

[Zechariah and Elizabeth] were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

Luke 1:6-7



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Trinity is a member congregation of the Church of the Lutheran



November 28, 2025

Advent 1

Serving Us Today

Organist: Kathy Conway

Pre-service Meditation: *Psalm 103*

Pre-Service Prayer

Dear Jesus, as we prepare to celebrate Your first coming as a baby in Bethlehem and stand ever-watchful for Your return, fill my heart with the joy of Your salvation. Renew in me the wonder of Your birth, and let the awe and wonder of the gospel's good news fill me with zeal to serve You in every day You have numbered for me. Be with us all and bless us in worship, I pray. Amen.

Order of Worship

(Worship Supplement pp. 1ff)

*When the congregation is asked to stand, please do so only if you are able.
You may remain seated if standing is difficult.*

Pre-Service Music

Welcome to Worship & Opening Prayer

Hymn: 702 — As Angels Joyed with One Accord

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (spoken): **Amen**

P: Beloved of God: Let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

C: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer: we confess that we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have not loved You above all things. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Have mercy on us, and, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us our sins.

P: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given His only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a fellow believer called by Christ to serve among you and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C (spoken): **Amen.**

C (sings): **Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.**

(WS2000 pp. 2-3)

Pastor: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all people on earth.

Cong: Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give you thanks, we praise You for Your glory. 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.

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.

Prayer (Pastor)

Congregation (speaks): **Amen**



God Speaks to Us Through His Word

Old Testament Lesson: Psalm 103

King David declares his praise to the Lord for all of the earthly blessings we receive from Him and for the spiritual blessings and salvation that we so desperately need. At the end of the psalm (the responsive reading), David calls upon the mighty angels to also “Bless the Lord.”

*Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!*

*Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

*The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.*

*He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.*

*The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

*He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.*

*He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.*

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.
For he knows our frame;
he remembers that we are dust.*

*As for man, his days are like grass;
he flourishes like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.
The LORD has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.*

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 103:20-22

Pastor: Bless the LORD, O you his angels,

Cong: **you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!**

P: Bless the LORD, all his hosts,

C: **his ministers, who do his will!**

P: Bless the LORD, in all his works, in all places of his dominion.

C: **Bless the LORD, O my soul!**

New Testament Lesson: Hebrews 1:1-2:9

The writer to the Hebrews discusses the role that Jesus, the Son of God, has in our salvation and in bringing us God's Word. In the process, he also provides information concerning the angels—they are not equal to God, they are spirit-beings created to do God's will for the benefit of believers.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom

he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

*“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”?*

Or again,

*“I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son”?*

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

Of the angels he says,

*“He makes his angels winds,
and his ministers a flame of fire.”*

But of the Son he says,

*“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.*

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

therefore God, your God, has anointed you

with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

And,

*“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;*

they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like a garment,

like a robe you will roll them up,

like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same,

and your years will have no end.”

And to which of the angels has he ever said,

“Sit at my right hand

until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression

or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere,

*“What is man, that you are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?*

You made him for a little while lower than the angels;

*you have crowned him with glory and honor,^[b]
putting everything in subjection under his feet.”*

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

P: Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and treasure it!

C (sings): Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!



Confession of Faith: The Apostolic Creed

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

I believe 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 is seated 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: Jesus, Your Church with Longing Eyes (cf. TLH 64)

Jesus, your Church with longing eyes
For your expected coming waits.
When will the promised light arise
And glory beam from heaven's gates?

E'en now, when tempests round us fall
And wintry clouds o'ercast the sky,
Your words with pleasure we recall
And know that our redemption's nigh.

Come, gracious Lord, our hearts renew,
Our sins forgive, our foes suppress,
Our rooted enmity subdue,
And crown your gospel with success.

Oh, come and reign o'er ev'ry land;
Let Satan from his throne be hurled.
Let nations bow to your command;
Let grace revive a dying world.

Teach us in watchfulness and prayer
To wait for your appointed hour,
And fit us by your grace to share
The triumphs of your conqu'ring pow'r.

