275
1751 - 2026
Trinity Lutheran Church
Reading, Pennsylvania

The Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2026



Arent de Gelder, Judah and Tamar, c. 1700.
Oil on canvas. Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht. Public domain.

Rembrandt's last pupil sets the scene in candlelight, with Tamar holding Judah's staff and seal, the pledges that will later expose his hypocrisy and force the confession, "She is more in the right than I." Matthew opens his genealogy of Jesus by naming her, "Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar," so that the Messiah's line runs straight through a woman who had to fight for justice.

Welcome to Trinity Lutheran Church
Founded in 1751

The Rev. Hans E. Becklin
Senior Pastor

The Rev. Fred S. Opalinski
Pastor of Visitation
Pastor Emeritus

Dr. Cameron Lee Wentz
Cantor

Matthew Mellen
Director of Technology and Communication

Rachel Gambone
Congregational Life Coordinator

Pam Wasmuth
Bookkeeper

John McKeon
Property Manager

Dave Troche
Sexton

✝ ✝ ✝

Deaconess Deborah Matern Graf
Deaconess Emerita

Karen S. Eddinger
Minister of Music Emerita



Thank you for joining us today as we worship God through word and sacrament in this landmark building, home to our congregation since 1791. Our liturgy is rooted in tradition; all are welcome to participate as they feel comfortable.

Trinity is a vibrant congregation with members from around Berks County and beyond. If you are interested in learning more about membership, speak with a member of our staff.



During worship, we pray, sing, listen, chant, read, and move our bodies. Please silence your cell phone so as not to disturb this rich experience for yourself or others.

The highlight of our worship is receiving the Eucharist, the true Body and Blood of Christ. All who trust that Jesus is present in this holy meal are invited to receive Him with us today. Detailed instructions for communion can be found on page 19 of the bulletin.



Children are always welcome in our worship! A changing table can be found in the all-gender restroom on the first floor. Restrooms can be found on the first floor and are accessible by elevator. Our AED is mounted on the wall in the stairway at the 6th street entrance.

We welcome all LGBTQ+ people as full participants in our common life. We're proud to proclaim this publicly in our city and wider church as a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

Our worship is an act of offering. By being here, we present ourselves and our time to God.

We also present our tithes and monetary offerings to God. During the offertory procession, they are brought forward along with the bread and wine used for the Eucharist.

We no longer pass an offering plate in the pew. However, an offering plate for cash or checks is available in the Narthex. You can also share your offering electronically using this QR code.

The Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

Congregational words are in bold print.

Prelude

Wake, Awake! — Cameron Wentz (b. 1990)

Trinity Choir

Please stand in body or spirit and face the processional cross.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

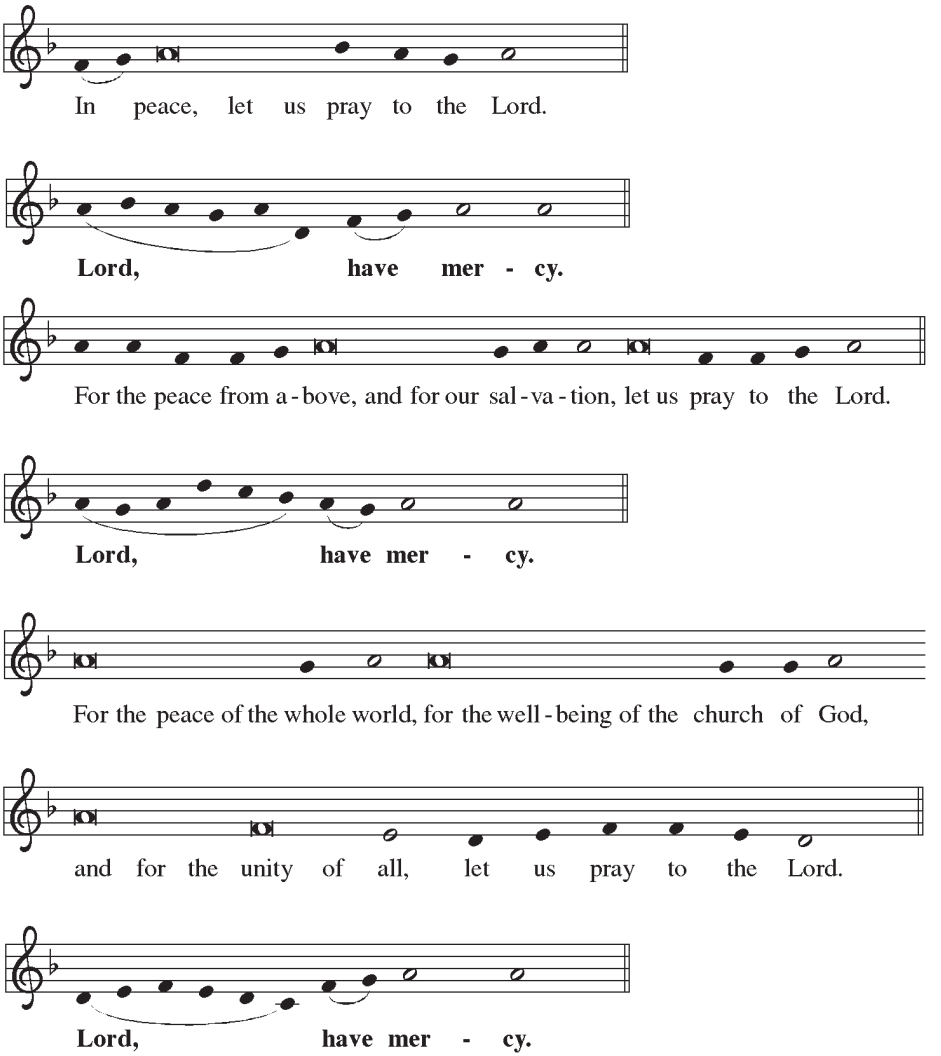
God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.
Amen.

