



The Nativity of Our Lord 2017
“The Liturgy of the People”

Zion Lutheran Church
Wausau, Wisconsin

10:00 a.m.

Sharing God's Blessings

- Today's broadcast is sponsored by Steve and Marlene Kroening for God's many blessings and answered prayers.
- The evergreen trees by the altar are donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Budnik. The trees are decorated with *chrismons*, symbols of Christ, handmade by members of Zion.
- Please refer to the bulletin insert for a listing of all who gave to the Christmas Decorating Fund.

Why December 25?

Did Christians really choose to celebrate Christmas on December 25 as a way of combating pagan celebrations of the winter solstice?

You may have heard this myth now and then. Every December, it gets shared in the secular media (and some Christian media, too!). But now consider: the pagan solstice celebration took place on December 21. If the early Christians were concerned about combating it, then why didn't they choose December 21 itself? Or try to ace out the pagans and choose December 20?

In *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, Thomas J. Talley documents the true story of December 25 from early Christian sermons and letters. Working with Scripture and then-current understandings of time, Christians first began celebrating the conception of Jesus on March 25 (as we still do today). Then they simply counted nine months from March 25, and there you have it: the reason why Christians began using December 25 for Christ's birth!

In fact, there is some indication that pagan celebrations of the winter solstice only became popular *after* Christians started celebrating Christmas on December 25, and that *they* were an attempt to combat *Christianity* with an earlier celebration – and doesn't that make more sense?

Whatever the case, we enter into today's liturgy with all Christian souls, both living and dead, for whom the arrival of Christ has transformed time itself into a way of proclaiming the good news of God's mercy. Lo! This is the day the Lord has made!

PRELUDES

Gigue on "Joy to the World"	...Sondra K. Tucker
"Pastorale"	... Arcangelo Corelli
"Angels We Have Heard on High"	... Benjamin M. Culli
"Once in Royal David's City"	... Sondra K. Tucker

RINGING OF THE BELLS

The ministers process to the chapel and assemble before the crèche.

Please kneel.

ADORATION OF THE CHRIST CHILD

P: O blessed Christ, the radiance of glory;
O blessed Christ, eternal Son of the Father;
O blessed Christ, born of the virgin Mary:

C: O Jesus, very light of light, our constant star in sin's deep night; now hear the prayers your people pray throughout the world this holy day.

P: O blessed Child, pure sacrifice for sins;
O blessed Child, firstborn from the dead;
O blessed Child, enthroned in splendor:

C: O Savior, ever bear in mind the grace you showed to all mankind, when, born in flesh of virgin womb, you authored life within the tomb.

P: O Prince of peace, the spring of mercy;
O Prince of peace, redeemer of the world;
O Prince of Peace, who was and is and is to come:

C: O Christ, redeemer virgin-born, let songs of praise your name adorn whom with the Father we adore and Holy Spirit evermore. Amen

The realization of Christ's presence is the source of Christmas joy. We say that we visit the manger in spirit to rejoice. We give the appearance that Christmas is a joyous occasion. Is our joy genuine? Over what do we rejoice? Surely we have progressed beyond the point where the Nativity means only that since Christ came to die for us, we need not go to hell Christmas means that we who were separated from God now have Him with us. It means God present on earth, among us, in us

Please stand and turn toward the cross as it is carried into the sanctuary.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"

**C: Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**The highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Child, for us sinners Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee, Loving us so dearly?
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing;
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

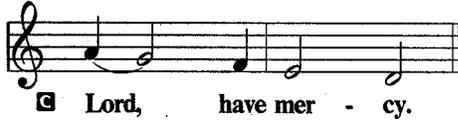
GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

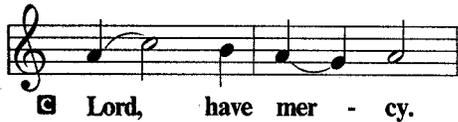
C: And also with you.

KYRIE

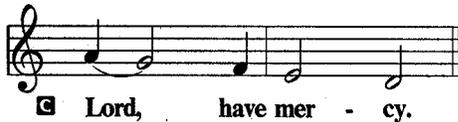
P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



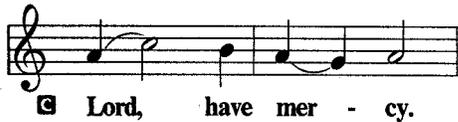
P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Church, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



GLORIA

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.



