

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

7:00 pm Sunday, December 24, 2023

The Congregation rises, turns towards the entrance of the nave, and faces the Cross of Christ, the reminder of Christ's promise to come and dwell among His people as they are gathered in His name.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

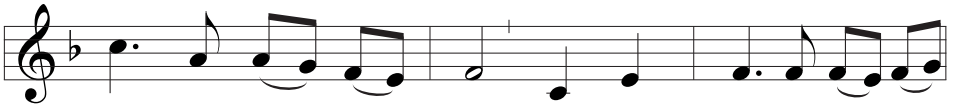
Processional Hymn Once in Royal David's City



[Solo] 1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty Stood a

[Women] 2. He came down to earth from hea - ven Who is

[Men] 3. And through all His won - drous child - hood He would



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a mo - ther laid her

God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a

ho - nor and o - bey, Love and watch the low - ly



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed. Ma - ry

sta - ble, And his cra - dle was a stall; With the

maid - en In whose gen - tle arms He lay. Christ - ian



was that mo - ther mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle Child.

poor and mean and lowly Lived our Sa - vior pure and holy.

child - ren, washed in Him, By His life stand pure from sin.

[All] 4. Our High Priest who knew our childhood,

Day by day like us he grew,

He was little, weak and helpless,

Tears and smiles like us he knew;

And he feeleth for our sadness,

And he shareth in our gladness.

[All] 5. But our eyes at last shall see him

Through his own redeeming love,

For that child so dear and gentle

Is our Lord in heav'n above,

As he leads his children on

To the place where he is gone.

[All] 6. Not in that poor lowly stable

With the oxen standing by,

But then at the Resurrection,

We shall see our Lord most high,

When like stars his children, crowned,

All in white, his praise shall sound!

Bidding Prayer, Lord's Prayer

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas Eve...

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ Himself hath taught 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.

The Almighty God bless us with His grace: Christ give us the joys of everlasting life: and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all..... Amen

[Be Seated]

Carol Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



- [All] 1. Hark! A thrill- ing voice is sound- ing, "Christ is near," we
[Men] 2. Star- tled at the sol- emn warn- ing Let the earth- bound
[Women] 3. See, the Lamb, so long ex- pect- ed, Comes with par- don
[All] 4. Of His grace we may be cer- tain, For this eve' He
[All • Rise] 5. Hon- or, glo- ry, might do- min- ion To the Fa- ther



hear it say! "Cast a- way the works of dark- ness,
soul a- rise; Christ, its sun, all sloth dis- pel- ling,
down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sor- row,
came to earth. Fore- taste of His fi- nal bless- ing,
and the Son With the ev- er- liv- ing Spir- it



all you child- ren of the day."
Shines up- on the morn- ing skies.
One and all, to be for- giv'n;
Giv- ing all men joy and mirth.
While e- ter- nal a- ges run!

[Be seated]

+ The Word of God for the People of God + Seven-fold Lessons and Carols for Christmas

First Lesson Genesis 3:8–15

Yahweh announces in the Garden of Eden that the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!*

Carol The Truth from Above



- (Choir) 1. This is the truth— sent from a- bove, The
(Choir) 2. The first thing which I do re- late—
(All) 3. Thus we were heirs— to end- less woes, Till
(All) 4. And at that sea- son of the year Our
(All) 5. Thus He in love— to us be- haved, and

truth of God, the God of love, There -
 Is that God did man cre - ate; The -
 God the Lord did in - ter - pose; And
 blest Re - deem - er did ap - pear; He
 by His death the world He saved; And

fore don't turn me from your door, But -
 next thing which to you I'll tell Wo -
 so a prom - ise soon did run That He
 here did live, and here did preach, And
 if you want to know the way, Be -

hear - en all both rich and poor.
 man was made with man to dwell.
 would re - deem us by His Son.
 man - y thou - sands He did teach.
 pleased to hear what He did say.

Second Lesson Genesis 22:15–18

Yahweh promises to Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Carol Sing Praise to the God of Israel Burgundy Hymn 936

Third Lesson Isaiah 9:2–7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by the prophet, Isaiah.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Solo For Behold / The People that Walked G. F. Handel

[from the oratorio, *The Messiah*.]