Apostolic Greeting

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

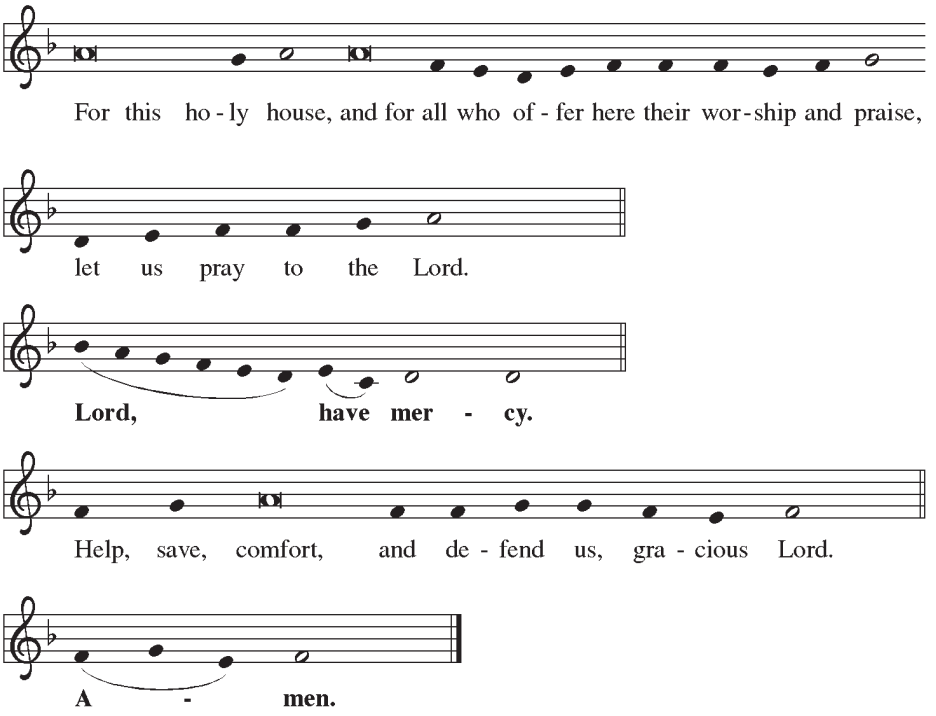
Continue to follow the processional cross, turning as it passes you.

Kyrie



Continues on the next page.

Kyrie (continued)



Prayer of the Day

This prayer relates to the readings appointed for the day and asks for God's help in applying them to our lives.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us pray.
O God of justice, resilience, and care, through your steady presence with Tamar, you reveal how you shelter the oppressed and put down the wicked, reminding us that we are never beyond your protection. Empower us with her same perseverance, that we may walk boldly in your name, caring for those around us and trusting in your hand to hold us.
In the name of ✝ Jesus.
Amen.

