



# 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.*

## First Sunday of Christmas December 31, 2023

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

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The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

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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** *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

arr. Leila Viss, © 2014

## ✠ GATHERING ✠

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

↑ **CALL TO WORSHIP** #275 vs. 1, 4

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

**1** *Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
once you sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.*

**4** *All creation, join in praising  
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising  
to the eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.*

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3;  
Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, st. 4

↑ **CAROL** congregation choice

## ↑ 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.**

## ↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, **you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

↑ **GLORIA** *Midnight Stars Make Bright the Skies*

#280

**1** *Midnight stars make bright the skies,  
Bethlehem in slumber lies:  
glistering heav'n sends forth a great light,  
shepherds see a wondrous sight!  
Angels rank in chorus sing.  
Silken sounds from heaven ring.*

*Frightened shepherds hear them say:  
"Christ is born on earth today!"*

## Refrain

*Glory be to God on high,  
blest are all beneath the sky.*

**2** *Midnight slumber lies o'er all,  
one lone bright lamp lights the stall.  
Choose old clothing, wrap him warmly,  
manger shall his cradle be.  
Born to save us from our sin,  
Word made flesh, our lives to win,  
came to earth from heaven's throne,  
mortals' sin to bear alone. Refrain*

Text: Jing-qiu Yang, 1912-1966; tr. Mildred A. Wiant, 1898-2001  
Text © 1977 Chinese Christian Literature Council Ltd., Hong Kong, admin.  
Augsburg Fortress.

## ✠ WORD ✠

↓ **FIRST READING** Isaiah 61:10—62:3

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of  
salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of  
righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

<sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to  
spring up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and  
praise

to spring up before all the nations.

<sup>62:1</sup>For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.

<sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

<sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the  
LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

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

## ↓ Psalm 148

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise God in the heights.

<sup>2</sup>**Praise the LORD, all you angels;  
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD, sun and moon;  
sing praise, all you shining stars.

<sup>4</sup>**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens.**

<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they were created,

<sup>6</sup>**who made them stand fast forever and ever,  
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all deeps;

<sup>8</sup>**fire and hail, snow and fog,  
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

<sup>9</sup>mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

<sup>10</sup>**wild beasts and all cattle,  
creeping things and flying birds;**

<sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers of the world;

<sup>12</sup>**young men and maidens,  
old and young together.**

<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose  
name only is exalted, whose splendor is over  
earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup>**The LORD has raised up strength for the people  
and praise for all faithful servants, the children  
of Israel, a people who are near the LORD.  
Hallelujah! R**

## ↓ SECOND READING Galatians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

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

## ↑ GOSPEL      Once in Royal David's City      #269

**1    Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ, her little child.**

**2    He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**3    And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heav'n above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.**

**4    Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
there his children gather round,  
bright like stars, with glory crowned.**

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895

## ↓ CAROL SING

### ↑ 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.

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

*A brief silence.*

You inspire faith in our hearts and call us to rejoice with our whole selves at the salvation you bring. Make our churches places of belonging for all people in the fullness of their being. Raise up the gifts and the witness of people who are neurodivergent, living with disability, or bearing invisible illness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your praise is sung throughout creation in all times and seasons. As the new year turns, ground us in your changeless and sustaining love. Keep us attentive to the rhythms of the cosmos and inspire us to live in harmony with all the earth. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Give hope and stamina to leaders who work tirelessly for the sake of the most vulnerable. We pray especially for organizations working on behalf of children to provide basic needs, to protect from abuse and neglect, to address trauma, and to rescue from trafficking. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Sustain all people who, like Simeon and Anna, have been waiting for salvation and wholeness, especially *the family of Robert Voll, Ryan Simpson, 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.* We pray especially for anyone living with cancer or chronic illness, all people who are in physical rehabilitation or addiction recovery, and those experiencing complications from long COVID. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the ministries of your Word, for Trinity Church Council, the Strategic Exploration Team, the priesthood of all believers, Trinity Lutheran Church in Oakland, the Lutheran Church of Kagitumba in Rwanda and our Sunday School. We give thanks for the fullness of the life of Rachel Hanson as she celebrates her birthday this week. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Let this community of faith be a joyful and welcome place for all ages and generations. Teach us to honor the wisdom of children, the inquisitiveness of youth, the thoughtfulness of adults, and the knowledge of elders. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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*

We give thanks for all the beloved who lived with expectation and departed this life in peace. Sustain us in joy until we join them around your throne. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.  
**Amen.**

### ✠ MEAL ✠

#### ↑ SHARING THE PEACE

*In the Peace of God Find Rest*      **ACS #1029**

*In the peace of God find rest;  
in the pow'r of God find strength;  
in the love of God find grace;  
in God's peace find rest.*

Text: Joy F. Patterson, b. 1931  
Text © 2005 Joy F. Patterson, admin. Augsburg Fortress

↓ OFFERING CAROL      congregation's choice

#### ↑ 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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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, 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.

↓INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest!

Come to the table of peace.

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.*

↓HYMN *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* #276

- 1 *Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing,  
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child is Lord of all!*
- 2 *Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you!  
Christ the child was born for you!*

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt.

↑POST COMMUNION BLESSING

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

Amen.

↑PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our redeemer, **you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life.**

**As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

✠ SENDING ✠

↑BLESSING

God bless you and keep you, ✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. Amen.

↓ANNOUNCEMENTS

↑CAROL congregation's choice

↑DISMISSAL

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace.

Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Heaven and Nature Sing*

*Tune: Antioch, arr. Leila Viss, © 2023 LeilaViss.com*

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## THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AT TRINITY

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 52

### IMPORTANT DATES THIS WEEK:

Mon 1/1	9:30am	Craft Group
Tues 1/2	7:30am	Bible Study (meets on Zoom)
Wed 1/3	10:00am	Women's Bible Study (meets on Zoom)

### EPIPHANY STAR SERVICE JAN 7

This year we will have our annual Epiphany Star Service on a Sunday morning. While it is the morning after Epiphany (which is January 6th), we can still appreciate stories of God being revealed among us.

The Star Service draws upon this theme of God continuing to be revealed in our lives as we are given a word to ponder for the upcoming year and discuss how God was revealed through the words we were given to ponder over the past year. Don't miss your chance to get your 2024 star!

**SIGN-UP SHEETS** for Coffee Hour and the Midway Shelter Meal are available in the church entryway.

Please consider signing up to provide a light coffee hour one (or more) Sundays or to provide all or part of a 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Midway Shelter Meal. Please see Jessica with any questions about either of these activities.

### 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