



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 22, 2024

www.trinityalameda.org

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

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 ✠

↓ ANNOUNCEMENTS

↓ **PRELUDE** *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*
Tune: *Gabriel's Message*, Basque carol
Arr. Paul Manz, 1919-2009
© 1990 MorningStar Music Publishers

✠ 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

We praise you, O God, for this keeper of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light these four candles, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

Light all four candles.

↑ CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,
we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,
we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,
we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✠ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

↑ HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

#257 vs.1, 2, 5

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way. Refrain**

**5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. Refrain**

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

↑ 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 binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

✠ WORD ✠

↓ FIRST READING

Micah 5:2-5a

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the
strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be
great
to the ends of the earth,
^{5a} and he shall be the one of peace.

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

↓ Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55

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

⁵⁵ the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

↓ SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

⁵ Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;
⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.
⁷ Then I said, ‘See, I have come to do your will,
O God’
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”
⁸ When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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 1:39-55

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

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state

of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name;

⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones

and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

↓ SERMON

↓ CHOIR *No Wind at the Window*

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949 Text © 1992 WGRG, Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

↑ 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.

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. Today we pray especially for *Fern Stern, Larry Haskins, Anita Burnaford, Anna Streissguth, Starr Brown, Janette McChesney, Mary Waller, Sally Petersen, Jeremiah Jacob Schultz, Nevi Zabilski, Ann Kenyon, Betty Ann Haskins, Matt Fleischman, Ginny Parsons, Lou and Stevie O'Connell, Ryan Simpson, Elizabeth Madaras, Peter Dow, Jane McDermott, Mary Goglio, Marla Anderson, Constance Farber, Alan Petersen, Annalise Simmons, Helen Pedersen, Tricia, Pam Clisham, Deanna Madarasz, Jackson Bohm, Nancy Stich, Patricia Runo, Michael Rasmussen, Gail Cromack, Kate Ganschow, Michael Lamb, Maddy Pearce, Christine Winberg and Dorothy Wingire.*

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the ministries of your Word, for Trinity Church Council, the Strategic Exploration Team, the priesthood of all believers, Alameda Christian Reformed Church, the Lutheran Church of Kagitumba in Rwanda and our Sunday School. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy, **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

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

✠ MEAL ✠

↑ SHARING THE PEACE

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

↓ OFFERING *In the Bleak Midwinter*

Tune: *Cranham*, by Gustav Holst, 1874-1934
arr. Leila Viss, © 2024 LeilaViss.com

↑ 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 God thanks and praise.

↑ PREFACE

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, 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

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to 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,
we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of
salvation. We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace. We thank you for
showering us with mercy, for sending us into the
world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed
the hungry in your name. Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

↑ BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness
and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✠
bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

↑ 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
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↑ DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

Tune: *Haf trones lampa färdig*, Swedish folk tune
Arr. Paul Manz
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* Denotes a selection from the 2024 favorite hymns list.

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AT TRINITY

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 34

IMPORTANT DATES THIS WEEK:

Mon 12/23 9:30am Craft Group
Tues 12/24 7:30am Tuesday Morning Bible Study (meets on Zoom)
3:30pm Christmas Eve Worship
6:30pm Christmas Eve Worship
Sun 12/29 9:30am Sunday Worship- Lessons and Carols

TRINITY IS PLEASED TO WELCOME Pastor Rebecca Swee as our Guest Pastor this morning.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR NAMETAGS.

THIS MORNING IS THE LAST MORNING TO ADD CHRISTMAS DEDICATIONS to the Christmas Eve Bulletin. Please see the enclosed bulletin insert, fill it out and place it in the offering plate this morning.

PLEASE JOIN US AFTER WORSHIP THIS MORNING for our Stewardship Luncheon, a time of fellowship in thanksgiving for all the gifts you bring to Trinity.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP Confirmed times are **3:30 and 6:30 pm**. Both services include communion and candlelight.

THE WARMING SHELTER BEGINS THEIR TWO WEEK STAY AT TRINITY this evening. The shelter runs from 6pm-7am, with two staff members onsite the entire time. They will be with us until Sunday, January 5th. Please sign up for breakfast bags or to provide a part of the meal we are hosting.

ALAMEDA WARMING SHELTER OPPORTUNITY: Trinity is signed up for 3 days of providing to-go breakfast bags for the Warming Shelter guests while the shelter is being hosted at Trinity, and one dinner service. There is a sign-up sheet in the Hall if you would like to participate in providing a part of the items for the breakfast bags, or if you would like to participate in providing a portion of the meal for Saturday, January 4th. Please sign-up on the sign-up sheet. Jessica will follow up with each of the participants with more details.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JILL: Dear Congregation, I am looking forward to starting our ministry together, January 15th! In the most recent Synod Newsletter, the opportunity to participate in the ELCA National Day of Racial Healing online conference became available. Since it is just a few days after I start, I wanted you to have the opportunity to consider attending and to save the date. You can register on line. [You can find the link to register in the weekly email, but if you have trouble and want to register, please see Jessica]. I'm not sure how the break out workshops will work, but I'll ask some questions and get the information to you. I know that one of the requirements of this Interim time is for us to do some anti-racism work together. This looks like a great opportunity to begin a conversation and to decide how we will proceed from there. Meanwhile, Peace to you and Merry Christmas! Pastor Jill

Assisting in Worship:

This morning:

Assisting Minister: Kaye Fitzsimons
Reader: Ray Wentz
Greeters: Joanne Robinson
Children's Attendant: Mary James
Coffee Hour: Stewardship Luncheon
Altar Guild: Joanne Robinson

Next Sunday, 12/29

Assisting Minister: Anita Burnaford
Reader: Margie Sherratt
Greeters: John Kofranek & Marilyn Ohm-Smith
Children's Attendant: Candace Gutleben
Coffee Hour: Karol Luque
Altar Guild: Joanne Robinson

Next Week's Scripture Readings:

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

For Pastoral care during this time before we have an Interim Pastor, Pastor Ned O'Donnell had kindly agreed to provide this to us. He can be reached at (415) 652-0427 or via email at pastorned@live.com.