



FOURTH SUNDAY OF  
**ADVENT**

Zion Lutheran Church  
210 North Wayne St.  
St. Marys, OH 45885

December 24, 2023  
8:00 a.m.

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Setting 10

PRELUDE      *The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came*      Lau

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG      *"The King Shall Come*      #260

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS      Page 94

P The days are coming, says the Lord, when God's promises to Israel and Judah will be fulfilled. Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship, in the name of the Father, the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. (Jeremiah 33:14)

C Amen.

P The Lord proclaimed, "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me." Let us take this time to examine ourselves, asking for forgiveness for the things which we have done that are not pleasing to the Lord and the things which we have neglected. (Malachi 3:1)

P Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C Amen.**

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

P Most merciful God,

**C we confess that we are captive to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and  
deed, by what we have done  
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,  
so that we may delight in your will  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

P In the mercy of almighty God,  
Jesus Christ was given to die for us,  
and for his sake God forgives us all our sins.  
As a called and ordained minister of the church of  
Christ, and by his authority,  
I therefore declare to you  
the entire forgiveness of all your sins,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the + Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit

C Amen.

### GREETING

L The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ for whom we wait, the  
love of the Father who will never let us go, and the peace  
of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

### KYRIE

Page 203



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.  
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.  
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!



- 1 Come, let us join our cheer-ful songs with an-gels round the throne;  
 2 "Wor - thy the Lamb that died," they cry, "to be ex - alt - ed thus!"  
 3 Je - sus is wor - thy to re-ceive hon - or and pow'r di - vine;  
 4 Let all cre - a - tion join in one to bless the sa - cred name



ten thou-sand thou-sand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.  
 "Wor - thy the Lamb," our lips re - ply, "for he was slain for us!"  
 and bless-ings, more than we can give, be, Lord, for - ev - er thine.  
 of God who sits up - on the throne, and to a - dore the Lamb.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Insert

## FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Insert

## PSALM 89:1-5

Insert

## SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

Insert

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Page 205



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior; o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

**P** The holy gospel according to Saint Luke the first chapter.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL**

**Luke 1:26-38**

Insert

**P** The gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

Pastor Bill

**HYMN OF THE DAY**     *"Fling Wide the Door"*

#259

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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**L** Lord in your mercy...

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

## PEACE

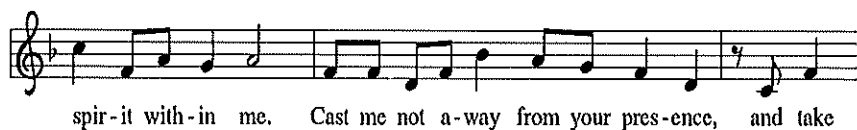
P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERING *God That Madeth Earth and Heaven*

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE HYMN

#186



## OFFERING PRAYER

L Let us pray.

Loving God, we give you thanks for the generous gifts you have first given us. May that which we offer to you, come joyfully from our hearts and be pleasing in your sight.

C Amen.

## 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.

## BLESSING

P As you go from this place, remember that with God, nothing is impossible. May God the Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit go before you, beside you, and with you wherever you go. (Luke 1:37)

C Amen.

## SENDING

*"Joy to the World"*

#267

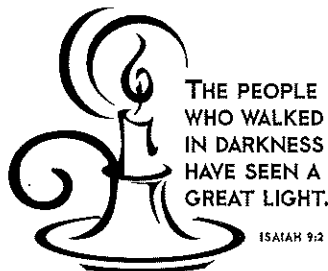
## DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord!

C Thanks be to God!

