

APOSTLES' CREED PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Petitions conclude... name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE OFFERING

OFFERING VOLUNTARY — Deborah Maier

COMMUNION

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER [TRADITIONAL]

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY — Deborah Maier

BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. Amen.

SENDING

BENEDICTION

HYMN #288 — *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest! **And peace to God's people on earth!**
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE — Deborah Maier



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

1254 S. Union Street, Shawano, WI 54166

715.526.2017 • zion@shawanozion.org • www.shawanozion.org

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First Sunday of Christmas

DECEMBER 28, 2025

WELCOME TO ZION

PRELUDE — Deborah Maier

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made in remembrance of Baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God, we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. **Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you. ✠ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

HYMN #298 — *The Bells of Christmas*

GREETING

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING — *Isaiah 63:7-9*

I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD, the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, because of all that the LORD has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that the LORD has shown them out of mercy, out of abundant steadfast love. For the LORD said, “Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely”; and the LORD became their savior in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but the presence of the LORD that saved them; out of love and pity the LORD redeemed them; lifting them up and carrying them all the days of old.

SECOND READING — *Hebrews 2:10-18*

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.” And again, “I will put my trust in God.” And again, “Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that Jesus did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore Jesus had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a

merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because Jesus himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL — *Matthew 2:13-23*

Now after the magi had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

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

CHILDRENS' SERMON

THE SERMON — Pastor Scott Ludford

HYMN #296 — *What Child is This?*