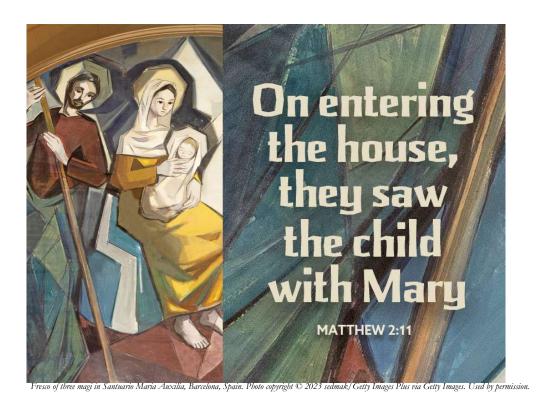
PRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

OFFICE@TRINITYCHURCHVIRGINIA.ORG January 5, 2025 Epiphany

[540] 869-4019 *9:30AM*

810 FAIRFAX STREET STEPHENS CITY, VA



PRELUDE

Morning Star

Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ♣ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

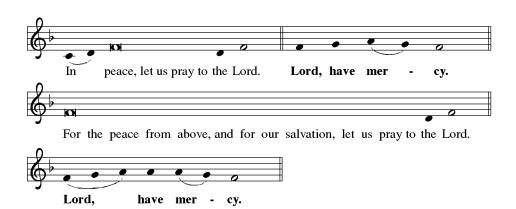


Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt. Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

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.**

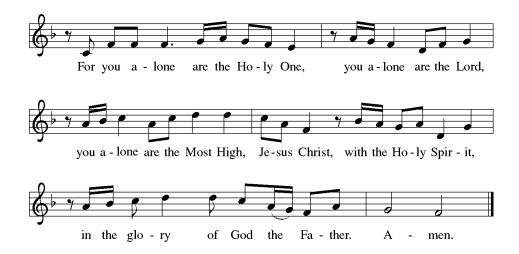
KYRIE





CANTICLE OF PRAISE





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

Susan Scheulen

A reading from Isaiah.

- ¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
- ² For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;

but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

- ³ Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- ⁴ Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
- ⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,

because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶ A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14





- ¹ Give the king your jus- ¹ tice, O God, and your righteousness to ¹ the king's son;
 - ² that he may rule your | people righteously and the | poor with justice;
 - ³ that the mountains may bring prosperity | to the people, and the | hills, in righteousness.
 - ⁴Let him defend the needy a- | mong the people, rescue the poor, and crush | the oppressor. R
 - ⁵ May he live as long as the sun and | moon endure, from one generation | to another.
 - ⁶ Let him come down like rain upon | the mown field, like showers that wa- | ter the earth.
 - ⁷ In his time may the ¹ righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall ¹ be no more.
 - ¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of the | isles pay tribute, and the kings of Sheba and Seba | offer gifts. R
 - ¹¹ May all kings bow | down before him, and all the nations | do him service.
 - ¹² For the king delivers the poor who cry out | in distress, the oppressed, and those who | have no helper.
 - ¹³ He has compassion on the low- | ly and poor, and preserves the lives | of the needy.
 - ¹⁴ From oppression and violence he re- | deems their lives, and precious is their blood | in his sight. R

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

A reading from Ephesians.

¹ This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶ that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was

given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰ so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler

who is to shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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

SERMON Pastor JMe Lowden



Text: Reginald Heber, 1783-1826, alt.

Music: MORNING STAR, James P. Harding, 1850-1911, adapt.

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

Your glory fills the earth. Bless the work of all who engage in dialogue with people of other traditions and faith. Bridge our differences with a shared mission of revealing your boundless love to the world. God of grace, receive our prayer.

Restore the glory of creation. Send rain to water-parched lands. Revive ecosystems and habitats threatened by a changing climate, and protect the peoples and creatures who live in them. God of grace, receive our prayer.

Give the rulers your justice and reveal your righteousness to those who govern. Frustrate the plans of tyrants and oppressors. Encourage the work of community organizers and activists who speak out against injustice. God of grace, receive our prayer.

Help those who have no helper. Draw near to those who have no one to advocate for them or those who feel forgotten. Deliver those who call to you: Barb, Shirley, Louise, Stephen, Paul, Hadley, Nikki, Dan, Michael, Pat and others we name now (worshippers may add names silently or *aloud*). Precious are they in your sight. God of grace, receive our prayer.

As we say our farewells to Pastor IMe and give you thanks for her ministry among us, we lift her and Bob to you that you may guide their days and their hearts as they move forward into new adventures. As Trinity moves into a new time of discovery, liberate this congregation from a yearning for the past that forgets the future. Fuel in us a passion for that discovery. Give us the boldness to dream and to imagine our ministries in new and different ways. God of grace, receive our prayer.