Please be seated.

Candle Lighting

Hannah Long, Allison Rogers, Suzy Evans
Today, we kindle the first candle of Advent, and remember Jesus' ancestor Tamar.

We cry out for justice, especially for the vulnerable and oppressed.

We remember Tamar and all the women throughout history and around the world whose voices go unheard.

May we, like Tamar, speak the truth with boldness and courage, and may your light illuminate our paths as we seek to do your will in our lives.
Amen.

As we await the Messiah's coming, we consider how God was at work in five of Jesus' ancestors.

Reading

Genesis 38:11-26

Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up," for he feared that he too would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father's house.

In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died; when Judah's time of mourning was over, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. When Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," she put off her widow's garments, put on a veil, wrapped herself up, and sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. She saw that Shelah was grown up, yet she had not been given to him in marriage.

When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a prostitute, for she had covered her face. He went over to her at the roadside and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" He answered, "I will send you a kid from the flock." And she said, "Only if you give me a pledge until you send it." He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord and the staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him. Then she got up and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

When Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite to recover the pledge from the woman, he could not find her. He asked the townspeople, "Where is the prostitute who was at Enaim by the wayside?" But they said, "No prostitute has been here." So he returned to Judah and said, "I have not found her; moreover, the townspeople said, 'No prostitute has been here.' " Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, otherwise we will be laughed at; you see, I sent this kid, and you could not find her."

About three months later Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has prostituted herself; moreover, she is pregnant as a result of prostitution." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "It was the owner of these who made me pregnant." And she said, "Take note, please, whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." Then Judah acknowledged them and said, "She is more in the right than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not lie with her again.

Word of God. Word of life.
Thanks be to God.

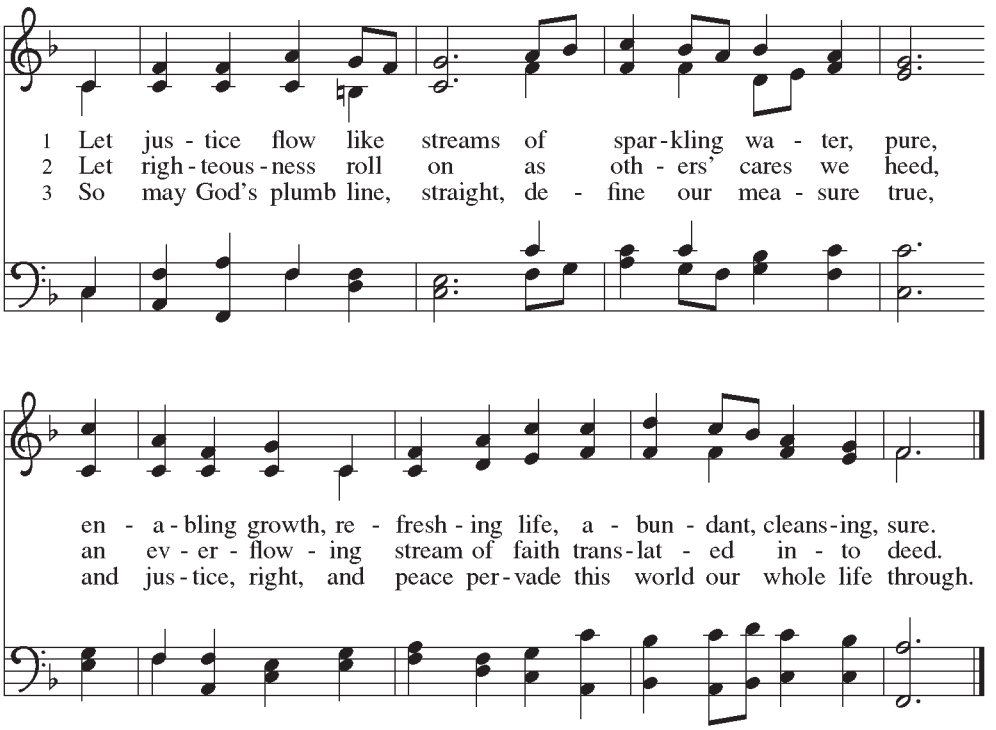
Sermon

Pastor Hans E. Becklin

Please stand in body or spirit.

Hymn of the Day

Let Justice Flow like Streams — ELW 717



Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926

Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731–1776

Text © 1984 Jane Parker Huber, admin. Westminster John Knox Press

Together, we confess the faith of the Church.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.