Fourth Lesson Isaiah 11:1-9

A shoot comes forth from the stump of Jesse.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Carol Lo, How a Rose E'er Burgundy Hymn 359

[All sing stanza 1; Choir alone sing stanza 2; All sing stanzas 3 and 4.

Choral setting by Hugo Distler.]

Fifth Lesson Luke 1:26–38

The angel Gabriel announces the birth of a son to the Blessed Virgin Mary .

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Carol Tell Out My Soul Burgundy Hymn 935

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1-14

Saint Luke proclaims the birth of Christ.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Carol O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is Burgundy Hymn 372

Seventh Lesson Luke 2:15-20

The shepherds go to visit the Child announced by angels.

[Following the reading] *This is the Word of the Lord.* **Thanks be to God!**

Carol Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Burgundy Hymn 380

Sermon

Offerings

Choral Voluntary Christmas Night arr. J. Rutter

Hymn It Came Upon a Midnight Clear Burgundy Hymn 366

+ The Prayers of the People of God Before the Throne of God +

[Stand] **Salutation**

The Lord be with you.



And with your spir - it.

Collect for Christmas Eve: *O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*



A - men.

Collect for Peace: *O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*



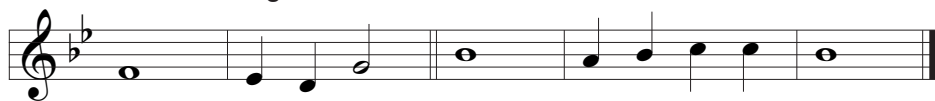
A - men.

+ CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY +

[The light for the candles is distributed during the organ meditation on "Silent Night".]

[The lighted candle will remain upright. Please tip your unlighted candle to the flame for lighting.]

Proclamation of the Light of God



1. *The people who* walked in dark-
ness have seen . . . a great light;
2. For unto us a . . . child is born
3. In Him was life,
4. The light shines | in the •darkness•, but the
darkness
has not . . . ov- er come___ it.
5. And the Word •became• flesh and dwelt
among us, | full of grace and truth;
6. We have be— held His •glory•, glory as of the
only Son | from the Fa-___ ther.

Hymn Silent Night, Holy Night



1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright Round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child.
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far,
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Your ho - ly face



Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild, Sleep in hea - ven - ly
Hea - v'nly hosts___ sing, "Al - le - lu - ia!" Christ, the Sav - ior, is
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord at Your



peace,___ Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace.
born!___ Christ, the Sa - vior, is born!
birth,___ Je - sus, Lord at Your birth.

Benedicamus

Let us bless the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

Benediction

May He, who by His Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ✠ be upon you and remain with you always.



A - men.

[The candles are extinguished]

During the Recessional, the Congregation turns and faces the Processional Cross, the symbol of Christ's promise to remain with and lead His people as they now go and live in the world in His name.

Recessional Hymn Joy to the World..... Burgundy Hymn 387

Choral Postlude ... From the Christmas Cantata: Alleluia J. S. Bach



**THE DIVINE SERVICE FOR
THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
Tomorrow, Christmas Day, at 9:00 a.m.**

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Lessons for the Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8-15

[The man and woman] heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,

on them has light shone.
You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-9

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2:1-14 (KJV)

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:15-20 (KJV)

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Hymns for the Eve of the Nativity of our Lord

LSB376 Once in Royal David's City

Cecil F. Alexander

Text: (sts. 2-4, 6) alt by Robert W. Schaibley; © 1986 Zion Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Printed in Service Bulletin

Printed Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

Latin, c. 5th-10th cent.

Text: (st. 4) © 2018 Rev. Dr. James W. Voelz; Used by permission.

Printed in Service Bulletin

Printed The Truth from Above

English Traditional Carol

Printed in Service Bulletin

LSB936 Sing Praise to the God of Israel

Stephen P. Starke

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LSBHymnLicense.net #100012381.

1. Sing praise to the God of Israel! Sing praise for His visitation!
Redeeming His people from their sin, Accomplishing their salvation,
Upraising a mighty horn within The house of His servant David.
2. God spoke by the prophets long ago, His promise an oath recalling—
To Abraham made in former years; Of vanquishing foes appalling,
That those He delivered from their fears Might gladly and truly serve Him.
3. You, child will go before the Lord As prophet, His way preparing;
To speak on behalf of God Most High, His counsel of truth declaring;
Rich mercy and grace for all whereby Iniquity is forgiven.
4. O, bright, rising Sun, now shine on us In need of illumination;
Come scatter the shades of sin and death And shatter their domination.
Be guiding our footsteps on the path In peace, in Your presence dawning!

