**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, WOODLAND, MI**

**First Sunday of Advent, December 3, 2023**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRELUDE**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH, Read by: Naomi Wilson**

In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out:

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. (Isaiah 64:1-3)

In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, “Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come” (Mark 13:35).

**Congregation:** **We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kin-dom all around us.**

We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

*Light the first candle of the Advent wreath.* (Verse One)



**GATHERING**

The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord. (Henri Nouwen)

**Confession and Forgiveness**

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires know, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

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

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

**Gathering Song“My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness Lord” ELW 251**



**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.**

**o cOME, O COME EMMANUEL** (Verse One)





**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray together.

**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**First Reading  Isaiah 64:1-9**

A reading from Isaiah.

1O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
  so that the mountains would quake at your presence—  
 2as when fire kindles brushwood  
  and the fire causes water to boil—  
 to make your name known to your adversaries,  
  so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
 3When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
  you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
 4From ages past no one has heard,  
  no ear has perceived,  
 no eye has seen any God besides you,  
  who works for those who wait for him.  
 5You meet those who gladly do right,  
  those who remember you in your ways.  
 But you were angry, and we sinned;  
  because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
 6We have all become like one who is unclean,  
  and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
 We all fade like a leaf,  
  and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
 7There is no one who calls on your name,  
  or attempts to take hold of you;  
 for you have hidden your face from us,  
  and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
 8Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;  
  we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
  we are all the work of your hand.  
 9Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,  
  and do not remember iniquity forever.  
  Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

1Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph **|** like a flock;  
  shine forth, you that are enthroned up- **|** on the cherubim.  
 2**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,**  
  **stir up your strength and | come to help us.**  
 3Restore **|** us, O God;  
  let your face shine upon us, and we **|** shall be saved.  
 4**O Lord | God of hosts,**  
  **how long will your anger fume when your | people pray?**   
 5You have fed them with the **|** bread of tears;  
  you have given them bowls of **|** tears to drink.  
 6**You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,**  
  **and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.**  
 7Restore us, O **|** God of hosts;  
  let your face shine upon us, and we **|** shall be saved.  
 17**Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,**  
  **the one you have made so strong | for yourself.**   
 18And so will we never turn a- **|** way from you;  
  give us life, that we may call up- **|** on your name.  
 19**Restore us, O Lord | God of hosts;**  
  **let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.**

**Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

4I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, 5for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—6just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—7so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. 8He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**



**Gospel  Mark 13:24-37**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] 24“In those days, after that suffering,   
 the sun will be darkened,  
  and the moon will not give its light,  
 25and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
  and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.  
26Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. 27Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.  
 28“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.  
 32“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**Sermon  Pastor Frank Rothfuss**

**Hymn of the Day“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” ELW 244**



**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**

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.*

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. We pray especially for the Lutheran Church of the Savior in Kalamazoo and Rev. Alexander Steward. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief. We pray especially for all those affected by gun violence, Ukraine, Sudan, Turkey, Syria, and the Middle East. Deliver all in any need. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence. 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.**

**Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering & OFFERING SONG**

The joy of the Lord is my strength,

The joy of the Lord is my strength,

The joy of the Lord is my strength,

The joy of the Lord is my strength.

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue**

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.**

**Holy, Holy, Holy**



**Thanksgiving at the Table**

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the 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 sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

**Lord’s Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

**communion** \**continuous*

*\*People are welcome to kneel at the altar rail for a time of prayer after they receive their communion elements*

**SongS During Communion**

**“As the Grains of Wheat” ELW 465**



**“We Come to the Hungry Feast” ELW 479**

A sheet music with text and notes

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**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Chrit, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Sending**

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

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**Sending SonG “Soon and Very Soon” ELW 439**



**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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**Thank you to all who served in worship today!**

**Presider: Pastor Frank Rothfus**

**Musician: Jayne Flanigan**

**Acolyte: Kole Hokanson**

**Elder: Dan Utterback**

**Trustee: Mike Johnson**

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

**Safety Person:**

**PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

With thanks for all God’s blessings and his love for all people. Our Bishops, Craig Satterlee Elizabeth Eaton, and the congregations of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. **Lutheran Church of the Savior in Kalamzoo and Rev. Alexander Steward**

Prayers for our friends, for all who are sick or hospitalized and for all health care workers who care for them. We pray especially for all those affected by gun violence, Ukraine, Sudan, Turkey, and Syria All those members of Zion’s family traveling; all those homebound or in frail health; all those suffering with quiet, unknown needs or worries.

