



**REJOICE  
IN THE  
LORD  
ALWAYS.  
I WILL SAY  
IT AGAIN:  
REJOICE!**

**PHILIPPIANS 4:4, NIV**

**Third Sunday in Advent**  
December 12 / 15, 2024

# Zion Ev. Lutheran Church

6430 Hwy. D

Allenton, Wisconsin 53002

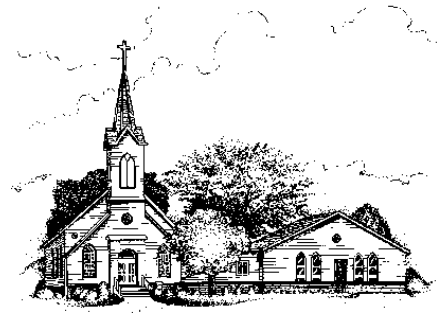
Members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

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## Welcome to God's House

Multiple studies have proven that the holiday season exacerbates mental health issues. For some, the pressure to have “a perfect Christmas” can be overwhelming. For others, it’s loneliness. Such people need a real

Christmas, one that results in great joy. But this joy is different from simple happiness. It’s much better.

Happiness is an emotion. Joyfulness is a condition.

Happiness comes from your circumstances. Joyfulness

comes from Christ’s abiding love and your glorious

future. Therefore, happiness —“holiday cheer” — is

fleeting. Joyfulness is enduring.



The historic Christian Church gave Latin titles to each Sunday. They titled the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent “Gaudete,” which means “Rejoice!” As we reach the midway point of Advent, we ask Christ to empower us to do just that.

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## ORDER OF SERVICE

### Opening Hymn

### Rejoice, the Lord is King #524

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore!

Rejoice, give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore:

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

The Lord, our Savior, reigns, the God of truth and love;

when he had purged our stains, he took his seat above:

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, he rules o'er earth and heav'n;  
the keys of death and hell are to our Jesus giv'n:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
Rejoice in glorious hope! Our Lord and judge shall come  
and take his servants up to their eternal home:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

### **Invocation**

In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

### **Confession**

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.  
**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his

authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Lord, Have Mercy**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

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

**Lord, have mercy.**

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 mercy.**

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

**Lord, have mercy.**

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

**Amen.**

## THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your

mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **First Reading**

**Zephaniah 3:14-17**

<sup>14</sup> Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel!

Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,

Daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup> The Lord has taken away your punishment,

he has turned back your enemy.

The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;

never again will you fear any harm.

<sup>16</sup> On that day they will say to Jerusalem,

“Do not fear, Zion;

do not let your hands hang limp.

<sup>17</sup> The Lord your God is with you,

the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;

in his love he will no longer rebuke you,

but will rejoice over you with singing.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm of the Day

## Remember Your Mercy, O LORD - 130B

### Refrain

Re - mem - ber your mer - cy, O LORD;  
re - mem - ber your mer - cy and love.

### Tone

Out of the depths I cry to / you, Lord;

Lord, / hear my voice.

Let your ears be at- / tentive

to my cry for / mercy.

If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, / who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, / serve  
you. **Refrain**

I wait for the Lord, my whole / being waits,

and in his word I / put my hope.

I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the / morning,

more than watchmen wait for the / morning.

Israel, put your hope / in the Lord,

for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full re- / demption.

He himself will redeem / Israel

from / all their sins.

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. **Refrain**

## **Second Reading**

**Philippians 4:4-7**

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Matthew 11:10**

**Alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.**

## **Gospel**

**Luke 3:7-18**

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

<sup>11</sup> John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

<sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

<sup>13</sup> “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

<sup>14</sup> Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

<sup>15</sup> The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” <sup>18</sup> And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**Hymn**

**O Lord, How Shall I Meet You #324**

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart’s delight.

O Jesus, let your Word be a lamp to light my way,  
to show me how to please you, to guide me ev’ry day.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me.

Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.

Oh, love beyond all telling that led you to embrace  
in love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race!



Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted, who sit in deepest gloom,  
who mourn o'er joys departed and tremble at your doom.  
Despair not; he is near you, he's standing at the door  
who best can help and cheer you and bids you weep no more.

**Sermon**

**Luke 3:7-18**

*Where's the Joy?*

*Please stand*

**The 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 in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

*Be seated*

## **Prayer of the Church**

O Lord our God, you are with us, mighty to save, calming troubled hearts with your love and delighting in us as your own people.

**We wait for you, O Lord, we wait for you. In your Word we put our hope.**

By your one and only Son, our mediator, you have opened the way of prayer for us so that we can bring everything to you with prayer, petition and thanksgiving. Guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

**We wait for you, O Lord, we wait for you. In your Word we put our hope.**

Lead us in the way of joyful repentance. Free those who are still enslaved by sin. By your Word and Spirit equip us to proclaim the time of your favor to people everywhere.

**We wait for you, O Lord, we wait for you. In your Word we put our hope.**

Guide those you have established as authorities over us. Give them wisdom, mercy and eagerness to serve the people in their care. Give us hearts and hands that are eager and willing to serve others.

**We wait for you, O Lord, we wait for you. In your Word we put our hope.**

Your Word tells us to rejoice in you always. Move us to share our joy with those who suffer in body or soul, [especially...] Heal their diseases, relieve their pain, and restore their strength when it is your will.

**We wait for you, O Lord, we wait for you. In your Word we put our hope.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayers and special intercessions may follow*

Lord God, awaken us, that we may be ready when your dear Son comes, that we may receive him with joy and serve you with pure hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

*The members of Zion have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. If you are a visitor, please don't feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry.*

## **The Sacrament**

### **Preface**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

## Sanctus

HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG CW 1065



1 Sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts on high,  
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How blest is Christ our King,



your ev - er - last - ing glo - ry fills earth and sea and sky."  
who died as our Re - deem - er, e - ter - nal life to bring!



Our voic - es cry, "Ho - san - na!" Lord, hear our hum - ble plea:  
How blest are you, Lord Je - sus, now com - ing in God's name!



in mer - cy, come and save us; in love, come set us free.  
"Ho - san - na in the high - est!" our grate - ful hearts pro - claim.

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

# Lord's Prayer

## Words of Institution

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

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

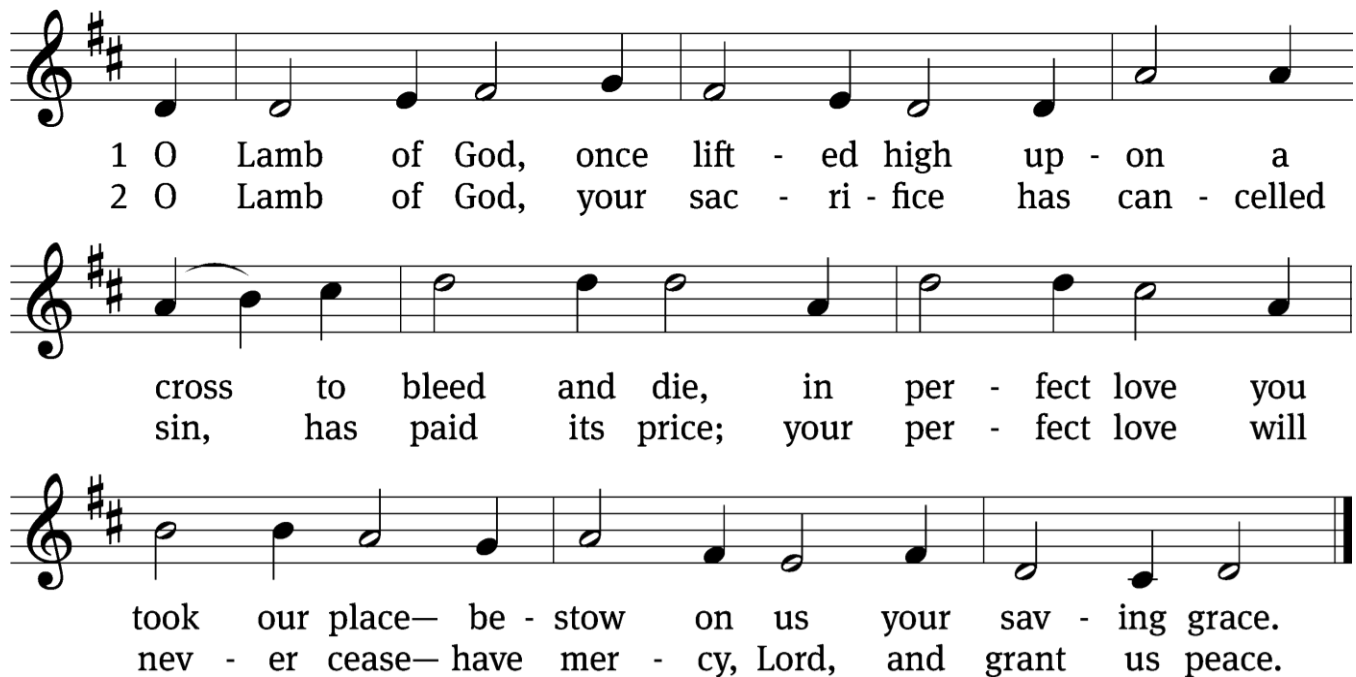
The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## Lamb of God

