



Zion Lutheran Church – LCMS
20-141 County Road X – P.O. Box 37 – Ridgeville Corners, OH 43555
Phone: (419)267-3429 Email: zionrco@bright.net
Education Hour 8:45 AM - Divine Worship 10:00 AM
Communion First and Third Sundays
Rev. Dr. Carl Rockrohr, Pastor
Phone: (419)267-3429 Email: pastor.zionrco@bright.net

Thursday, December 24th, 2020 – 1:00 & 7:00 PM
Christmas Eve

Prelude
Tower Bells and Welcome
Announcements

Visitors are encouraged to note their attendance by filling out the “Welcome” side (blue print) of the pew cards and putting the card into the offering plate near the entrance doors.

Welcome to visitors! You are invited to take a business card on tables at the front entrance for Zion’s contact details. Zion’s website is www.zionrco.org.

Worship Notes about Social Distancing: Face covering must be used at all times. Worshipers should sit in family groups with 6-foot social distancing between groups. The congregation is invited to speak and sing the parts in bold through a face covering. Face coverings are available near the front door.

Worship Service and Participation: This service is designed to reflect upon the meaning of Christmas symbols. At this time of pandemic, when illnesses and quarantines have changed so many activities among us, it is vital to our spiritual and physical health that we remember and do that which is most important in life. Christmas is fundamentally about the birth of Jesus Christ our Savior. If our various Christmas traditions and symbols help us to think about Jesus, then they are things that help strengthen our faith. But if various traditions lead us away from faith in Jesus, then those traditions are not helpful. In this service, whoever is in attendance, whether adult or child, is invited to participate in the questions and answers about Christmas symbols so that the symbols can all the more point our faith to look to Jesus.

Children are invited to answer questions while sitting in the pews where they sit with their families (but responses from adults are also welcome). Children are invited to come forward at the time to place each symbol up near the altar. At the closing prayer children are also invited to come forward to the altar.

1 O come, all ye faithful,
 Joyful and triumphant!
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
 Come and behold Him Born the king of angels;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,
 Light of Light eternal,
 Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;

Son of the Father
 Now in flesh appearing! (*Refrain*)

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God In the highest: (*Refrain*)

4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
 Born this happy morning;
 Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
 Word of the Father
 Now in flesh appearing! (*Refrain*)

INVOCATION AND OPENING VERSES
 (*Congregation Stands*)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

P: O Lord, open my lips.

C: and my mouth will declare Your praises.

P: Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

C: make haste to help me, O Lord.

All: Glory be 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.

All: Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us!

HEARING GOD'S WORD
 (*Congregation remains standing*)

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
 and the government shall be upon his
 shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and of
 peace
there will be no end,
 on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
 to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1-21 (*Congregation remains standing*)

1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And all went to be registered, each to his own town. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. 6 And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

**14 "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"**

15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, **"Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."**

16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. 17 And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

21 And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ!

REFLECTION ON CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS

(*Congregation sits*)

What did the angel first say to the shepherds? _____

Why did the angel speak to the shepherds? _____

Who is the good news? _____

All: Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying. "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace good will toward men!"

(Christ candle in the middle of the Advent Wreath is lit.)

Christmas Carol

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

LSB 380

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!"

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

ANGEL

In the Old Testament the Hebrew word translated as "angel" is *malak*. This Old Testament word has the general meaning "messenger." In the New Testament the Greek word for angel, *aggelos*, also means a messenger. The Bible teaches that angels are messengers from God.

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-33

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" 29 But

she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

What is an angel? _____

Who did angels talk to about Baby Jesus? _____

Who else did an angel talk to? _____

Who sang to the shepherds? _____

An angel is put on the designated place near the altar.

CHRISTMAS TREE

Some kinds of plants are called "evergreen." Evergreen bushes and trees are always green. They do not lose their leaves or turn colors in the fall, they stay green. The leaves or needles of an evergreen tree always stay green and alive no matter if it is summer, fall, winter or spring. The traditional Christmas tree is an evergreen tree and reminds us that God promises everlasting life through faith in Jesus. God's promises never change no matter what happens in our life.

Responsive Reading about Everlasting Life from John 11

Men: Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Women: Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

All: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Women: She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

What is the kind of tree for a Christmas tree? _____

Does the evergreen tree lose its leaves when winter comes? _____

Who gives us life that never ends or dies? _____

A Christmas tree is put on the designated place near the altar.

