

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Livonia, Michigan



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@HolyTrinityLutheranChurch

Greeting & Invocation

Greetings to you in the name of the triune God - the Shaper of Life, the Savior of Humanity, the Spirit of Renewal - the one whose word always accomplishes. Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

Today, as we confess our sins... our limitations often create the conditions for sin.

Let us pray.

God, we want a faith that feels like more than words, but we lack your power to embody goodness. We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to make the food. We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal. We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger. We have lost our appetites for mere thoughts and prayers, but we fail to match our intentions to our actions. Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence. Amen.

My friends, God knows you are imperfect... God forgives you all your sins.

Now repeat after me. We accept God's forgiveness. **We accept God's forgiveness.** We take our place in God's purpose. **We take our place in God's purpose. Amen.**

Gathering Song

Joy to the World

ELW #267

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, while fields and flood, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text and music in the public domain.

Apostolic Greeting

Lighting of the Advent Candles & Prayer of the Day

Joy ebbs and flows each day, holy God, so we pray to you in honesty.

Anthem O Splendor of God's Glory Bright (arr. S.D. Wolff)

Holy Trinity Chancel Choir

Children's Message

First Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

A reading from Philippians.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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

Gospel Acclamation

p. 188

Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Reading

Luke 3:7-18

The holy gospel according to St. Luke, the third chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What, then, shall we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

Continued on next page

Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.” As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

Sermon

Vicar Alysa Offman

Song of the Day

ELW #843

Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light; praise the One who frees the pris’ners, turning blindness into sight. Praise the One who preached the gospel, healing ev’ry dread disease, calming storms and feeding thousands with the very bread of peace.

Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong yet gentle word; praise the One who drove out demons with a piercing two-edged sword. Praise the One who brings cool water to the desert’s burning sand; from this well comes living water quenching thirst in ev’ry land.

Praise the one true love incarnate: Christ, who suffered in our place; Jesus died and rose for many that we may know God by grace. Let us sing for joy and gladness, seeing what our God has done. Praise the one redeeming glory; praise the One who makes us one.

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Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the

scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. We pray especially for Steve, Kim, Denise, Patti, Dorisann, Kathy, Vicki, Cassie, Terry, Bonnie, Mary Lou, Vickie, Elaine, the family of Mary-Lee Busse, and those undergoing fertility treatments. Show your compassion and remember your people in love. For what else can we pray today? Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Offertory Song Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful ELW #184

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the bring our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

Together we pray. Holy Spirit, please bless these small gifts we give.

You set the table with plenty of love.

Prepare room in your home **for my neighbor and for me.**

Prepare a place in your vision **for my neighbor and for me.**

Prepare a seat at your table **for my neighbor and for me.**

Holy Spirit, you have blessed these gifts we give.

You set the table with plenty of love. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

God is with you. **And also with you.**

Offer your hearts to God. **We do, because we know God cares for us.**

We give thanks to God. **God always deserves our thanks and praise.**

Thanksgiving at the Table

and led them to freedom. **Your love grows unseen.**

...in a quiet stable. **Your love blooms in the dark.**

...new life grew in the grave. **Your love echoes in the silence.**

Holy, Holy, Holy

ELW p. 190

Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might:
heav'n and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table (continued)

Jesus, we remember you died. **We remember.**

We remember God's love sparked life in your dead body. **We remember.**

We remember you shall return to empty every grave. **We remember.**

The Lord's Prayer

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

Communion Song

Lamb of God

ELW p. 191

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

Communion Song

I Love You, Lord

W&P #67

I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice to worship you. O my soul, rejoice.

Take joy, my king, in what you hear. May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

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Post-Communion Blessing

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

Prayer after Communion

God, what you have planned for us unfolds slowly.

Your love is often unrecognizable, unappreciated, gentle, and unnoticed.

But in this place we have noticed what others do not see.

We have tasted your unspoken goodness. And now we will magnify your love.

We thank you in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Announcements

Sending Song Love Divine, All Loves Excelling ELW #631

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown. Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure unbounded love thou art; visit us with thy salvation, enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive; suddenly return and never, nevermore thy temples leave. Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above, pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be; let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee! Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our crowns before thee, lose in wonder, love, and praise!

Text and music in the public domain.

Purpose Statement

L: We are a welcoming community of believers in Jesus Christ who witness our faith

All: by serving together, praying together, and living generously together.

Blessing & Dismissal

Where is the care in this world? Where is the faith we were promised? Where is the hope we desired, when peace moves into our homes, and joy is a constant presence, and justice is for everyone?

God, this world waits to know that your love is more than words.

People of God, you have already shared the advent of God's goodness. You carry the blessing of God, the First Whisper, the Living Promise, the Speaker of Hearts.

Now go into this world expecting God's justice and nurturing God's peace.

God, we will magnify your love.