



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for January 2, 2022, celebrating the Second Sunday of Christmas.

Pastor Mike is currently on a medical leave of absence. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Jack Dressler - **519-250-7210**.

Thank you again for your support for Trinity. Please continue to mail in cheques, or drop them off in the church's mailbox or make your donation either through PAR or through the Donate button on the church's website, at "www.trinitylutheran.ca".

Introduction

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

Worship

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel."

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,

and they shall never languish again.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,

I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,

Psalm: Psalm 147:12-20

¹²Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion,

¹³**who has strengthened the bars of your gates
and has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁴God has established peace on your borders
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵**God sends out a command to the earth,
a word that runs very swiftly.**

¹⁶God gives snow like wool,
scattering frost like ashes.

¹⁷**God scatters hail like bread crumbs.
Who can stand against God's cold?**

¹⁸The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

¹⁹**God declares the word to Jacob,
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

²⁰The LORD has not done so to any other nation;
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made know as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ

with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will,⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ,¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will,¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Gospel Reading: John 1:[1-9] 10-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

[¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried

out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon: John 1:1-18 (from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church – Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Hacienda Heights, California)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

We long to understand the universe and our existence. We want to understand where everything came from and how it was made. We want to know what lay behind the “Big Bang,” what came “before” the beginning. We want to understand not only how things exist but why they exist. Science, our reason, our senses can tell us only so much, but they cannot take us back to the beginning. Our reason and our senses can tell us that there is “something” there, but they can’t help us put our finger on it much less shake its hand.

The Word is the key. The Word that is “light” and “life.” The Word that both was with God and is God at the same time. This is the Word that says, “Let there be...” and there is. This is the Word through whom all things that exist were made and in whom all things that exist hold together and have their meaning.

The Word is light. Light was the first Word-event of the creation. “Let there be light.” And light there is, because the Word does what it says. The Word is the event. The Word is light. It causes light to be and to shine in the darkness. The darkness is nothing, empty, formless, void. The darkness offers no resistance to the Light. It cannot overcome the Light. The Word speaks into the silent Darkness and there is Light.

The true Light, who enlightens all, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not know Him nor did it recognize Him. His name is Jesus. Mary’s Son. God’s Son. You wouldn’t have recognized Him

either. There was nothing extraordinary about Him. Yes, He was conceived and born of a Virgin, but that's a hidden thing revealed by the Word. You must believe it. Yes, He is the Creator come to be with His creatures, and the ox and ass know their masters, but we have lost our way. We have forgotten our origins, our ears have gone deaf to the Word, our eyes have gone blind to the Light. Sin has destroyed our sight, our hearing, our minds. We're lost in the silence of our own self-centered darkness.

Left in the darkness, we would be lost and die. Without Light there cannot be Life. The Light needs to shine. God must speak the Word-event – "Let there be Light" – into the darkness of sin, death, and grave.

The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Light came into the world. The Light came not as a blazing sun or a star but as a tiny flame, a little speck of light so small you would miss it if angels didn't tell you where to look. There in Bethlehem, in a manger, swaddled in clothes, is the Light, the Word Made Flesh who came to be with us, to dwell among us. The One who gives light and life to all comes like a little candle flame in the vast darkness. Humbly, meekly, rejectably.

Don't be misled by what you see. There is more light in that little flame of a Child than in all the stars of the universe. There is more life in this little newborn lying in a manger than all the life that has ever existed. In fact, He is the reason they, and you, exist. He is the Word Made Flesh.

And now we have come to the mystery of Christmas and the most difficult part for us to comprehend, we who would judge God and hold His Word to our standards. Here in the little Child who sleeps in a manger and who nurses at His Virgin mother's breast is the infinite and holy. The second Person of the undivided Holy Trinity. The eternally begotten Son of the Father. The Word who was with God in the beginning before there was anything; the Word who is God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God.