Please kneel in body or spirit.

Prayers of Intercession

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

After a brief silence each petition concludes:

God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

After the final petition:

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray,
in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
Amen.

Peace

Please stand to greet one another and then be seated.

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Announcements

Offertory

Zion Hears the Watchmen Singing — J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Trinity Choir

Text for the prelude, offertory, and postlude can be found in ELW 436.

Please stand in body or spirit.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.
Providing God, you feed your flock like a shepherd and gather your people in your arms. We praise you for the care and sustenance you give at this meal and always.

As we leave your table, carry us near your heart, and send us with confidence in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

In Our Prayers

In Immediate Need

- Peter Graf
- Nancy Souders-Negri

Trinity Households

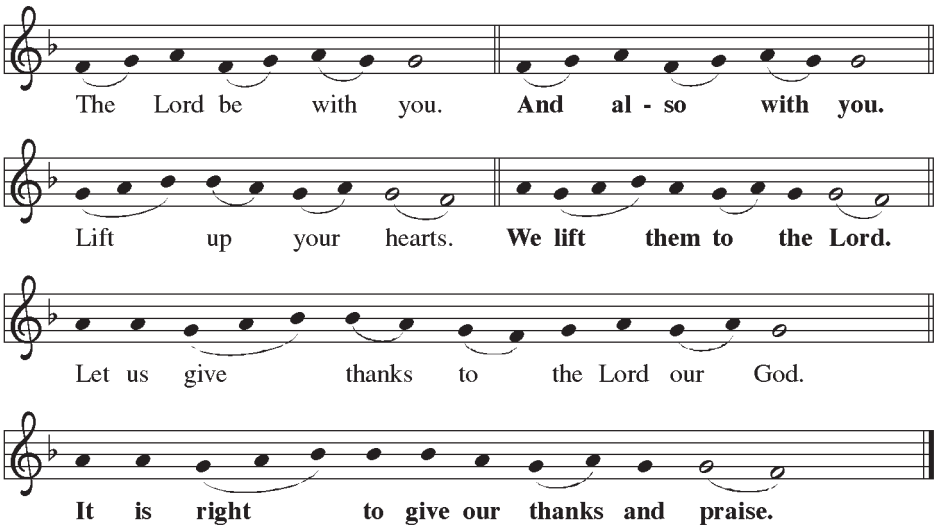
- Kirsten & Guy Irwin
- Marian Jameson
- Darryl Jeffries
- Art & Allison Kalbach
- Beverly Kennedy

Ongoing Needs

- Harry Feinauer
- Dar Unger
- Rob Unger
- Yadar
- Marian Jameson
- Carol P. Miller
- Pamela Reeves
- Carolyn Hoffman
- Jason Sbarbaro
- Ruth Sassaman
- Fred Negri
- Ralph Unruh
- Miles Dechant
- Walter Schur
- Darryl Jeffries
- Austin Stine
- Matt Sawyer

Dialog

The presider greets the assembly and invites all to give thanks.

