



2nd Sunday of Advent
December 4, 2022 + 9:00 a.m.

Zion-Public WiFi password: Zion54484

Congregational responses are in BOLD.

All are welcome to receive Jesus' unconditional gift of God's grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Regardless of your church membership or affiliation, all are encouraged to participate in communion or to come forward for a blessing.

Children of all ages are encouraged to worship with the whole community in Christ. Children's worship bags are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Page numbers that are listed are found in the front of the cranberry-colored hymnal on the bottom of the page. Hymn numbers are listed in bold, large print on the top of the page.

If you would like home communion, hospital visit, or a conversation with the pastor, please contact the church office at 715.687.4110 or at office@zionstratford.org or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or pastoramy@zionstratford.org.

Ministers: All the People of God through the love of Jesus and the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

Pastor: Rev. Amy Heinz

Administrative Assistant: Kathy Busche

Organists: Judy Polege, Marge Redetzke, Ryan Huther

Custodian: Rod Huther

Missionaries: Steven & Bethany Friberg, Tanzania

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PRELUDE

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CENTERING

We Gather in Grace

ADVENT PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Advent candles are lit during this time

In anticipation we gather.

With expectation we wait.

We gather to watch for the coming of the good news
into our world and into our lives.

We wait to see the fullness of God's vision.

O God, open the doors to our hearts,
that this year we may have room for the birth of Jesus.

**O God, as we marvel over all that you are doing,
overwhelm us with so much wonder
that words of praise spring forth from our lips!**

In this time of waiting, let true worship begin in our hearts.

Let our praises rise up to the heavens!

Let our celebrations spread new hope over a tired world!

**Let us gather together all our dreams and our very lives
to worship our God! Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN *Blessed Be the God of Israel* ELW 250

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Prepare the way of the Lord!

Let us make our confession to God.

Brief silence for individual reflection and confession.

Lord Christ,

**we confess our willingness to be loved
but also our reluctance to love.**

**We confess our readiness to accept your offer of redeeming love
but also our refusal to forgive.**

**We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love
but also our resistance to follow you without question.**

**In this Advent time,
forgive us our failure
to respond as we should.**

**Come to us anew, and by your grace, help us to receive you
with joy, as the shepherds;
with gratitude, as Simeon;
with obedience, as Mary;
with love, as you have loved us.**

Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Comfort, comfort my people, says our God.

In the name of + Jesus Christ,
our sins are pardoned.

The penalty is paid.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

GREETING

As we enter this season of Advent,
may the love of God the Father, the grace of Jesus the Son,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with you all.

And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Glory to God

ACS Setting 11

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Faithful God, you proved your faithfulness to your people when
they cried out to you in distress. Be present in our distress, and
show us how to be faithful to you in the midst of suffering. We
pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and
Lord. Amen.**

We Hear the Word of God

READING

Esther 4:1-17

4 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes and went through the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry; ² he went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. ³ In every province, wherever the king's command and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and most of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴ When Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed; she sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. ⁵ Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what was happening and why. ⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, ⁷ and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸ Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther, explain it to her, and charge her to go to the king to make supplication to him and to entreat him for her people.

⁹ Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that, if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law: to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone may that person live. I myself have not been called to come in to

the king for thirty days.”¹² When they told Mordecai what Esther had said,¹³ Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think that in the king’s palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.¹⁴ For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.”¹⁵ Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai,¹⁶ “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”¹⁷ Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

COMPLEMENTARY READING

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“For Such A Time As This”

Pastor Amy Heinz

HYMN OF THE DAY *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness* ELW 251

APOSTLES’ CREED

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

Caring God,

we thank you for your gifts in creation:

for your world, the heavens that tell of your glory;

for our land, its beauty and resources;

for the rich heritage we enjoy.

We pray for those who make decisions about the resources of the earth,

that we may use your gifts responsibly;

for those who work on land and sea, in city and in industry,

that all may enjoy the fruits of their labors

and marvel at your creation;

for artists, scientists, and visionaries,

that through their work we may see creation afresh.

We thank you for giving us life;

for all who enrich our experience.

We pray for all who through their own or others' actions are deprived of the fullness of life;

for prisoners, refugees, those differently able, and all who are sick;

for those in politics, medical science, the armed forces and law enforcement, social and relief work, and for your church;

for all who seek to bring life to others.

We thank you for your redeeming love;

may your Word and sacrament

strengthen us to love as you love us.

God, our Creator, bring us new life.

Jesus, Redeemer, renew us.

Holy Spirit, strengthen and guide us.

Amen.

We Share the Meal

KIDS' GLOBAL OFFERING/OFFERING ANNOUNCEMENT

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of hope,
you gave your Son to free a lost world.
You give your Spirit to comfort and encourage.
You give us hope for a future
free of pain, sorrow, and tears.
You promise us a future with you.
In gratitude, we bring you time, talents, and tithes.
May what we return to you be used so that many others will
taste and see
the goodness of knowing you.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION SONGS

<i>Lamb of God</i>	ELW p. 154
<i>Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence</i>	ELW 490
<i>Now We Join In Celebration</i>	ELW 462

BLESSING

And now, may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER

Jesus, you truly are Immanuel “God with us”.

In this season of hope, may the meal we have shared together nourish us to be your body in the world.

With the angels in heaven, we join in singing your praises,
Glory to God in the highest.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Amen.

We Serve the World in God’s Name

BENEDICTION

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope ✝ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CLOSING SONG *Fling Wide the Door* **ELW 259 vs. 1, 4**

DISMISSAL

We go in peace serving the Lord,
with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Installation

The Rev. Amy Heinz will be installed as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 11 during worship. Preaching and officiating the rite of installation will be the Rev. Greg Kaufmann representing the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin. Make plans to attend the reception following worship and greet Pastor Amy and Pastor Greg!

Advent Meal & Worship

Wednesday evening Advent meals and worship will be held on December 7 and 14 in the Family Center. The meal will be at 5:30 pm and the worship service at 6:15 pm. Confirmation students, please make sure to check the schedule for your date to help with the dinner



Zion Lutheran Church

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands

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