



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
[www.trinitylutheran.ca](http://www.trinitylutheran.ca)

## CHURCH AT HOME

### **Announcements:**

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for January 1, 2023, celebrating the First Sunday of Christmas.

Pastor Jack Dressler (519-250-7210) is our interim Pastor. Please contact him for any pastoral needs.

### **Upcoming Services:**

Date	Comment	Pastor / Lay Leader	Reader
January 8	Communion	Pastor Jack	
January 15		Father Brian	
January 22		Greg	
January 29		Father Brian	
February 5			
February 12	Communion	Pastor Jack	
February 19			
February 26	Communion	Father Brian	
March 5			
March 12			
March 19			
March 22	Ash Wednesday – 10am	Pastor Jack	
March 26	Communion	Pastor Jack	

We need your help to assist in the above services – readers and lay leaders.

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](http://www.trinitylutheran.ca)".

### **Introduction**

From the beginning, through baptism, we are called Christian. We are "Christ-ened" at the font. Bearing Christ's name, we share the same Father and are invited to address

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this parent intimately: Abba! Jesus bears our sins in humble obedience to the will of God. Today we pray that the mind of Christ, whose name we bear, would be our own. It is a good way to begin, again, another year.

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

God of life,

**you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.**

**Amen.**

Hear the good news:

We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In ☩ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God. **Amen.**

### **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**

Eternal Father, you gave your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be a sign of our salvation. Plant in every heart the love of the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia.* At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. *Alleluia.*

**First Reading: Numbers 6:22-27**

*God commanded Aaron to say these words, known as the Aaronic benediction, in blessing the people of Israel. We too are marked with God's name and God's blessing as we are sent from our assemblies into the world.*

<sup>22</sup>The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>23</sup>Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,

<sup>24</sup>The LORD bless you and keep you;

<sup>25</sup>the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

<sup>26</sup>the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

<sup>27</sup>So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

**Psalm: Psalm 8**

*How majestic is your name in all the earth!*

<sup>1</sup>O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

<sup>2</sup>**you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children;**

**you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.**

<sup>3</sup>When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

<sup>4</sup>**what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them,  
human beings that you should care for them?**

<sup>5</sup>Yet you have made them little less than divine;  
with glory and honor you crown them.

<sup>6</sup>**You have made them rule over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet:**

<sup>7</sup>all flocks and cattle, even the wild beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup>**the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,  
and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.**

<sup>9</sup>O LORD our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7**

*Paul proclaims the ultimate significance of the nativity: Jesus was born the Son of God so that, because of him, we all may be God's children.*

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

**Gospel: Luke 2:15-21**

*Eight days after his birth, Jesus is circumcised according to Jewish law and given the name announced by the angel before his conception.*

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

<sup>21</sup>After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

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

**The Sermon: Focus on a Godly Family (written by Rev. Paul Rydecki of the Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico)**

In these times, when we’re surrounded by so many lies, so much propaganda, when so many things happening to us and around us are totally out of our control, what do you do? What do you do, as Christians? Well, first, you trust God, because nothing is out of His control. And then, you turn your attention toward the little things God has called you to do according to your vocations. First and foremost, you turn toward the vocation of attending to your family, whatever your family situation may be, whether you’re parents or children or brothers or sisters, or even as part of a church family, since, as Paul said in today’s Epistle, **we who are many are one body in Christ, and we are, each one, members of one another.** So even if there’s nothing else you can do to heal this world in its death spiral, there is something useful you can do. You can focus on a godly family. We learn some things about that today from the holy family: Mary, Joseph, and the boy Jesus at age 12.

Luke tells us that Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem every year at the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the festival. We learn something very important here about godly parenting from Mary and Joseph, from their own faithful attendance at the Jewish festivals, at very least the Passover, which required a journey that no one listening to this sermon today has ever undertaken to get to a church service, I guarantee it. They traveled, on foot, for four days—four roughly ten-hour days of walking—one way, just to get from Nazareth to Jerusalem. And although the text only mentions this journey when Jesus was 12, I think the context suggests that He went along with them before that. Either way, they faithfully attended and participated and made sure Jesus also participated. And that also certainly included their weekly attendance at the synagogue, every Sabbath Day, since we're told that, when Jesus was older, it was "His custom" to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. And, when He eventually preached His one sermon at the synagogue in Nazareth, everyone there in the synagogue knew Him and His mother and father and brothers and sisters, by name. We'll say more about that in a moment.

