



# TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

1323 Central Ave, Alameda CA (510) 522-5220  
*Anchored in Faith. Serving Our Neighbor. Singing God's Praise.*

*Mission: To be a caring and diverse community of people who know and share the love of God through Jesus Christ.*

## Fourth Sunday of Advent December 17, 2023

[www.trinityalameda.org](http://www.trinityalameda.org)  
Rev. Stephanie Johnson, Pastor (510) 846-0883

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God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

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**WELCOME TO TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH.** *You are invited to join with us as we seek to be God's loving community for all who enter here. You are received as a friend . . .*

- *just as you are, created by God.*
- *whatever your color, culture and customs, your age, abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity.*
- *wherever circumstances find you... in the midst of change or challenge or pain, in need of strength and hope, or in search of spiritual fullness and friendship.*
- *whether you are a new visitor or an old friend, have no church home, have doubts or do not believe, or want to follow Christ and pursue peace and justice in Christ's name.*

*You are embraced as an expression of the diversity and beauty of the creation God has given us.*

**You are welcome here!**

*The presence of children is a gift to the church and a reminder that our congregation is growing.  
Please welcome our youngest brothers and sisters and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.*

# ✠ THE SERVICE ✠

## PRELUDE *Savior of the Nations, Come*

Tune: *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, J. Walter, 1524  
Arr. Helmut Walcha, 1907-1991 ©1954 by C. F. Peters

## ✠ GATHERING ✠

(Arrows indicate when the congregation may sit ↓ or stand ↑ as able. **Bold print** are responses spoken by the congregation.)

### ↓ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dream so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. **Amen.**

*Light all four candles.*

### ↑ HYMN *Savior of the Nations, Come*

#263 vs. 1, 2, 6

- 1 *Savior of the nations, come;  
virgin's son, make here your home.  
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:  
God has chosen such a birth.*
- 2 *Not by human flesh and blood,  
but the mystic Breath of God,  
was the Word of God made flesh,  
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.*
- 6 *Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,  
virgin's son, incarnate Word!  
To the holy Trinity  
praise we sing eternally!*

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397;  
Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version

### ↑ GREETING

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

### ↑ CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Glory to God* p. 185 (Refrain)

*Glory to God in the highest, the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.*

*Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory. (Refrain)*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,*

*you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;*

*you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer. (Refrain)*

*For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.  
Amen. Amen.*

*(Final refrain)*

*Glory to God in the highest, the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.*

*Glory to God in the highest, the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.*

### ↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. **With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## ✠ WORD ✠

### ↓ FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among

all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

<sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Word of God, Word of Life.      **Thanks be to God.**

↓ **SECOND READING**      **Romans 16:25-27**

<sup>25</sup>Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup>but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup>to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Word of God, Word of Life.      **Thanks be to God.**

↑ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**      **p. 188**

*Al-le-lu-ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of e-ter-nal life.  
Al-le-lu-ia... al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia,  
Al-le-lu-ia... al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.*

↑ **GOSPEL**      **Luke 1:26-38**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.      **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored

one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>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 ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

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

↓ **Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55**      (read responsively)

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup>my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup>**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:**  
<sup>49</sup>you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.  
<sup>50</sup>**You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.**  
<sup>51</sup>You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,  
<sup>52</sup>**casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.**  
<sup>53</sup>You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup>**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,**  
<sup>55</sup>the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever.

↓ **SERMON**

Congregation to join on the refrain of each verse

**Refrain**

***That boy-child of Mary was born in a stable,  
a manger his cradle in Bethlehem.***

↑APOSTLES' CREED p. 105

Let us profess our faith in the words of the 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**

*(The congregation is encouraged to take the position which is most prayerful to you.)*

You may choose to sit or stand as you are comfortable.

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

***A brief silence.***

You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow

wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill, especially for *Elizabeth Madaras, RuthAnne Ladue, Jerry Stich, Kelly Rager, Sister Pat Nagle, Jeremy Dude, Judy Lamb, Bernadette Hunsaker, Peter Dow, Jane McDermott, Mary Goglio, Wes & Marla Anderson, Constance Farber, Alan Petersen, Annalise Simmons, Helen Pedersen, Ann Kenyo, Tricia, Pam Clisham, Deanna Madarasz, Craig Anderson, Pastor Craig, Michael Rasmussen, Jackson Bohm, Nancy Stich, Patricia Runo, Gail Cromack, Kate Ganschow, Michael Lamb, Maddy Pearce, Christine Winberg and Dorothy Wingire.* Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the ministries of your Word, for Trinity Church Council, the Strategic Exploration Team, the priesthood of all believers, Saint Paul Lutheran Church in Oakland, the Lutheran Church of Kagitumba in Rwanda and our Sunday School. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

At this time, you are invited to pray the prayers of your heart, either silently or aloud.

