

SATURDAY EVENING COMMUNION SERVICE
DECEMBERE 27, 2025
ZION LUTHERAN, TAMAQUA, PA

Note: Pastor White will ask for prayer requests at the start of this evening's service. Worshipers are also invited to add their own prayers during Prayers of the People.

GATHERING

Video: "The Christmas Story" – Peter Thomas/Manheim
Steamroller

Song: "O Come All Ye Faithful" – Alan Jackson

Welcome

Let us begin with the Gathering Words.

Gathering Words

This is the day the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it

Praise the God of mercy and love.

Praise God with angels in the highest heavens.

Praise Christ, who came as a child.

**Praise Christ with all God's children,
young and old alike.**

Praise the Holy Spirit, who calls us here.

Praise the Spirit from the depths of our souls.

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

And also with you.

Let us pray together: **Loving God, we come into your presence with joy in this holiday season. But we also come with sorrow for a world struggling in pain. Bring hope to our weary world. Bring love to our hearts. Bring joy to our lives. And help us bring hope, love, and joy, as we follow your Son, Christ Jesus. Amen.**

Greetings

Good evening and welcome to Saturday Evening Worship here at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tamaqua. I'm Pastor Cindy White and we are so glad you are with us this evening.

Those of you worshiping from home can follow along with today's service by downloading the service bulletin on the Zion website or Facebook page. This evening's service includes Holy Communion so you may wish to have your elements ready for that part of the service.

Before we begin, I'd like to collect prayer requests. I'd encourage those of you watching and listening to send your prayer requests through the Zion website or by calling 570-668-2180.

(COLLECT PRAYER REQUESTS)

Sharing of Peace

God is building our lives into a spiritual house of love, hope, and blessing. Let us rejoice in God, our builder, as we share signs of Christ's peace with one another.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Godsightings:

Godsightings are instances in our daily lives when we've seen God at work—often through the acts of others. We recognize God at work when we see acts of goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, love, peace, patience, kindness and caring. Where have you seen God at work in your life?

THE WORD (Matthew 2:13-23)

Gospel reading

Holy God, may we taste and see the good things you are doing in our lives.

May the words we hear inspire us to be your faithful followers. Amen.

“Have Your Way” – Don Moen

A reading from Matthew: ¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”^[a]

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”^[b]

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt²⁰ and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of Our Lord **Praise to you, O Christ!**

Today’s message – Pastor Cindy White

Praise & Prayer

The Offering Moment

Just as visitors from the East brought gifts to the Christ child, we too are invited to bring gifts to Christ’s church in

service of God's work in the world. Any gift of love is a gift of gold.

Have someone bring the offering plate forward.

"Doxology" – The Vagle Brothers

Let us pray: **Generous God, thank you for the gift of Christ Jesus in our lives and in our world. Thank you for the gifts we return to you now. Bless these gifts, that they may support Christ's loving presence in our ministry, in our community, and in our world. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Here at the table, we see most clearly that we are part of the body of Christ. We are no longer divided into people of different ages, different ideas, different backgrounds, different gifts.

Here unique individuals become a single body, made richer for the multitude of gifts shared. Here, we feast on one bread and one cup, and become one body in service to the world.

The preparation – Please remain seated

God be with you.

And also with you.

Open your hearts.

We open them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

We offer our thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, O God, for you are the Ground of our being, in whom we live and move. At the beginning you created the galaxies and planets, our sun, the earth and moon,

plants and animals, individuals and nations, every substance and spirit.

You gave us your creative spirit to make friendships and families, art and music, love and compassion.

You gave us power to acquire the secrets of our mother earth, to honor her and care for her, as she cares for us. And so we join with all the creation that praises you, in every time and place.

God of eternity, spirit and matter all express your splendor.

We take this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Spirit we who eat and drink them may know a closer experience of your presence. On the night before Jesus died, he shared food with his disciples. He took bread, blessed and broke it, and giving it to them said: "Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you and for many. Do this to remember me," He took wine, blessed it, and giving it to them said: "Drink this all of you. This is my blood which is shed for you and for many; do this to remember me".

To God be glory forever. Amen.

We who are many are one body

For we all share in the one bread

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us receive this Holy Sacrament remembering that Jesus died for us, and hold him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

The Distribution

For those of you worshiping at home

Please take the host

(Pause)

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen

(Pause)

Please take the cup

(Pause)

The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen

(Invite the in-person people forward for Communion)

Post-Communion prayer

Loving God, you have created all humanity in your image and likeness, and have revealed your plan and purpose in calling us your beloved.

We commit ourselves to you.

As we have shared this holy meal, inspire our hearts to see every man, woman and child given the dignity and value which is your purpose and your gift.

We commit ourselves to you. Amen.

Announcements

Zion's Culinary team is hosting a New Year's Day Community Sauerkraut and Pork Dinner from Noon to 2 p.m. Eat in or take out. If you'd like to reserve a dinner, check out our website or Facebook page or call 570-668-4451. There's a limit of two dinners per order.

Zion's diaper ministry, Diaper Depot, is accepting new clients for its January distribution. Families that live in the Tamaqua Area School District are invited to make a request on Zion's website or Facebook page. The ministry serves children new born to age 4 with free diapers sizes NB to size 6 and 2 to 4 T pullups.

Keep up with Zion news and events on our website and Facebook page. Zion's newsletter, The Herald, is also online.

Prayers of the People

God calls us to be a praying people. Let us join in prayer, offering our praise, thanksgiving, and concerns to God ...

Lord in your mercy ... **Hear our prayer**

The Lord's Prayer – Spoken

Now together, let us join the countless numbers across the centuries who have prayed as our Lord instructed us to pray. . . “Our Father

The sending

We invite you to our Sunday service tomorrow at 9 a.m. and join us for Morning Prayer Wednesdays at 9 a.m.

Benediction

May the birth of Jesus be renewed in our lives.
May the Spirit of Jesus guide our words and thoughts.
May the life of Jesus inspire us to follow in the way of hope.
Amen

And all God's people say **Thanks be to God.**

Sending song: “Joy to the World” – George Strait

Postlude

Thank you for worshiping with us this evening.