## POSTLUDE

*Postlude*



**Memory Verse:**

**Romans 16:27**

*...to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

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*The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God in Celebration of Christmas Day and the birth of Jesus, by Marion and Josie Slater.*

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***Today, December 24\****

- Acolytes:** 8AM: Zoey Lampert  
**Ushers:** 8AM: Judy Schultz, Deb Henning,  
Bob Hinschlager, Jody Slemmons  
**Greeters:** 8AM: Judy Schultz, Vic Von Blon  
**Readers:** 8AM: Steve McAfee

***Next Sunday, December 31\****

- Acolytes:** 8AM: Maylee Fischbach  
10:30am: Hunter Coldiron  
**Communion** 8AM: Jody Slemmons



- Assistants:** 10:30AM: Ruth Hoenie
- Crucifer:** 8AM: Aiden Meinerding  
10:30AM: Allison Ankerman
- Ushers:** 8AM: Jeanne Wurster, Rhonda Weaver,  
Deb Henning, Doug Stetler  
10:30AM: Dwayne Hoenie, Sandy Wierwille,  
Mark & Connie Torsell
- Fellowship Table:** 8AM: Deb Henning  
10:30am: Sandy Wierwille
- Greeters:** 8AM: Ed & Linda Yahl  
10:30AM: Sandy Wierwille, Joni Immenschuh
- Readers:** 8AM: Dora McAfee  
10:30AM: Stanley Brown

\*Correct as of time printed

ATTENDANCE .....	Last Wednesday: 58
.....Sunday 8 a.m.: 62, 10:30 a.m.: 47, Total for the Day: 109	
.....	Total for the Week: 167
PIANIST.....	Miriam Johns
DIRECTOR OF BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION .....	
.....	Mindy Thiebeau, <a href="mailto:zionbpe@gmail.com">zionbpe@gmail.com</a>
CONGREGATION PRESIDENT.....	Neal Brady
OFFICE MANAGER .....	Kathy Bishir, <a href="mailto:kbishir@hotmail.com">kbishir@hotmail.com</a>
OFFICE ASSISTANT .....	Ann Maki, <a href="mailto:annmmaki@yahoo.com">annmmaki@yahoo.com</a>
LAY LEADER .....	Heidi Yahl, <a href="mailto:heidiyahl@yahoo.com">heidiyahl@yahoo.com</a>
PASTOR.....	William Maki, <a href="mailto:wllmmaki@yahoo.com">wllmmaki@yahoo.com</a>
MINISTERS .....	All Members of Zion
CHURCH WEBSITE .....	<a href="http://www.zionstmarys.org">www.zionstmarys.org</a>
CHURCH OFFICE.....	419-394-3115

## Calendar for December 24—January 7, 2023

S/24	8:00 a.m.	Worship*	No Sunday School No 10:30 a.m. Worship
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship*	
	11:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship*	
M/25		Merry Christmas/Office Closed	
T/26	9:00 a.m.	Dorcas Quilting	
W/27	12:30 p.m.	Bulletin Information Deadline No Wednesday Service	
S/31	8:00 a.m.	Worship+*	No Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Worship*	
M/1		Happy New Year/Office Closed	
T/2	9:00 a.m.	Dorcas Quilting	
W/3	11:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting	
	12:30 p.m.	Bulletin Information Deadline	
	1:00 p.m.	Book Club	
	6:30 p.m.	Worship*	
	7:00 p.m.	Confirmation Class	
Th/4	12:00 Noon	Middle School Bible Release Time	
S/6	10:00 a.m.	Take Down Christmas Decorations	
S/7	8:00 a.m.	Worship+*/Recognition of 2023 & Installation of 2024 Councils	
	9:15 a.m.	Sunday School	
	10:30 a.m.	Worship*/Recognition of 2023 & Installation of 2024 Councils	

*\*Holy Communion*

*\*Livestreamed on [www.zionstmarys.org](http://www.zionstmarys.org) & on WCSM 96.7 Radio*



**We invite you** to include the following people in your daily prayers: Janet Dicke, Judy Von Blon, Brent Paulus, Sandi Deerhake, Alma Kuffner, Michael Moore, Tom Kaster, Ann Morris, Darlene Henkener, Margaret Moore, Ronald Suchland, Don Diers, Linda Diers, Ruth Schreffler, Vicki Bishir, Emily Henkle, Kristin Hemmelgarn, Mary Willmann, Judy, Dana Kittle, Vicki Homan, Lisa Suchland, Kelsey, Eileen Zimmerman,Carolynn Sidey, Markham Hodge, Forrest Cooper, Janet, Mark Torsell, Michael Gardner, Jamie, Sharon Lhaman, Family of Sandy Minturn, Bill & Carolyn Slemmons, Bob Hinschlager, Bob Suchland, Janet, Analisa Bouscaren, Alan Bishir, Lonnie Hietkamp, Eden Tangeman, Margaret Miller, Mike Kittle and the people of Israel.