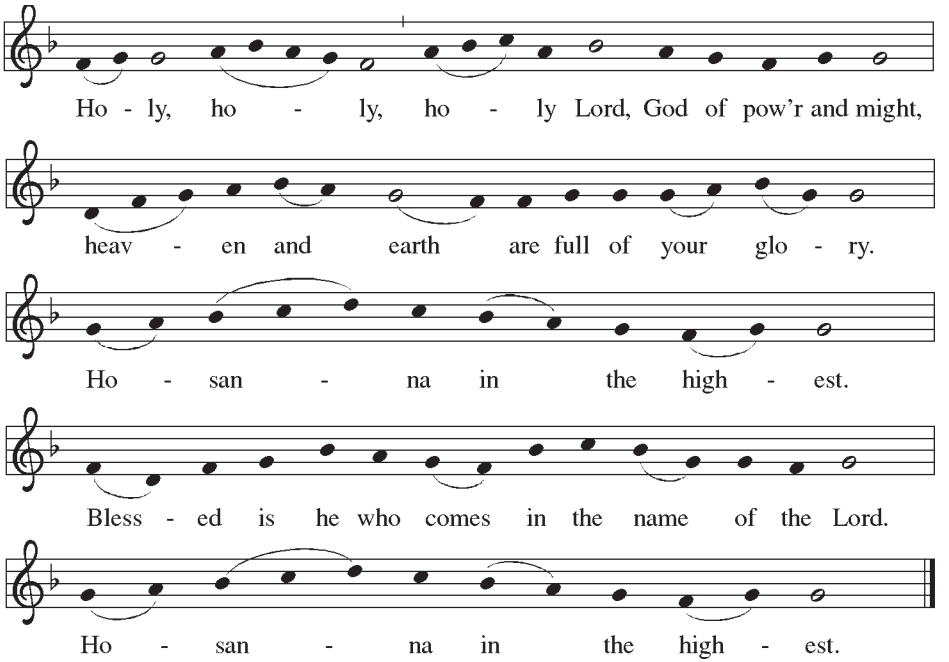


Proper Preface

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

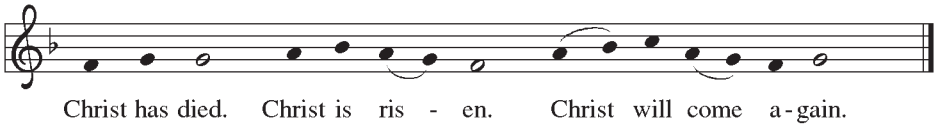
All join in the hymn of the angels.



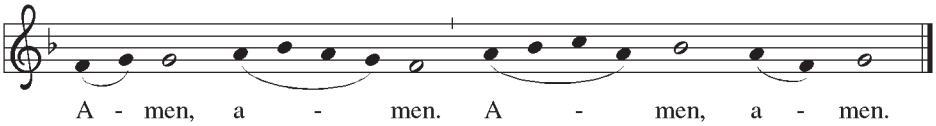
During the Words of Institution, the bread and wine are elevated for the congregation to revere and adore Christ's presence in our midst.

Eucharistic Prayer

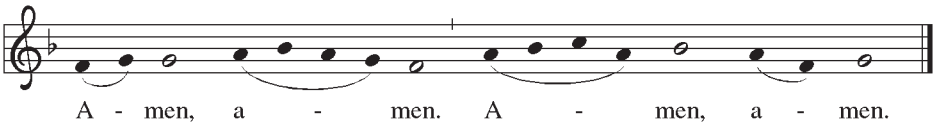
Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father. . .
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



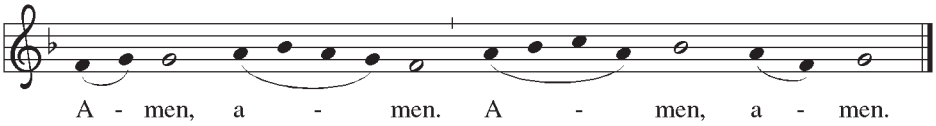
Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup. . .
to share with us the great and promised feast.



Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit. . .
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