LSB359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

German, 16th cent.

1. Lo, how a rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter, When half-spent was the night.
2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
She bore to us a Savior, When half-spent was the night.

Choir
only

3. This flow'r, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death he saves us And lightens ev'ry load.
4. O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven, And to the endless day.

LSB935 Tell Out My Soul

Timothy Dudley-Smith

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1. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of His Word;
In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.
2. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His name!
Make known His might, the deeds His arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.
3. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His might!
Pow'rs and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.
4. Tell out, my soul, the glories of His Word!
Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure.
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and forevermore!

LSB372 O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is

Paul Gerhardt

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House; Used by permission. LSBHymnLicense.net #100012381.

1. O Jesus Christ, Thy manger is
My paradise at which my soul reclineth.
For there, O Lord, Doth lie the Word
Made flesh for us; herein Thy grace forth shineth.
2. He whom the sea And wind obey
Doth come to serve the sinner in great meekness.
Thou, God's own Son, with us art one,
Dost join us and our children in our weakness.

3. Thy light and grace Our guilt efface,
Thy heav'nly riches all our loss retrieving.
Immanuel, Thy birth doth quell
The power of hell and Satan's bold deceiving.
4. Thou Christian heart, Whoe'er thou art,
Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee!
For God's own Child, In mercy mild,
Joins thee to Him; how greatly God must love thee!
5. Remember thou What glory now
The Lord prepared thee for all earthly sadness.
The angel host can never boast
Of greater glory, greater bliss or gladness.
6. The world may hold Her wealth and gold;
But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure.
To Him hold fast Until at last
A crown be thine and honor in full measure.

LSB380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley

1. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! *Refrain*
3. Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. *Refrain*

LSB366 It Came upon a Midnight Clear

Edmund H. Sears

1. It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, From heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds The blessed angels sing.
3. All you, beneath your heavy load, By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the angels sing.
4. For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song the angels sing.

LSB363 Silent Night

Franz Joseph Mohr

1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior is born!
3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

LSB387 Joy to the World

Isaac Watts

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King:
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy.
3. No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love.

*The Eve of the
Nativity of Our Lord
Service of Lessons and Carols*

*December 24, 2023
7:00 PM*



When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."

Luke 2:15



In loving memory of our beloved parents Carl & Myrtle Albersmeyer,
Byrle & Joyce Greenamyer
by Carl & Rosie Albersmeyer & families

In memory of Baby Bahr, Elizabeth Hope Bahr
by Michael & Amber Bahr

In loving memory of William Bengs and Walter & Adeline Bengs
by Clarann Bengs

In loving memory of our parents
Paul & Esther Bieberich and David & Agnes Shutt
by Don & Beth Bieberich

In loving memory of Paul & Esther Bieberich and
Paul Menze & Hilda Bieberich
by Dwight & CarolLu Bieberich

Dedicated to all our family and friends
by Mike & Rita Davies

In memory of Eileen Porter and Sylvia Ganaway
by Julie Ganaway

To my mother Virginia Hollman and grandmother Hulda Sonne
by Beth Hollman

To my beloved wife Virginia Hollman
by Richard Hollman

In loving memory of my parents Alonzo & Ora Edmonds
by Alanza Jackson

In loving memory of Spiro Kostoff & Anne Kostoff
and Karen Kostoff Wood
by the Family



To honor the Christ Child
by Rev. George & Lois Lange

In loving memory of Dr. Robert & Katherine Leininger
and Fred, Betty, Teresa & John Beckman
by Kevin & Maribeth Leininger

In loving memory of Willie Manning
by Rose Manning

In honor of Robert & Loretta Manth, Albert & Caroline Manth,
Ferdinand & Henrietta Bornkamp, and Mrs. Clara Tegtmeyer
by Jennifer Manth

In loving memory of Walter & Georgianna Ostermeyer
O come all ye faithful, joyful and “triumphant”
from their thankful children Karen, Kim, David, and Kirk

“Now in the manger we may see God’s Son from eternity,
The gift from God’s eternal throne
Here clothed in our poor flesh and bone. Alleluia!”
by Pastor & Marge Punke