For those who serve on our behalf: public safety, utility workers, medical personnel, military personnel. For those who might be forgotten.

**This week at Zion:**

* Coffee Fellowship following worship today
* Men’s Coffee, 8 AM Wednesday, December 6

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* **Door Locking Policy:** Our door locking policy relies on having a volunteer(s) each Sunday to serve as the Safety Person of the Day. On Sundays where no one has volunteered, if someone arrives at church and is willing to be the Safety Person of the Day, we will follow the door locking policy. If no one steps forward to serve as the Safety Person of the Day, the doors will not be locked as there will be no one to monitor the church cell phone and let late arrivals into the church. Please consider volunteering for this important duty
* **Zion’s Free Christmas Tree Farm and Market**: The Third Annual free Christmas ministry was a huge success again this year. We gave out well over 100 trees to people in need. Thank you to everyone who donated, helped bring things up from the basement, helped with set up, working during the event, and cleanup. It was a tremendous project, and I know our efforts were very appreciated by many people. God bless you all for your caring hearts!
* **Thank you!** The ZLCW want to thank the women and girls of our church who helped with our special Thankoffering service.  We received $460.00. These donations are greatly appreciated. This money will be sent to the main office of the Women of the ELCA to help with their many projects. Also, a special thank you to Chloe Makley for being our speaker.  She was in Thailand one year doing missionary work.
* **Refrigerator:** The Zion Lutheran Church Women want to let everyone know that we have purchased a new commercial refrigerator. It was purchased from D. L. Walker, Inc. in Lansing. Two men delivered it on Tuesday, November 7th. The cost was $2,990.00 plus $50.00 to remove the blue protective film for a total cost of $3,040.00. A special thank you to Dawn and Phil Brodbeck for their generous donation of $1,000.00 given in memory of Dawn's parents, Robert and Phyllis Baes. Also, thank you to the men involved with removing our old refrigerator from our church and hauling it to Hastings to be recycled.
* **Church Musician Opening**: We have an opening for the position of church musician for two Sundays a month starting in January 2024. The musician would play liturgy and hymns for our Sunday worship services. If you are aware of anyone who may be interested in sharing their musical gifts with Zion, please contact Buffy Meyers. It is a paid position.
* **Call Committee Update:** The Call Committee continues to meet and research candidates from the synod. Please pray for wisdom and patience for the Call Committee and the congregation.

**LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL CHRISTMAS PROJECT 2023**

Here is information about the annual Christmas Basket project, sponsored by the Lakewood Community Council. Some suggestions for how to help:

* Pray for this ministry
* Send monetary contributions to cover meat certificates and other purchases
* Send contributions of any size hat, warm winter mittens/gloves, and socks
* Children’s gifts for 14 children

A Thrivent Action Grant has been granted for $250 and will be used to purchase the children’s gifts and some socks, hats, and gloves/mittens.

The schedule is as follows:

* Tuesday, December 12 from 9 AM-noon: receive and organize food from Feeding America. Set up tables and make up boxes.
* Wednesday, December 13 from 9 AM-noon: Distribute food into boxes.

\*If needed, 6 PM-9 PM: Finish packing food into boxes.

* Thursday, December 14 from 9 AM-noon: Pack letters, meat certificates, seal boxes, number boxes, and tape information to side of boxes.
* Friday, December 15 from 9 AM-noon: Match up gift bags with boxes, sort boxes into communities, set up for distribution.
* Saturday, December 16 from 9 AM-noon: Deliver boxes to families.

Questions should be directed to Claude Smith.