**Please pray** for Sean Lawler, Andrew Johnson, Michael Carroll, Nathan Adams, Jacob Yahl, Jason Gross, Daniel C. Lukac IV, Michael Franklin and Kyle Schmehl who are in the service. Please pray for them, their family, and their safe return home.

**Our loose offerings** each Wednesday and Sunday for the month of December are earmarked to support the Institute of Lutheran Theology. The Institute of Lutheran Theology is a private Lutheran seminary in Brookings, South Dakota. It provides distance education online and at its campus in Brookings. For more information on this Institute, check out the December newsletter. *The loose plate offerings for Christmas Eve will go toward Zion's current expenses.*

**Thank you** to Teresa and Nora for their help wrapping the Christmas gifts for our congregation last Saturday. We were able to wrap 27-30 packages. Thanks to all and Merry Christmas from the Creative Crafters.

**Snow Removal:** Volunteers are needed to help with snow removal especially on Sundays and Wednesdays. Let the church

office know (419/394-3115) or talk to Dana Cook, trustee, if you are able to help out.

**Reminder!** There will be no Sunday School **today** or **Sunday, December 31.**

**Our Christmas Eve Candlelight worship** services will be held **tonight**, in the Sanctuary, at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. Holy Communion will be served at each service. We invite you to bring your family and friends with you to worship.

**The church office** will be closed on **Monday, December 25,** and **Monday, January 1.**

**Women's Fellowship** will resume on Monday, January 8, 2024. A new study will begin; *The Life of Martin Luther, An Historical Journey and Bible Study*, by the Rev. Steven E. King. All women of Zion are welcome to attend! Please notify the church office by **Tuesday, December 26**, if you wish to attend and to order a study guide. Cost is \$13 for the study guide. Contact Pam Fledderjohann if you have any questions, 419-953-2334.

**The church office** will have limited hours, beginning on **December 26 through December 29.** For that week the office hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**NO Wednesday night** worship service on **December 27.**

**The recognitions** of our 2023 Congregation Council and Women's Council and installation of the 2024 councils will take place at both services on **Sunday, January 7.** If you were a member of council and are a newly elected council member, please plan to attend one of the worship services on that day. See you there!

**The Fellowship Table** could use more people on the schedule (especially for the late service). If you are able to help with this ministry, please mark your "I Worshiped Today". Treats do not need to be homemade. If you have any questions, speak to Sandy Wierwille.

**Birthday Bags:** The women are once again putting together Birthday Bags for Agape. We will be collecting box cake mixes and frosting for 30 bags (a month's supply for Agape's food recipients). Please place your donations in the tub by the elevator. This is one of our local community projects. Thank you for participating. We will be putting bags together in January at our workday.

**Coats for those in need** will be given away at Agape until the end of February 2024. If you feel inclined to bring in coats to Agape for One Warm Coat campaign, when dropping them off just tell them that they are for the one warm coat drive and they will go to the right building.

**The 2024 Flower Chart** for the first 6 months is on the bulletin board by the alley entrance. We invite you to select the date you wish to provide flowers. On the Tuesday before the date you selected, order your arrangement from your favorite florist, and *contact the church office, 419-394-3115*, to let us know what information you would like included in the bulletin. Upcoming dates: **January 7, 14 & 21.**

**We have installed equipment** for livestreaming of our worship services. The worship services can be found on our Facebook page. Volunteers are needed to help with recording each of the services. Please contact the church office, 419-394-3115, or Pastor Bill about this ministry.

