

November 30, 2025



ADVENT

Prepare the way of the LORD

Isaiah 40:3



MT. ZION

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Madison Heights, MI

Pastor Tom Naumann
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1st Sunday in Advent

Pre-Service Personal Prayer: *O Lord Jesus Christ, as we celebrate Your advent on this first Sunday of the church year send Your Holy Spirit to open our hearts. Come with Your blessing upon our congregation, giving faithfulness to our pastor and success to his efforts, bestowing upon all our members brotherly love for one another and a zeal to spread the Gospel. Finally, come Lord Jesus! Amen.*

Today's Order of Service

Greeting and Prayer

Opening Hymn 343 *Prepare the Royal Highway*

**1 Prepare the royal highway, The King of kings is near!
Let every hill and valley A level road appear!**

Then greet the King of glory foretold in sacred story:

[Refrain]: Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word!

2 God's people, see Him coming: your own eternal king!

**Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! [Refrain]**

3 Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!

**Tour king, yet every nation Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before him! All voices, thus adore Him! [Refrain]**

4 His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heaven above.

**His rule is peace and freedom, And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding: [Refrain]**

The Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen!

The Confession and Absolution of Sins

We come before our Holy God admitting that we are sinful and need His forgiveness.

P Beloved of God: Let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant forgiveness:

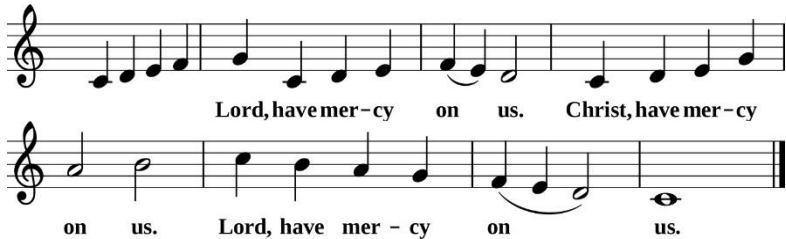
C Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer: we confess that we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have not loved You above all things. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Have mercy on us, and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us our sins.

P God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given His only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy


Kyrie – Latin for “O Lord.” We approach our Lord with a cry for help in all the needs of our earthly life.



The “O” Antiphons *(Hymn 357:1-2 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)*

Advent means “coming.” During the Advent season, we pray for the Messiah Jesus to come and make His home with us.

These hymn verses are a part of the “O” Antiphons—ancient chants which formed the basis for “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

C  *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!*

*O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!*



The Prayer for the Day

The main thoughts for the day are collected together in this prayer.

P Let us pray. . . through Christ Jesus, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Epistle Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

The Responsive Reading: *Psalm 85 Selected Verses*

- P** LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
- C** You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin.
- P** You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.
- C** Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!
- P** Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.
- C** Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.
- P** Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.
- C** Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.
- P** Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.
- C** Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.



The Gospel Reading: *Mark 1:1-8*

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, ³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" ⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.

Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! These words are
writ - ten that we may believe that Je-sus is the Christ, the
Son of God. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

The Apostle's Creed

We boldly confess what we believe.

- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was
conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He
descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven; And is seated at the right hand of
God the Father Almighty. From there He will come to judge the
living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the
communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of
the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn 344 *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

***1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!***

***2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.***

***3 We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away Like flow'rs that wither and decay.***

***4 Lay on the sick Thy healing hand And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.***

***5 All praise, eternal Son, to Thee Whose advent sets Thy people free.
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.***

The Sermon: *Isaiah 40:1-11*

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Theme: HARK! THE HERALDS OF ADVENT SPEAK

- I. The LORD heralds His plan of deliverance. (1-2)
- II. The voice in the wilderness heralds sin and grace. (3-8)
- III. The Church heralds the King's coming. (9-11)

Sermon Worksheet:

In ancient times, what was the speediest way for information to travel?

Write down the 2 questions which the whole story of the Bible is designed to answer. (Hint: the exiled Israelites were asking the same 2 questions)

1. _____
2. _____

What is God's answer to the 2nd question? (vv. 1-2) How would He do this?

Who is the voice "in the wilderness" (v.3)?

How does the message of the Law answer the 1st question from above?

Unlike grass and flowers, what never withers or fades? (v.8)

Explain how "all the promises of God find their 'Yes' in Christ" (2 Cor. 1:20):

In what ways can you be a herald of the gospel this Advent and Christmas season? (be specific!)

