

Zion Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD  
Fourth Sunday in Advent  
zionlutheranaberndeen.org



## INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

*Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.*

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

### OPENING HYMN

*All Earth is Hopeful*

ELW #266

- 1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!  
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:  
this, the labor of people who struggle to see  
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.
- 2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:  
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";  
she conceived him, "God with us,"  
our brother, whose birth  
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.
- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;  
new highways opened, new protocols declared.  
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!  
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!
- 4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.  
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live  
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see  
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

## INVOCATION

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

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wondrous things.

**Blessed be God's name forever.**

**Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.  
Let us confront our sins,  
and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of new beginnings,  
**we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.**  
**We have strayed from your paths.**  
**We prepare for war instead of peace.**  
**We dishonor one another and your creation.**  
**Purify us with your refining fire**  
**and set us again on your way of love,**  
**that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,**  
**and welcome your coming among us.**  
**Amen.**

People of God,  
a new thing is growing in our midst,  
a tender branch, a living sign.  
By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.  
You have put on ✠ Christ,  
and your sins have been washed away.  
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.  
**Amen.**

## 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.**

## SONG OF PRAISE

*He Came Down*

ELW #253

1 He came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
hallelujah forevermore.

- 2     He came down that we may have light;  
      he came down that we may have light;  
      he came down that we may have light;  
      hallelujah forevermore.
- 3     He came down that we may have peace;  
      he came down that we may have peace;  
      he came down that we may have peace;  
      hallelujah forevermore.
- 4     He came down that we may have joy;  
      he came down that we may have joy;  
      he came down that we may have joy;  
      hallelujah forevermore.

Let us pray together:

**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Sonya Kempf, piano

**FIRST READING**

**Isaiah 58:5-11**

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?  
Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the LORD?  
<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
<sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?  
<sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.  
If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
<sup>10</sup>if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
<sup>11</sup>The LORD will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.

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

## PSALM

## Psalm 146

*(read responsively)*

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD, O my soul!  
<sup>2</sup>**I will praise the LORD as long as I live;**  
**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**  
<sup>3</sup>Do not put your trust in princes,  
in mortals, in whom there is no help.  
<sup>4</sup>**When their breath departs, they return to the earth;**  
**on that very day their plans perish.**  
<sup>5</sup>Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the LORD their God,  
<sup>6</sup>**who made heaven and earth,**  
**the sea, and all that is in them;**  
**who keeps faith forever;**  
<sup>7</sup>who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry.  
The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
<sup>8</sup>**the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**  
**The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;**  
**the LORD loves the righteous.**  
<sup>9</sup>The LORD watches over the strangers;  
he upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.  
<sup>10</sup>**The LORD will reign forever,**  
**your God, O Zion, for all generations.**  
**Praise the LORD!**

## SECOND READING

### 2 Corinthians 6:1-10

<sup>1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see — we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

## ALLELUIA

### *Advent Alleluia*

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 De—o!

Glo-- --ria, in excelsis De—o!

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

## GOSPEL

### Matthew 25:31-45

<sup>31</sup>When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup>Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

<sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup>And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' <sup>40</sup>And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did

it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup>Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' <sup>44</sup>Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' <sup>45</sup>Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

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

## SERMON

Pastor Jim Holthus

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*  
Vs. 1, 5, 7

ELW #257

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

### *Refrain*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

5 O come, O Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heav'nly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

7 O come, O King of nations, come,  
O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
refresh the hearts that long for you;  
restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

## APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. 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 prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

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

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

### SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

### OFFERING

*We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this congregation possible. We encourage everyone to give. We encourage you to consider giving a gift online at [zionlutheranaberdeen.org/giving](http://zionlutheranaberdeen.org/giving) or by mail as you are able. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online.*



### OFFERING SONG

#### *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!

#### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together:

Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### 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.

#### BENEDICTION

God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**



- 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*

**SENDING WORDS**

Go in peace. Christ is near.  
Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE**