

SATURDAY EVENING COMMUNION SERVICE
JANUARY 3, 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: "One Starry Night"

Song: "Christmas Hallelujah" – Cloverton

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

Arise, shine, for your light has come!

The glory of the Lord has risen upon us!

Let us fall on our knees in his honor!

Let us lift our voices in praise of his name!

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: **God of our hopes, Christ of our faith, Spirit in our hearts, we come to worship you with joy and gladness. Your goodness knows no limits of generation or gender, of condition or citizenship. You are kind to all, and we worship you in all sincerity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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

May peace prosper in our world and in this place. And may we foster the abundance of peace by sharing signs of peace and love 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 (John 1:1-18)

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 John: 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome^[a] it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and ^bis in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

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 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

O Christ, we know that the gifts of our hands are no substitute for the loyalty of our lives. As we leave this sanctuary, enable us to serve your creation as we have worshiped you, with ourselves as well as our gifts. Amen.

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

Sending song: “What Child Is This?” Francesca Battistelli

Postlude

Thank you for worshiping with us this evening.