Other prayers may be offered now.

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

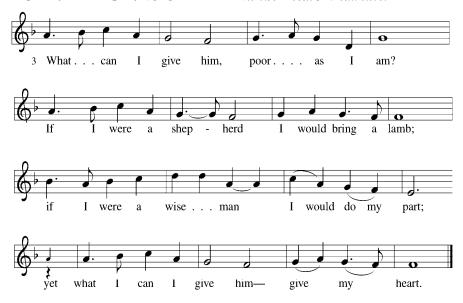
Christopher Grundy

PEACE

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

GIFERING Take Us Home by Another Way Offering is an act of worship that shows our gratitude to God for all that we are and have in our lives. The offering today will provide support for the ministries of Trinity both locally and in the world around us. You may provide your offering in person, scan the QR code adjacent or send it

by mail. We thank you for sharing not only your monetary gifts but also your gifts of time and talent to further our mission to share Jesus' love in worship, fellowship, hospitality, and community, doing God's work with our hands.



Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894 Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

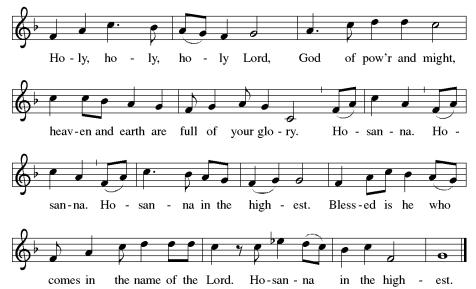
The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

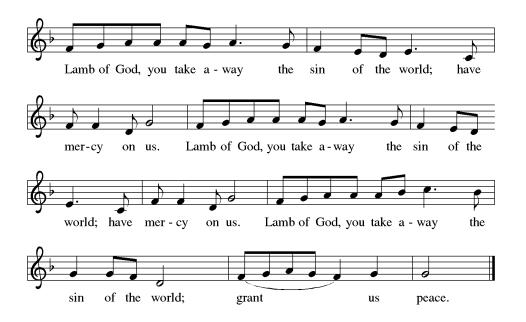
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Those communing from home, have your package ready to open, but do not consume the elements until the pastor acknowledges those at home and says: "Take and eat. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is given and shed for you." Then you may partake.