The Sermon

Text: Luke 21:5-24, 34-36

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him

an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will 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 for the Lord a people prepared." And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

Angels We Have Heard on High

"Messengers of Fulfillment"

- I. A message from the throne of God
- II. A message about a long-held prayer
- III. A message about a long-held promises

Congregation (sings): Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Uphold me with Your free Spirit.

Hymn: Lord God, We All to Thee Give Praise (cf. TLH 254)

Lord God, to Thee we give all praise,
With grateful hearts our voices raise,
That angel hosts Thou didst create
Around Thy glorious throne to wait.

They shine with light and heav'nly grace
And constantly behold Thy face;
They heed Thy voice, they know it well,
In godly wisdom they excel.

They never rest nor sleep as we;
Their whole delight is but to be
With Thee, Lord Jesus, and to keep
Thy little flock, Thy lambs and sheep.

The ancient dragon is their foe;
His envy and his wrath they know.
It always is his aim and pride
Thy Christian people to divide.

As he of old deceived the world
And into sin and death has hurled,
So now he subtly lies in wait
To undermine both Church and state.

A roaring lion, round he goes,
No halt nor rest he ever knows;
He seeks the Christians to devour
And slay them in his dreadful pow'r.

But watchful is the angel band
That follows Christ on ev'ry hand
To guard His people where they go
And break the counsel of the foe.

For this, now and in days to be,
Our praise shall rise, O Lord, to Thee,
Whom all the angel hosts adore
With grateful songs forevermore.

Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Benediction (Pastor)

C (spoken): **Amen.**

Hymn: 56 — Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

Silent Prayer

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture references are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version.
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Welcome to worship at Trinity!

Guest and Visitors, we invite you to sign our guest book. We look forward to having you worship with us again! Please speak to the members and pastor if you wish to learn more about the Gospel ministry at Trinity.



Thank-offerings may be left in the offering plate in the back of the church or mailed to the church.

This Week's Schedule

(If the Lord wills we shall do this or that)

Today

9:15 a.m. Bible Class (**Words with Big Meanings**: Repentance)

10:30 a.m. Worship Service **Greeters**: Dennis & Linda Lux

Church Decorating following the service

Saturday (December 6)

9:15 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Communion

Greeters: Randy & Lynne Estes

Congregation Christmas Party following the Service

News & Notes

Trinity's Call: In last week's voters meeting, we extended a divine call to Pastor David Naumann to serve as Trinity's next pastor.

Pastor Naumann currently serves two congregations: St. John's Lutheran Church in Clarkston, WA and Peace Lutheran Church in Orofino, ID. We pray for the Lord's blessings on Pastor Naumann's deliberations and may God's will be done.

Christmas Decorating: Decorating the sanctuary for celebrating Christ's birth will take place right after the worship service today for all who are able to help.

Midweek Advent Worship begins on Wednesday: We will not be holding midweek Advent services at Trinity this year. **You are invited to attend the midweek worship services at Gethsemane (December 3, 10, 17) at 1:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.** The evening services are also live-streamed: gethsemanecclc.sermon.net (also on YouTube and Facebook).

The Congregational Christmas Party will be next Saturday (December 6) following the worship service. It will be a breakfast brunch—bring whatever you'd like, there is no sign-up sheet. We also have a gift exchanged, bring a wrapped gift in the \$10.00 range.

Pastoral Needs: Without a resident pastor, it can be more difficult to be aware of personal pastoral needs within the congregation. If such need arises, please do not hesitate to phone/text Pastor Eichstadt (507-380-1068) and/or Dennis Lux so that either the pastor or one of the elders can be of service to you.



The Branches—It's time to **renew or sign up** for a calendar year subscription! Think about Thanksgiving, Christmas, and birthday gifts. **Sign up any time before December 15, 2025. Subscriptions are \$16.00 per year for 4 issues.**

Pay by PayPal, Venmo, or check (email Sandy for PayPal option). Make paper checks payable to: **The**

Branches Contact: Sandy Hulke, Subscription Manager / 29985 Norway Ave, Lindstrom, MN 55045 / thebranchesmagazine@gmail.com

Daily Rest: *Daily Rest* — the daily devotion magazine of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) can be heard via podcast: BeneathTheTreesAtGethsemane.podbean.com (also available on all major podcast platforms) **Daily Rest website:** dailyrest.clclutheran.org

Christmas for Kids – On Saturday morning, December 13, Gethsemane is hosting a Christmas event for children ages 4K-5th Grade. All are welcome. Registration for participants (4K-5th Grade) is open: <https://tinyurl.com/CHR4KDS>.



