



Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church



Come Together Grow in Faith Serve the Lord

December 24, 2023 9:30 AM – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Service of the Word



Rev. Pamela Brouker, Supply Pastor

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WELCOME

to Holy Trinity

Reconciling in Christ

At Holy Trinity, we welcome and affirm everyone—because God welcomes and affirms everyone—



regardless of age, race, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other life circumstance.

You are welcome. Your family, children, friends, spouses, and partners are welcome.

You are welcome, whether you are a believer, a doubter, or a seeker.

Your diversity and uniqueness are welcomed and affirmed into the full life of Holy Trinity.

You are wanted here.

December Celebrations!

Happy Birthday!

Pam Shaw, Jerry Schock, Patrick Roberts, George Parseghian, Annika Mellor, Erlinde Beliveau, Steve Bush, Dick Topping, Shirley Jackson, Fran Mallon, Lena Olsson, Dave Reinhard, Brett Larson, George Saufley, Robert Refsdal, Linda Marshall, and Richard Anderson

Happy Anniversary!

Peter & Lynda Johnson, Karen Gerome & husband, David & Mary Kuck, and Jeff & Heidi Morrison.

A Warm Welcome as you worship with us today!

Whether you are here for the first time or a long time member, know that you are welcomed in Christ's Name, joined to be with us, Christ's Body the Church, as we worship God.

Your presence at worship is a gift!

We love having children worship with us!

At this moment, our Nursery is not staffed. You may find Children's bulletins and activities on tables inside the sanctuary.

Prayer Requests:

Prayer Request Cards are available indoors on the Usher's Table. Simply fill one out and hand it to the Pastor, or place it in the Offering Basket.

Office Hours & Pastoral Emergencies:

Church Office: *Monday-Thursday 9am-4pm*

Pastor's Office: *Tuesday & Wednesday afternoons*

If you need a Pastoral Visit, or experiencing a Pastoral Emergency, pastoral care is available for home or hospital visits, emotional support, and church ceremonies. Please contact the Church Office and we will connect you with our Pastor as soon as possible. Email office@htelc.com or call (603)436-1704 and leave a voicemail message.

Donate to Holy Trinity: You can place your offering in the offering plate during the service. We appreciate what you are able to give to help support our church and our ministries. Thank you.



To give online, visit

www.elixiogiving.com/App/Giving/htelc OR scan this QR code with the camera app on your phone.

Follow us on Facebook and YouTube:

@HolyTrinityEvangelicalLutheranChurch

PRAYER CONCERNS

Health Issues: Franklyn Vosburg, Jerry Schock, Alice Peterson, Don Gindlesperger, Richard Anderson, Dave Smith, Hazel Larson, Leo Larson, Geri Seig, Rani Marcus, Shirley Jackson, Lynda Johnson. **Homebound:** Carol Saufley, Barbara Werdelin, Dave & Joyce Rivoire, Anita Lindstrom, Judy Hollister, Jean Klein, Steve Bush, June Slipp. **Military:** Josh Bretz, Jacob Schankis, Jessica Chabot, Ian Connors.

Partners in Ministry: ELCA, New England Synod, Ismani Congregation in Tanzania, Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Church, Ascentria Care Alliance, Camp Calumet, Operation Blessing, Crossroads, Dover Friendly Kitchen, Good News Garage, Seacoast Family Promise, Salvation Army, & Lutheran World Relief.

Friends: Carol Dumican (friend of Bobbie Febbo), Scott Andrade (Bobbie Febbo's friend), Phil Cahners (Bobbie Febbo's son-in-law), David Roth (Bonnie Sanders' brother), Janis (friend of Eileen & Cark Kackenmeister).

NOTES ON TODAY'S SERVICE

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."

LECTIONARY

This Week: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Next Week: Isaiah 61:10—62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40.

Next week's service will be "A Service of Lessons and Carols". We will not be reading these readings next week.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Musician(s): N/A

Choir Director: N/A

Sound System & Live Stream: Franklyn Vosburg.

THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

WEDNESDAY, December 27

NO Bible Study

THURSDAY, December 28

NO Property Team

SUNDAY, December 31

9:30 AM: Sunday Worship (A Service of Lessons and Carols"

ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING

Sunday, December 10: 110 (In-Person) + 16 (Online) = 126

Offering: \$3,819.25

Sunday, December 17: 90 (In-Person) + 27 (Online) = 117

Offering: \$16,604.05

Announcements

In Memory of Geri Seig: Geri Seig, longtime member who moved away in 2019, passed away peacefully on Monday, December 18. Please keep Geri's family in your prayers at this time.

