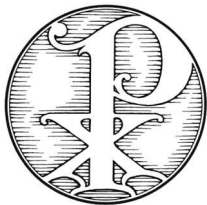


**A Prayer  
Upon  
Entering  
Church**

Lord, I thank You that You came as a Light to lighten the Gentiles. We are also Gentiles. Your salvation could be seen by all nations. We also have been able to see it. Help us to really see it, and help others to see it. Amen.

~ Bo Giertz



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**The First Sunday after Christmas**

*Testimonia Tua* + December 31, 2023 + 9:00 A.M.

**Welcome to the Lord's Day.** Just as Jesus marks the line of division for history – B.C. (“Before Christ”) and A.D. (“Anno Domini” or “Year of our Lord”) – so too does He mark the line of division for salvation. Those found in Him will rise with Him by baptism (Romans 6:1-8) through faith in the only Name that saves (Acts 4:12). Those found outside of Christ and His body, the Church, will be shut out (Revelation 22:15), having fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4). But it's not too late! The Day of Grace, having dawned in the birth of Christ, still is shining today, calling all people to His mercy.

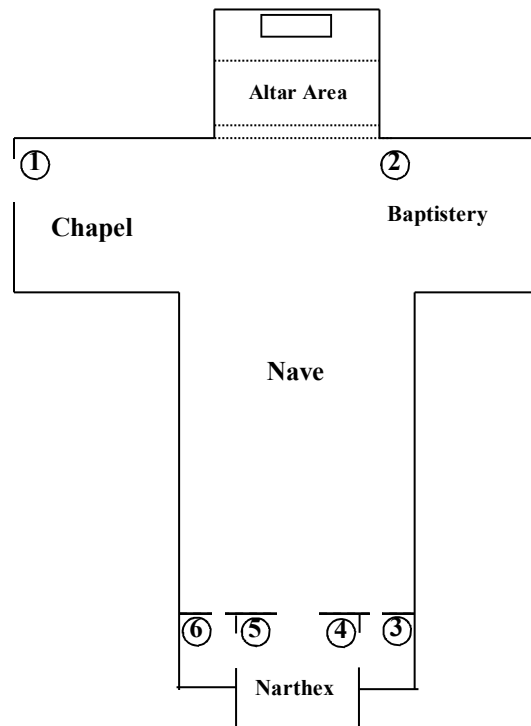
## Sharing God's Blessings Today

- Sunday's Radio Broadcast is sponsored by Dick & Dianne Ames in thankfulness for the many blessings received and with a prayer for peace in the new year.
- The bulletins are sponsored in loving memory of Michael Cordts with love from Linda Sagstetter.
- The poinsettias are received from the Christmas Decorating Fund. A special insert, listing those who contributed to the Decorating Fund, was included in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day bulletins. Extra insert forms are on the tables in the narthex and reception area.
- Thanks be to God for all who sponsored Radio Broadcasts, Flowers and Bulletins in 2023! The sponsor charts for 2024's Radio Broadcasts, Flowers and Bulletins are available for you to sign up. The charts are by the stairs by the north-west entry.

## To Share Your Offering

Offerings are received in **Zion's wooden offering boxes built into the walls of the church**. Please see the map, where the boxes are labeled by **number (1-6)** or ask an usher for assistance.

This returns us to an older and beautiful tradition of the Lutheran church in which offerings are not collected during worship so as to focus more intently on God's gifts and offerings to us.





## PRELUDE

"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" ... Young  
"Joy to the World" ... Kerr  
"Angels from the Realms of Glory" ... Johnson

*Please stand and turn toward the cross as it is carried into the sanctuary.*

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"Angels from the Realms of Glory" ... LSB #367

## GREETING

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

C: **And also with you.**

## KYRIE

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Church, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

*God has not deserted His church; He has brought her through even darker hours than those which try our courage now, yet the darkest hour has always come before the dawn.*

*~ John  
Gresham  
Machen,  
Christianity and Liberalism,  
1921 A.D.*

Lord, have mer - cy.

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us gracious Lord.

A - men.

## GLORIA

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and

Fa - ther: We wor - ship You, we give You thanks, we

praise You for Your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly

Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God: You

take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on  
us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the  
Fa-ther; re - ceive our prayer. For You a-lone are the  
Ho - ly One, You a-lone are the Lord, You a-  
lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,  
in the glo - ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men.

