

# ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



## *Gospel Acclamation*

*Alleluia. The virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel. Alleluia. (Matt. 1:23)*

# SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Congregational participation in bold font.

Please silence your cell phone.

## PRELUDE AND WELCOME

*Invited by the minister, we turn to face the baptismal font.*

*We make the sign of the cross, ✠ the sign that is marked at baptism, as the minister begins.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

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.**



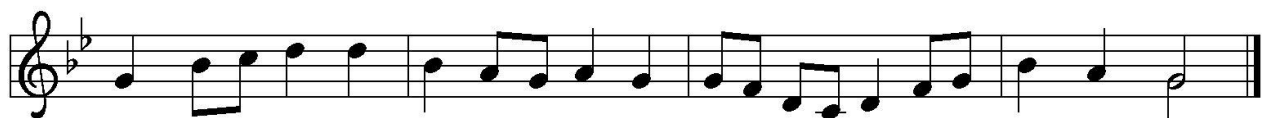
1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
 2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.  
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer-it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

### LIGHTNING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Lord, grant us your light, that, being rid of the darkness of our hearts, we may come to the true light which is Christ.

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.

*Light four candles.*

### GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

We pray: 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.**

*Be seated.*

## FIRST READING

**Isaiah 7:10-16**

A reading from Isaiah, the 7th chapter.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore 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. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For 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.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING

**Romans 1:1-7**

A reading from Romans, the 1st chapter.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

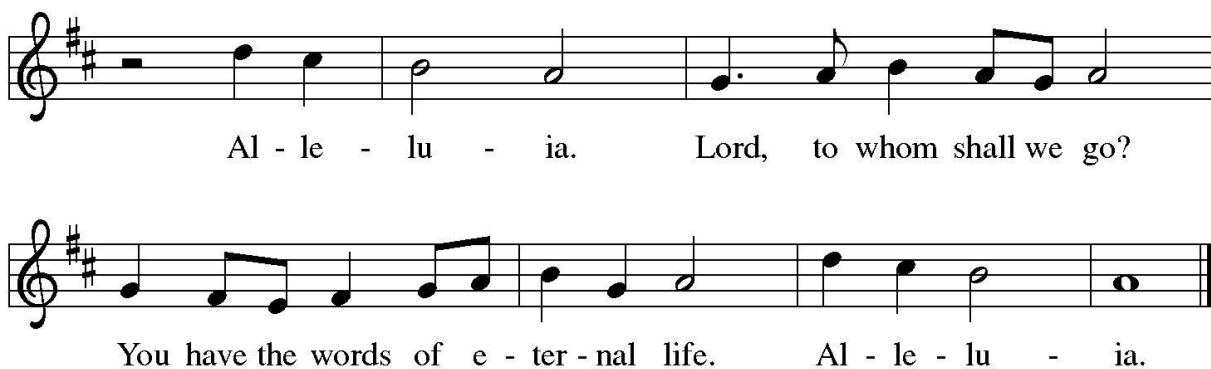
To all God’s beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*We rise in body and spirit as we are able.*

## GOSPEL READING

**Matthew 1:18-25**



The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 1st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But 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. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 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.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Be seated.*

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**SERMON**

**REFLECTION SONG**

*We rise in body and spirit as we are able.*

**NICENE CREED**

*2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the first ecumenical council of Nicaea. This commemoration is an opportunity to reflect on the importance of the ELCA’s ecumenical self-understanding and vocation. Recent developments in Lutheran-Orthodox relations present the possibility of continuing the journey toward reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christianity after nearly a millennium of church division over the addition of the filioque clause (“and the Son”) to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. The Joint International Commission on Theological Dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Orthodox Church’s 2024 Common Statement on the Filioque is an important ecumenical breakthrough, concluding that the filioque is no longer church-dividing and inviting further dialogue and renewed theological reflection on the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit. In faithful response to this invitation, today we will profess the Creed without the filioque clause.*

We profess our faith saying: **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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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], who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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  $\ddagger$  resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition concludes with the following:*  
God of grace, hear our prayer.