... To tell us that God is with us, the heavens open in Bethlehem and the glory of heaven streams forth upon the earth. God comes to earth and opens the gates of Paradise once more. They stand open ever since! "He opens us again the door of Paradise today." Heaven is the Presence of God, and heaven has come to earth. Christmas means that God is present among men, to be worshiped on bended knee as He is adored in heaven ...

[continued next page]

. . . . Christ-
 mas means
 that God
 companies
 with men and
 communes
 with sinners.
 Christmas
 means that
 we are travel-
 ing toward
 the open gates
 of home into
 the Presence
 of God. We
 are to spend
 eternity wor-
 shipping and
 adoring Him,
 in having
 sweet com-
 munion and
 fellowship
 with our Lord
 and King.
 ~ Fred H.
 Linden-
 mann,
*The Service
 of the Prop-
 ers*

Fa - ther: We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we
 praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly
 Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God: You
 take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
 us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the
 Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the
 Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a -
 lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,
 in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

☐ And al - so with you.

P: Let us pray . . . Almighty God, you have made yourself known to us in your Son, Jesus, Redeemer of the world. By his birth of the Virgin Mary, set us free from the old slavery of our sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

Please be seated.

CHORAL RESPONSE

“He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising”

... 14th Century German Carol

Soloist: He whom shepherds once came praising,
Awed by heav’nly light ablazing,
Cheered by angel-news amazing:
“King of glory, Christ is born!”

Choir: The glorious angels came today,
Aglow with light into the night of darkness deep,
To shepherds who by moon’s bright ray
Did in the field o’er sheep their silent vigil keep,
“Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav’n . .
Resounding, for you, for you
and all the world abounding.”

Congregation: Refrain:



The incarnation [that is, God becoming flesh in Jesus] opened heaven, for it was the revelation of the Word; but it also re-consecrated earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And it is impossible to read history without feeling how profoundly the religion of the Incarnation has been a religion of humanity . . .

Soloist: He whom sages, westward faring,
Myrrh and gold and incense bearing,
Humbly worshiped, off'rings sharing:
Judah's lion reigns this morn!

Choir: God's majesty has come to earth
And sent his only Son to you in human-kind;
A chosen virgin gave him birth.
In David's town the holy infant you will find,
Lying helpless in a manger, poor and bare . . . and lowly,
To set you free from all your sorrow wholly.

Congregation: Refrain:



God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;
God the Fa - ther is rec - on - ciled, is rec - on - ciled!

Soloist: Sing with Mary, virgin mother;
Praise her Son, our newborn brother;
Angel ranks, lead one another, Hailing him in holy joy!

Choir: Then sang the angels this refrain:
"To God on high alone give praise and glory,
And peace on earth again shall reign.
Let all on earth with gladness heed this story
And rejoice in his good will."
The Savior came . . . in meekness
For you, for you, to bear your flesh in weakness.

C: Refrain

Soloist: To our king, God ever reigning,
yet of Mary manhood gaining,
Heavn'ly gifts for us obtaining,
Raise your hymns of homage high!

Choir: The wond'ring shepherds said:
"Behold! Let us now go with all good speed to Bethlehem
To see this thing the Lord has told;
The cattle leave; he will indeed take care of them."
There they found the wonder child,
in lowly swaddling clothes lying,
Yet all the world with his free grace supplying.

C: Refrain

OLD TESTAMENT Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." ⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 2

Choir: Why are the nations 'in an uproar?*'
Why do the peoples mutter 'empty threats?

**C: Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt,
and the princes 'plot together,*
against the LORD and against 'his anointed?**

Choir: "Let us break their 'yoke," they say;*"
"let us cast off their 'bonds from us."

**C: He whose throne is in heav'en is laughing;*
the Lord has them 'in derision.**

... The human body itself, which heathendom had so degraded that noble minds could only view it as the enemy and prison of the soul, acquired a new meaning, exhibited new graces, shone with a new lustre in the light of the Word made Flesh; and thence, in widening circles, the family, society and state itself felt in their turn the impulse of the Christian spirit with its "touches of things common, 'till they rose to touch the spheres."
~ Charles Gore,
Lux Mundi

Choir: Then he speaks to them 'in his wrath,*
and his rage fills 'them with terror.

