



AND THE SHEPHERDS RETURNED,
**GLORIFYING AND
PRAISING
GOD**

FOR ALL THEY
HAD HEARD AND
SEEN, AS IT HAD
BEEN TOLD THEM.

LUKE 2:20, ESV



MEMBER OF THE CHURCH





Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church

December 17th, 2023

Organist: Kathy Conway

Video: Stan White & Ben Reim

4704 N Wall St
Spokane, WA 99205

Bible Class: 9:15am
Worship: 10:30am

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Service of the Word

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn *TLH 498 Rise, Thou Light of Gentile Nations (vv. 1, 3-4, 6)*

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P Our Help is in the Name of the Lord,

C **Who made heaven and earth**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with you there is forgiveness; therefore, You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, and to call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our own unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Kyrie - Lord, Have Mercy



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Gloria in Excelsis - Glory to God in the Highest



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat - ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C (spoken) And also with you.

P Let us pray. . .

C (spoken) Amen

First Reading

Isaiah 61

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
3 To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”

4 And they shall rebuild the old ruins,
They shall raise up the former desolations,
And they shall repair the ruined cities,
The desolations of many generations.
5 Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
And the sons of the foreigner
Shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.
6 But you shall be named the priests of the Lord,
They shall call you the servants of our God.
You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles,
And in their glory you shall boast.
7 Instead of your shame you shall have double honor,
And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion.
Therefore in their land they shall possess double;
Everlasting joy shall be theirs.

8 “For I, the Lord, love justice;
I hate robbery for burnt offering;
I will direct their work in truth,
And will make with them an everlasting covenant.
9 Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles,
And their offspring among the people.
All who see them shall acknowledge them,
That they are the posterity whom the Lord has blessed.”

10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
My soul shall be joyful 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 ornaments,
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
11 For as the earth brings forth its bud,
As the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth,

So the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 1:1-3

- P** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
C **Nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;**
- P** But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
C **And in His law he meditates day and night.**
- P** He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season,
C **Whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; 20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; 21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; 22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

- P** Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it!



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



C These things are writ-ten that you may be-lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Hymn of the Day

TLH 136 Angels from the Realms of Glory

Sermon

Luke 2:15-20

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

A Redeemer Elicits a Reaction

- I: The manic herdsmen
- II: The meditating mother
- III: The marveling masses

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

OFFERTORY

C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me
not a - way from Your pres - ence. Take not Your Ho - ly
Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
Your sal - va - tion. Up - hold with Your Spir - it free.

Hymn

TLH 103 To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

Offering

Prayer of the Church + The Lord's Prayer

P . . . in whose Name we also join to pray together:

- C** 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**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn

WS 707 On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

Silent Prayer

Acknowledgments

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Welcome to Worship at Trinity!

Please wait to be ushered out of the sanctuary. Please do not leave any bulletins or other materials behind. **Offerings** may be left in the offering plate in the rear of the sanctuary or mailed to the church.

Guest and Visitors, we are delighted to have you here for worship with us this morning and are grateful for the opportunity to share the saving gospel message of Jesus Christ with you! Because He lives, we shall live also! We invite you to sign our guest book in the entryway. Please speak to the members and pastor if you wish to learn more about the Gospel ministry here at *Trinity*, and we hope to see you again!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH COUNCIL – The church council will meet after worship today. Council members: this month’s reports can be found printed for you in your church mailbox. Women’s Circle will not be meeting this month.

THANK YOU! – A big thank you to everyone who was able to join us for our Christmas party last Sunday! Psalm 133:1, *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP – In the entryway are three sign-up sheets for cleaning, greeting, and mowing at Trinity. If you are willing to help in any or all of these areas, we would be very grateful for your time and energy! Col 3:23 *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.*

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES – The church council has decided not to hold midweek Advent services this year. A midweek devotional video will be uploaded to our YouTube page each Wednesday evening until Christmas.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP – Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, our Christmas Eve worship will take place at 10:30am next Sunday, December 24th. Christmas Day worship of lessons and carols will follow the next day, December 25th, at the same time.

MEMBER INFO FORM – Member info forms were distributed to update our information on current members and collect information from new members. This is helpful for a lot of reasons (church directory, calendars, funeral planning, to name a few), so please fill one out. If you need a form, they are in the bottom right slot of the church mailboxes.

PRAYERS REQUESTED

- **Kate Sauers**, wife of Pastor Rob Sauers who serves Immanuel Lutheran Church in Winter Haven FL, was diagnosed with cancer recently. May God keep Kate in His loving care and bless the family with Gospel comfort.
- **Molly's friend, Jeanne**, has continued to take chemotherapy treatment to treat a brain tumor. May the Lord, in His love, alleviate any pain and suffering and grant healing according to His will.
- Please keep **Pastor John Hein and his family** in your prayers as he continues treatment for his thymic carcinoma. For updates on his care, visit: <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/pastorjohnhein>. Additionally, a GoFundMe has been set up to help offset medical and travel expenses: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/john-and-janelle-hein-family>.