## PEACE AND OFFERING

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

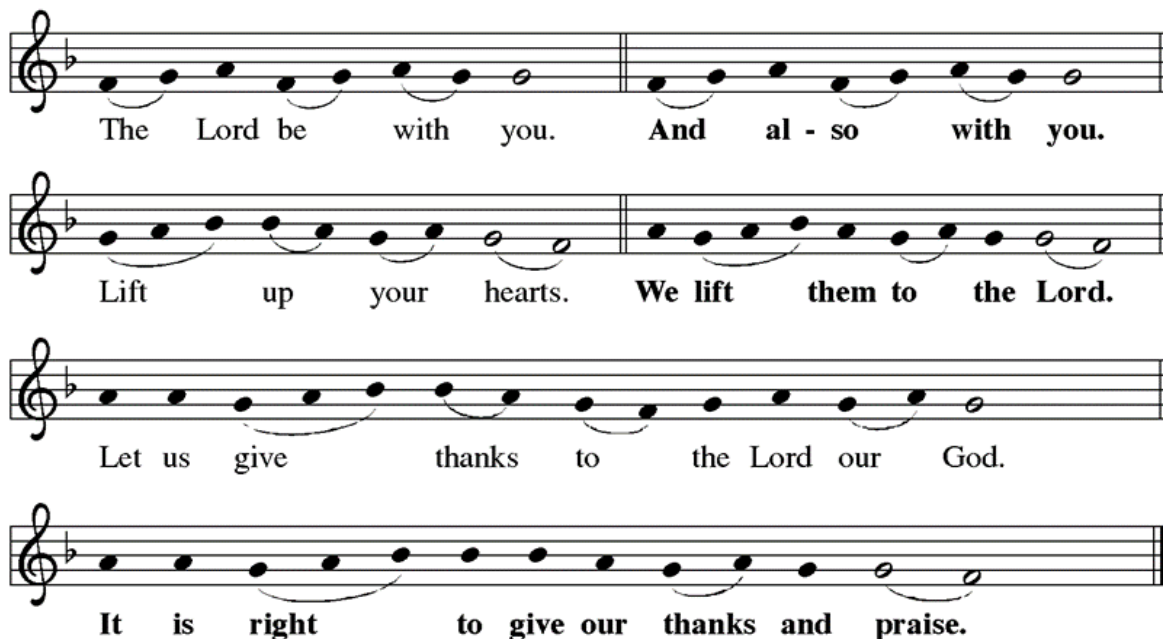
*As you greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, saying, "Peace be with you," we thank you for joining us in sharing God's love. You can share your gift either by scanning the QR code provided, giving online at [zionhickory.org](http://zionhickory.org), or placing your offering in the offering plate as you leave worship.*



*Sung:* Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God, above you heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

We pray: 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.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

