky & Terry
* **Thank you** to all who helped with our annual ZLCW Thankoffering service. Also, thank you so much for the generous donations. We collected a total of $441.The donations will be sent, in a couple of weeks, to the Women of the ELCA for their programs.  If anyone wishes to receive a tax receipt for their donation, see Carol Engle, the ZLCW treasurer.

**This week at Zion:**

* Women’s Circle, Tuesday December 21 at 1 PM in the Fireside Lounge
* **Bulletin deadline will be Tuesday December 21 this week**
* **Pastor Beck and Secretary in office Wednesday, December 22**
* Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Friday, December 24 at 7 PM