The Offertory

Having heard God's Word, we ask Him to spiritually heal us, giving us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O
God. Re - new a right spir-it with - in me. Cast me
not a - way from Your pres-ence. Take not Your Ho - ly
Spir-it from me. Re - store to me the joy of Your sal-
va - tion. Up - hold me with Your free Spir - it.

Hymn 347 *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

1 "Comfort, comfort ye My people, Speak ye peace," thus saith our God;
"Comfort those who sit in darkness, Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover And her warfare now is over."

2 Yea, her sins our God will pardon, Blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserved His anger He no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many a day, Now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness Into ever-springing gladness.

3 Hark, the herald's voice is crying In the desert far and near,
Calling sinners to repentance, Since the Kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.

4 Make ye straight what long was crooked; Make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits His holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token That His Word is never broken.

The Offering of Thankful Hearts

In tangible evidence of our gratitude, we offer the Lord the gift of our money, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him. If you wish to give your church offering electronically, you can do so by using the CashApp on your mobile device. The church's Scastag is "ScIcmztion". While the usher brings the offering plate forward we sing the following hymn verse:

**Lord, You love the cheerful giver Who with open heart and hand
Blesses freely, as a river That refreshes all the land.
Grant us, then, the grace of giving With a spirit large and true
That our life and all our living We may consecrate to You.**

Prayer of the Church – The Lord's Prayer

C 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 Benediction *The blessing given by God for His people (Numbers 6:24-26)*

Closing Hymn 380:1 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If the LORD wills, we will do this or that. James 4:15

WELCOME EVERYONE! We pray that God's Word and our worship today will help you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus.

- † Restrooms are located to the left after you exit down the main aisle.
- † A Parents Room is located in the back of the sanctuary.
- † If you are visiting with us today, please sign the Guest Book in the back.
- † If you are looking for a church home, ask Pastor Tom about a free one-on-one Bible study for new people. Where & when? Your convenience.

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING TODAY: We have received a new offer for the sale of our Northeastern property. Our Board of Trustees recommend that we accept. President Wittorp has called for a special voters meeting today following the service. Please keep this important matter in your prayers!

DECEMBER MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES: Beginning Wednesday, December 3 at 7pm, Mt. Zion will be holding three midweek advent services. We once again will be exchanging pulpits with Redeemer, Sister Lakes, and Gethsemane, Saginaw. Our theme this year is *God's Christmas Trees*.

Date	Preacher	Sermon Text and Theme
Dec. 6	Pastor Tom Naumann	Revelation 22:1-2 <i>The Tree of Life</i>
Dec. 10	Pastor Mike Wilke	Psalms 1:1-3 <i>The Tree of the Believer</i>
Dec. 17	Pastor Stefan Sonnenfeld	Galatians 3:10-13 <i>The Tree of the Cross</i>

CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Children's Christmas Eve Service: Wednesday, December 24 at 4:00pm. All are invited to this special service where, with the help of the congregation's children, we will be reading through the Biblical Christmas account, singing favorite Christmas carols, and celebrating the birth of our Savior Jesus!

Christmas Day Service: Thursday, December 25 at 10:00am. All are invited to our traditional Christmas Day service where we will praise God for our Savior's birth in Word and song.

A POST-CHRISTMAS PARTY is being planned by LIFT for Friday, January 9 at 5:30pm. Food & games! Everyone is welcome, so please mark your calendar.

UPCOMING CALENDAR

Today	11am	Special Voters Meeting (Sale of Northeastern)
Tue. 12/2	8pm	Compensation Committee Meeting
Wed. 12/3	7pm	1 st Midweek Advent Service
Sun. 12/7	9am	Bible Class/Sunday School
	10am	Divine Worship Service (w/ Communion)
Tue. 12/9	7-9pm	Church Meetings (Elders/Council/Trustees/Ed)
Wed. 12/24	4pm	Christmas Eve Worship Service (Children's Program)
Thu. 12/25	10am	Christmas Day Worship Service

SERVING US THIS WEEK:

Usher: Jesse Wilke **A/V Coordinator:** Randy Wittorp **Church Cleaners:** Troyan