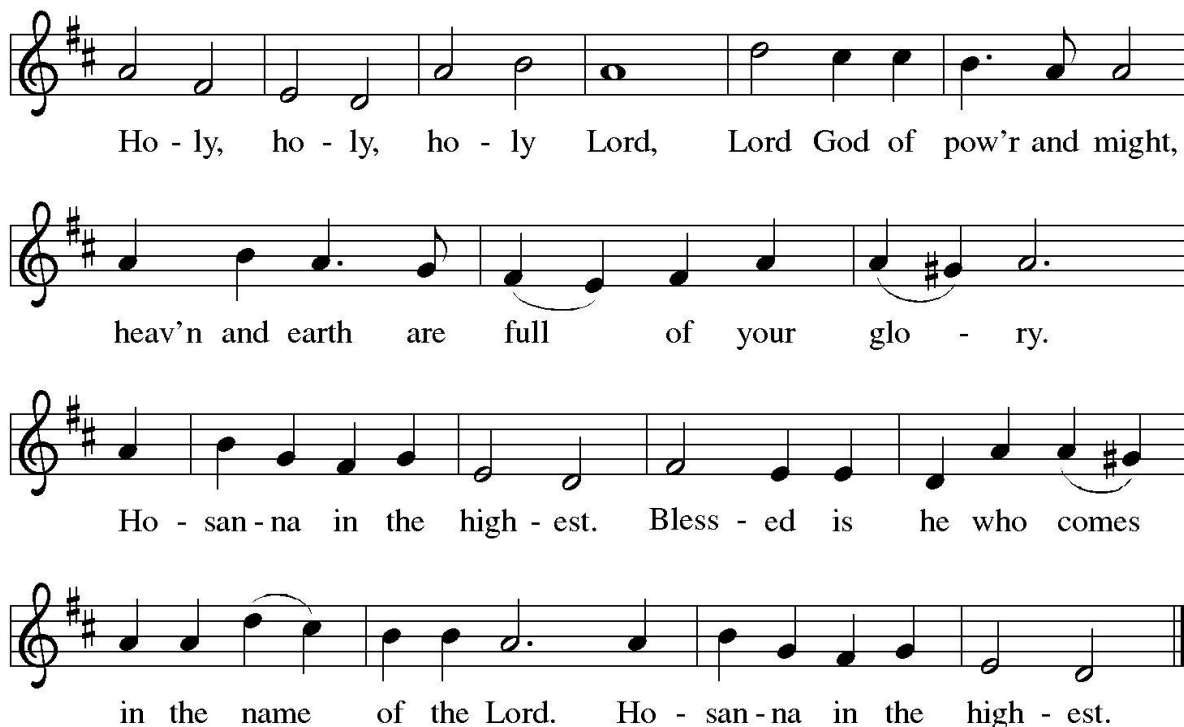


## PREFACE

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:



## SANCTUS (HOLY, HOLY, HOLY)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on us and given your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for the salvation you have granted to us through Jesus, the Word made flesh, the child of Mary; the Light of the world, our Immanuel. Send the Spirit of your Son into our hearts, that as your beloved children we may welcome our Savior who comes to us in his body and blood.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was [handed over], took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

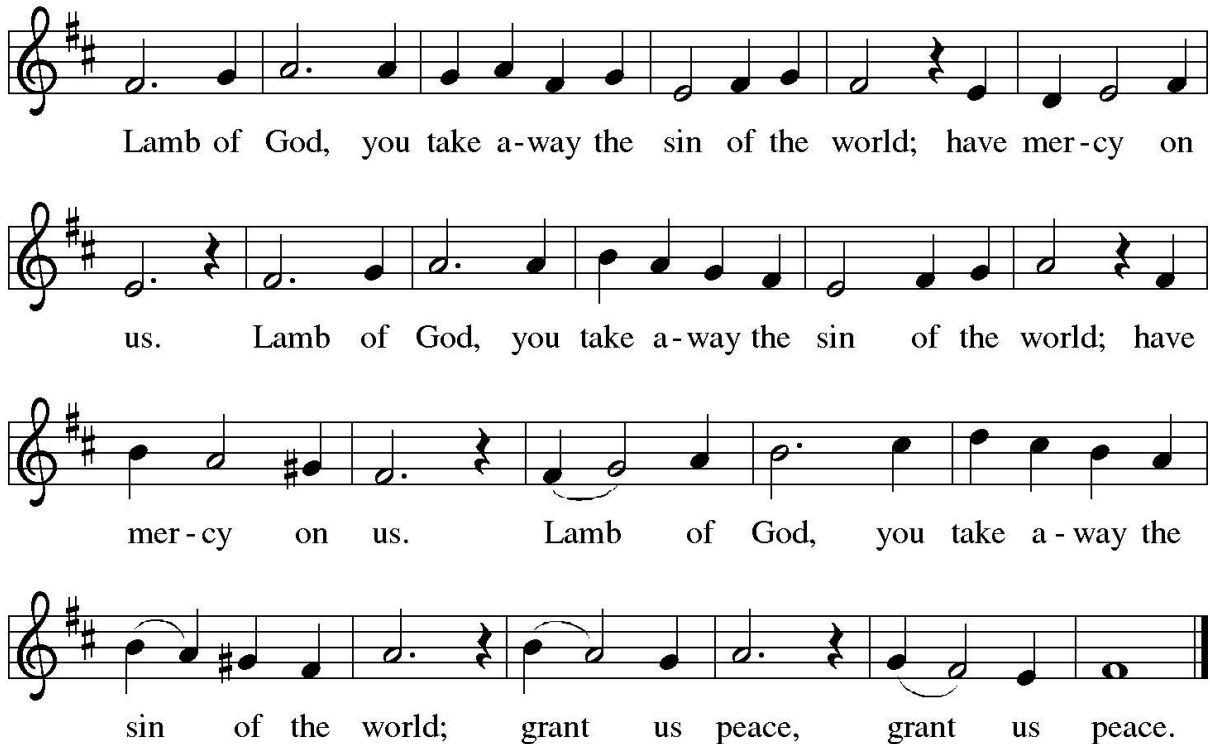
In the same way also he took the cup after supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION AND LAMB OF GOD