***A moment is offered for prayers from the congregation***

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.**

## ✠ MEAL ✠

### ↑SHARING THE PEACE

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

### ↓OFFERING *Comfort, Comfort, Now My People*

Tune: *Freu dich Sehr*, 1551 Arr. Egil Hovland, 1924-2013  
©1963 Harald Lyche & Co.

### ↑ GREAT THANKSGIVING p. 190

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### ↑PREFACE FOR THE DAY

*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:*

### ↑HOLY, HOLY, HOLY p. 190

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:  
heaven and earth are full of your glory,  
full of your glory.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.***

### ↑JESUS' WORDS OF INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

### ↑LORD'S PRAYER

*You are invited to pray in the version or language of your choice.*

**Our father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### ↓INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### ↓DISTRIBUTION

*All are welcome to receive Holy Communion.  
The cup we serve is non-alcoholic. **Gluten-free wafers are offered for those who have need. Please indicate your need to the pastor as you approach to receive the host.** If you do not wish to take communion you may come forward for a blessing or remain seated.*

### ↓LAMB OF GOD p. 191

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.***

### ↑POST COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and give you peace.  
**Amen.**

### ↑PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Generous God,  
**in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## ✠ SENDING ✠

### ↑BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit  
✠ remain upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

### ↓ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ↑HYMN *Unexpected and Mysterious* #258

***1 Unexpected and mysterious  
is the gentle word of grace.  
Everloving and sustaining  
is the peace of God's embrace.  
If we falter in our courage  
and we doubt what we have known,  
God is faithful to console us  
as a mother tends her own.***

**2** *In a momentary meeting  
of eternity and time,  
Mary learned that she would carry  
both the mortal and divine.  
Then she learned of God's compassion,  
of Elizabeth's great joy,  
and she ran to greet the woman  
who would recognize her boy.*

**3** *We are called to ponder myst'ry  
and await the coming Christ,  
to embody God's compassion  
for each fragile human life.  
God is with us in our longing  
to bring healing to the earth,  
while we watch with joy and wonder  
for the promised Savior's birth.*

Text: Jeannette M. Lindholm, b. 1961  
Text © 2002 Jeannette M. Lindholm, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

**↑DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Keep awake.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

*The King Shall Come*

Tune: *Consolation*, A. Davisson, 1816

Arr. David N. Johnson, 1922-1987

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## THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AT TRINITY

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 52

### IMPORTANT DATES THIS WEEK:

Mon 12/18	9:30am	Craft Group
Tues 12/20	7:30am	Bible Study (meets on Zoom)
Wed 12/21	10:00am	Women's Bible Study (meets on Zoom)
Sun. 12/24	9:30am	Christmas Eve worship
	5:00pm	Christmas Eve worship

**THERE WILL NOT BE COFFEE HOUR AFTER WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY, 12/24.**

**ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31<sup>st</sup>,** you are invited to bring a finger food or plate of cookies to coffee hour. We will have hot chocolate (and of course coffee) and look forward to giving a toast to the coming blessings of 2024.

**ELCA GOOD GIFTS** Looking for a gift to give to someone who has everything? Consider a gift that keeps on giving! There are ELCA Good Gifts catalogs on the round table in the narthex. Consider purchasing bees or a pig or some chicks in a loved ones honor. The ornaments hanging on the tree are for you to take and give to the person you purchase in honor of. Please see Kathy Booker or Mary James if you have any questions about ELCA Good Gifts.

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN** invites you to a free, fun & festive Christmas Carol Sing-along. Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm. Refreshments will be served. It is open to everyone, children and adults alike. Immanuel is located at 142- Lafayette St. Parking on Chestnut at Santa Clara. RSVP not needed.

### Visits from Pastor Stephanie

If you would appreciate a visit from Pastor Stephanie, she is available by phone, text or email to make an appointment. She is happy to visit with you in your home, at her office, or a location of your convenience.

### Pastor's Office Hours

*Mon-10:00-Noon; Tues. 9am-Noon; Thurs.-10:00-Noon*

You can reach Pastor Stephanie on her cell phone at (510) 846-0883

