



HOLY TRINITY

LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Volume 98, Issue 50 • December 21, 2014

On 28th Avenue between Lake and 31st Streets Minneapolis, MN 55406 • 612-729-8358 • office@htlcmpls.org • www.htlcmpls.org
WORSHIP SERVICES: 8:45 and 11:00 am • CHURCH SCHOOL: 9:45 am • Jay Carlson and Ingrid Rasmussen, Pastors

REFLECTION FROM ADVENT CHORAL WORSHIP

And Mary said, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed; you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your name. You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation. You have shown strength with your arm; and scattered the proud in their conceit, casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly. You have filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, remembering the promise of mercy, the promise you made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever." Luke 1:46-55

When the angel Gabriel told Mary she would be the mother of God's son, the gospel of Luke tells us that she then sang a song of praise to God. We usually call this song the Magnificat (its technical title is a canticle, which means a biblical song found outside the book of Psalms), because "magnificat" is the first word of the Latin version of the text. Mary may or may not have actually said these words when she found out she was pregnant, and whatever she said it probably wasn't in Latin. But the church universal has repeated this canticle for thousands of years because it speaks directly to our experience of the world, the joy of the love of God, the imbalance of the world's empires, and the enduring promise of a covenant relationship with God.

We call it the Magnificat because that's how the Latin version begins, but what really is the most important word in that first sentence? Is the focus our action of proclaiming or magnifying? Perhaps "greatness" should be the focus, describing the Lord's ineffable depths. Or perhaps "soul" or "spirit" should take first place, emphasizing that our whole being praises God, not just our bodies or our voices.

But in English, nearly every translation starts with the word "my," un-descriptive though it may be. That's probably because of the thorny rules of English grammar, but imagine if that little, tiny word, that inconspicuous "my" were actually you. Not just "Our spirits magnify the Lord," or "The church's many members rejoice in God," or "Mary's spirit proclaimed the wonder of God," but actually, "My soul, my very specific self." What was it like...or, maybe, what is it like...to be chosen? What would you say or feel? Poet Marie Howe imagines Mary in this way:

"Annunciation"

Even if I don't see it again—nor ever feel it
I know it is—and that if once it hailed me
it ever does—

And so it is myself I want to turn in that direction
not as towards a place, but it was a tilting
within myself,
as one turns a mirror to flash the light to where
it isn't—I was blinded like that—and swam
in what shone at me
only able to endure it by being no one and so
specifically myself I thought I'd die
from being loved like that.

—David Sims, Cantor

"Annunciation" text: Marie Howe, from *The Kingdom of Ordinary Time*, © 2008 by Marie Howe. Published by W.W. Norton & Company, Inc

The Sunday School children will present "How Far Is It to Bethlehem?" on Sunday, December 21, at the 11:00 service.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

God keeps the promise made to David, to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." With Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."



LESSONS

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

ADULT FORUM

10:00 am — In the library

DECEMBER 21 "QUEST FOR THE LIVING GOD"

Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen

Where did your images of God originate? Did your concept of God come to you through iconography (visual images), liturgy (worship form), and hymnody (songs)? Or was your concept of God shaped by your third grade Sunday School workbook, the bookmark in your grandmother's Bible, and the picture that hung above your neighbor's nightstand? Through a variety of sources, all of us learned to attach images to God. Using Elizabeth Johnson's *Quest for the Living God*, we'll look at a few images that might expand our understanding.

DECEMBER 28 "CHRISTMAS HYMN SING"

David Sims

Please join us in the sanctuary for a joy-filled hymn sing.

FAITH AT HOME DEVOTION

Advent, Week Four—Read Luke 1:46-55

1. What are your favorite words in the reading-circle or highlight them and share them out loud.
2. When and why are people "counted"?
3. Talk about a time you were "counted."
4. Where are some of the places you have traveled? How did you get there?
5. Mary and Joseph traveled on a donkey—do you suppose they were worried?