## SALUTATION AND COLLECT

P: The Lord be with you.

☐ And al - so with you.

P: Let us pray . . . O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

*Why did he do this? Why did he venture to enter into such squalid conditions, and acquiesce to so many adversities? Why did he not prefer to make use of his divine omnipotence, or the protection and assistance of the angels, who could easily have disposed of Herod? Simply, because in this way the Holy Scriptures would portray for us this Lord as a real, ordinary man who in all things was determined to be like us.*

*~ Martin Luther, House Postil for the Day of the Holy Innocents, 1541 A.D.*

*Shake off  
your dust;  
rise up, sit  
enthroned,  
Jerusalem.*

*Free yourself  
from the  
chains on  
your neck,  
Daughter  
Zion, now a  
captive.*

*For this is  
what the  
LORD says:*

*"You were  
sold for noth-  
ing, and  
without mon-  
ey you will be  
redeemed."*

*~ Isaiah  
52:2-3*

*Please be seated.*

## **OLD TESTAMENT** Isaiah 11:1-5

<sup>1</sup>There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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,

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALMODY** Psalm 89:1-8

L: I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, for- | ever;\*  
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all  
gener- | ations.

**C: For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up for- | ever;\*  
in the heavens you will establish your | faithfulness."**

L: You have said, "I have made a covenant with my | chosen  
one;\*"   
I have sworn to David my | servant:

**C: 'I will establish your offspring for- | ever,\*  
and build your throne for all gener- | ations.'"**

L: Let the heavens praise your wonders, | O LORD,\*  
your faithfulness in the assembly of the | holy ones!

C: **For who in the skies can be compared | to the LORD?\***  
**Who among the heavenly beings is | like the LORD,**

L: a God greatly to be feared in the council of the | holy ones,\*  
and awesome above all who are a- | round him?

C: **O LORD God of hosts,**  
**who is mighty as you are, | O LORD,\***  
**with your faithfulness all a- | round you?**

**All: 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**

**EPISTLE** Galatians 4:1-7

<sup>1</sup>I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, <sup>2</sup>but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. <sup>3</sup>In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. <sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup>And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

*The theology of the cross... is nevertheless first of all a statement about God, and what it says about God is not that God thinks humankind so wretched that it deserves death and hell, but that God thinks humankind and the whole creation so good, so beautiful, so precious in its intention and potentiality, that its actualization, its fulfillment, its redemption is worth dying for.*

*~ Douglas John Hall,  
The Cross in Our Con-  
text,  
2003 A.D.*

God is here,  
the same as  
then. He has  
descended on  
earth. God  
Himself slept  
that night on  
straw. The  
heaven's  
blessing lay  
swaddled and  
in a crib.  
Thus God has  
taken His  
dwelling in  
the most in-  
significant of  
insignificants  
when He  
chose the  
means of  
grace through  
which the  
child Jesus  
and the cruci-  
fied Savior  
would come  
to us today.  
There Christ  
hides in a  
word that can  
be read and  
heard – and  
mocked and  
scoffed and  
opposed if one  
wants to do  
so...

## VERSE



## GOSPEL

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.

**C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>33</sup>And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. <sup>34</sup>And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed <sup>35</sup>(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed." <sup>36</sup>And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, <sup>37</sup>and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup>And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

**P:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C:** **Praise to you, O Christ.**



## NICENE CREED

P: Let us confess the faith with one heart:

C: **I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory  
to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

*... Here He  
rests on the  
altar, myste-  
riously con-  
tained in the  
cup and the  
wafers. Here  
the sign has  
already  
touched you  
and was put  
upon your  
forehead  
when you  
were bap-  
tized.*

*~ Bo Giertz,  
Christmas  
Day Ser-  
mon,  
1957 A.D.*

*Simeon embraced the Savior in the sign of the baby that brought him his death and his salvation. You embrace the Savior in the sign of this Sacrament where the thoughts of your heart come clear. This sign means death to you in your self-affirmation and specifying of God. It means your rising, for you are joined more closely with Christ and share His life, which no sword through your soul nor anything can destroy...*

*Please be seated.*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Let All Together Praise Our God”

... LSB #389

## **SERMON**

“To Rise or Fall in Zion”

*Please kneel.*

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

P: Trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting God and Son of Mary, let us pray.