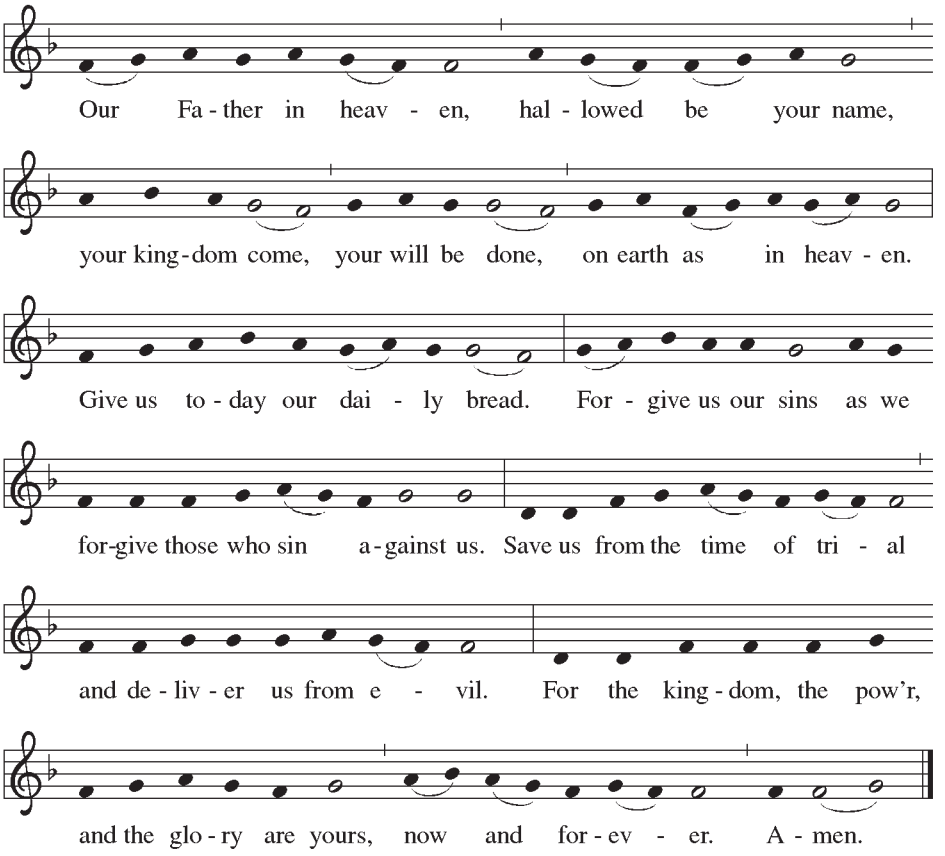


Join our prayers with those of your servants. . .
almighty Father, now and forever.



Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.



Invitation to Communion

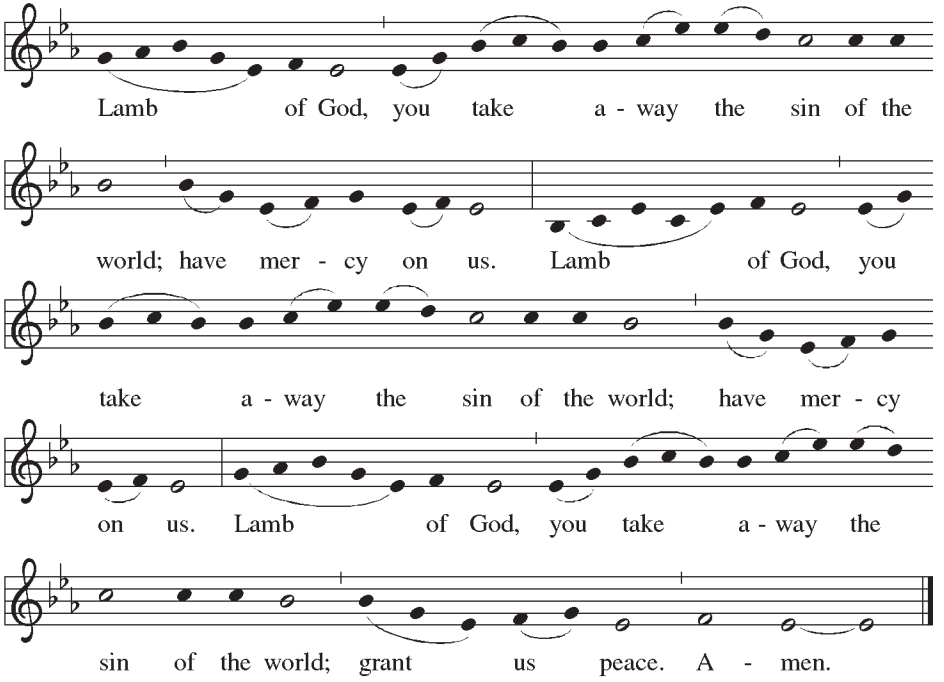
Silence is kept as the bread is broken.

Please be seated.

The glory of the Lord is revealed!
Come and taste God's presence.

Lamb of God

Detailed instructions for communion can be found on page 19.



You can find this hymn in the red hymnal.

Music During Communion

Creator of the Stars of Night ELW 245

Please stand in body or spirit.

Table Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.
Holy God, we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal. You continuously seek the lost, bind the injured, and feed your people abundantly.
Now send us out, awake to your presence, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

As a sign of God's blessing, you may make the sign of the cross.