PUER NOBIS CW 1059

*Tune: PUER NOBIS*



1 O Lamb of God, once lift - ed high up - on a  
2 O Lamb of God, your sac - ri - fice has can - celled

cross to bleed and die, in per - fect love you  
sin, has paid its price; your per - fect love will

took our place— be - stow on us your sav - ing grace.  
nev - er cease— have mer - cy, Lord, and grant us peace.

“Comfort, comfort all my people; speak of peace,” so says our God.  
“Comfort those who sit in darkness, groaning from their sorrows’ load.  
Speak to all Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;  
tell them that their sins I cover, that their warfare now is over.”

All their sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed;  
all that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed.  
They have suffered many a day; now their griefs have passed away.  
God will change their aching sadness into ever-springing gladness.

John the Baptist’s voice is crying in the desert far and near,  
calling people to repentance for the kingdom now is here.  
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;  
let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.

Then make straight the crooked highway; make the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble, ready for his holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord now o’er earth is spread abroad,  
and all flesh shall see the token that his word is never broken.

**When All the World Was Cursed #317**

When all the world was cursed by Moses’ condemnation,  
Saint John the Baptist came with words of consolation.  
With true forerunner’s zeal the greater one he named,  
and him, as yet unknown, as Savior he proclaimed.

Before Saint John was born, he leaped in joyful meeting,  
confessing him as Lord whose mother he was greeting.  
By Jordan’s rolling stream, a new Elijah bold,  
he testified of him whom prophets had foretold.

Behold the Lamb of God, who bears the world's transgression,  
whose sacrifice removes the devil's dread oppression.

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away our sin,  
who for our peace and joy will full atonement win.

O grant, dear Lord of love, that we receive, rejoicing,  
the word proclaimed by John, our true repentance voicing,  
that gladly we may walk upon our Savior's way  
until we live with him in his eternal day.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving  
gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and  
increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ  
our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now  
and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

**Amen.**

## Closing Hymn

## Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates #305:1, 5

Lift up your heads, you mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits.  
The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.  
Life and salvation he will bring; therefore rejoice and gladly sing.  
To God the Father raise your joyful songs of praise.

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to you; here, Lord, abide!  
O enter with your saving grace; show me your kind and friendly face.  
Your Holy Spirit guide us on until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame we offer to your name.