P: . . . O King of Kings,

**C: receive our prayer.**

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**

*Please be seated.*

**OFFERTORY** “In His Temple Now Behold Him” ... LSB #519

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

P: Blessed are you, heavenly Father, for the priceless gift of your Son, sent into our flesh to redeem the creation. Grant that we may now so eat of his flesh and drink of his blood that we may ever dwell in him, and he in us.

**C: Amen**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you.



*I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death...*



## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

**P:** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me."

In the same way also he took the cup after the supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink of it, in remembrance of me.

## LORD'S PRAYER

**P:** Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**C:** **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**

## ACCLAMATION

**P:** The Word was made flesh

**C:** **and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

## AGNUS DEI ("Lamb of God")



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.

*Please be seated.*

## **DISTRIBUTION**

*The congregation is ushered forward for Communion. If you cannot use the steps to the altar, you may either ask an usher to have Communion brought to you, or you may go to the altar in the side (west) chapel. Those not communing may cross their arms over their chest for a blessing.*

*Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which He joyfully gives to His Church to eat and to drink. This gift bestows tremendous benefits. His Body and Blood forgives ours sins, strengthens our faith, binds us to the Lord, and unites us with each other. In this is life and salvation.*

*The Lord therefore invites to His altar baptized Christians who trust that they will receive in Holy Communion all that He promises there: His body and blood, the forgiveness of sins, union with Christ and His Church, life, and salvation. Know that He gives it to you with great joy.*

*... that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.*

*~ Martin Luther, Small Catechism, 1531 A.D.*

**A Prayer  
As You Go**  
My eyes  
have seen  
Your salva-  
tion, Lord  
Jesus. I ask  
you to for-  
give me  
because I  
so often  
passed by  
indifferent-  
ly and  
there were  
so many  
other  
things that  
filled my  
life. Now I  
pray that I  
may see  
You as You  
wanted to  
be seen  
when You  
became one  
of us...  
Amen.  
~ Bo Giertz

## COMMUNION HYMNS

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” ... LSB #361

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” ... LSB #386

*Please stand after all have received the sacrament.*

## POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

**P:** Let us pray. O God of wonder, we have tasted your goodness, and beheld your presence in the Word made flesh. Shine forth his light in all we say and do, and fill the earth with your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** Amen

## BENEDICTION

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



*Please turn toward the cross as it is carried out of the sanctuary.*

## RECESSIONAL HYMN

“Let Our Gladness Have No End” ... LSB #381

## SILENT PRAYER

## POSTLUDE

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” ... Kerr

+ **Soli Deo Gloria** +  
*To God alone be glory*

### **Serving at Worship**

Presiding: The Rev. Dr. Steven K. Gjerde  
Preaching: The Rev. Christopher S. Johnson  
(Pr. Gjerde to Bethany at 10:30 am)  
Organist: Rodney Riese  
Radio: Dick Ames  
Lector: Jewell Holdorf  
Acolytes: Sarah Gjerde, Noah Harter, Joselyn Joanis  
Communion: The Rev. Ted Gulhaugen, Steve Zeinemann  
Elder: Adam Holzschuh  
Ushers: Sally Christoffersen, Landis Holdorf,  
Frank Rodemeier, Tammie Rodemeier  
Altar Guild: Pam Hoppe, Anna Mae Zeinemann

### **Acknowledgements**

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## **Zion Lutheran Church**

**Sixth and Grant Streets, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403**

Those who trust in the Lord shall be like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be moved, but abides forever. (Psalm 125:1)

**Church Telephone: 715-848-7286**

**Senior Pastor** Steven K. Gjerde  
**Associate Pastor** Christopher S. Johnson  
**Kantor** Irene Beethe  
**Office Manager** Jessica G. Ray  
**Custodian** Cody Augustine  
**Deployed Chaplain** Joseph C. Pinzl  
**Pastor Emeritus** Theodore B. Gulhaugen

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[www.zionlutheranwausau.com](http://www.zionlutheranwausau.com)

**Host of the Wausau Lutheran Hour**  
Sundays, 9:00 am, WSAU Radio 550AM (or  
click "Listen Live" at [www.wsau.com](http://www.wsau.com))

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