OUR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL

Last Sunday Attendance = 31 Bible Class/Sunday School = 21

General Fund Offerings Budgeted YTD: \$112,077.14	Weekly General Fund Offerings Budgeted: \$2,384.62
General Fund Offerings Received YTD: \$109,784.00	Last Week's General Fund Offerings Received: \$1,923.00
Building Fund Offerings Received YTD: \$22,740.00	School Fund (Maisie Wittorp Christian Education Fund): \$67,106.00
Building Fund Balance: \$8,274.45	Missions Offerings YTD: \$5,813.00

IN OUR PRAYERS <> ENCOURAGEMENT LIST

Be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Ephesians 6:18

Jackie McGruder remains homebound as she continues to suffer from lupus. **Dave and Peggy Green** remain homebound as Dave continues to suffer from a very debilitating form of Parkinson's disease. **Our congregation** continues to pray for a buyer for our old church property at 26689 Northeastern Hwy.

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION SYNODWIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! Psalm 133:1

CALL NEWS Pastor Dave Naumann of St. John's Church, Clarkston, WA, and Peace Church, Orofino, ID, has **received** the call to Trinity Church, Spokane, WA. <> Pastor Terrel Kesterson of Ascension Church, Batavia, IL, has **received** the part-time call to Our Redeemer's Church, Red Wing, MN. <> Pastor Emeritus Michael Eichstadt has **received** the vacancy call to Holy Cross Church, Phoenix, AZ. <> Pastor Ben Libby of Redeemer Church, Cheyenne, WY, has **received** the call to Holy Cross Church, Phoenix, AZ. <> Pastor Ben Libby of Redeemer Church, Cheyenne, WY, has **received** the call to Messiah Church, Eau Claire, WI. <> Pastor Johnathan Schnose of Bethel Church, Morris, MN, has **received** the call to Living Hope Church, Appleton, WI.

INSTALLATION Pastor Michael Gurath will be installed at Peace Thru Christ Lutheran Church, Middleton, WI, on December 21, 2025.

2026 CLC MISSION HELPER TRIP: The CLC Mission Helper Program is making preparations for another Mission Trip to Africa for the summer of 2026. The main focus of this trip will be presenting the Gospel, through a series of child evangelism lessons, to member and non-member children in village congregations. Possible areas of evangelism include the CLC-Tanzania, CLC-Kenya, CLC-Zambia, and CLC-Uganda. CLC members are welcome and encouraged to apply. For more information and to apply, visit www.mht.lutheranmissions.org.

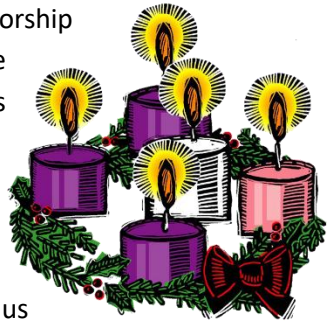
LIVESTREAM on  **YouTube** @MtZionLutheranChurch

SERMON PODCAST on  **Spotify** @TheWordFromMtZion

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The Advent Wreath

is rich in symbolism, and as such it aids our worship as it reinforces our hope in the ultimate coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wreath is in the form of a circle, which has no beginning and no end. What better way to picture that our life with God is everlasting. The lighted candles are symbolic of the light of Christ and His Gospel, which alone can lift us



out of our sin and spiritual darkness. The 4 candles surrounding the center candle remind us of the 4000 years of waiting for Christ by the Old Testament world. Each of the candles has been assigned a special name with special significance.

The Prophecy Candle is lit the first week in Advent. It is symbolic of the years of waiting during which the prophets, inspired of God, kept alive the hope that the Son of God was coming to save His people from their sins.

The Bethlehem Candle is the 2nd candle lit. It symbolizes the preparations being made for the coming of the Christ-child. The prophecy in Micah 5:2 that foretold Jesus' birthplace at Bethlehem may seem to be a small thing, but it shows how God prepared every detail for the coming of Christ.

The Shepherds' Candle is the 3rd candle lit and reminds us of our responsibility to share the Savior and His promises. The shepherds left their task and went with haste to see the Christ-child, then they returned to tell others about the good news of the Savior.

The Angel's Candle is lit the 4th week of Advent. It reminds us of the activity of the angels before and after Jesus' birth, bearing messages, ministering, protecting, praising; they will be with Jesus at His final coming on Judgment Day, to gather the nations.

The Christ Candle is the center candle lit at the celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. Its white color symbolizes the perfect and holy life our Savior led on our behalf. With His death on the cross, the LORD now gives that white robe of Christ's righteousness to each of us. God's great gift – His Son Jesus!