

# Fourth Sunday of Advent



**FOR THE BEGINNING**  
— HOPE IS WORTH THE RISK —

December 21-22, 2024



Trinity Lutheran Church  
213 North Pennsylvania Ave. | Mason City, Iowa 50401 | 641-423-0536 | trinity-mc.org

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

December 21, 2024—5:00 p.m.

December 22, 2024—9:00 a.m.

Livestream Worship Service/KCMR 97.9

## 2024 ADVENT SERIES: WORDS FOR THE BEGINNING

### *Hope Is Worth the Risk*

*Hope is vulnerable and can feel like a tremendous risk, especially if you've experienced loss or trauma. But Mary shows us a resilient hope that takes risks—she risks her body to bear a son who will become the hope of her people. Similarly, Joseph makes a risky choice to stay with Mary; dismissing her quietly would have kept him safe. But instead, he chooses hope. He chooses to trust the angel, and it makes all the difference. It can feel safer and easier to be a cynic, but the world doesn't need more cynics. It needs people who say, "It can be better" and make it so.*

**Welcome to Trinity!** We are glad you're here. If you are new to Trinity Lutheran, please complete an informational card which can be found in the pews.

**We love having small children in worship!** Those needing a space to change or feed little ones are welcome to use the **Child Care Room** located next to the nursery. A **unstaffed nursery** is available during the **9:00 and 10:30 services**, located on the 2nd floor just outside the north sanctuary door (door under the stained glass window door).

**Seating for People with Limited Mobility** is reserved in the pew located in front of the Technical booth.

**Large print bulletins and listening devices** are available from the ushers.

**Activity Bags** are available for children during worship. They are located in the narthex and at the front of the church. Please return them at the end of services.

**Our Mission** *We are called to share God's healing love through Christ's forgiveness and our personal servanthood.*

## Serving in Worship This Weekend

**Pastor** Pastor Daniel Hanson  
Pastor Beverly Butler

**Organist** Deb Nielsen

**Cantor**

**Greeters** Roger & Susan Schlitter

**Coffee Fellowship**  
Dan & Nancy Clarke  
Cynthia Zach

**Advent Candle Lighting**  
5:00 p.m. Don & Nina Pals  
9:00 a.m. The Stanton Family

**Scripture Readers**  
5:00 p.m. Nina Pals  
9:00 a.m. Kirk Hardcastle

**Acolytes** Adilynn Page, Aubree Kreimeyer

**Technical Support**  
Randy Elsbernd  
Evelynn Hunt

**Worship Transportation**  
Travis Hesley, Kirk Hardcastle

**Ushers**  
5:00 p.m. John Barron, Stu Vold  
9:00 a.m. Scott Boyle, Ray Gogel  
Candy Marshall, Bob Mason

**Building Host**  
Dana Rockwell

# GATHERING

## Prelude

## Welcome

### **Advent Candle Lighting** *(four candles are lighted)*

L In a weary and worn world,  
how do we begin again?  
Where do we start?

**C Let us begin with tenderness.  
Let us begin with our hearts on our sleeve.  
Let us begin from a place of vulnerability  
and hope.  
Let us begin with love.**

L Yes, let us start with love.  
Today we light the candles of hope, peace,  
joy, and love.

**C May the warmth of these lights be  
our cornerstone.  
May the truth in these lights help us  
begin again.**

L May it be so! Amen.

## Confession and Forgiveness

P Friends,  
Hope can feel slippery.  
One moment we may believe that change will come, that good will win,  
that the suffering of today will not be the suffering of tomorrow.  
The next moment we can receive word of more gun violence,  
of more mudslinging,  
or yet another missile headed toward a group of humans.  
Hope can feel slippery.  
Fortunately for us, God's grace is not.  
No matter what we are able to hold, God is able to hold onto us.  
So trusting that God's grace does not let us go, join me in the prayer of confession:

P Gracious God,  
You paint pictures of what could be,

**C but we declare those visions impossible.**

P You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb,

**C but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.**

P You dream of a more just day,  
**C but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom that horizon.**  
P Forgive us for losing sight of hope.  
**C Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is.**  
P Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it.  
**C Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams,  
and to not be afraid of either.**  
**With gratitude we pray, amen.**

P Friends,  
No matter what you hold onto,  
and no matter what you let slip through your hands,  
God is holding onto you.  
That good news will never change.  
So hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:  
Today is a new day.  
Today, we have reason to hope.  
Today, we are forgiven.  
And the same will be true tomorrow.  
Thanks be to God for a love like that.

**C Amen.**

**\*Gathering Hymn**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

ELW 279

**\*Greeting**

P The light and love of God  
who wonderfully made you,  
who graciously redeemed you,  
who calls you each by name,  
be with you all.

**C And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

P Holy God,  
The stories of Advent are stories many of us have heard before.  
We've arranged the nativity scenes.  
We've read the children's books.  
We've seen the movies.  
We've sung the songs.  
But as we come to your scripture this morning,  
we pray: help us begin again.

Clear the distractions from our minds.  
Center us in this space.  
Move through the protective barriers we surround ourselves with  
and speak to us here and now.  
We are listening. We are hopeful.