Great is the mystery. The infinite resides in the finite. The eternal has broken into chronological time. The Creator has become the creature. God is Man and Man is God in this tiny Child of Bethlehem. The world scoffs at this notion. How can this be? But the

world underestimates God, if it has any estimation of God at all. And it greatly overestimates Man. To become Man is nothing for God to do, for with God all things are possible. It's nothing for God but everything for us. Literally everything.

Out of His fullness, we have received grace upon grace. He is Gift, pure gift. Undeserved, unmerited. He is God's kindness to the unkind, His mercy to the merciless, His love to His enemy, His grace to the undeserving. There is nothing in us that we should deserve this Child. He comes as grace upon grace. This is how God loves the world. He sends His Son in the flesh, and says, "Go and make peace. Reconcile the world to me. Bring it back. Be the Lamb who takes away the Sin of the world. Go, my beloved Son. Be born of the Virgin, be baptized by John, be despised and rejected by your own people, be crucified, buried, rise from the dead and come back to me bringing the whole reconciled world with you."

The Law came through Moses. Moses can't save you. He can bring you through the wilderness with his commandments, but he can't bring you into the promised land. Y'shua needs to do that. Jesus. Grace and truth come through Him. Moses can lead you to Jesus, and he will have succeeded if he does that. But Moses has nothing that can save you, nothing that you can hold before God, nothing to hide from the wrath of the Law. He has only commandments, threats, and promises. Grace and truth come through Christ Jesus, and only through Him.

No one has seen God. Some have caught a glimpse, but the glimpse they caught was only through Christ. No one may look upon God unattenuated and live. We would be destroyed. We may only look on God through His coming in the Flesh. The Word Made Flesh makes God known to us on our terms. We're flesh. We cannot rise up to God. Our prayers cannot take us to heaven. Our faith cannot ascend to God nor can our hearts. God must come down to us. All the way down to us, to the lowest reaches of our humanity, to the womb and the grave. He must come to us if we are to meet Him. He did, and He does. The Word became Flesh.

We don't go to Bethlehem to meet Him. There's nothing in Bethlehem to see, except the historic remnants of that event centuries ago. The Word Made Flesh dwells with us in the same humble, creaturely way however. He is mangled in the preached and writ-

ten Word, in the water of Holy Baptism, in the bread and wine of His Supper. There you will find Him, swaddled in all His enfleshed glory, offering you grace upon grace.

If you get nothing else out of this day, remember this: The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. Light and Life have come. Joy to the world!

In the name of Jesus, **Amen**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

You make yourself known in the gift of language in diverse forms. Draw our attention to those who communicate through sign, braille, and technology. Make your church a place where all methods of communication are celebrated. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creating God, the sun greets us anew each morning. Thank you for waking us up today to witness and share your abundance. Awaken us always to your wisdom and deepen our care for your natural world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Emmanuel, in your name we are assured that you are with us. Train nations and peoples to honor and respect one another, especially those whose names and identities have been mistreated, neglected, or oppressed. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You adopt us as your beloved ones. Accompany parents and children navigating the adoption process, especially those in the foster system. Sustain those struggling with infertility or pregnancy loss. Tenderly embrace all in need. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You journey with us through change. Guide those assuming new roles in this congregation or making transitions in their families, workplaces, or communities. As the seasons and the calendar change, equip us for unexpected challenges. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of presence, bless those of this community who cannot be with us this morning, and those who walk with them, especially:

In Residence: Margaret; Maria; Stan; Katie; Katherine; Cordelle;

Needing our prayers: Peter; Brenda; Doug; Dorothy; Bill; Bev; Ed; Marilyn; Jordan; Audrey; John; John; Greg; Sam; Katie; Walter; Hart; Frank; Pastor Mike & Patti

Recovering: Katherine; Carol; Betty; Greg; Kati; Bill; Sharon; Mary;

And all those we name in our hearts...

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We give you thanks for all who modeled lives of loving service. Lead us in your grace until, with all your saints, we enter the fullness of your glory. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior. **Thanks be to God!**