

"My soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation"

AN ADVENT SERVICE OF MORNING PRAYER
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

STANDING STRONG + GROWING TOGETHER + REACHING OUT

The Third Sunday In Advent

December 13, 2020

AS WE GATHER

We hear John the Baptist coming to prepare the way for the Lord, whose earthly birth we are preparing to celebrate and whose coming again on the Last Day is the promise of resurrection and eternal life for all who believe. Between our coming to faith and His coming again, we are called to lives of faith that continue to rejoice, to pray, and to give thanks in every circumstance. We can do that because we have come to the light of our salvation and hope of eternal life. Now certainly it's easier to rejoice, pray, and give thanks when things are going well. It's another thing when we suffer illness or persecution, the reverses, challenges, and disappointments of life. Nevertheless, the Spirit of Christ seeks to enable us to do just that—to rejoice always, to pray always, and to give thanks to God always in all circumstances. This is holy living, constantly keeping the eyes of faith on the sure and certain Word and promises of God for His people, the God who blesses, keeps, comforts, and strengthens us every day. We rejoice with the psalmist, saying, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).



PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent"

David Garcia, *Organ*; Raul Candelaria, *Trumpet*

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO WORSHIP

Pastor Stephen Heimer

MISSION PRAYER

O Emmanuel, our Advent King, You stand in time and eternity as the resurrection joy of your people and as the sign of final peace among nations. Breathe into Your Church anew this Advent Season Your Holy Spirit that we might live your victory and be a sign of your peace to the lost and the lonely, the broken hearted and broken in spirit, the despairing and dying. Breathe into us, your people of Zion, the vitality and vision to reach out to our communities with the eternal Gospel of Your Kingdom coming in joy and peace. In Your precious Name we pray. Amen.

INVOCATION AND BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE

- P** In the Name of God,
- C** **The Everlasting Father.**
- P** In the Name of God,
- C** **The Prince Of Peace.**
- P** In the Name of God,
- C** **The Wonderful Counselor.**
- P** In the strong Name of the Holy Trinity,
- C** **The Father, The Son, + And The Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The sign of the Holy Cross may be made by all in remembrance and celebration of their baptism

CALL TO ADVENT WORSHIP

- P** A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the Desert a highway for our God.
- C** **Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.**
- P** And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.
- C** **We wait and we watch for the advent of the glory of the Lord. Your kingdom come! Amen!**

OPENING HYMN

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" v.1-4 Lutheran Service Book 344



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make straight the
3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge the
4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the



that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken,
way for God with - in, And let us all our
and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we
fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - 'ry place.

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CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** Heavenly Father, we are slow to wake up, to prepare, to repent ... even though John the Baptizer, preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; though Jesus called all prodigals to wake up and head for the Father's home; though the apostles challenged the church to live as a new creation in the midst of an old and dying order.
- C** **Forgive our preoccupation, our indifference, our slowness, our selfishness, our fear. In our baptism turn us daily always to you, to the promise of Bethlehem, and to your Son's cross and His resurrection.**
- P** The Lord is not slow about His promise as some count slowness, but is patient and gracious to us not willing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3) Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: To God who by the power at work in us is able to accomplish far more abundantly than all we ask or imagine, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3)

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" v.1,6 LSB 357



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
6 O come, Thou Day - spring from on high, And cheer us



cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
by Thy draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom - y

ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
clouds of night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.

Refrain
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

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INTROIT

Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: v. 7

P Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.
Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,*
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to | folly.

**Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear him,*
that glory may dwell | in our land.**

**Yes, the LORD will give | what is good,*
and our land will yield its | increase.**

**Righteousness will go be- | fore him*
and make his foot- | steps a way.
Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.**

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

G **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, true Light of the world, abide with us that we may rejoice in Your gracious presence, pray to You in every need, and give thanks for all Your blessing; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

OLD TESTAMENT READING

(The year of the Lord's favor)

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of

righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. . . .

⁸For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul 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 like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE READING

(Rejoice Always)

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil. ²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

P Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight;

C **all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.**

GOSPEL READING

(The testimony of John the Baptist)

John 1:6–8, 19–28

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. . . .

¹⁹This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." ²²So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.



