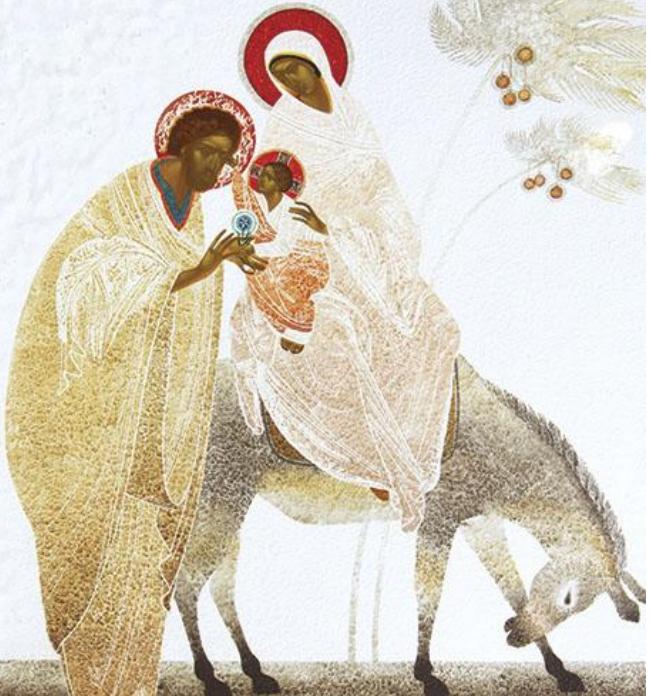


Welcome!

Take
the child
and his
mother,
and flee

MATTHEW 2:13



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

101 N. Greenwood Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252
(570) 668-2180 - Email: zionlcof@verizon.net

Our Mission: Empowered and Inspired by God to bring others to Christ.

The First Sunday of Christmas

December 28, 2025 ~ 9:00 am

The Liturgy of Word and Sacrament

As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the “holy innocents” of past generations and today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us as in days of old.

**Congregation please stand*

The Pre-service Music

~ The Gathering ~

*** The Confession and Forgiveness**

BLESSED BE THE HOLY TRINITY, **+** ONE GOD, WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY SAVIOR, PRINCE OF PEACE.

Amen.

TRUSTING IN GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS, LET US CONFESS OUR SIN.

Please kneel if able.

RECONCILING GOD,

we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.

GOD'S GRACE UPON GRACE FLOWS OVER YOU. **+** CHRIST'S PRESENCE REDEEMS THE WHOLE CREATION. YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN. LET THE EARTH REJOICE AND BE GLAD!

Amen.

*** The Gathering Hymn**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

No. 71

*** The Greeting**

CHRIST IS BORN: ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BE WITH YOU ALL.

And also with you.

*** The Kyrie Eleison (music on page 57 of LBW)**

IN PEACE, LET US PRAY TO THE LORD.

(Sung) 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 Hymn of Praise (*music on page 58 of LBW*)

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND PEACE TO HIS PEOPLE ON EARTH.

Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father: We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God: You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

* The Prayer of the Day

THE LORD BE WITH YOU

(*Sung*) And also with you.

LET US PRAY:

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

~The Word~

The First Lesson Isaiah 63:7-9

God does not delegate divine intervention to a messenger or angel. God's own presence brings salvation. The prophet and all who read these words join in celebrating God's gracious deeds. God trusts that God's people will not act falsely.

(*After the reading*)

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Thanks be to God.

The Psalm 148 Tune “*As for Gladness Men of Old*” No.82

HALLELUJAH! PRAISE THE LORD FROM HEAVEN!

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Let his praise be heard on high.

PRAISE HIM, ALL YOU HOSTS OF HEAVEN! PRAISE HIM, SUN AND MOON! PRAISE HIM, SHINING STARS AND ALL THE FIRMAMENT!

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Let his praises fill the sky.

LET THEM ALL PRAISE THE NAME OF THE LORD! HE COMMANDED AND THEY WERE CREATED; BY HIS COMMAND THEY WERE FIXED IN THEIR PLACES; THEY CANNOT DISOBEY.

Hallelujah! Glory be, To the Lord eternally!

HALLELUJAH! LET THE EARTH JOIN HIS PRAISE: THE SEAS AND ALL THAT DWELL THEREIN, THE FORCES OF NATURE THAT OBEY HIS COMMAND; HILLS AND MOUNTAINS, TREES AND FORESTS, BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF EVERY KIND.