**C: "I myself have 'set my king*
upon my holy 'hill of Zion."**

Choir: Let me announce the decree 'of the LORD:*
He said to me, "You are my son; this day have I be'gotten you.

**C: Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for 'your inheri-
tance*
and the ends of the earth for 'your possession.**

Choir: You shall crush them with an 'iron rod*
and shatter them like a 'piece of pottery.

**C: And now, you 'kings, be wise;*
be warned, you rulers 'of the earth.**

Choir: Submit to the 'LORD with fear,*
and with trembling 'bow before him;

**C: lest he be angry, 'and you perish,*
for his wrath is 'quickly kindled.**

Choir: Happy 'are they all*
who take ref'uge in him!

**All: Glory to the Father, and 'to the Son,*
and to the 'Holy Spirit;
as it was in 'the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. 'Amen**

EPISTLE Hebrews 1:1-6

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his

power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand.

PROCESSIONAL VERSE

As the Scriptures are carried into the midst of the congregation, please turn to where the Holy Gospel will be proclaimed.

Choir: stanza 1; Congregation: Stanza 2



1 We praise You, Je - sus, at Your birth; Clothed in flesh You
2 Now in the man - ger we may see God's Son from e -



came to earth. The vir - gin bears a sin - less boy
ter - ni - ty, The gift from God's e - ter - nal throne



And all the an - gels sing for joy. Al - le - lu - ia!
Here clothed in our poor flesh and bone. Al - le - lu - ia!

GOSPEL St. John 1:1-14

The holy Gospel of our Lord according to St. John, the first chapter.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into

That is the way we are cleansed of our wretched Adam's birth, and that is why it was Christ's will and pleasure to be born as man, so that in Him we might be born again. 'Of His own will He brought us forth by the Word of truth, that we should be reborn unto a new creation.' Behold, in this manner Christ takes our birth away from us and sinks it in His own birth and gives us His birth, that we may be made new and clean, as if it were our own birth . . .

being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord. Alleluia.

PROCESSIONAL VERSE

7. All this for us our God has done Grant-ing love through
 His own Son. There-fore all Christ-en-dom, re-joice
 And sing His praise with end-less voice. Al-le-lu-ia!

NICENE CREED

P: Let us confess the faith with one heart.

C: **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 worshiped 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

Please be seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” green hymnal #42

Stanzas 1 & 2: Choir

Stanzas 3–5: All

SERMON “The Lord Has Bared His Holy Arm”

Please kneel.

THE PRAYERS

P: Trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting God and Son of Mary, let us pray.

(after each prayer:)

P: . . . O King of Kings,

C: **receive our prayer.**

P: . . . one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

Please be seated.

. . . . Therefore shall every Christian rejoice in this birth of Christ, and glory in it, as if he too were born of Mary. He who does not believe that, or doubts it, is no Christian.
~ Martin Luther, sermon for Christmas Day, 1522 A.D.

*In Bethlehem,
the House
of Bread,
Jesus was born,
the Church's
Head.
Within the
Church, the
House of
Bread,
Those born
in Christ
His flesh
are fed.*

*The Babe
wrapped up in
swaddling
clothes
wraps up His
Church,
that she,
enclosed
within His
flesh and blood
may be
clothed with
divine human-
ity*

OFFERING

VOLUNTARY

"For Unto Us"

... Natalie Sleeth

Please stand.

OFFERTORY "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all To gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.
Christ was born to save! _____ Christ was born to save!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Blessed are you, heavenly Father, for the priceless gift of your Son, sent into our flesh to redeem the creation. Grant that we may now so eat of his flesh and drink of his blood that we may ever dwell in him, and he in us.

C: Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

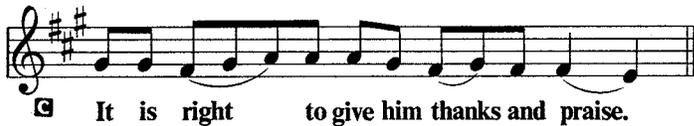
P: The Lord be with you.