In loving memory of my parents Albert & Emma Dirks
by Marilyn Shafter

In loving memory of my wife Jill, my parents David & Savannah,
my sister and nephew Artis & Michael Barksdale
by Clarence Stokes

In loving memory of Bryce Shull
by Jim & Judy Voelz

In loving memory of William Wallschlaeger
by Carolyn Wallschlaeger and family

“Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! ... Repeat the sounding joy.”
by André Woodard

In loving memory of Margaret Trachsel
by Charlene Young

Celebrate

The Birth Of Christ

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

Zion Lutheran Church is the body of Christ at Hanna and Creighton in Fort Wayne, Indiana that:

- *Receives Christ's gifts in Word and Sacraments; and*
- *Responds to God's love in Christ by*
 - *Reaching out to those who do not know His love; and*
 - *Revealing His love in acts of kindness and mercy.*

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The Pastoral Ministry At Zion

Senior Pastor:

Rev. Douglas D. Punke, MDiv (341-5397)

Field Workers:

Paul Mroczenski, Matthew Harris

The Teaching Staff At Lutheran South Unity

Teachers:

Amber Bahr, Principal

Yvonne Schwantz, Michael Cullen, Chase Mertz,

Danielle Ramsey, John Kuker, Abbey Zelt,

John Fink, Hannah Maresh, Karen Koehlert, Rachel Wiegman, Natalie Reynolds,

Lizzy Hoham, Marcus Rush

The Support Staff

Organist and Director of Parish Music:

Michael Hollman, MM

Church Office Manager:

Melvia Culpher



What Doctor Luther Says:

About Christ from a Humble Mother and Lowly Stem

The tender mother of Christ ... teaches us, with her words and by the example of her experience, how to know, love, and praise God. For since she boasts, with heart leaping for joy and praising God, that He regarded her despite her low estate and nothingness, we must believe that she came of poor, despised, and lowly parents. ... Even in her own town of Nazareth she was not the daughter of one of the chief rulers, but a poor and plain citizen's daughter, whom none looked up to or esteemed. To her neighbors and their daughters she was but a simple maiden, tending the cattle and doing the housework, and doubtless esteemed no more than any poor maidservant today, who does as she is told around the house.

For thus Isaiah announced (Is. 11:1,2): "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the Holy Spirit shall rest upon Him." The stem and root is the generation of Jesse or David, in particular the Virgin Mary; the rod and flower is Christ. Now, as unlikely, indeed incredible, a thing it is that a fair branch and flower should spring from a dry and withered stem and root, just so unlikely was it that Mary the Virgin should become the mother of such a child. For I take it that she is called a stem and root not only because she became a mother in a miraculous manner without violation of her virginity — just as it is miraculous to make a branch grow out of a dead tree stump

Luther's Works, 21:301-2.



Beloved in Christ,

Every week we are presented with what Dr. Luther has to say about a text or topic. I hope you read them. He said this about the coming of the Christ Child: “Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother, still a virgin. What can be sweeter than the Babe ... Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. See how God invites you in many ways. He places before you a babe with whom you may take refuge. You cannot fear him, for nothing is more appealing to man than a babe. ... Come to him, lying in the lap of the fairest and sweetest maid. You will see how great is the divine goodness ... Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation.” From Martin Luther’s Christmas Book.

“Behold Christ! Trust him! Here is your salvation.” Your Savior came down in all of our fragility as this babe; He came into our brokenness to fix it — not by power and might but by humility, suffering, and cross. That’s the reason we rejoice; the Christmas message is more than a baby in a manger; His swaddling cloths portend His burial cloths. That’s the whole story: the lowly Christ, our joy; the suffering Christ, our peace; the risen Christ; our hope. Behold this Christ! Trust him! He is your salvation.

On behalf of Zion’s staff—myself, Mike, and Melvia—thank you for the privilege of serving you with this Gospel. May the Lord in the coming year continue to bless Zion, Zion’s school LSUS, and her ministries with His grace, and may the Lord make His Zion ever more zealous to proclaim this great mystery of salvation in Christ to the world.

We are truly blessed to be among this family of Christ at Zion. Beloved, we will continue to pray for you as we know you do for us. We pray today the blessings of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be yours now, in this Holy Season of the birth of our Lord, and forever.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Pinke