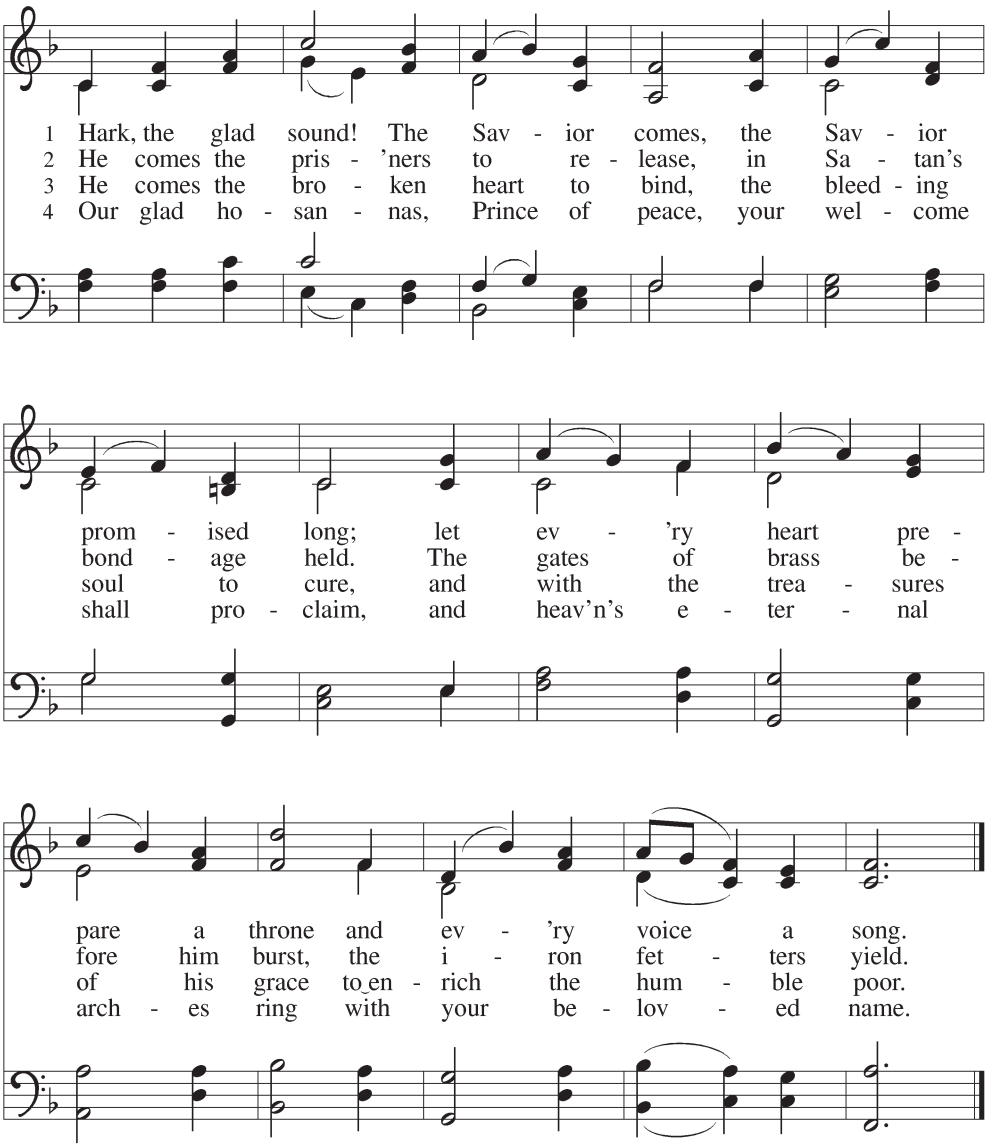
God our provider,
God our feast,
God our companion,
✝ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Face the processional cross, turning as it passes you.

Sending Hymn

Hark, the Glad Sound

ELW 239



Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

Dismissal

Go in peace. Bring good news to the brokenhearted.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Gloria sei dir gesungen — J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

✝ ✝ ✝

Advent and Christmas at Trinity

This Advent our series, Preparing the Way, reads the family tree that opens Matthew's Gospel, with special attention to the women Matthew went out of his way to name. We confess that Jesus is true God and true man, born into a real family whose history includes injustice, outsiders, grief and the abuse of power. Christ took that whole story as his own, and that tells us no part of ours is beyond his reach. Each Sunday we'll meet one woman: Tamar (Nov. 29), Rahab (Dec. 6), Ruth (Dec. 13) and Bathsheba (Dec. 20). We'll light the Advent candle in her memory, see her in sacred art in the bulletin, and offer a coloring sheet of her story for all ages.