Christmas Carol

Angels from the Realms of Glory

LSB 367

1 Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth:
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.

2 Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines His Infant Light. (*Refrain*)

Refrain Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

3 Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star. (*Refrain*)

CHRISTMAS WREATH

A Christmas wreath is a circle. A circle has no end and no beginning. A circle reminds us of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who has no beginning and no end. One of the names of Jesus is the "Alpha and Omega" which shows that He is more than everything in the alphabet, more than A to Z. Jesus is more than any human word or description can hold. He has no beginning and no end.

In Revelation 21:5-7:

P: Our Lord Jesus showed to St. John the great victory He would give His people.

"And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

All: And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

P: To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

All: The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

What did Jesus say He is... the Alpha and....? _____

That means that Jesus is the what? _____

What shape is the Christmas wreath? _____

Does the Christmas wreath have a beginning or end? _____

Who has no beginning and no end? Who has power to take care of us? _____

A Christmas wreath on the designated place near the altar.

CANDLE

P: "Jesus said..."

All: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

What is this thing that has a small fire on it? _____

When it is dark all around us, what can a candle do? _____

What does Jesus say He does in our life like a candle does for us? _____

A candle is put on the designated place near the altar.

CHRISTMAS STAR AND CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Responsive Reading (Matthew 2:7-11)

P: Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.

Men: And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."

Women: After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.

All: When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

Men: And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him.

Women: Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

What led the Wise men to find Baby Jesus? _____

What do stars in our Christmas decorations remind us about? _____

What did the Wise Men do when they found Jesus? _____

What can we do like the Wise men? _____

What were the gifts the Wise man gave to Jesus, frankincense, myrrh and _____

What is the best Christmas gift of all to us? _____

What does John 3:16 teach us about God's gift of His Son? _____

Stars and gifts are put on the designated place near the altar.

BABY JESUS, CHRISTMAS PRAYERS AND BLESSING

(Children sing the "Away in a Manger" verse one alone. The rest of the congregation joins in with verses 2-3. Children may sing from the front of the church, the pastor or teacher will help direct the children where they will stand to sing.)

1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky--looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

All:

2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the
sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

(Children are invited to come up to altar area with the pastor and teacher.)

What laid in the manger on the first Christmas night? _____

What was the baby's name? _____

What did Jesus do when He grew up? _____

Did Jesus stay dead? _____

What does the risen Lord Jesus do for our sins? _____

What does our Lord Jesus do in our lives? _____

CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

P: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us so much that You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to be born of the Virgin Mary. Thank You, Dear Jesus, for being born of Mary for me. **Dear Jesus, thank You.**

P: Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for growing up in this world. Thank you for teaching and healing many people. Thank You for dying on the cross to pay for my sins. **Dear Jesus, thank You.**

P: Dear Jesus, thank You for rising from the dead and giving me life everlasting with You in heaven. **Dear Jesus, thank You.**

P: Dear Jesus, help me not to think about decorations, parties, and presents so much that I forget about You. Teach me to remember our Christmas decorations and symbols point to You and Your love for me and my family. **Dear Jesus, thank You.**

P: Dear Jesus, thank You for all who take care of me: my parents, grandparents and all my family. Firefighters and police. Doctors and nurses. Farmers and store workers. Factory workers and truck drivers. Mayors, town councils, our governors, president and all other people in government. All our military like soldiers, sailors, pilots and marines. Dear Jesus keep them all safe, and give them a good Christmas. **Thank you, Dear Jesus.**

P: Dear Jesus, bless me and my family this Christmas. Keep us safe. Keep us believing in You. **Thank You, Dear Jesus.**

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 adults accompanying the children to the front put his/her hand on the child's head or shoulder as the Pastor speaks the blessing.

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. **Amen.**

The children and adults return to their pews.

Christmas Carol

Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363

1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Stille nacht, heilige nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das heilige Elternpaar,
Das in Stalle zu Bethlehem war,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind.

2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born!
Christ, the Savior is born!

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Orderly dismissal and exit of the congregation. Children pick up Christmas packages from the congregation in the basement on way out of church.

Special Service Schedule

New Year's Day Service with communion on Thursday, December 31 at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Holy Communion will be given at both services.