☩ And al - so with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

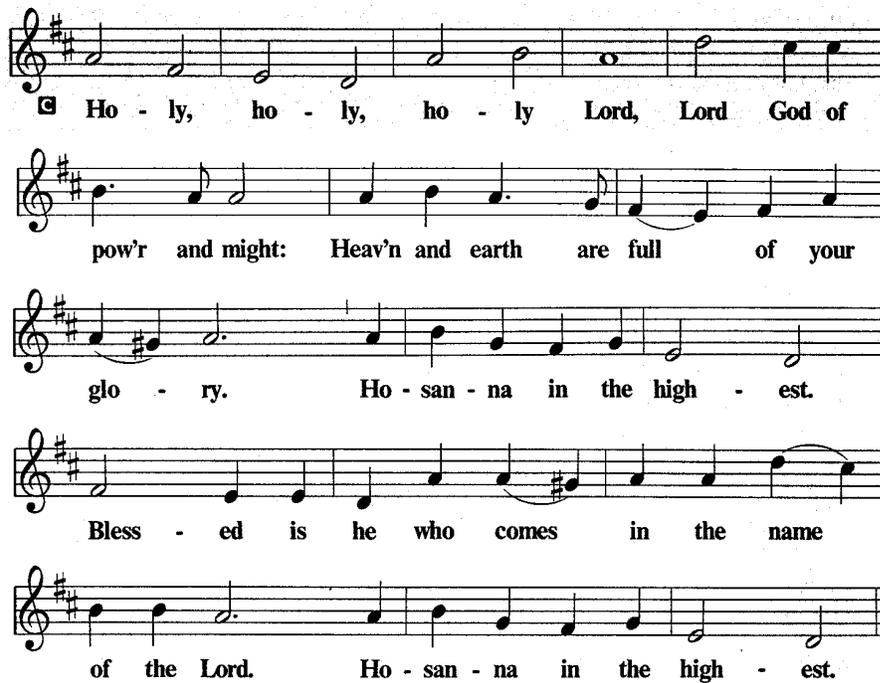


P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



P: It is indeed right and salutary . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS ("Holy")



. . . . Archangels, angels, saints above, magnify Him who came in love, to call the hungry to His Feast, from north and south, from west and east.

The manger held the God of life, who came to swallow sin and strife. Christ, let my tongue Thy manger be, that I may swallow life in Thee

[continued next page]

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to

[continued
from previous
page]

... His
mother's flesh,
which Christ
assumed,
is by His Vir-
gin Bride
consumed.
The Word
made flesh
makes her
His own,
joined flesh to
flesh and bone
to bone.

Born in the
darkness of
the night,
the Father's
uncreated
Light,
illuminates us
with earthly
wine,
full of the glow
of blood di-
vine

the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me."

In the same way also he took the cup after the supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink of it, in remembrance of me.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

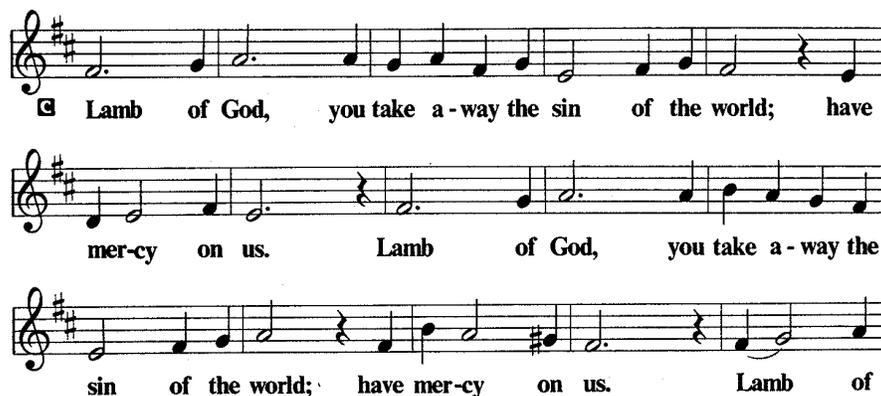
C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