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised. **Thanks be to God!**



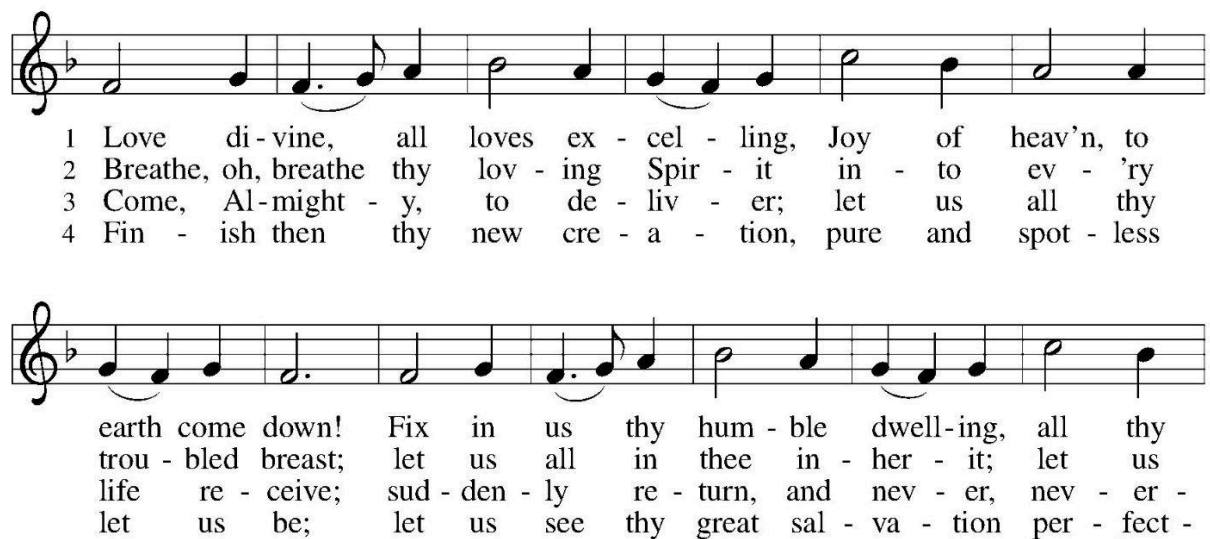
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

*Be seated. All are welcome to receive Communion at Christ's table. For good order, musicians will commune first.  
Ushers will invite you to the altar to receive communion. You may kneel or stand at the rail.  
After communing, you may remain at the rail for private prayer or return to your seat.*

## COMMUNION SONG

### 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling'

ELW 631



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to  
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-'ry  
3 Come, Al-might-y, to de-liv-er; let us all thy  
4 Fin-ish then thy new cre-a-tion, pure and spot-less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy  
trou-bled breast; let us all in thee in-her-it; let us  
life re-ceive; sud-den-ly re-turn, and nev-er, nev-er-  
let us be; let us see thy great sal-va-tion per-fect-





faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,  
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

*We rise in body and spirit as we are able.*

### **COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER**

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

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



1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,  
 2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,  
 3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose  
 4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race  
 5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.

when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.  
 but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky.  
 and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.  
 the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.  
 Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.

