

Wherever you may be, welcome to our worshipping community!



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH • HICKORY NC

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Congregation – Respond in bold portions

GATHERING SONG & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let the Whole Creation Cry

HINTZE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, **(+)** one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, we confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God, we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. **We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through **(+)** Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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

We pray – You are great, O God, **and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-12

A reading from Zechariah, the 9th chapter.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war-horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.

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

SECOND READING: Romans 7:15-25a

A reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans, the 7th chapter.

[Paul writes:] I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son

except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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

SERMON

Rev. David T. Drysdale II, Pastor

REFLECTION SONG

A time to reflect, pray or meditate.

Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty

APOSTLES' CREED

We profess our faith saying – **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

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, we pray to God for our shared world.

A brief silence.

For the church. Sustain us as we share your word. Embrace us as we struggle to find our common ground. Lift up leaders with powerful and prophetic voices. Free us from stagnant faith. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For the well-being of creation. Protect the air, water, and land from abuse and pollution. Free us from apathy in our care of creation and direct us toward sustainable living. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For the nations especially the United States and Canada, each celebrating their nationhood in recent days. Guide leaders in developing just policies and guide difficult conversations. Free us from those forms of patriotism and nationalism that hinder relationship-building. Lead us to expansive love for our neighbor. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For all in need. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed abandoned especially those named on our prayer list and those we name before you now aloud on our lips or in the silence of our hearts (*we pause for the offering of names*)... Take their yoke upon you and ease their burdens. Give your consolation and free us from all that keeps us bound. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For this congregation and all other congregations in our city. Bless pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders. Energize children’s ministry volunteers, church administrators, and those who maintain our facilities and properties. Shine in this place that we might notice the ways your love transforms our lives. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For visiting our jails and prisons with your justice, judgment and mercy. Bring the guilty to repentance and amendment of life according to your will; and grant them hope for their future. For any held unjustly, raise up advocates and bring them release; forgive us, teach us, and grant us wisdom to improve our justice system. Grant those who work in these institutions strength and compassion and lead them to abide in their humanity. Lead us to do for those in prison what we would do for Christ. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For our challenges with this pandemic. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to health care workers and protect them as their work caring for others puts them at great risk. Guide us as we consider how best to respond as new cases continue to increase. Grant leaders wisdom, integrity, and courage as they consider the way forward: may safeguarding lives be seen as more important than gains in political standing. Renew our patience so we face these days with compassion, concern, good humor, trust, and acts of love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For those who work among the sick; grant them strength, courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for those who have died in faith especially Mary Kahill. Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE AND OFFERING

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*Greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, saying "Peace be with you,"
Please mail your offering to Zion or, better yet, give online through the "Donation" button on our website.*

OFFERING PRAYER

We pray – God of goodness and growth, **all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread, life and the community of saints: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our Lord. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

We pray. **Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to

all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us, saying: **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

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, (+) Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Christ is with you. So, proclaim the good news of God in Christ through your words and deeds, serve all people, and strive for justice and peace in all the earth. **We will! Thanks be to God!**

SENDING SONG

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

*Called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit,
members of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church will
WELCOME, WORSHIP, WITNESS
all to the Glory of God.*

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please pray for those who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, especially the following:

ZION MEMBERS... Jeb Bass, Beard Family, Sam Collins; Donna Daily, Jason Davis Family (Leslie & Kenneth Eggers, Mary Jo Hilton); Elsie Eudy, MaryAnn Gilman, Ron Herman, Wayne Huffman, Charles Hunt, Janice Jeffreys, Mary Kahill Family, Leigh Ann Lackey, Rose Lackey, Jeff Lail, Nellie Lutz, Roger Massey, Susan McNeely, Mike McRee, Violet Michael, Catherine Miller, Joe Miller, Casey & Lily Mull, Kenny Mull, Patrick Mull, Jean T. Pitts, Martha Propst, Benelia Reese, Barron Whitener, Stephen Whitener, Jerry & Marianne Yoder.

HOMEBOUND... Bernice Bass, Beryl Beard, Janelda Deal, Revonda Harris, Betty Hefner, Ray Powell, Barbara Warren, Dottie Yoder.

FRIENDS OF ZION... Renee Biggs, Jim Bridgeman, Brian Caldwell, Donna Calloway, Danny Chapman, Bill Childs, Rick Clayton, Ken Dickerson, Guy D. Elmore, Tammy Fletcher, Aaron Hamrick, Stamey & Sandy Hardin, Pauline Hatcher, Rev. Doug Hefner and Family, Dana Hicks, Jian Hilton-Demetri Saltz Family, Felicia Hollar, Dale Hollars, David Hollars, Jenni Holmes, Jackie Huffman, Russell & Lovenia Icenhour, Matt Jones, Alice Keenan, Sandra Lewis, Austin McCaslin, Jenny Massey McMahan, Mabel Medlin Family, Rev. George Miller Family, Alex Moore, Leslie Murphy, Betty Parsons, David Pitts, Mark Pitts, Susan Pokwatka, Charlie Rauch, Wayne & Brenda Reed, Iva Rhyne, Larry Robinson, Rick Sigmon, Rev. Maurice Staley, Michael Sullivan, Amelia Tate, Kristen Teague, Laura Teague, Allen Travis, Jessica Vandecar, Stephen Westmoreland, Alyssa Woods, Ruby Wooten.