The holy family spent the customary number of days in Jerusalem, observing the feast, as the Law required them to do, and then the caravan of people—relatives, friends, neighbors—that had traveled down from Nazareth together left Jerusalem and started the days-long journey back to Nazareth. Joseph and Mary assumed that Jesus was in their company, hanging out with relatives or friends, but, in fact, He had stayed behind in Jerusalem, and it took them until the end of the first day's walk to realize that He wasn't there.

Now, did they make a parenting mistake in accidentally leaving Jesus behind in Jerusalem, in not making sure He was with them when they left? Maybe. But consider this: Jesus was the perfect Son, sinless in every way, completely trustworthy, and probably extremely predictable. (And this is one reason I think Jesus had gone with them to the Passover for several years before He was twelve, since, if it were His first trip there, they would reasonably be more cautious about His whereabouts.) But in any case, it's clear that Mary and Joseph were not like modern "helicopter parents," hovering around and doting on their children every moment, obsessing about their children's whereabouts at all times. And that's a good thing. They showed their Son an appropriate amount of trust for His age, and then stood back and allowed Him a degree of freedom. Even more importantly, they commended Him to the care of God the Father and didn't spend every moment worrying about Him.

When they did go to check on Him, though, they didn't find Him, and you parents can imagine the panic they must have felt, made even worse, because they probably had to wait till the next morning to turn back to Jerusalem, not daring to travel at night, and then it still took them till the third day to find Him, since they looked all over Jerusalem first, before finally retracing their steps back to the Temple.

There Jesus was at the Temple, no family or friends or relatives around, just Him and the rabbis. They found Him there, **sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions**, and obviously also answering their questions, since we're told that **all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers**.

Now, I've known twelve-year-old boys. In fact, I'm about to have another twelve-year-old boy in my house, in just a few weeks. It's hard to picture any of them doing this, and rightly so, because this is really the first epiphany of today's Gospel, a revelation of the hidden divinity of that particular twelve-year-old boy, who had such astonishing understanding of God and His Word because the worlds were made through Him, because He was the Word who was with God in the beginning and who was God, because He had come from the bosom of God the Father to reveal God to mankind more brightly and more intimately than any prophet had ever done or could ever do. Even as a twelve-year-old boy, it was clear to all that He was no ordinary child.

But beyond Jesus' great, supernatural understanding of God and His Word, which can't be imitated, we see something else, something that can be imitated by twelve-year-old boys but rarely is—it's barely imitated by any of us. We see a zeal for knowing God and discussing the things of God, a deep, heartfelt love in Jesus for His Father's house and for His Father's teaching. The boy Jesus was the perfect embodiment of what the Psalmist once wrote, **Oh, how I love Your law. It is my meditation all day long**. Or again, **LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells**. Or again, **How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God...For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness**. Or again, **I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD."**

It was in that setting that Mary and Joseph finally found Jesus. **When they saw him, they were amazed, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? See, your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."** And he said to them, **"Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I had to be doing my Father's business?"** And they did not understand what he said to them.

Was it sinful for Jesus to remain in Jerusalem without His parents' knowledge or permission? Of course not. Scripture says He committed no sin. Why was there no sin involved here? First, we don't know exactly how things went down, but they obviously didn't tell Him to leave, so there was no rebellion or disobedience involved. Second, because young, 12-yr-old Jesus, as God, had a lesson to teach His earthly parents: Yes, He was their Son, but they needed to be reminded of His other identity and of His mission. And this is really the second epiphany in this account, as Jesus reminded His parents that He was the only-begotten Son of God, that, unlike other children, He had come to earth for a specific, God-given purpose: to do His Father's business. They needed to accept that in humility, even from their twelve-year-old Son, although they didn't understand what He meant at the time.