1 Praise the One who breaks the dark - ness With a lib - er -
 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil - dren With a strong, yet
 3 Let us praise the Word In - car - nate, Christ, who suf - fered



at - ing light; Praise the One who frees the pris - 'ners,
 gen - tle, word; Praise the One who drove out de - mons
 in our place. Je - sus died and rose vic - to - rious



Turn - ing blind - ness in - to sight. Praise the One who preached the
 With the pierc - ing, two - edged sword. Praise the One who brings cool
 That we may know God by grace. Let us sing for joy and



Gos - pel, Heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease, Calm - ing
 wa - ter To the des - ert's burn - ing sand; From this
 glad - ness, See - ing what our God has done; Let us



storms, and feed - ing thou - sands With the ver - y Bread of peace.
 Well comes liv - ing wa - ter, Quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
 praise the true Re - deem - er, Praise the One who makes us one.

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SERMON

"Rejoice Again!"

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"On What Has Now Been Sown" v.1-2 LSB 921



1 On what has now been sown Thy bless - ing, Lord, be - stow;
 2 To Thee our wants are known, From Thee are all our pow'rs;



The pow'r is Thine a - lone To make it sprout and grow. Do Thou
 Ac - cept what is Thine own And par - don what is ours. Our prais -



in grace the har - vest raise, And Thou a - lone shalt have the praise!
 es, Lord, and prayers re - ceive, And to Thy Word a bless - ing give.

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PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

For the Holy Christian Church throughout the world and for all who confess the name of Christ, that God guard and defend us from all temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For Matthew, our Synod President, Roger, our District President, for all pastors and servants of Christ, that they proclaim with faithfulness and clarity the true light of the Gospel in all they do, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the government and all who have been set into positions of leadership, that they use the authority entrusted to them honorably and for the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all who suffer from hunger, homelessness, poverty, or unemployment, that God's great mercy and love preserve and relieve them, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who are sick, [*especially* . . .], that God grant healing to their bodies and strength to bear their infirmities with patience and grace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

Additional petitions may be added

P For those who rejoice in the rich blessings of God, that they always remember the Giver of every gift and give Him heartfelt thanks, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

L Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold 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.

MORNING PRAYER

(Luther)

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.

CLOSING PRAYER

Grant, O Lord that the lips which have sung your praise in this sanctuary will glorify You in the world, that the ears which have heard the voice of the Shepherd will be closed to the clamor of anger and dispute, that the eyes which have seen your great love will also share your blessed hope, that the tongues which have confessed your name will ever speak the truth, and that the bodies which today have served in sacrifice and thanksgiving will worship You forever with all the saints, angels, and the whole company of heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION AND COMMISSION

P Go out into the world in Christ's peace; have courage; hold to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. And Almighty God the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you. (Romans 12:9-12)

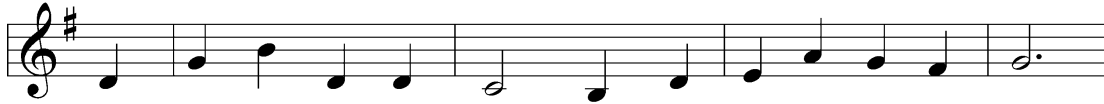
C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" LSB 515



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain Pro - claim the Bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience Their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



The eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, And dark - er night is near.
Go forth as He ap - proach - es With al - le - lu - ias clear.
Shall live and reign for - ev - er When sor - row is no more.
A - rise, O Sun so longed for, O'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The Bride - groom is a - ris - ing And soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; The gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry The Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; At mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; The Bride - groom is at hand.
In tri - umph cast be - fore Him Their di - a - dems of gold.
The day of earth's re - demp - tion That sets Your peo - ple free!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

"Mary Did You Know?"

David Garcia, *Organ*; Raul Candelaria, *Trumpet*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ADVENT AT ZION

Lutheran Christians keep Advent as a penitential season; a season of personal preparation, examination, and anticipation. We remember with deep gratitude Jesus' birth among us and for us; we prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth and the renewal of His life in us; we pray for and look forward to His Advent return in glory and grace.

The Advent Wreath, with the lighting of a candle each week, signals the approach of Nativity celebration and underlines the waiting and longing of God's people throughout Holy History. The color **blue**, the church's designated color for **Hope** adorns the altar, pulpit, advent candles, and the clergy stole. **At Zion the Christmas tree** itself is a symbol of the passing of Advent time and the approach of Christmas as each week the tree assumes a new form - the first Sunday unadorned, the second Sunday lighted, the third Sunday (Joy Sunday) decorated, the fourth Sunday accompanied by the decorations and worship accessories throughout the sanctuary the tree and sanctuary are now "prepared" for Christmas worship.