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#### 130B Remember Your Mercy, O LORD

*Psalm 130B*

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#### 317 When All the World Was Cursed

*CW 317*

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## **This Week at Zion**

<b>Today:</b>	7:30 / 9:45 a.m.	Worship with Holy Communion
	8:30 / 8:45 a.m.	Sunday School / Bible Study
	3:00 p.m.	Luther Prep Christmas concert, Watertown
<b>Mon:</b>	7:00 p.m.	Long Range Facilities committee
<b>Tue:</b>	6:30 p.m.	Lutheran Ceili Orchestra Christmas Concert at St. Paul's, Howards Grove
<b>Wed:</b>	6:00 p.m.	Catechism instructions
	6:30 p.m.	Landmark German Christmas Concert
<b>Thu:</b>	7:00 p.m.	Worship
	7:00 p.m.	WLA Christmas concert, Fond du Lac
<b>Sat:</b>	9:00 a.m.	Sunday School Christmas practice
<b>Sun:</b>	7:30 / 9:45 a.m.	Worship

**In Our Prayers** Rhea Schmidt, hospitalized at St. Agnes in Fond du Lac; also Tim Herman, recovering at home after a foot surgery this past week.

**Holy Communion** We believe that gathering together at God's altar to receive the Lord's Supper is a testimony of the confession, commitment and unity we share as members of the Lutheran Church. We ask guests who are not members of our Lutheran denomination to speak with the pastor before joining us at the altar so all may have a clear understanding of our faith and practice.

**We thank** our organist this weekend, Barb Olsen.

**Christmas Invitations** Take the invitation included in your bulletin home today and give it to a family member or friend as an invitation to one of our Christmas services this year. Share the greatest gift – Jesus at Christmas – with others!

**Pick up the** December edition of the *Forward in Christ* from the cabinets in the entryway, as well as the December church calendar and newsletter. There are a few copies of the *Meditations* left there as well. Check out the *Forward in Christ* issue with articles on how you can respond when things don't go as planned this Christmas.

**Christmas Practices** Sunday School parents, it's extremely important that your child(ren) attend the remaining Christmas practices. If you can work with your child on his / her parts, that will also help tremendously. Thank you.

**Council Positions** At our annual meeting in January, we will be electing two new members to the church council. The nominating committee has been working to find people who are willing to be on the ballot. If you are or know of anyone who would be willing to be on the ballot, please contact our church president, Keith Bartelt.

**Offering Envelopes** for 2025 can be found in the fellowship hall. Even if you use the auto - withdrawal option for your contributions, you should have a box with your name on it.

**KML's 12 Days of Christmas** Over twelve days in December, Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School's Student Council and National Honor Society work to collect money through student involvement to support families in need. This year we are raising money to help the Heimsch, Kruschel, and Smidl families. Parents, federation members, alumni, friends, and the community are encouraged to donate as well. To read these families' stories, donate to support them, or learn more about the 12 Days of Christmas at KML, visit [kmlhs.org/12days](http://kmlhs.org/12days).

**Teen Retreat** Calling all teens in grades 8-12! Teen retreats offer you the opportunity to connect with other teens about real, relevant issues — and also have a phenomenal time enjoying one of a kind activities. Register now at [www.CampPhillip.com](http://www.CampPhillip.com) for our next teen retreat on January 10-12, focusing on the account of the Wise Men and do some stargazing for

yourself on the beautiful Camp Phillip property. See the poster on the bulletin board.

**German Christmas Concert** How might our great-great grandparents have celebrated Christmas 175 years ago? The WELS Historical Institute and Salem Lutheran Church invite you to “*A Landmark German Christmas Concert*” to find out! This free concert is this Wednesday, December 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the historic Salem Landmark Church and WELS Museum on the campus of Salem Lutheran Church (6814 N 107th Street, MKE). It will feature carols sung in German and the Christmas gospel read auf Deutsch. The assembly will sing a few favorite stanzas in English as well!

**Christsong – A Celtic Christmas Concert** Join the members of Morning Star, Jackson this Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM for a night of relaxing Irish Christmas music with *The Lutheran Ceili Orchestra*! It will also be recorded and then can be found on their youtube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/MorningStarWELS>