ACCLAMATION

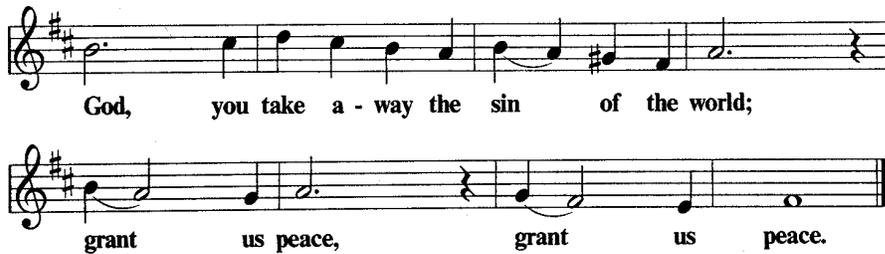
P: The Word was made flesh,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

AGNUS DEI ("Lamb of God")



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of



Please be seated.

The congregation is ushered forward for Communion. If you cannot use the steps to the altar, you may either ask an usher to have Communion brought to you, or you may go to the altar in the side (west) chapel. Those not communing may cross their arms over their chest for a blessing.

Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which He joyfully gives to His Church to eat and to drink. This gift bestows tremendous benefits. His body and blood forgives our sins, strengthens our faith, binds us to the Lord, and unites us with each other. In this is life and salvation.

The Lord therefore invites to His altar baptized Christians who trust that they will receive in Holy Communion all that He promises there: His body and blood, the forgiveness of sins, union with Christ and His Church, life, and salvation. Know that He gives it to you with great joy.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Angels We Have Heard on High" green hymnal #71

"Your Little Ones, Dear Lord" green hymnal #52

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" green hymnal #60

Please stand after all have received the Sacrament.

PRAYER

P: Let us pray O God of wonder, we have tasted your goodness, and beheld your presence in the Word made flesh. Shine forth his light in all we say and do, and fill the earth with your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

. . . . O God
made man,
make us in
Thee
partakers of
divinity.
Feed us Thy
flesh and
blood, we cry;
fill us with
Thee, O God
Most High.
~ Chad L.
Bird,
2001 A.D.

**A Prayer
As You Go**
 Father, we are filled with the new light by the coming of Your Word among us. May the light of faith shine in our words and actions. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



Please turn toward the cross as it is carried out of the sanctuary.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

“Joy to the World” green hymnal #39

SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

“A Festival Flourish on ‘Antioch’” ...Jacob B. Weber

+ Soli Deo Gloria +
To God alone be glory

UPCOMING SERVICES

Wednesday, December 27:

Feast of St. John.....Holy Communion, 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 30:

First Sunday after Christmas.....Holy Communion, 5:15 p.m.

Sunday, December 31:

First Sunday after ChristmasHoly Communion, 9 and 11 a.m.

New Year’s EveHoly Communion, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 3:

Epiphany (Observed)Holy Communion, 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Serving at Worship

Preaching: The Rev. Dr. Steven K. Gjerde

Assisting: Vicar Joseph Pinzl

Organist: Kantor Irene Beethe

Choir: Zion Kantorei

Soloist: Jim Speckhard

Trumpet: Chad Premeau

Horn: Meagan Cihlar

Violin/Timpani: Mary Premeau

Radio Announcer: Ryan Fernstaedt

Acolyte: Sam Schubring

Elder: Marlene Kroening

Communion Assistants: Sally Christoffersen; Lois Jarosz; Joe Pinzl

Altar Guild: Janet Dettmering; Bonnie Waack

Acknowledgements

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"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" is public domain.

Zion Lutheran Church

Sixth and Grant Streets, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403

Those who trust in the Lord shall be like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever. (Psalm 125:1)

Church Telephone: 715-848-7286

Senior Pastor Steven K. Gjerde
Visitation Pastor Theodore B. Gulhaugen
Pastoral Assistant Joseph C. Pinzl
Kantor Irene Beethe
Parish Nurse Lenore Grosinske
Office Manager Pam Gabriel
Secretary Anna Mae Zeinemann
Custodian Michael Renken

To contact us by email:
zion@dwave.net

To visit our webpage:
www.zionlutheranwausau.com

Host of the Wausau Lutheran Hour
Sundays, 9:00 am, WSAU Radio 550AM (or
click "Listen Live" at www.wsau.com)

Member Congregation of Lutheran Core
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