National Women's Retreat Coming in January!

Before your 2026 calendar begins to fill up, we want you to mark your calendars and get ready to *Press Pause* with women across the country!

What: Press Pause for the National Women's (Virtual) Retreat 2026

When: Saturday, January 31, 2026 // 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

How: Join us virtually via Zoom

Cost: Free event – all are welcome!

Register now: <https://tinyurl.com/PressPause26>



News from around the Church of the Lutheran Confession

Calls: Pastor Terrel Kesterson of Ascension

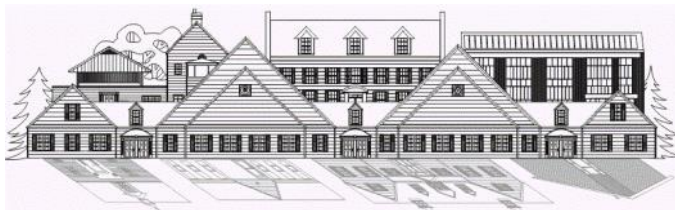
Lutheran Church, Batavia, IL, is considering the part-time call to Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN / Pastor Emeritus David Schierenbeck is considering the call to serve as Assistant to the Pastor at Berea Ev. Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, MN, after he has completed his work as vacancy pastor of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN / Pastor Emeritus Michael Eichstadt is considering the vacancy call to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ / Pastor Ben Libby of Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Cheyenne, WY is considering calls to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ and to Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI / Pastor Johnathan Schnose of Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church, Morris, MN, is considering the call to Living Hope Lutheran Church, Appleton, WI.



December Cleaners

Sanctuary: Poffenroth / **North Entry:** Kenkman /
Basement: Helke

ILC Board of Regents



Show me Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day. (Psalm 24:4-5)

In Robert Frost's famous poem, "The Road Not Taken," the speaker of the poem looks back at what he sees as an important point in his life – a point where he had a choice between two paths and had to decide which to take. The poem concludes with a reflection on this choice: "I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference." Since the speaker took the road "less traveled," this poem is often seen as advocating the speaker's nonconformity. That conclusion, though, is undermined by the poem's earlier statements regarding the paths, for the speaker claims that they "Had worn them really about the same, / And both that morning equally lay." Furthermore, if the speaker did not travel the other path and thus know where it led and what it entailed, how confident can he be that the path he took "made all the difference"? The poem, then, ends up demonstrating something we can all relate to: making decisions in life is difficult, as is living with and questioning those decisions.

Well, what does that have to do with ILC? Of course, every year parents and high school students have to decide if the path of going to the ILC is right for them and their family. Students returning to college or seminary here at Immanuel may question what particular calling God has for them. Faculty, staff, administration, and the

Board of Regents are faced every year with decisions big and small. How do we know that we are making the right decisions for this school and these students that have been entrusted to us? Well, the answer can be found in Prof. Gullerud's theme for the high school this year, "God's Way is Better," which is based on Psalm 25:4-5. God's way is better and that is the reason that all of us are here at Immanuel: to study God's Word and to learn and grow in faith so that we can know and follow God's way and believe that His decisions are always the best and the best for us.

In Psalm 25, David asks for guidance; he wants the LORD to show him His ways and to teach him His paths. We can learn something from David's approach. When we are looking for help with anything – with any question, with any decision, with any problem – our best source for help is the LORD. But people may ask, how do we know what God would do or wants us to do? How do we learn God's ways and paths? Where are the road signs or the GPS system for us to follow in life? The answer is simple. We learn about God through the Bible, His own inspired Word. As we read in Psalm 119: "Your word *is* a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." Not only will God's Word reveal His path, but it will guide us down it. Unlike the speaker in Frost's poem, when we are on God's path and following His ways, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God. We pray that this school year – and for the rest of our lives – God continues to educate us in His ways and lead us in His Truth.

Professor Daniel Schierenbegck / Immanuel Lutheran College President

CLC Coordinating Council – September 2025

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