

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 21, 2025

Welcome

P This is the day that the Lord has made!

C Let us rejoice and be glad in it!



Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection and self examination

P Long-expected God, we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. **Amen.**

P God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. † You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King.
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone,
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

O Come O Come Emmanuel (vs. 1 and 5)

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

5 O come, Desire of nations,
Bind all peoples in one heart and mind
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease
Fill all the world with heaven's peace.

(Repeat Refrain)

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray together. **Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

The Peace
able

Please stand as you are

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

First Reading ***Isaiah 7:10-16***

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall

name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

...The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

Second Reading Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

... The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Verse

Please stand as you are able

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 1st chapter.

(sung) **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel ***Matthew 1:18-25***

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

(sung) Praise to you, O Christ.

Youth Time - Lighting of the Love Candle

Please be seated

Light four candles to watch for Messiah;
let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high
the gateway for the King of glory.

Choir Anthem ***We Await You***

Sermon

Hymn of the Day
able

Please stand as you are

(next page)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
 3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
 and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876
 Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

The Apostles' Creed

A Let us profess our faith through the words of the Apostles Creed.

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the Church

A In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. Bless the ministries of TOL, Augustana, Good Shepherd and Pr. Sohail's South Asian Ministry, as we serve our neighbors in love. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those impacted by war and violence, for our men and women in the armed forces, and for all first responders. We also ask for your blessing on Glenda, Ralph, and Arlen, and for those for whom we now pray, either in our hearts or aloud:

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand as you are able

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 God thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(sung): **Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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.

The 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.**

{P Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.}

Communion Song

Please be seated

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.

Communion: The usher will direct your row to the communion rail. Please come forward and stand or kneel. If you do not wish to receive communion, please come for a blessing. We believe Christ is present in the Sacrament; come join us at the Lord's table. White grape juice is available in the center of the tray. If you would like a gluten free wafer, please let Pastor know.

The Body of Christ given for you.

The Blood of Christ shed for you.

Post-Communion Blessing

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

Prayer after Communion

A Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Blessing

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

Please stand as you are able

(next page)

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

Dismissal

A Go in peace. Keep awake.

C Thanks be to God.

MINISTERS: All the Members of Our Congregation
PASTOR: The Rev. Frederick Kopp
Church Office: 716-836-4868 Office Email:
trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com
Pastor's Study: 716-836-4990 Email: pastor_tol@verizon.net
Website: www.trinityoldlutheran.com
Music Minister: Don Grabau Media Minister: Jeff Ward
Today's Worship Assistant: Sharon Wall
Ushers: Jenna and Scott Edwards

Prayers and Announcements

Prayers

Welcome: We extend a very warm welcome to everyone worshipping with us today. If you are visiting, we are delighted to have you here, and we hope you enjoy your worship time.

Today's Altar Flowers: The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God from John and Gail Lawler in celebration of their 62nd anniversary!

Offering: Thank you for your gifts to TOL. There is an offering plate at the back of the sanctuary. If you send your offering through the US mail, please use checks only-please don't mail cash. We also have online giving through tithe.ly, which can be accessed through TOL's website (www.trinityoldlutheran.com) or on your smartphone.

Christmas Eve Service: Our Annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held here at TOL at **7 pm this Wednesday, December 24**. Come and join us for this special celebration! If you need to attend an earlier service, there is also a Christmas Eve service that day at 4 pm at Augustana.

Mission for December: This month our focus will be the National Alliance on Mental Illness – Buffalo and Erie County (NAMI). This is a non-profit organization serving WNY families since 1984. For more details, see the December Tidings or go to www.namibuffalony.org. Thank you for your support.

Coffee Hour: WWI is planning a Coffee Hour following worship **on Sunday, January 11**. Please use the signup sheet on the main bulletin board, and indicate if you can bring in baked goods or help with set up/clean up. Thanks!

Augustana Book Club: The book for January is Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt. All are invited on **Thursday, January 15** at 6:30 pm to discuss!

Adult Education: Classes will resume on **Monday, January 19** at 1 pm.

Friends of Night People: Thank you to our volunteer teams who continue to prepare and deliver 100 sandwiches per week! Besides donations of peanut butter and jelly, you can help the homeless by collecting winter items. They need thermal clothing, sleeping bags, blankets, boots, hand and foot warmers, gloves, hats, hygiene items, lip balm and travel mugs (so guests can take hot cocoa or coffee with them when they leave the facility). Please place donations in the blue barrel in the hallway. Thanks!

Help Wanted - Usher Sign-Up Sheet: If you can help us by ushering some Sunday, please add your name to the sign-up sheet, for the months of January through March, on the main bulletin board. Thank you!

Devotionals: If you would like a “Christ in Our Home” devotional for **January through March 2026**, please pick one up in the narthex or call the church office at 716-836-4868 to have one mailed to you.

Book and Puzzle Sale: Please visit our Book Sale in the Resource Library, which is the first room in the hallway near the main bulletin board. Books and puzzles are always being added, and are available for a fraction of the cost at retail. No cost for the greeting cards available. Proceeds are used for church building interior improvements, such as carpeting, door mats, etc.

We continue to collect for these ministries:

- Non-perishable food items for the food pantry at Good Shepherd.
- Aluminum can pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House – box in narthex.
- Dash’s Tapes for the Niagara Lutheran Health System – box in hallway.
- Cans and bottles to be recycled – barrel in hallway.
- Warm clothing and hygiene items for Friends of Night People– blue barrel.
- Items for Operation Christmas Child boxes.
- Calendars for 2026 for Veterans Hospital.

Thank you for your contributions and generosity!

This week's calendar

<p><i>Please notify the Church Office of any schedule changes, member illness, prayer request, etc., so church staff can respond accordingly. Office hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9 am–12 noon.</i></p> <p><i>For a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Fred. For office related matters, please leave a voice mail message or send an email.</i></p>	Sun	12/21	9:30 am 9:45 am 11 am 3:30 pm 7 pm	Worship Service at Augustana Sunday School Worship Service at TOL Abiding Faith Worship GA Meeting
	Mon	12/22	10 am 6:30 pm	No Yoga this week OA Meeting Sandwich Team #4
	Tues	12/23	7:30 pm	CoDA
	Wed	12/24	4 pm 7 pm	Christmas Eve service at Augustana Christmas Eve service at TOL
	Thurs	12/25	4 pm	Have a Blessed Christmas South Asian Worship Service
	Fri	12/26		
	Sat	12/27		
	Sun	12/28	9:30 am 11 am 3:30 pm 7 pm	Worship Service at Augustana Worship Service at TOL Abiding Faith Worship GA Meeting

Announcements: *If you'd like to submit a bulletin or Tidings announcement, please send to trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com or call 716-836-4868 by Wednesday morning.*

TOL's Free WiFi and Password:

N7W7y; Password = limp82hewer43dig