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Let his praise be heard on earth.

LET THE PEOPLE PRAISE THE LORD--RULERS AND SUBJECTS, MEN AND WOMEN, THE OLD AND THE YOUNG ALIKE. LET THEM ALL PRAISE THE NAME OF THE LORD!

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! All creation, tell his worth.

HIS NAME IS GREATER THAN ALL OTHERS; HIS GLORY IS ABOVE EARTH AND HEAVEN. HE BLESSES ALL WHO ARE HIS OWN, SO THAT ALL MAY PRAISE HIM.

Hallelujah! Glory be, To the Lord eternally!

The Second Lesson Hebrews 2:10-18

Through Jesus' suffering and death, the trail to eternal salvation has been blazed for us. We do not fear death, because he has conquered the power of death. Thus Christ, our merciful and faithful high priest, has the final say over the destiny of our lives.

(After the reading)

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Thanks be to God.

* The Gospel Acclamation (*Alleluia Verse LWB p. 62*)

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

* The Holy Gospel St. Matthew 2:13-23

In a dream, Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus from the jealousy of Herod.

(Before the Gospel)

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW THE 2ND CHAPTER:

(Sung) Glory to you, O Lord.

(After the Gospel)

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

(Sung) Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

Pastor Cindy White

*The Hymn of the Day

“Away in a Manger”

No. 67

* 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He 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.

* The Prayers of Intercession

EMPOWERED BY THE NEWS OF CHRIST'S BIRTH, LET US PRAY BOLDLY FOR THE CHURCH, CREATION, AND ALL WHO ARE IN NEED.

A brief silence.

GOD OF GRACE, YOU SHOW US MERCY NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORTHINESS, BUT ACCORDING TO THE ABUNDANCE OF YOUR STEADFAST LOVE. GRANT US THE COURAGE TO GO INTO THE WORLD AND DO LIKEWISE. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF ABUNDANCE, THE SUN AND MOON PRAISE YOU AND THE SHINING STARS SING OF YOUR LOVE. WHERE WE HAVE DESECRATED YOUR CREATION, MAKE US INTO A HEALING BALM FOR WHAT WE HAVE BROKEN. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHEN LEADERS FAIL TO FULFILL THEIR CALLS TO ENACT JUSTICE, YOU SUFFER ALONGSIDE US. PROPEL THOSE IN POWER TO SEE YOU REFLECTED IN THE FACES OF ALL THEY SERVE. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF LIFE, YOU CLAIM US AS YOUR OWN AND CARE FOR US AS CHRIST'S SIBLINGS. POUR OUT YOUR COMPASSION IN EVERY PLACE YOUR PEOPLE SUFFER, AND PROTECT THEM IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND. WE PRAY ESPECIALLY FOR PAM, BETTY, WALTER, FORREST, STEVE, CHRISTINE, EDDIE, GEORGE, JAN, AND ALL OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE HOMEBOUND. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF COMPASSION, YOU NURTURE CHILDREN AS THE APPLE OF YOUR EYE. AS YOU SHELTERED YOUR SON JESUS FROM HEROD'S GRASP, SHELTER ALL CHILDREN IN DANGER. AS YOU COMFORTED RACHEL, COMFORT ALL WHO HAVE LOST CHILDREN TO VIOLENCE. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF LOVE, YOU CONSOLE THOSE WHO WEEP FOR LOST BELOVED ONES. EVEN AS WE MOURN, WE OFFER THANKS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US, TRUSTING IN YOUR COMFORT AND PROTECTION. HEAR US, O GOD.

Your mercy is great.

GOD OF GRACE AND MERCY, (PLEASE SHARE ANY PERSONAL PRAYER PETITIONS) HEAR OUR PETITIONS THAT WE SPEAK OUT LOUD AND THE ONES THAT WE HOLD IN OUR HEARTS. HEAR US, O GOD,

Your mercy is great.

WITH THE JOY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH IN OUR HEARTS, WE COMMEND OUR PRAYERS TO YOU, O GOD, TRUSTING IN YOUR BOUNDLESS MERCY AND ETERNAL LOVE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR.

Amen.

* **The Peace of Christ**

THE PEACE OF THE LORD BE WITH YOU ALWAYS.

And also with you.