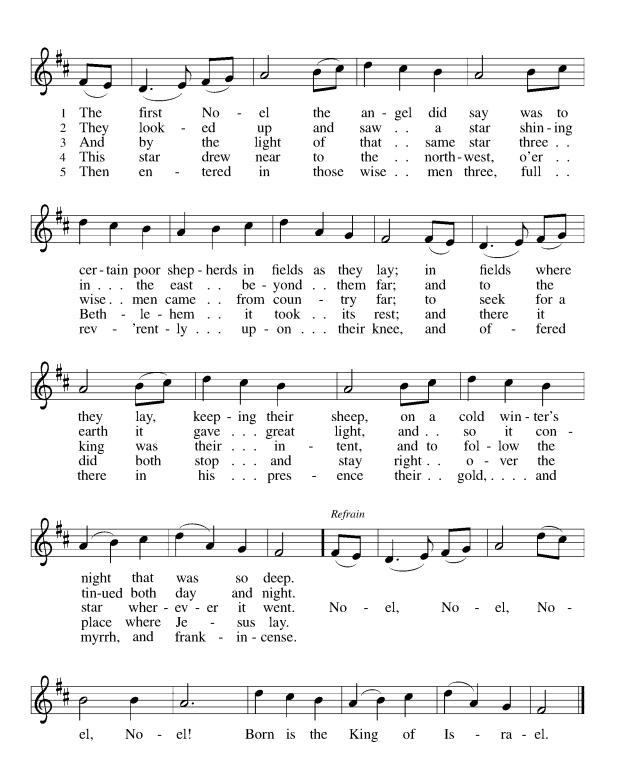
COMMUNION SONG



SONGS DURING COMMUNION

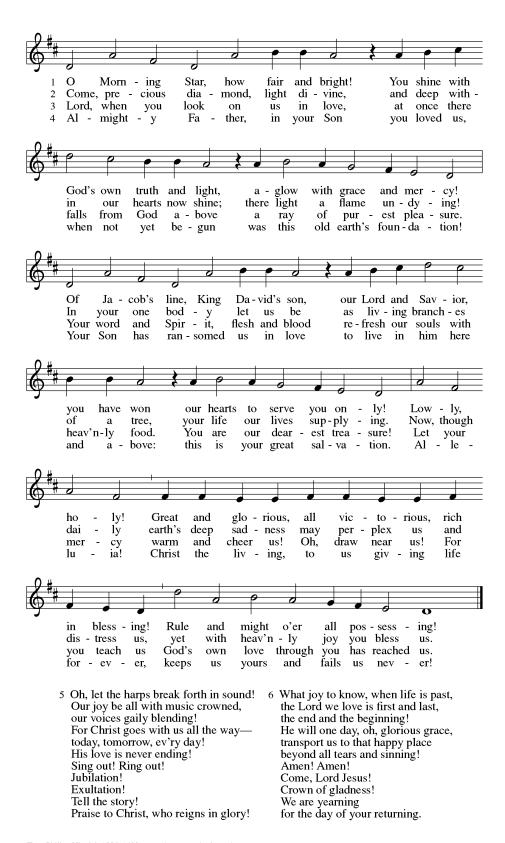
The First Noel

ELW 300



Text: English traditional

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional



Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship* Music: WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET, Philipp Nicolai Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

May the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Let us pray.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LITURGY OF THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF A CALL

Address

The person whose call is concluding and representative/s of the congregation come before the assembly.

A representative of the congregation addresses the pastor whose call is concluding with these or similar words.

Pastor JMe Lowden on November 10, 2019,

we of Trinity Lutheran called you to be pastor in this place:

to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach,

to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table.

With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones.

Sharing our joys and sorrows, you and your husband

have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ,

in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world.

As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.

You have served our congregation faithfully for five years.

You are now leaving our midst to retire.

As your fellow members of this congregation we wish to honor your ministry among us and to bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavor, bringing closure to your ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church.

The pastor addresses the congregation:

I thank the members of Trinity Lutheran Church for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me and my husband during my active ministry among you.

I ask forgiveness for the ways I have sinned against you.

I am grateful for the ways my ministry has been accepted.

As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

The congregation responds:

We receive your thankfulness. We offer you our forgiveness and accept that you now leave to retire.

We express our gratitude for your time among us.

We ask forgiveness for the ways we have sinned against you.

Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

The pastor responds:

I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

The leader addresses the assembly with these or similar words.

People of God, members of Trinity, do you release Pastor JMe from service as your pastor? We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Do you offer encouragement for her ministry as it unfolds in her retirement? We do, with God's help.

The leader addresses the person whose call is concluding.

Pastor / Deacon JMe Lowden do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with Trinity Lutheran Church?

Response: I do, and I give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here? *Response*: I do, with God's help.

We will hold you in our prayers as you begin your retirement. We pledge our support and love to you and wish you God's blessing.

Thanksgiving and Sending

The congregational leader leads the assembly in prayer.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ

you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock.

You equip your people with abilities that differ according to the grace given to them, and you call them to various avenues of service.

We give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor JMe among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in:

bless this time of ending and beginning.

You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love.

You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial:

prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together;

heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us.

Help Pastor JMe and Bob and all of us

to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

You have given Pastor JMe many gifts that she might serve your people.

We give you thanks, O God, for opportunities to grow and learn,

and for relationships built through years of connection.

As JMe now transitions to a new phase of rest and play,

direct her in new ways of serving you and one another.

As she has been a blessing to us, so now send her forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The presiding minister, or the pastor whose call has concluded, proclaims God's blessing in these or similar words.

Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. Amen.



Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934 Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Kings of Orient Albin Whitworth

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TRENDING @ TRINITY

Everyone is invited to the parish hall following worship this morning for a special luncheon farewell for Pastor JMe and Bob. Take a few moments to express your appreciation and say your goodbyes.

The new quarter of Christ in Our Home daily devotional booklets are in the rack in the Narthex. You may have to scoot around the Tree of Warmth to get to them.

The 2025 Chancel flower calendar is on the bulletin board in the Narthex for those who wish to reserve one or more Sundays on which they will provide the flowers.

Received in the mail this week: "Hello! I wanted to send a thank you card for the food that was given to me and my family for Thanksgiving and Christmas. It truly made such a difference for our holidays and the relief provided to my mental stress level. I can even find the words to express how grateful I am. Thank you doesn't even begin to cover it. Merry Christmas, the Meyer family"

Food pantry donation request for January: soup. The black bin for donations is in the Narthex. Please remember to check expiration dates to be certain they are at least a year away, also no personal hygiene or other products unless specifically asked for; no opened products of any kind (this includes unopened items that are in an opened multipack).

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Zoom to Worship, 9:30AM Meeting ID: 898 8887 8840 Passcode: 458736 Dial 1-301-715-8592 US **Facebook Live**: you must have internet, but you do not need to have a Facebook account https://www.facebook.com/trinitylutheranchurchstephenscityva/live/

This week: Greeter: David Reichert, Marianne Watson, Reader & Comm. Asst. Susan Scheulen Next week: Greeter: Marianne Watson & Deb Wickboldt; Reader: Roger Wickboldt