



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: 9:55 am • Ingrid Rasmussen and Angela Khabebe, Pastors

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Christmas comes at a descending time. The old year is coming to an end, the new year is not yet here. It is too late to accomplish goals set on the previous New Year's Day, and just enough time to realize that whatever shape or state you are in will be the shape or state in which you end the year. There is a hefty dose of "what-might-have-been."

In the Northern Hemisphere the trees are bare, fields are barren, birds have migrated, animals are hibernating, the days are short, and the nights are long. The earth's colors are muted, and when there is snow the world becomes silent. Sometimes during these short days and long nights I find myself thinking about the brevity of life. This conflicts with my tendency to believe that the possibility of self-improvement and renewal is limitless: there is always another day, more time, another chance. I remember watching our first child as she slept in her cradle, thinking about the future before her and, at the same time, the reality that there would be an end. The Ash Wednesday declaration, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," became more pointed and more poignant. The cradle-to-grave progression is our path; the inevitable decline of our strength.

Maybe this is why the Christmas season can be so fraught. Of course, there is anticipation and celebration, but there is also pressure and stress. Perhaps we are trying to greet the Lord's birth with our best efforts (when I was a girl, Christmas preparations were not complete until the silver was polished, and that job fell to me), but desperation can creep into the urgency to get Christmas right, to hold back the night. "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight" (ELW, 279). This is freight that Christmas can't carry when Christmas depends on us.

But Christmas also comes at an opportune time. God did not come to us that first Christmas when we were at the top of our game or when the world was perfect. Even the circumstances of Jesus' birth were a sharp reminder that all was not well—forced migration to Bethlehem, no room for the young family, born in a stall. Emmanuel—God with us—came to us and comes to us precisely at the time when our need is greatest. Our attempts to bring about perfection actually get in the way of receiving the gift. When we try to fit into an unrealistic ideal of who we ought to be instead of welcoming God into our real self, no matter how messy, then what is left on the 13th day of Christmas? Fatigue, certainly, but also the dull acceptance that life moves from cradle to grave.

On Christmas, God has reversed the cradle to grave progression. The angel announced to the shepherds:

"I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: for to you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

Here is the new reality. Here is the truth. Our lives are not a meaningless trudge from cradle to grave, but a joyful journey — true and lasting joy—from grave to cradle. All our brokenness and death meet life and healing and hope in the child in the manger. His cradle defeats the grave. We are loved. We are alive. Now we are free to greet this holy season.

Merry Christmas, dear church.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



READINGS

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

ADULT FORUM

10:00 am — in the Library

JANUARY 6 "Let's Innovate Together" Innovation Hub Team

What about Holy Trinity fills your cup? What leaves you wanting more? How can we create safe spaces for vulnerability and walking together through life's highs and lows? How can we connect more deeply with each other and our neighbors? We'll discuss our collaboration with Augsburg's Riverside Innovation Hub to connect with younger adults, foster relationships, and create inspiring community both inside and outside our church walls.

JANUARY 13 "Housing Discrimination" Katherine Parent

What roles have Lutherans specifically played in the history of racist and anti-Semitic housing discrimination in Minnesota? Luther Ph.D. candidate Katherine Parent has been digging into this local history in her dissertation and will lead an interactive workshop where we explore our churches' stories together.

GAME NIGHT WITH NURTURING AND YOUTH COMMITTEES

Saturday, January 12, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Snacks and games galore! Holy Trinity members and friends of all ages are invited to an evening of laughter and some fun competition playing favorite games and new games. Come and play between 7:00-9:00 p.m. Bring your favorite game and snack to share. Sign up in the Community Room by January 6.

SAVE THE DATE FOR WINTER FAMILY RETREAT, FEB. 15-17, 2019

Join other families for a weekend of rest and renewal and family-friendly fun with church members of all ages at the Mount Olivet Retreat Center in Farmington, Minnesota, from Friday, February 15-Sunday, February 17. Watch for more information coming soon.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP TUESDAYS, JANUARY 22-FEBRUARY 5

Have you wondered who God intended you to be? Join a book discussion group on John Ortberg's *The Me I Want to Be* and begin to unravel this mystery of your life. Tuesdays, January 22-February 5, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Discussions will be led by Cori Gershon and Julie Cahoy. Sign up in the Community Room by January 13.