CALL NEWS

<> Pastor Michael Wilke of Gethsemane Lutheran of Saginaw, MI, has *returned* the calls from Calvary Lutheran of Marquette, MI and St. Peter's Lutheran of Iron River, MI.

<> Pastor David Pfeiffer of Holy Trinity Lutheran in West Columbia, SC has *returned* the call from Immanuel Lutheran in Mankato, MN.

FRUITS OF FAITH AT TRINITY		
Date	Attendance	Offering
11/19/23	18	\$640
11/26/23	18	\$730
12/3/23	22	\$3,371
12/10/23	25	\$1,285

GREETER SCHEDULE	
Next Sunday	Jeanne Helke
12/31	Dennis & Linda Lux
1/7	Ben Reim

DECEMBER CLEANING SCHEDULE	
North Entry	Lux
Sanctuary	White
Basement	Naumann

Midweek Advent Devotion #2 (12/13/2023)

In lieu of having midweek Advent services here at Trinity, we have begun a weekly devotional series to answer the question, “how can we know that Jesus really is the promised Messiah?” Last week we turned to Micah chapter 5 verse 2 as well as Numbers chapter 14 verse 17 to see how the star led the wise men straight to the Christ-child in Bethlehem, just as it was foretold.

This week we turn to the book of the prophet Malachi, whom the Lord also spoke through concerning the coming of the Messiah. In chapter 4 verses 5 and 6 of Malachi, the Lord says, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 6 And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

This would have been a startling thing for the people of Israel to hear Malachi speak in the year 430 BC, since Elijah had been called up to heaven in a fiery chariot more than four hundred years earlier as recorded in 2 Kings chapter 2. And Scripture makes it clear that Israel was still confused about what exactly the fulfillment of this prophecy would look like even during the life of Christ. If you recall, Jesus asked His disciples, “who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” And they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

So how are we to know that this prophecy of one who would go before the Messiah in the spirit and power of Elijah has been fulfilled and how it has been fulfilled? Perhaps it will not shock you that this Advent we turn to the words of an angel, Gabriel, to find the answer. Luke chapter 1: But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. . . And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Zacharias, a Levite priest, and his wife, Elizabeth, did not have any children because she was barren and both were well advanced in years. And as Zacharias was performing his priestly duties in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared to him with shocking news. “You and your wife will bear a son. His name will be John. He will go before Him (with a capital H in verse 17, referring to the Christ) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.” Does that sound familiar? It should. That’s a direct quote by an angel as recorded in Scripture from the Malachi prophecy we read earlier.

We know that Jesus is the Messiah because he was preceded by the one who came in the spirit and power of the prophet Elijah: John the Baptist. And this is

not the only prophecy concerning John, who is called the Forerunner. The prophet Isaiah foretells John coming in chapter 40 verse 3 of his book: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

And, again, how do we know that this prophecy has anything to do with the Messiah, or with John the Baptist? Once more Scripture clearly connects the dots for us in the Gospel of John chapter 1, Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" . . . He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the Lord," ' as the prophet Isaiah said."

Once more we see how the Lord beautifully wove the tapestry of history to bring about His promised Savior in such a way that we can definitively know who the Christ is. When Jesus had grown and began His ministry, we read again in John chapter 1, John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" And later, in Matthew chapter 11 verse 14, Jesus plainly states concerning John, he is Elijah who is come.

There is such perfect agreement on what was taking place from so many sources. Jesus, the prophets, and the evangelists all agree: John the Baptist was the Forerunner, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for Jesus. And John, the prophets, and the evangelists all agree: Jesus is the Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Let's not forget that last part this Christmas season. We all marvel as we read Luke 2 and see the Son of God, that perfect infant child, swaddled in linens and laid in a cattle trough. This is the Christ - we can be sure of that as Scripture has provided many proofs of it. And as surely as we know Who the Christ is, we also surely know His purpose. He did not come to begin an earthly kingdom. He did not come merely as a good example for us to follow. This Child in the manger is also the Lamb of God who has taken away the world's sin by sacrificing Himself for us on the cross. As the Reformer penned in the old familiar Christmas hymn: This is the Christ, our God and Lord, who in all need shall aid afford; He will Himself your Savior be, from all your sins to set you free.

Now, you might be thinking to yourself, "we must be running out of prophecies that prove Jesus is the promised Messiah!" We're not even close. And we won't be able to cover them all in three short devotions. Nonetheless, we hope you'll join us next week as we take a look at a few more of these Messianic prophecies which have been fulfilled in Christ. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that believing you may have life in His Name. May the God of all peace grant you a blessed and quiet evening, for unto you is born in the city of David a Savior - who is Christ the Lord.