**DISMISSAL AND POSTLUDE**

Go in peace! Keep awake!  
 We will! Thanks be to God!

**PARTICIPANTS**

*If anyone is interested in reading scriptures, please contact the Church Office.*

Senior Pastor.....The Rev. David T. Drysdale II  
 Guest Musician.....Joel Rogers  
 Assisting Minister.....Becky Ladnier  
 Children's Message.....Angela Beard  
 Altar Guild.....Paula Parsons, Alan Parsons  
 Ushers.....Greg Walters, Doug Eckard, Milton Wrike  
 Tellers.....Marc Ladnier, Misty Foster, Elaine Vaughn

## PRAYER CONCERNS

*Please pray for those who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, especially the following:  
(Names in BOLD have been added or updated this week.)*

**Zion Members...** Joey & Jennifer Brown, Jack Cooke, **Tom Crowder**, Elsie Eudy, Randy Hefner, Ron & Sandra Herman, Ruth Ann Hollar, Kim Hollars, Maxine Huffman, Amy Jarrett, Janice Jeffreys, Gary Kanipe, Leigh Ann Lackey, Mike McRee, **Alan Mull**, Kenny Mull, Kenny Lee Mull Family, Patrick Mull, Barron & Lois Whitener, **Matthew Whitener**, Stephen Whitener, Martha Wrike, Rosie Yoder.

**Homebound...** Bill Hefner, Mary Jo Hilton, Gary & Hippie Johnson, Nellie Lutz, Violet Michael, Barbara Scronce, Janey Whitener, Dottie Yoder, Jerry Yoder.

**Friends of Zion...** Gary Abernethy, **Vicky Annas**, Ann Arney, Michelle Barger, Davey Beard, Jeff Beck, Charlie Boger, Sue Bolick, Easton Case, Patty Cook, Ruth Cook, Ulrike Cox, Bryant Early, Cindy Elder, Kathy Freeman, Alice Greer and Family, Sandra & Stamey Hardin, Sandra & Don Hefner, Pastor Betty Helms, Tim Hewitt, Myrtle Hilton, Tina Holloway, Alice Huffman, Dixie Icard, David Icenhour, Alma Jacobs, Gary Jarvis, Anaisha Jaykumar, John Keck, Alice Keenan, Caroline Keller, Toni Kenerly, Savannah Klein, Joyce Ladnier, Kay-Kay Ladnier, Yolanda Ladnier, Jay Lamb, Dale Love, Sophia Marlowe, Tim Martin, Teresa Mays, Jim & Anne Rhyne McCoy, Frances McCracken, Mario Molina, Terry Mooneyham, Randy Neill, Sharon Oxford, Meghan Paris, David Pruett, Fred Prince, Wayne Reed, Lacey Reeves, Dr. J. David & Jena Rhyne, Rusty Rhyne, Bryson Romero, Betty Shook, Gina Sigmon, Pat Stilwell, Andy Tomah, Michelle Whitener.

**Condolences...** Please keep **Maxine Huffman and her family** in your prayers as they mourn the death of Maxine's father, Troy "June Bug" Wray Stallings, who passed away on December 12, 2025, at the age of 89. A service celebrating Troy's life was held yesterday morning (December 20) at Corinth Baptist Church in Vale.

**Condolences...** Please remember **Barron and Lois Whitener and their family** in your prayers following the passing of Barron's sister, Patsy Whitener Kanagy, age 85, of DeLand, Florida. Patsy died on December 14 after a lengthy battle with cancer. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, January 3, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church in DeLand.