Then they all left together, and we're told that **He was subject to them**. Even though He was God, even though He was sinless and they weren't, Jesus submitted to them, because His Father had placed Him in their care and under their authority. We're also told that **Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man**. Not by pandering to people or flattering people. Not by putting on a good show. But by being a genuinely pleasant young man, eager to help, respectful, kind, merciful, and devoted to God's Word, with a genuine love for God that showed in how He spoke and in how He acted.

This is part of what we call Jesus' "active obedience" as our Substitute. He did perfectly what God has commanded us all to do, except that we haven't. This is what saves us, together with Jesus' passive obedience—the things He suffered in our place. This is what earned our salvation, that Christ was righteous for us, even as a child, and now the Father counts His righteousness and obedience to all who believe in Him, as if it were our obedience, as if we had been perfect parents or perfect children.

But that doesn't mean that we are now free to disobey. On the contrary, we have a holy calling, as those whom God has counted as righteous, to **offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God**, as Paul wrote in today's Epistle.

So parents, be the fathers and mothers God has called you to be. As Paul writes, **fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord**. Spend time with them. Teach them whatever you can, including the chief parts of the Small Catechism. Admit your sins and mistakes and ask for forgiveness. Keep urging them, by word and by example, to grow into godly men and women who don't just attend church regularly, but who show a genuine interest in God's Word, a firm commitment to sound doctrine, and zeal for knowing God and discussing the things

of God. And finally, commend your children to God and know that He loves them even more than you do.

Children, as Paul writes, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." Learn obedience. Learn to honor your parents, not just outwardly, but with your attitude and in your heart.

Children, young people, even adults, ask yourself is it your goal to imitate Jesus, to grow in wisdom as well as stature? To grow in favor with God and man? Not the favor of the cool crowd or of your friends, but of all people? In favor with your parents, your brothers and sisters, your fellow church members, your teachers, your classmates, your neighbors? You do that by being good, honest, dependable, humble, caring, and kind, by humbly admitting your sins and mistakes and asking for forgiveness, by devoting yourself to living as children of God in a godless world, who are eager to hear their Father's Word and do their Father's business.

You see, we all have plenty to work on, don't we?, no matter what else we can't work on or fix in this world. **Don't be conformed to this world**, as Paul says, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. May God help you to focus on a godly family during these trying times, even as He has brought you into His family through faith in Christ Jesus and loves and cares for you as a perfect Father. **Amen.**

### **Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

### **The Prayers of Intercession**

*United with the great cloud of witnesses throughout the ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.*

Guide your church to confess that Jesus is Lord. Fill us with wonder at the good and saving news of Jesus. May we treasure your words and meditate upon them, that we reveal your glory to the world with humility and hope. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your name, O God, is majestic in all the earth. You set the moon and stars in their courses. You are mindful of every work of your hand: flocks and cattle, birds and fish, seas and fields. Make us wise stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** Bless the nations with your grace and peace. Inspire and uphold treaties, cease-fires, and international agreements that seek to calm strife between nations. Shield all those who work to protect vulnerable populations from exploitation or danger. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**



We cry, "Abba! Father!" as we seek your loving care in times of need. Heal those wounded by hurtful words. Console all who are weighed down by depression and anxiety. Call by name any who feel unloved, misunderstood, or rejected. Heal the sick. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Reveal yourself to us in the fullness of time, O God. Give us gratitude for what has been and hope for what is to come. Grace us with your presence during transitions: new jobs or schools, new homes, new diagnoses, or new relationships. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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; Dorothy

***Needing our prayers:*** Ed; Donna; Sharon B; Jeffrey; Art; Joan; Olga

***Friends and Family of our Members Needing our prayers:*** Audrey; Greg; Hilda; Mary; Anna; Jean

**...and all members who may have needs unknown to us**

And all those we name in our hearts...

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With thanksgiving, we remember all the saints who proclaimed the name of Jesus in life and who now rest in glory. Show us our inheritance as adopted heirs of eternal life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the company of your saints we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your eternal mercy and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **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.**

**Blessing**

God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Dismissal**

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news. **Thanks be to God.**