

Zion Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD  
 Third Sunday of Advent  
[zionlutheranaberndeen.org](http://zionlutheranaberndeen.org)  
 Erin Heidelberger, Pastor  
 Tim Sersen, Visitation Pastor



### INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

*"Rejoice always," begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.*

### PRELUDE

*People, Look East*

Besancon

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### INVOCATION

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

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the Son who comes to show mercy, and the Holy Spirit who grants us faith.

**Amen.**

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: The Candle of Joy

**Isaiah 55:12** – You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us come before God in confession.

*Silence for reflection.*

To you, O God,  
we lift up our souls. You know us through and through. We confess our sins to you, known and unknown; things we have done, and things we have failed to do. Remember not our sins; remember us according to your steadfast love. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us by your Word of truth. Amen.

Children of God, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation. Remember the gift of baptism and hear again the promise God has made to you. By the command and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. You belong to Christ, who came into the world and will come again. The reign of God is near!  
**Amen.**

## GATHERING SONG

*Blessed Be Your Name*

Matt & Beth Redman

Blessed be Your name in the land that is plentiful,  
Where the streams of abundance flow,  
Blessed be Your name.  
Blessed be Your name when I'm found in the desert place,  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name.

Ev'ry blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise.  
When the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your glorious name.

Blessed be Your name when the sun's shining down on me,  
When the world's all as it should be.  
Blessed be Your name.  
Blessed be Your name on the road marked with suffering,  
Though there's pain in the offering.  
Blessed be Your name.

Ev'ry blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise.  
When the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your glorious name.

You give and take away, You give and take away.  
My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be your name.  
You give and take away, You give and take away.  
My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be Your name.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your name.  
Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be Your glorious name.

### **GREETING**

Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near! May the grace of the promised Messiah, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Merciful God, you sent your messengers to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Turn us away from our sins, so that we greet our coming redeemer, Jesus Christ, with joy. For he lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **KIDS' TIME**

Pastoral Assistant Sandra Anderson

### **FIRST READING**

*Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

*Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.*

<sup>1</sup>The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;

<sup>3</sup>to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
 to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
 the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
 the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
 They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
 the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.  
<sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
 they shall raise up the former devastations;  
 they shall repair the ruined cities,  
 the devastations of many generations.

<sup>8</sup>For I the LORD love justice,  
 I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
 I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
 and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
<sup>9</sup>Their descendants shall be known among the nations,  
 and their offspring among the peoples;  
 all who see them shall acknowledge  
 that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.  
<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
 my whole being shall exult in my God;  
 for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
 he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
 as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
 and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
<sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
 and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
 so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
 to spring up before all the nations.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

*Psalm 126*

*(read responsively)*

*The Lord has done great things for us. (Ps. 126:3)*

<sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
 then were we like those who dream.  
<sup>2</sup>**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.**  
**Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."**  
<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great things for us,  
 and we are glad indeed.  
<sup>4</sup>**Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

<sup>5</sup>Those who sowed with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.

<sup>6</sup>Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,  
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

## SECOND READING                      1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

*Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.*

<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise the words of prophets, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast to what is good; <sup>22</sup>abstain from every form of evil.

<sup>23</sup>May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God. Word of life.    **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

TUNE: *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Sing to God, all praises bring  
Praise the Christ, our coming king  
And the Holy Spirit praise  
To the Trinity we raise.  
Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!  
Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!

## GOSPEL

*John 1:6-8, 19-28*

*John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.*

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>19</sup>This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup>He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,  
 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

<sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" <sup>26</sup>John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The gospel of the Lord.  
 Praise to you, O Christ.

## SERMON

Pastor Erin Heidelberger

## SONG OF THE DAY

*Hope of the Nations*

Brian Doerksen

Jesus, hope of the nations.  
 Jesus comfort for all who mourn.  
 You are the source of Heaven's hope on earth.  
 Jesus light in the darkness.  
 Jesus truth in each circumstance.  
 You are the source of Heaven's light on earth.  
 In History, You live and died.  
 You broke the chains, You rose to life

You are the hope living in us.  
 You are the rock in whom we trust.  
 You are the light shining for all the world to see.  
 You rose from the dead, conquering fear,  
 Our Prince of Peace drawing us near.  
 Jesus our hope  
 Living for all who will receive. Lord we believe!!

Jesus, hope of the nations.  
 Jesus comfort for all who mourn.  
 You are the source of Heaven's hope on earth.  
 Jesus light in the darkness.  
 Jesus truth in each circumstance.  
 You are the source of Heaven's light on earth.  
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 Our Prince of Peace drawing us near.  
 Jesus our hope  
 Living for all who will receive. Lord we believe!

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

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.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the Church, the world, and all creation.

*Prayer response:* Come, Lord Jesus. **Hear our prayer.**

God of all salvation, hear the prayers we make this day, in the name of the one whose coming is certain and whose day is near—Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## OFFERING

*Thank you for your faithful giving that has continued during this time! Ministry at this time depends on regular giving. If you would like to give online now, you can use this QR code scanner on your smart phone to be directed to the Giving page on our website. You can also mail your offerings in to the church.*



## OFFERING SONG

### *Give Thanks*

Henry Smith

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,  
 Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son.  
 Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,  
 Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son.  
 And now, let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich,"  
 Because of what the Lord has done for us.  
 And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich,"  
 Because of what the Lord has done for us.  
 Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks, give thanks!

## OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious Lord, we bring before you the gifts that you have already given to sustain our lives and to share with others. Teach us patience and hope as we care for those in need with your mercy and forgiveness until the coming of your Son. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.**



## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray in confidence in the words our Savior gave 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.

## BENEDICTION

May God direct your ways in peace,

make you abound in love for one another and for all,

and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

## SENDING SONG

*Sing for Joy*

Lamont Hiebe

If we call to Him, He will answer us.

If we run to Him, He will run to us.

If we lift our hands, He will lift us up.

Come now praise His name, all you saints of God.

Sing for joy to God our strength.

Sing for joy to God our strength.

Draw near to Him, He is here with us.

Give Him your love, He's in love with us.

He will heal our hearts, He will cleanse our hands,

If we rend our hearts, He will heal our land.

Sing for joy to God our strength.

Sing for joy to God our strength.

If we call to Him, He will answer us.

If we run to Him, He will run to us.

If we lift our hands, He will lift us up.

Come now praise His name, all you saints of God.

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Sing for joy to God our strength.

Sing for joy to God our strength.  
Sing for joy to God our strength.  
Sing for joy to God our strength.  
Sing for joy to God our strength.

### **SENDING WORDS**

The coming of the Lord is near. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God!**

### **POSTLUDE**

*And the Glory of the Lord*

Handel

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### **Leading worship today:**

Pastor Erin Heidelberger  
Pastoral Assistant Saundra Anderson  
Nancy Schmidt, lector  
Sue Gates, prelude and postlude  
Stephanie Hawkinson, accompanist  
Kara Pies, vocalist  
Stacy Geffre, vocalist