**Featured Homebound Member...** Please encourage this special member with a card or note this week: **Nellie Lutz, 5468 Pittstown Road, Hickory, NC 28602.**

## **POINSETTIAS AND ASHURE MINISTRY DONATIONS**

*The beautiful poinsettias decorating our Sanctuary, along with donations **totaling \$196** to Ashure Ministry, have been given to the Glory of God by the following individuals and families:*

**Elaine Allan (1 large)**

*In honor of Kim Sherrill and Pam Henline*

**Jackson & McKenzie Bass (2 large)**

*In memory of Ross Miller and Marilyn Miller*

*In memory of Howard & Miriam Morton,  
Evelyne Reynolds, and Gene Morton*

**Roger & Robbin Bass (4 flowers)**

*In memory of R. W. & Bernice Bass  
and Percy & Dixie Little*

*In honor of Jeb & Katie Bass and Jackson & McKenzie Bass*

**Kay & Gary Bolick (1 flower)**

*In honor of Zion's Church Family*

**Tom & Dottie Crowder (1 large, white)**

*In honor of Mary Jo Hilton*

**Maryanne DeCesare (1 large, white)**

*In memory of Michael & Rose Kosar  
In memory of Ralph DeCesare*

**Bob & Vicki Fales (2 flowers)**

*In honor of Alice and Megan Fales*

**Rick & Teresa Foster (2 flowers)**

*In honor of Sarah Foster and Corey Avery*

*In honor of Matthen, Misty, Peyton, Paige, and Avery Foster*

**Rick & Twila Hartford (2 large)**

*In memory of Gordon & Janet Bogh  
In memory of Gerald & Alice Hartford*

**Ron & Sandra Herman (2 flowers)**

*In memory of Ray & Mary Powell  
and Joe & Frances Herman  
In honor of Maryanne DeCesare*

**Steve & Andrea Hilton (2 flowers)**

*In memory of Ray C. & Ruth Hilton  
In memory of Frank & Theda Reinhardt*

**Raenell & Randy Hines (1 flower)**

*In memory of Rosa Shook and Mr. & Mrs. Heber Shook*

**Randy & Raenell Hines (1 flower)**

*In memory of Kate Hines Eckard and Charles Hines*

**Jeff & Janice Jeffreys (3 flowers)**

*In memory of Isaac L. & Lillian S. Robinson, Jewell W.  
Robinson, Larry E. Robinson and Donald K. Robinson  
In memory of H. A. & Mildred W. Jeffreys  
and Cynthia Jeffreys*

**Lee & Jennifer Kanipe (1 large)**

*In memory of Jim & Janelda Deal  
In honor of Jeffrey, Priscilla, Laura, Chase, John David,  
Easton, Emily, Alexa, Parker, Ford, and Sylvia Kanipe*

**Carroll & Rose Lackey (3 flowers)**

*In memory of R. A. & Pauline Lackey, Bobby & Ruby  
Cline, Vernon & Reita Lackey, and Chris Mundy  
In honor of Leigh Ann Lackey, Carol Ann Mundy,  
and Bryan, Danielle and Olivia Lackey*

**Billy & Suzie Milner (2 flowers)**

*In memory of Samuel & Hazel Ayers and James Milner  
In honor of James & Judy Aiello*

**Steve & Amy Morton (1 flower)**

*In honor of Katie and Caroline Morton*

**Alan & Paula Parsons (1 flower)**

*In honor of our grandson James*

**Benelia Reese (1 flower)**

*In memory of Wayne H. Reese and Ben & Ruth Yoder*

**Rusty Rhyne (1 large, 1 flower)**

*In memory of my wife, Patricia Allen Rhyne*

**Eric & Kristin Wright (1 flower)**

*In honor of Jackson Bryan Wright*

**Milton & Martha Wrike (1 flower)**

*In memory of Worth & Louise Wrike,  
Ed & Mozelle Cline, and Eddie Boone*

**Benjy & Nancy Yoder (2 flowers)**

*In memory of Ben & Ruth Yoder  
In memory of Aubrey & Gertrude Williams  
and Aubrey Williams Jr.*