**Our 8 a.m. worship service** is broadcast live on WCSM radio 96.7 FM. Thank you to our primary sponsor of our WCSM radio broadcast—St. Marys Chrysler. Volunteers are needed to help with the sound board. No experience needed! Anyone interested in running the sound board during worship will be trained. We would like to have more people for rotation purposes. Contact the church office, 419-394-3115, or Pastor Bill if you can help.

<b>Weekly Budget</b>	<b>51 Week Budget</b>	<b>51 Week Income</b>	<b>Received 12/17</b>
\$6,133--Current	\$312,783	\$285,776	\$10,624
\$290--NALC Offering	\$14,790	\$12,308	\$117

**Council Organization 2023**

- President:* ..... Neal Brady
- Vice President:* ..... Cheryl Macklem
- Secretary:* ..... Jeanne Wurster
- Assistant Secretary:* ..... Genevieve Brown
- Treasurer:* ..... Stanley Brown
- Assistant Treasurer:* ..... Andrew O'Bryan

**COUNCIL AT LARGE:** Pete Ackroyd, Stan Brown, Thelma Kellermeyer, Cheryl Macklem, Andrew O'Bryan, Doug Stetler

**BOARD OF DEACONS:** John Hesse, Dwayne Hoenie, Dan Macklem, Judy Schultz, Jody Slemmons, Dianne Uhlenhake, Rhonda Weaver, **Jeanne Wurster\***, Ryan Yahl

**BOARD ELDERS:** **Darl Bishir\***, Kathy Lampert, Brandy Yahl

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** **Dana Cook\***, Ed Flora, Eric Langsdon, Kurt Rodeheffer

**BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION:** Alexa Coldiron, Karrie Hughes,  
Ann Maki, Sandy Wierwille\*

**BOARD OF PARISH EDUCATION DIRECTOR:** Mindy Thiebeau

**YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE:** Genevieve Brown

**MEMBERS TO THE TRUST FUND:** Darl Bishir, Doris Cook\*,  
Rick Green, Bill Kellermeyer, Marion Slater

*\*Chairperson*

# Listening for the Promise

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fourth Sunday of Advent — December 24, 2023

*“Now to him who is able...”*

*– Romans 16:25a –*

A doxology is a hymn of praise. We are familiar with many different doxologies, including the *Gloria Patri*, “Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.” Doxologies can be very simple — or more complicated like the one in today’s passage. Through his words Paul not only praises God, but he also gives us the reason why God deserves the glory.

*He is able.* The Christmas story seems impossible. The story of Mary, a pregnant virgin, is beyond our understanding. It is so unbelievable that many have taken great pains to explain away Mary’s virginity. Even Mary wondered at this impossibility, “How can this be since I have not been with a man?” Yet, God is able to do this thing.

The story of John is no less miraculous; he was born to elderly parents Elizabeth and Zechariah. Yet, God was able to do this thing, too.

Think about the incredible acts of God in the Old Testament: the flood and the saving of Noah’s family, the parting of the Red Sea and all that occurred during Israel’s exodus. The prophets healed the sick, raised the dead, and did other miraculous things with water, flour, and oil.

In the New Testament, Jesus did all that and more. He made water into wine, fed thousands on one child’s meal, and cast out demons from those bound in darkness. He did things that had never been done before, like healing a man born blind. God gifted and sent the disciples into the world to continue his impossible work. Each impossible thing was the fulfillment of a promise. God is not only able, he is willing and faithful.

Paul writes that the mystery of God is that the Gospel is *for all nations*. Hundreds, even thousands, come to believe from the word of just one or two witnesses. This seems impossible, yet God is able to do this thing. This is why he is worthy of praise. He is able to do the impossible, and invites us to tell the stories that are ridiculous and yet true. God calls and gifts us to take the message into the world through doxologies and sharing the Gospel. As we do so, the world experiences God’s grace through us and people see that he is truly able and willing to fulfill all his promises.