~The Meal~

The Offering and Offertory

Zion members, please use your envelopes for contributions so that your offering may be officially recorded. Please mail your envelopes to Zion Lutheran Church 101 N. Greenwood Street Tamaqua, PA 18252 or visit zontamaqua.com for our Vanco option.

* **The Offertory Procession**

“What Child is This?”

No. 40 stanza 3

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;

Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

* The Offertory Prayer

LET US PRAY: GOD OF GLORY, GREAT ARE YOUR WONDERS AMONG US AND MANY ARE THE BLESSINGS YOU BESTOW. USE US AND THESE YOUR GIFTS FOR THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD, THAT ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH MAY REJOICE IN YOUR SAVING GRACE, THROUGH CHRIST OUR SAVIOR.

Amen.

* The Preface and Sanctus (*music on page 68 of LBW*)

THE LORD BE WITH YOU

(Sung) And also 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 him thanks and praise.

IT IS INDEED RIGHT.....THEIR UNENDING HYMN: (*ELW No. 193*)

(Sung) Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:

Heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

* The Prayer of Thanksgiving

HOLY ONE, THE BEGINNING AND THE END, THE GIVER OF LIFE: BLESSED ARE YOU FOR THE BIRTH OF CREATION...BLESSED ARE YOU FOR YOUR SON JESUS, THE WORD MADE FLESH.

IN THE NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED, OUR LORD JESUS TOOK BREAD, AND GAVE THANKS...DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

AGAIN, AFTER SUPPER, HE TOOK THE CUP, GAVE THANKS...DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

LET US PROCLAIM THE MYSTERY OF FAITH:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

WITH THIS BREAD AND CUP WE REMEMBER YOUR WORD DWELLING AMONG US, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH. WE REMEMBER OUR NEW BIRTH IN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. WE LOOK WITH HOPE FOR HIS COMING.

Come, Lord Jesus.

HOLY GOD, WE LONG FOR YOUR SPIRIT. COME AMONG US. BLESS THIS MEAL. MAY YOUR WORD TAKE FLESH IN US. AWAKEN YOUR PEOPLE. FILL US WITH YOUR LIGHT. BRING THE GIFT OF PEACE ON EARTH.

Come Holy Spirit.

ALL PRAISE AND GLORY ARE YOURS, HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, WORD OF GOD INCARNATE, POWER OF THE MOST HIGH, ONE GOD, NOW AND FOREVER.

Amen.

* The Lord's Prayer

JESUS, REMEMBER US IN YOUR KINGDOM; AND TEACH US TO PRAY:

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 Invitation to the Holy Meal

GOD IS NOW IN FLESH APPEARING. COME TO THE FEAST OF JOY!

* The Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

The Distribution

All who are baptized and believe that Christ is truly present in the Sacrament are welcome to commune when we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Zion members, please complete a Communion card once a year for our records.

* The Post-Communion Blessing

THE BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST STRENGTHEN YOU AND KEEP YOU IN HIS GRACE.
Amen.

* The Post Communion Canticle (*music on page 72 of LBW*)

Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'ryone what he has done. Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name. He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia. Alleluia.

* The Post Communion Prayer

LET US PRAY: INCARNATE GOD, YOU ARE AMONG US AT THIS TABLE. MAY WE TREASURE THIS GIFT AND PONDER IN OUR HEARTS THE MYSTERY OF YOUR PRESENCE. MOVE US TO DISCOVER THE WONDERS OF YOUR LOVE IN THE EVERYDAY MOMENTS OF OUR LIVES, THROUGH CHRIST BORN IN US.

Amen.

The Senior Choir Anthem "*Do Not Find Me Sleeping*" – Martin

~The Sending~

* The Benediction

THE TRIUNE GOD, GLORIOUS MYSTERY, HOLY INCARNATE ONE, ABIDING COMFORTER,
☩ BLESS YOU WITH ENDLESS GRACE, PEACE, AND JOY.

(Sung) Amen! Amen! Amen!

* The Dismissal

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!

And peace to God's people on earth!

GO IN JOY. EMBODY GOD'S REDEEMING GRACE.

Thanks be to God.

* The Sending Hymn

"Joy to the World"

No. 39

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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First Reading: Isaiah 63:7-9 – Not Printed

Second Reading: Hebrews 2:10-18

¹⁰ It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying, “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.” ¹³ And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: ¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰ “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³ There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

January 4, 2026 readings are: Jeremiah 31:7-14
Ephesians 1:3-14

Psalm 147:12-20
John 1:1-18