PARISH INFORMATION

MEDITERRANEAN LUNCH AND PALESTINE FILM SEGMENTS

On January 20 at 12:15 p.m., come enjoy a Mediterranean lunch from the Holy Land Deli and watch a selection of movie segments on Palestine and the conflict with Israel. After the movie(s), the Palestine/Israel team will offer time for a discussion and a reflection on feelings and thoughts about the movie(s). There will be a freewill offering for the lunch/movies. The lunch and movie segments will take place in the Bartsch Room at Holy Trinity. Sign up in the Community Room.

ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 12:00 P.M.

Following the 11:00 a.m. service, all are invited to the gym for a free meal and the annual congregational meeting, as we celebrate the 115th year of God's ministry through Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. We will review committee goals, elect new council members, and approve the 2019 budget. The annual meeting is also an opportunity for us to check on our progress made toward congregational goals.

POETRY READING THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Come experience *The Whereness of God*, a poetry reading with Cori Gershon (poet) and Chris Martin (poet and mentor). Thursday, February 7, 2019, 7-8:30 p.m. in the Library.

FARE FOR ALL AND SHOE BUS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

Fare For All is community supported and open to everyone! Bring a friend and join us at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 East 31st. St., Minneapolis, January 16, 2019, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. This month, the Shoe Bus will be at Holy Trinity at the same time as the Fare For All truck. The Shoe Bus has new and gently used shoes for sale. Suggested donation of \$2.00 for sizes 0-6½, \$5.00 for sizes 7 and up. Every shoe purchase helps to provide food for the feeding programs of Good in the Hood. Fare For All accepts cash, credit, debit, and EBT cards.

TRINITY VILLAGE EPIPHANY PARTY SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

Trinity Villagers and their parents will make the journey with the Magi and place their gifts at the foot of the manger. Bring a "treasured" book to donate to the Longfellow School children's library. Star-gazing trivia, King's Cake, and Epiphany songs and games for all. Meet in the Bartsch Room at 9:55 a.m. Godly Play resumes in their regular classroom on 2nd floor with a special Epiphany party of their own!

U.S. Postage Paid
Periodical

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH (USPS 777-060)
Published weekly by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E 31 St.
Mpls MN 55406. Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, Minnesota
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Community Church, c/o Holy
Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31 Street, Mpls, MN 55406.

PARISH EVENTS January 6-12, 2019

Sunday	8:45 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:55 am	Sunday School
	9:30 am	Confirmation
	10:00 am	Adult Forum
	11:00 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	12:15 pm	First Sunday Musings
	1:30 pm	<i>Do Justice</i> Planning
Monday	2:00 pm	Swahili Service
	6:30 pm	Adult Christian Education Committee
Tuesday	11:00 am	Worship Readings Discussion
	4:00 pm	Peace with Justice
	6:30 pm	Children & Family Ministry
Wednesday	5:30 pm	Choir Supper
	6:00 pm	Children's Choir
	6:45 pm	Cantate!
	7:30 pm	Adult Choir
Saturday	7:00 pm	Game Night

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS JANUARY 6, 2019

8:45 AM		11:00 AM	
Cori Gershon		Assisting Minister June Prange	
Wilson Murray, Emma Murray	Acolytes	Johnny Waddick, Amelia Waddick	
needed	Crucifer	Paul Chindvall	
Phil Jury, Kevin Proescholdt	Communion	Allison Johnson Heist, Bryan Kuzel	
Carol and David Berg	Altar Guild	Lisa and Bruce Martens	
Bob Peschiutta, Ginny and Chuck Jordan	Ushers	Kathy Ohler, Mike Mann	
Carol Masters, Sandra Thornby	Coffee Servers	Carol Lane, Josef Fortier	
Gerry Berglin, Donna Heyer	Counters	Gary Johnson, Scott Cole	
	Closer	Vicki Mann	

Financial Report	December 30	Year to date
Budget Requirements	15,051.92	782,700.00
Budget Receipts	21,619.97	739,656.74
Opening Doors	4,718.71	92,392.45
MAS Racial Justice Appeal	135.00	1,812.00

World Hunger by Ray Sanders and by Betty and Dick Pittelkow