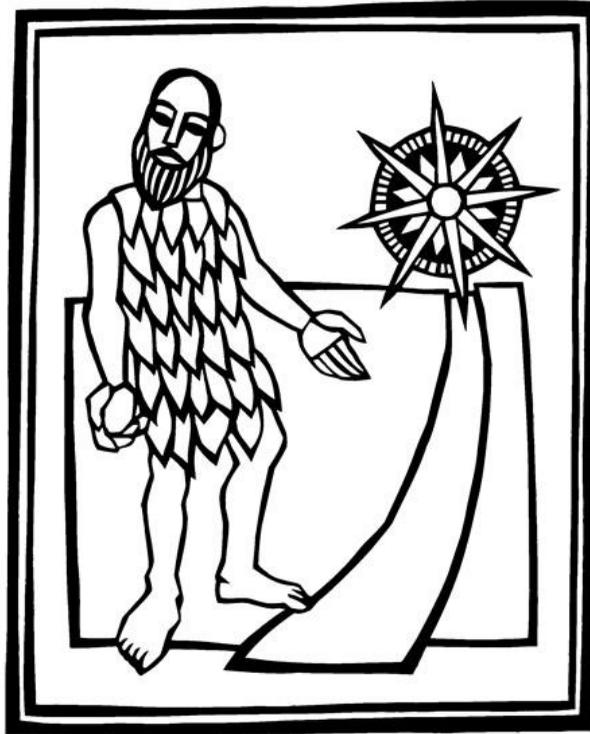


Third Sunday of Advent



December 11, 2016 + 11:00 am

**Zion Lutheran Church
Lexington, South Carolina**

WELCOME TO WORSHIP at ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH!

We are glad you have come to worship this day!

We especially welcome our Visitors and Guests!

We hope you feel right at home here at Zion. If you have any questions, our ushers will be happy to help you. You are invited to fill out a Visitor's Card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate.

If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to consider becoming a part of this community of faith and learning more about the mission and ministry of Zion. For more information about Zion Lutheran Church, becoming a member, and sharing your gifts in ministry, contact the church office (803) 356-2297, zionchurch@zionlexsc.com or visit our website, www.zionlexsc.com.

WORSHIP NOTES

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION is offered to all baptized Christians who seek Christ's gift of grace. Visitors who receive Holy Communion in their home



congregations are invited to share in this sacrament of grace. Gluten free bread is available to those with allergies. You may indicate this need to the pastor during communion distribution. Children who are not receiving communion may come forward for a blessing.

OUR STAFFED NURSERY is available for young children during worship. The nursery is located through the narthex/lobby area and down the hall to the right.

HYMNS not printed in the bulletin are in the back of the red WORSHIP hymnal.

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR ELECTRONICS AT THIS TIME.

+ THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT +

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace. **Amen.**

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

We kneel. Silence is kept for confession and meditation.

God of all time, **we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We have ignored our neighbors in need and have failed in the labor of justice and peace. We have expected too little of ourselves. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news and live in hope, for your God comes to you. **Amen.**

SHARING OF PEACE

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

We share a sign of Christ's peace with one another.

We stand.

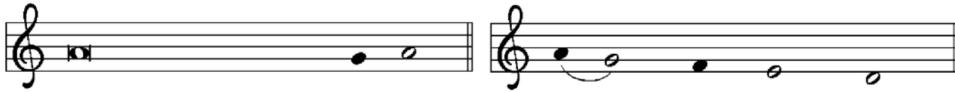
GATHERING HYMN # 248

People, Look East

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. **And also with you.**

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

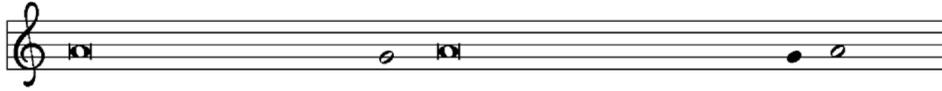
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



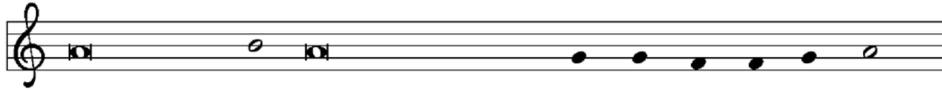
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

We sit.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 146:5-10

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;**
who keeps promises forever;

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.
The LORD sets the captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

⁹The LORD cares for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Young children are invited forward to the chancel steps at this time.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*Following the wreath lighting, children ages 3 through 3rd Grade may go to **Children's Church**. Meet the Children's Church leaders at the red door at the back of the church. Children will return from Children's Church during the offering.*

ADVENT HYMN # 257 (verses 5-6)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

We stand.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 11:2-11

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

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

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

We sit.

SERMON

Pastor Nathan Gragg

We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY # 242

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

NICENE CREED

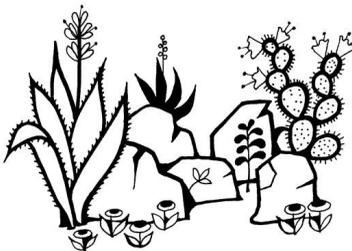
We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

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 INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**



We sit.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

We share our gifts for those in need and for the mission of the church.

SPECIAL MUSIC DURING THE OFFERING

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

We stand.

OFFERTORY HYMN (verse 3)

Prepare the Royal Highway



- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
- 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
- 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
- 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Savior of the nations come, **make your home here in us. Bless the gifts we offer and feed us with your love, that our faith may shine ever new and our lives reveal your light. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.', 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.', 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The music consists of quarter and eighth notes with various rests and phrasing slurs.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,', 'heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.', 'Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes', and 'in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.' The music consists of quarter, eighth, and half notes with various rests and phrasing slurs.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, the Beginning and The End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you...
in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you. Share in the feast of salvation. **Amen.**

We sit.

AGNUS DEI



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*Christ welcomes you to this feast of the baptized!
We receive communion today by intinction at the head of the center aisle.
As the ushers direct you, proceed down the center aisle in two lines.
Hold the bread given to you and continue toward the side aisle nearest you
to receive the chalice into which you may dip your bread.
Return to your seat by the side aisle.*

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

We stand.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN # 253

He Came Down

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

*Portions printed from Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2016 Augsburg Fortress.
All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #29104.*

*New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989. Division of Christian Education of the
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*



Zion Lutheran Church

226 Corley Mill Road
Lexington, SC 29072
(803) 356-2297
zionlexsc.com

Rev. Nathan T. Gragg, Pastor
Nathan@zionlexsc.com

Walt Hampton, Youth Director
Walt@zionlexsc.com

Julie Branham, Director of Music
Julie@zionlexsc.com

Starr Corley, Financial Administrator
Starr@zionlexsc.com

Carol Wyndham, Communications Administrator
Carol@zionlexsc.com

Steve Shumpert, Church Sexton
Steve@zionlexsc.com

Sam Mailleue, Second Year Seminarian