Mark will be away on Christmas break, from December 25 until the end of the year. He will return to the office briefly on Sunday, December 31, with a day off on Monday, January 1, and return to normal hours on Tuesday, January 2.

No Bible Study on Wednesday, December 27. We will resume Bible Study on Wednesday, January 3 at 9:30 AM. All are welcome!

Christmas Eve Worship:

At 5:00 PM, join Pastor Luther Zeigler for our Family-centered Christmas Eve service. This service will be kid-focused, but a great worship service for anyone of all ages! At our children's tables, will be several age-appropriate Christmas-themed activities for your child to enjoy. There will be no communion at this service. This service will be recorded and posted online on Christmas Day.

At 8:00 PM, we will have our Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, led by Pastor Luther Zeigler. Together we will sing our favorite Christmas Hymns, read about the birth of Jesus, including a candlelit hymn of "Silent Night". This service will be livestreamed.

Dover Friendly Kitchen will be on Tuesday, December 26 at 3:45 PM. at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Dover. Volunteers are welcome to help support this important ministry. Additionally, please drop off cookies with the Church Office by noon on the same day. Please speak to Bonnie Sanders for more info.

Calumet Women's Retreat: Mark your new 2024 calendars (or jot it in your electronic calendar) with next year's date for the women's retreat... March 1-3. This is ADDITION to the opportunity to enjoy an Adult's weekend at Calumet which will be planned for a different weekend. Calumet is a wonderful place to enjoy an outdoor setting, fellowship, good food and great conversations. We will start planning and sign ups in January 2024. Questions, contact Leslie Carson.

Epiphany of Our Lord: We hope you join us for the first Sunday of the new year – 2024! – for a special service. First, we will baptize two people into Christ – one child and one adult. Finally, we will welcome over a dozen new members into our congregation! Please join us as we celebrate and welcome them into our church family!

Congregational Budget Forum & Annual Meeting: Please note the following dates on your calendar. The Budget Forum will be held on Sunday, January 21. The Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 28. More details to follow.

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday of Advent – Sunday, December 24, 2023—9:30 a.m.
Service of the Word

Welcome and Opening Sentence

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, 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.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

Almighty God, have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

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.**

Psalm 89:1-4,19-26

¹Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing;
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

²**For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever;
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**

³“I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

⁴**‘I will establish your line forever,
and preserve your throne for all generations.’”**

¹⁹You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people:

“I have set the crown upon a warrior and have exalted one chosen out of the people.

²⁰**I have found David my servant;
with my holy oil have I anointed him.**

²¹My hand will hold him fast
and my arm will make him strong.

²²**No enemy shall deceive him,
nor shall the wicked bring him down.**

²³I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

²⁴**My faithfulness and steadfast love are with him,
and he shall be victorious through my name.**

²⁵I will set his hand on the sea,
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶**He will say to me, ‘You are my father,
my God, and the rock of my salvation.’**

The Lesson 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the 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.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I 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. ⁷Wherever 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?” ⁸Now 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; ⁹and 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. ¹⁰And 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, ¹¹from 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. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The 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. ³⁶And 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. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then 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.

Reflection

The Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.*

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks to God for all gifts so freely bestowed upon us: For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea,

We thank you, Lord.

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,

We thank you, Lord.

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,

We thank you, Lord.

For health and strength to work, and time to rest and worship,

We thank you, Lord.

For all who earnestly seek after truth, and all who labor for justice,

We thank you, Lord.

For all that is good and gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,

We thank you, Lord.

For the communion of saints, in all times and places,

We thank you, Lord.

Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

To him be praise and glory. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

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.

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.

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.

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill. 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.

I invite you to name now, either silently or aloud, those other persons or concerns on your heart.

[Pause to allow time for free prayer.]

The Lord's Prayer

*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,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

Thanksgiving for the Word

Let us pray: *Gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in love, we bless your name and give you thanks. In our need, you make haste to help us. You plant us beside streams of your wisdom, teach us in pastures greening with truth, and guide us on the path of your promise. By your Spirit awaken our faith, that, feasting on your Word, we may love you more fully and serve our neighbor more faithfully; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

The Final Blessing and Dismissal