The placement of the altar too reminds us that this is a penitential season and emphasizes the two primary dynamics or directions of worship, the **sacrificial** and the **sacramental**. The **sacramental** dimensions of worship describe God's presence and **God's gifts to us** in the Liturgy e.g. God's Word, Holy Baptism, Lord's Supper ... while the **sacrificial** actions of worship are the liturgical **responses of God's people to His grace in Christ** e.g. praise, prayer, offering ... The altar at the center of the chancel emphasizes the sacramental as God invites us to gather around His **table** for the sacred meal at which Jesus Christ is both host and healer. This placement also recalls the earliest liturgical and sacramental practice of the church. Placed against the chancel wall the altar reminds us of the sacrifice of God's people as we bring to Him our offerings of praise, petition and possessions. The more solemn penitential seasons of Advent and Lent are emphasized in our worship through the **sacrificial** placement of the altar against the chancel wall. In a similar way, the high festival season of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost present the altar as the table on which God offers us His Sacraments; **sacramental** grace and gifts.

+ + +

ZION STEWARDSHIP OF + TIME + TALENT + TREASURE

Preacher & Liturgist:	Pastor Stephen Heimer
Organist:	David Garcia
Trumpet:	Raul Candelaria
Elder:	Jim Smith
Reader:	Mariann Porter
Camera Operator:	Jaden Heimer
Sound Director:	Brenna Rodriguez
Offering Counter:	Ed Hamlyn

Offerings

You can contribute offerings using three main methods:

Online donations: You can make a secure contribution from your credit card or bank account at www.zionelpaso.org. We use Vanco, a reputable agency which specializes in donations to churches and nonprofits. Your contribution can be set up to be recurring, such as each week or month, or as a one-time donation.

Mail donations: Mail your check to the Zion church office at 2808 Pershing Drive, El Paso, TX 79903. The mail is checked every day.

Donations via an app: If you prefer using your phone or tablet, you can download the Vanco Give Plus app. You can easily set up an account and donation through the app.

Your offerings and support are crucial to our congregation and we are very grateful for your support!



Join Us for Special Services During Advent! In addition to our Sunday worship services, we have several more evening services throughout Advent! **Indoor Advent services will be at 7:00pm and outdoor services will be at 5:00pm.** Here is our remaining schedule of special services:

5:00pm & 7:00pm:

Wednesday, December 16 – *"Chosen Children"*

Thursday, December 24 – *"The Word Dwelt Among Us"*

10:30am:

Friday, December 25 – *"We Have Seen His Glory"*

We are updating information for the 2021 Directory to keep our Zion community connected to each other, even when we are far apart! Be sure to send us a picture of the people in your household! Also, if you have changed your address or contact information in the past 12 months, please call the church office or email us at info@zionelpaso.org.

Sponsor a Poinsettia! You can honor a loved one, event, or anything else you would like by sponsoring a poinsettia this Advent season! We will include poinsettia sponsors in the bulletins for the following services:

- Sunday, December 20
- Thursday, December 24
- Friday, December 25
- Sunday, December 27

Each poinsettia will cost \$10. If you attend church in person, we can provide you with an envelope for your poinsettia offering. Otherwise, poinsettia offerings can be mailed to the church or sent online. You can also call the church office to provide us with the message you would like in the bulletin. You will be able to take your poinsettia home after the worship service on Sunday, December 27th!



2021 Offering Envelopes have arrived and are available to be picked up at the Zion office! The office is open from 10:00am to 3:00pm, Tuesday through Friday. If you have any questions or if you would like to have your envelopes delivered to you, please call the church at (915) 566-4667.

Eastside Bible Study group will be taking a break during the Season of Advent and will resume meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., on Zoom. We will be studying the CPH series: "Faith on the Edge: Science and the Savior". New members are always welcome and encouraged to join us! For more information, contact the church office or Lydia Williams at 915-630-2131.

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THIS WEEK AT ZION

12/16	Wednesday	5:00 PM	Outdoor Advent Service
		7:00 PM	Advent Prayer Service
12/20	Sunday	9:15 AM	"Households of Faith" Bible Study
		10:30 AM	Worship Service