Prayer: Dear God—Our prayer tonight is for those who are far away—either family, friends or friends we haven't met yet! As people travel, please keep them safe, especially those we love. (Offer any prayer requests that you might have.) AMEN.

Christmas Eve—Read Luke 1:46-55

1. What are your favorite words in the reading-circle or highlight them and share them out loud.
2. Look at your nativity and take turns tell the story of each one of the figures.
3. What kind of message would an angel give us now?
4. What would you tell the world about Jesus?

Prayer: Our prayer tonight is for those who are hungry and have no place to live or sleep—remember when Jesus was born...he had no place to sleep. Thank God for the gift of Jesus.

PARISH INFORMATION

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Thank you to all the Holy Trinity members who contributed to the Advent Devotional Booklet this year. Extra booklets are available in the church office.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

There will be two worship services on Wednesday, December 24. The 4:00 p.m. service features the children and youth choirs, and the 10:00 p.m. service will be a candlelight service.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 25, 2015, immediately following the 11:00 worship service. Lunch will be provided. All members are encouraged to attend.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The Congregational Council nominating committee is compiling a list of persons who may be interested in serving on the council in the next couple of years. It's a three-year term, and council meetings are at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of each month. If you would like more information or are interested in being considered, please contact the church office.

DEMONSTRATE YOUR THANKFULNESS THIS SEASON

Every year Holy Trinity anticipates and relies on a year-end increase in contributions that help support the work of the church. This holiday season, please consider making an additional contribution to Holy Trinity or to our special appeals, Exodus Lending and World Hunger.

BUILDING PROJECT WORKING GROUP UPDATE

One of our group members reminded us this past week that we have met 10 times since our first meeting Oct. 19th. Last week we completed building walk-throughs with six architects who were initially chosen based on their work and recommendations. This week we are preparing a Request For Proposal (RFP), which is a structured request that will be sent to the architectural firms from whom we hope to receive a proposal. An RFP will identify the scope, pertinent details and expectations of the project, and will allow our working group the ability to compare "apples to apples" when deciding which firms to interview. Our working group will take a break during Christmas, and await responses to RFPs by mid January. We continue to invite your prayers.

Jay Carlson and Ingrid Rasmussen, Pastors
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Ingrid Rasmussen

PARISH EVENTS December 21-27, 2014		
Sunday	8:45 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:30 am	Confirmation
	9:45 am	Sunday School
	10:00 am	Adult Forum
	11:00 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	2:00 pm	Swahili Service
Tuesday	11:00 am	Text Study
Wednesday	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Festival Service
	10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Festival Service
Thursday		Christmas Day

African Pastors' Fund by Bud Dixon

Boiler Fund in memory of Jeanette Brown by Carole Schneiders

World Hunger in memory of Jeanette Brown by Margaret Peterson, Lyle Steinfeldt

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

If you'd like to buy a poinsettia for the altar area at Christmas, please call the church office. \$14 each.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS DECEMBER 21, 2014		
8:45 AM		11:00 AM
Tevy Nou	Acolytes	Sam Kleven, Anna Kleven
Andy R.K. Johnson	Assisting Minister	Martha Mueller
	Crucifer	Meghan Olsen Biebighauser
Linda Berglin, Gerry Berglin	Communion	Kari Kleven, Tom Kleven
Linda Berglin, Gerry Berglin	Altar Guild	Carol Lane, Rosemary Foley
Bob Peschiutta, DeWayne Townsend, Neil Anderson, Marcea Mariani	Ushers	George Madich, Bob/Helen Norheim, Mark Hiner
Chris/Mary Engen	Coffee Servers	Troy/Judy Davison
Joyce Peterson, Pam Blomgren	Counters	Mary Ellen Olson, Bruce Johnson
	Closer	John Sulzbach
Financial Report	December 14	Year to date
Budget requirement	13,591.35	679,567.31
Budget receipts	12,435.92	636,777.15
Exodus Appeal		8,787.00
World Hunger	56.00	11,966.57
African Pastors' Fund	50.00	1,710.00
Boiler Fund	25.00	25,632.50