

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025



Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us.

During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.



ZION
Ministries Under the Cross

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Welcome to Zion!

“All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ‘Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,’ which means, ‘God is with us.’” (Matthew 1:22-23)

Welcome – whether this is your home congregation or your first visit, we’re glad you’re here!

We welcome all people in the name of Christ to experience God’s goodness and grace in Word, water, and meal. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, there is a place for you to belong at Zion.

Get Connected at Zion

The best ways to stay connected are to visit our website, follow us on social media (@zionchurchdfb on Facebook and Instagram), and subscribe to our weekly newsletter.

Children in Worship

Children are God’s gift to our church! They are not the future of our church; they are the right now. The way we welcome children here directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God, and to one another.

We welcome children and their families to sit near the Playground at the front of the sanctuary. There are coloring activities, puzzles, books, and a toolbox to engage in our worship together.

Giving

We appreciate your stewardship of treasure, talent, and time at Zion. You may leave your offerings in the offering plates or give online via our website or this QR code.



Livestreaming

Zion livestreams all our services on Facebook and YouTube. Any person present gives consent to being filmed or photographed.



Zion is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) community, and extends God's radical welcome to all people, because we're all created in God's image.

We Gather

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God, **we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. † You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

ELW Hymn #257

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.**

KYRIE

ELW Hymn #157

The assembly joins with the refrain, and the Minister sings the verses.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together...**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. In your Son, Emmanuel, you have shown us your light and saved us from the power of sin. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Increase our longing for your presence, that at the celebration of your Son's birth his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. **Amen.**



We Hear & Respond to God's Word

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

...Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

...Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

Before the reading: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After the reading: The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

ACS Hymn #905

“We are Waiting for Jesus”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & SHARING OF PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always! **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY HYMN & PRAYER

ELW Hymn #247

“Come Now, O Prince of Peace”

Let us pray together...**Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.**

We Feast at the Lord’s Table

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

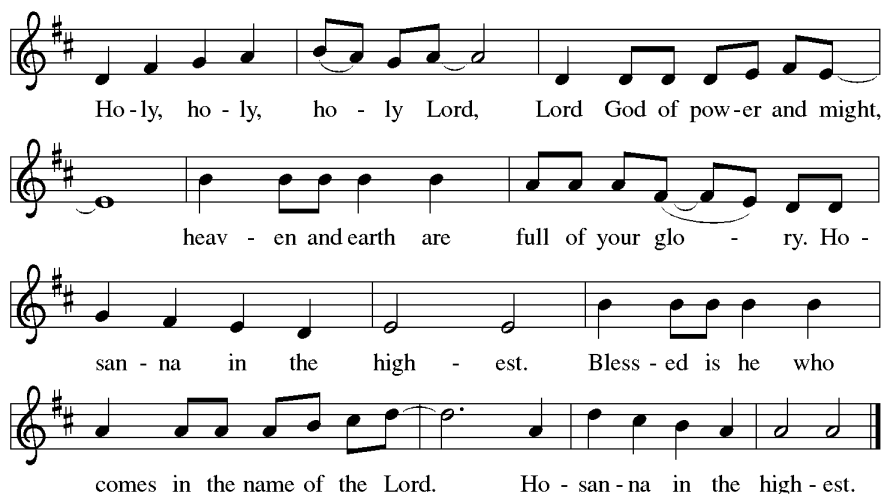
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a double bar line after the first phrase. The second staff also has a double bar line after the first phrase. The third and fourth staves end with double bar lines.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, we give thanks for your creation, fragile, yet fruitful, enough for all. We give thanks that you call us into community where love and justice may flourish, enough for all. We give you thanks for sending us Jesus, God-with-Us, whose life, death and resurrection have become for us the Way to find you, to know you, to join with you in creating your new heaven and new earth.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Come now, Holy Spirit—As you were present at creation, be present now, and let these gifts of bread and wine become for us the bread of life and the cup of blessing. As you were sent by Jesus to accompany us on our journey of faith, be present now, and transform this community into one body in Christ.

Gather us, O God, into your Advent hope—into watchfulness, wonder, and joy. Strengthen us by this meal to love and serve in the world you so love, until the day when all are fed at your table of grace, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Fa - ther in hea - ven, hal-low-ed be your
name, hal-low-ed be your name. Your king-dom come, your
will be done, on earth as it is in hea-ven, on earth as it is in hea-ven.
Give us to-day our dai - ly bread and for - give us all our
sins as we for-give those who sin a - gainst us, as we for-give those who sin a -
gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al and de - li - ver us from
e - vil, de - liv - er us from - e - vil. For yours is the
king-dom, the pow - er and the glo - ry, for - e - ver and e - ver, for
e - ver and e - ver. A - men, a - men. A - men.

SHARING THE MEAL

“He Came Down”

ELW Hymn #253

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

ELW Hymn #254

We Are Sent into the World

BLESSING FOR STRENGTH

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ comfort, strengthen, and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together...**God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Hymn #439, Verse 1

“Soon and Very Soon”

DISMISSAL

The worship has ended. Now the service begins. Go in peace. Christ is coming soon. **Thanks be to God!**

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Today's Readings

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

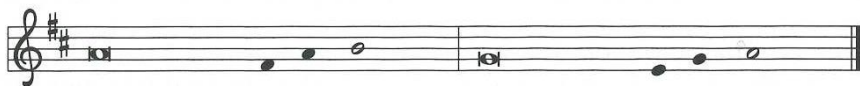
Isaiah 7:10-16

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹²But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a

sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Psalms

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19; tone 1



Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,
leading Joseph ¹ like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned
up- ¹ on the cherubim.

²In the presence of Ephraim,
Benjamin, ¹ and Manasseh,
stir up your strength
and ¹ come to help us.

³Restore ¹ us, O God;
let your face shine upon us,
and we ¹ shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD ¹ God of hosts,**
how long will your anger fume
when your ¹ people pray?

⁵You have fed them
with the ¹ bread of tears;
you have given them
bowls of ¹ tears to drink.

⁶You have made us
the derision ¹ of our neighbors,
and our enemies
laugh ¹ us to scorn.

⁷Restore us, O ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us,
and we ¹ shall be saved.

¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one
at ¹ your right hand,
the one you have made so strong
¹ for yourself.

¹⁸And so will we never
turn a- ¹ way from you;
give us life,
that we may call up- ¹ on your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD ¹ God of hosts;**
let your face shine upon us,
and we ¹ shall be saved.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name

him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,

and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us."

²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

TODAY'S READINGS December 21, 2025

Volume 57, Number 1

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23.

TODAY'S READINGS (ISSN 1069-0166, USPS 009628) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid in St. Paul, MN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Today's Readings, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1553. Printed in U.S.A. Price per weekly part \$4.79 per 100 copies; price in Canada subject to exchange rates. Minimum order 50 copies of each issue; all orders must be in multiples of 50. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Prayer of the day and psalm from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Psalm tone accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year A* (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our website at augsburgfortress.org. Lectionary year A.

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