On Christmas Eve the series reaches Mary, whose "yes" brings the promise home. At 5:00 p.m., a service especially suited to families, the series ends with a sermon on Mary and her Magnificat. At 10:30 p.m., following Trinity's longstanding tradition, we gather for our midnight service: traditional Christmas Eve worship by candlelight, with the full Christmas Eve readings, a sermon, and special music from Trinity's ensembles throughout the service.

Come prepare the way with us, and bring someone along to celebrate the Light that the darkness cannot overcome.

Christmas Poinsettias and World Hunger

Once again we will decorate the church with poinsettias for Christmas and offer gifts to alleviate world hunger. Donations of any amount are appreciated; we suggest $10 per poinsettia. You may give in honor of or in memory of someone you love, and every gift will be acknowledged in the Christmas Eve bulletin insert. Some poinsettias will be available to take home, though availability isn't guaranteed.

Forms are available in the Narthex. Please return your form with your gift to the church office by Sunday, December 13.

Christmas Eve Family Orchestra

Our "Family Orchestra" will play again at the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service this year. For anyone who has played in the orchestra before, things will be pretty much the same. If you're new to Trinity and have an old dusty instrument tucked away in a closet that you haven't played for years, or a friend who plays an instrument and would like to come to Trinity for the first time, now is your chance!

We rehearse at 9:00 a.m. on the last three Sundays of Advent, December 6, 13, and 20, and then play on Christmas Eve. David Himes writes a unique arrangement every year that includes challenging parts and easy parts. So if you or your friend haven't played in years, or if you have sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, or grandchildren who have just started an instrument, please come and join us. We'll have music for you!

Please let David Himes know when you see him in church, or call the office and tell them you're interested. We're looking forward to seeing some new faces and instruments this year!

Communion Instructions







All who trust that Jesus Christ is present in this holy meal are invited to receive communion.

Please follow the direction of the usher; if your pew is located on one of the side aisles, walk to the rear of the sanctuary. Two lines will form in the center aisle. The left line will commune at the left side of the altar rail; the right line will commune on the right side.

When you reach the front of the sanctuary, there are serving trays located on the tables. Please choose either an empty glass to receive wine, or, if you prefer, a prefilled glass in the center ring containing grape juice. After taking your cup, proceed to the rail. Fill in around the rail from the center to the ends. You may stand or kneel as is your preference.

The minister will give you a piece of bread; eat it when you receive it. If you prefer a gluten free alternative, please inform the pastor.

Then, an assistant will come to offer wine from a pouring chalice. Please extend your glass to be filled with wine or indicate that you have grape juice. After drinking the wine or juice, you are welcome to remain in place for a moment of meditation.

After you finish your time of reflection, please return to your pew, depositing your empty glass in the trays located on the tables at the head of the side aisles.

Leading our Worship Today

Presiding Minister	Pr. Hans E. Becklin
Assisting Minister	Hannah Long
Cantor	Dr. Cameron Lee Wentz
Lector	Hannah Long
Communion Assistant	Charlie Norton
Acolyte	William Norton-Ritz
Greeter	Brooke Rosenbaum
Ushers	Lawrence Fredericks, Andrew Smith, Joseph Speece III
Media Team	Danielle Smith, Abbie Smith, Declan Rosenbaum
Altar Guild	Anita Dolak, Sue Randazzo, Amy Reinsel, Jenn Smith
Worship Planners	Program Staff

Worship Sponsors

These offerings help to defray the cost of altar flowers and the television broadcast.

Allison Kalbach
in loving memory of her parents,
Zeke and Barbara Ketchum

This Week at Trinity

Sunday, November 29

10:00 AM
Sunday worship - Nave

11:15 AM
Coffee & Conversation - Welcome Center

11:30 AM
Trinity Youth Ringers - Bell Room

12:00 PM
The Mixed Ensemble - Bard House

6:00 PM
Trinity Youth Serve at Opportunity House

Monday, November 30

1:00 PM
Program Staff Meeting - Conference Room
Common Ground Ministry

Tuesday, December 1

9:30 AM
Staff Meeting - Conference Room

Wednesday, December 2

6:30 PM
Trinity Ringers - Bell Room

7:30 PM
Trinity Choir - Bard House

Sunday, December 6

10:00 AM
Sunday worship - Nave

11:15 AM
Coffee & Conversation - Welcome Center

11:30 AM
Trinity Youth Ringers - Bell Room

12:00 PM
The Mixed Ensemble - Bard House

Worship Attendance

Sunday, November 22
In-person:
Online:

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