

SATURDAY EVENING SERVICE
DECEMBER 3, 2022
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

Prelude: "Christmas Hallelujah" - Cloverton

Video: "The Heart of Advent"

Gathering Song: "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Welcome – Pastor Cindy White

Gathering Words – Please remain seated

This is the day the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it

Prepare the way of the Lord.

God's kingdom has drawn near.

Prepare the way of peace.

God's salvation is at hand.

Prepare the way of righteousness.

God's Spirit moves among us.

Prepare the way of the Lord.

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

Gathering prayer

Let us pray together: **Mighty One, the spirit of the Lord rests upon your chosen one: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. As we behold your glory in the heavens, breathe your passion for justice into our hearts, that we may defend the poor, deliver the oppressed, and help the weary. In this season of Advent, may your righteousness flourish and may your peace abound, that none shall hurt or destroy on all your holy mountain. Amen.**

Sharing of Peace

The Peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Godsightings:

Where have you seen God at work in your life?

Lighting of the second Advent candle – Please remain seated

Video: The Candle of Preparation

All sign together:

**O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Its light reminds us of Jesus, the light of the world.

In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.

The light grows gradually brighter as we move through Advent together.

The candle of Hope already burns bright. Today, we light the candle of Preparation.

The coming Christ desires us all to thrive, patiently wanting us to turn from the ways of sin and death.

As we wait for the coming of the day of God, we want to be ready.

Seeking a straight path, we light this candle to guide our steps. Together, we prepare the way and strive to lead lives of holiness, goodness, and peace.

All sing as second candle is lit:

**Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain***

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE WORD

Gospel reading (Matthew 3:1-12) – Please remain seated

A reading from Matthew: In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’”^[a]

⁴ John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ “I baptize you with^[b] water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with^[c] the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

The Gospel of Our Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Today’s message – Pastor Cindy White

Special music – Pastor Cindy White – Please remain seated

PRAISE&PRAYER

The Offering Moment

Let us pray: **Gracious God, you offer us a gift beyond price. Your Son is like the sweet kiss of rain on a barren land. Your promised salvation is like the bread of heaven for those who are perishing. In gratitude for your abundant gifts, we commit ourselves to act justly, in solidarity with the poor, and we pledge our assistance to those who are in need. May the gifts we bring before you this day hasten the day when none shall hurt or destroy on all your holy mountain. Amen.**

Prayers of the People – Please remain seated

Jesus calls on us to follow him. Let us call on Jesus for the needs, concerns, and hopes of all peoples ...

Lord in your mercy ...

Hear our prayer

The Lord's Prayer – Spoken – Please remain seated.

THE SENDING – Please remain seated

Sung: "Christ Be Our Light"

Benediction – Pastor Cindy White

And all God's people say

Thanks be to God!