

Zion Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD
 First Sunday of Christmas
zionlutheranaberdeen.org
 Erin Heidelberger, Pastor
 Tim Sersen, Visitation Pastor



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the "holy innocents" of past generations and today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us as in days of old.

PRELUDE

O Come All Ye Faithful

Cindy Berry

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 One of Israel, the Word made flesh,
 the Power of the Most High, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Gathered in the name of Christ, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

Silence for reflection.

Gracious God,
 in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our sin against you in thought, word, and deed by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may trust the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

People of God, I bring you good news of great joy: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord! For his sake God forgives you all your sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

ELW #288

- 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!
- 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!
- 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

GREETING

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome.

May the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word:
Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

KIDS' TIME

Pastoral Assistant Sandra Anderson

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Jeremiah is primarily concerned with Judah, yet these verses are a lament on the defeat and exile of the Northern Kingdom. The oldest tradition located the tomb of Rachel, mother of Joseph and Benjamin, in Ramah, north of Jerusalem. The later tradition followed by the author of Matthew placed it near Bethlehem.

¹⁵Thus says the LORD:

A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD:

Keep your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears;
for there is a reward for your work,
says the LORD:
they shall come back from the land of the enemy;

¹⁷there is hope for your future,
says the LORD:
your children shall come back to their own country.

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

PSALM

Psalm 148

(read responsively)

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels;
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon;
sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 who commanded, and they were created,
⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever,
 giving them a law that shall not pass away.**
⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps;
⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog,
 tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**
⁹mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars;
¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
 creeping things and flying birds;**
¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the world;
¹²**young men and maidens,
 old and young together.**
¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.
¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful
 servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING

Galatians 4:4-7

Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Love Has Come (vs. 1)

ELW#292

Love has come—a light in the darkness!
 Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
 See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
 hear how their song of joy arises:
 Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
 Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL

Matthew 2:13-18

In a dream, Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus from the jealousy of Herod.

¹³Now after [the wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

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

SERMON

Pastor Jonathan Steiner, Associate to the Bishop, SD Synod

HYMN OF THE DAY

Angels from the Realms of Glory

ELW #275

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
once you sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations,
you have seen his natal star.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 4 All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising
to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,
Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
 We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look for the resurrection of the dead,
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Dwelling in the good news of God with us, let us boldly pray for the church,
 the world, and all in need.

Prayer response: Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Trusting in the presence of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, we commend all
 for whom we pray, dwelling in the light and hope of Christ, our Savior. **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

The First Noel (vs 1,2,3)

ELW #300

- 1 The first Noel the angel did say
 was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
 in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
 on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
 Born is the King of Israel.

- 2 They looked up and saw a star
 shining in the east beyond them far;
 and to the earth it gave great light,
 and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

- 3 And by the light of that same star
 three wise men came from country far;
 to seek for a king was their intent,
 and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us—Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

BENEDICTION

May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth,
 give you peace this Christmas and always.
 Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

What Child is This?

ELW #296

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

- 2 Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

- 3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
 The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
 Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

SENDING WORDS

Glory to God in the highest!

Peace to God's people on earth!

Go in peace. Share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

What Child is This?

Jerry Ray

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Leading worship today:

Pastor Erin Heidelberger, presiding
 Reverend Jonathan Steiner, preaching
 Pastoral Assistant Sandra Anderson
 Mike Bretsch, lector
 Sue Gates, accompanist
 Stephanie Hawkinson, vocalist