**C Amen.**

**Children's Sermon(9:00)**

**Pastor Daniel Hanson**

**Reading: Luke 1:46-55**

L And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
<sup>50</sup> indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

L The word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## \*Gospel Acclamation

Marty Haugen

*Congregation:*

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we  
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal  
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Optional Repeat*

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

## \*Gospel Matthew 1:18-25

P <sup>18</sup> 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 pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:  
<sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Daniel Hanson

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

**C** We believe in a God who gives us reason to hope,  
a God who fills our nights with stars,  
who follows winter with spring,  
who dwells with and among us.  
We believe that this God has dreams for creation,  
dreams of justice like a mighty stream  
and swords that will be beaten into plowshares.  
Therefore, we push cynicism aside.  
We risk vulnerability.  
We hold onto hope,  
and we declare:  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

**\*Prayers of the People**

**L** Lord in your mercy.

**C** Hear our prayer.

**\*Peace**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

*The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

**THANKSGIVING**

**Announcements**

**Offering**

Text to Give is available at Trinity!  
Simply text the amount you wish to give to 833-412-0093.  
Or scan the QR code with your smartphone.  
Please note where your gifts should be directed towards.



**Offering**

*Be Born in Me*  
Grace Swisher, accompanied by Teresa Jacobson

**\*Offertory**

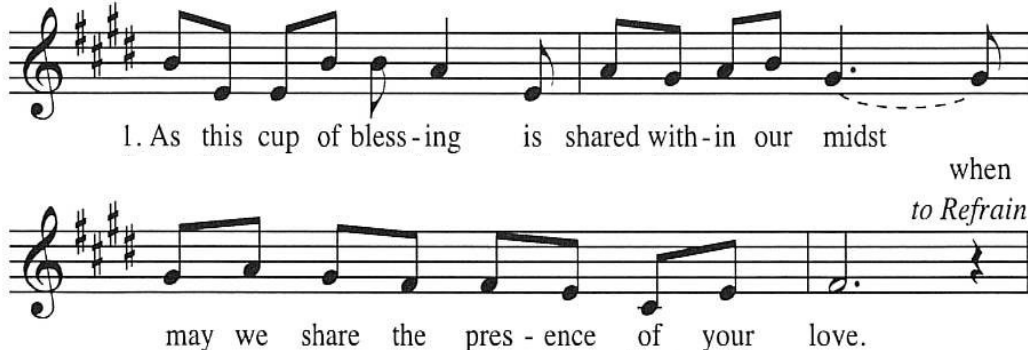
*As the Grains of Wheat*

Marty Haugen



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were  
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;  
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be  
gath-ered in - to one in you.

**Verses**



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst  
when  
*to Refrain*  
may we share the pres - ence of your love.



### **\*Offering Prayer**

P Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground.  
Receive these simple gifts and make us messengers of your mercy and love  
for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

### **\*Lord's Prayer**

C 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.

### **SENDING**

### **\*Blessing**

P God of endings and beginnings,  
God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our hope for the journey,  
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

C Amen.

### **\*Sending Hymn**

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

ELW 254

### **\*Sending**

P Go in peace. Hold onto hope.

C Thanks be to God!

### **Postlude**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **cover art for the bulletin** is given by Linda Godfrey.

## **Birthday Greeting -**

***Joan Dalen will be turning 90 on December 24th.*** If you know Joan and would like to share a birthday greeting with her, especially if you have a memory or story. You can send a greeting to her at: 350 Sumac Rd., Mason City.

**Trinity's Pastoral Care Staff** makes regular visits to Mercy One North Iowa hospital. But not everyone who is hospitalized appears on the clergy list. If you are hospitalized and wish to be visited, please contact the church office.

## **Sunday Morning Coffee Servers**

Volunteering to serve coffee is fun, not too difficult, and it's a wonderful way to meet or catch up with the congregation and visitors. A member of the Ministries Committee is there to assist you. We have ***openings from January to June 2025***, so whether you are new to volunteering for Sunday coffee or you have volunteered in the past, please sign up for a Sunday on the bulletin board by the church office.

**The 2025 Flower Calendar and Bulletin Calendar** have been posted. If you'd like to honor a loved one, remember a birthday and/or an anniversary while enhancing Trinity's sanctuary for the celebration of worship, please consider donating altar flowers or colored bulletins for a weekend. Both calendars are located on the bulletin board next to the church office. Altar Flowers are \$45 and Bulletins are \$25.

## **BASES Exercise**

There is NO exercise class on December 24, 26, and 31.

## **Young Adult Christmas Hangout - Friday, December 27th—4:00 PM - 10:00 PM | Fellowship Hall**

Young Adult Meetup event over Christmas! Trinity is inviting our 18-30 year olds to come and hang out at church on December 27th. This is a choose your own adventure event where you can pop in for one portion or more! We will have a variety of activities throughout the day including:

4:00 PM- *Nativity Themed Escape Room*

7:00 PM- *Movie*

5:00 PM- *Christmas Games*

9:00 PM- *Hang Out time*

6:00 PM- *Appy Hour (An all appetizer dinner party)*

## **Book Discussion**

**Monday, January 13 | 1:00 PM | The Gathering Space**

Our next book is *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni. *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* is a heartwarming novel that celebrates overcoming the unfairnesses of life." Multiple copies are available to check out from the Trinity Lutheran Church office.

**January, February and March  
*Christ in Our Home*** Devotional  
Books are available. Copies are  
located by the church office and  
welcome desk.

### **Seeking the Manger- A Scripture Escape Room**

Mary and Joseph have traveled to Bethlehem and need to find a place to stay. There is only one Inn in the city that has a manger for them to use for the arrival of baby Jesus. Solve the puzzles and riddles and lead Mary and Joseph to the manger before Mary has her baby. You will have 60 minutes to figure out which Inn has space for Mary and Joseph. This is a fun Christmas activity for families or groups of friends. This game is created for youth ages 10+ but younger children can play with help from parents. Ideal group size is 3-12 people. Room 219 in the Education Wing will be transformed into this escape room that resembles the city of Bethlehem. There are multiple slots open from Dec.15-29. Call the church office if you would like to make an appointment.

### **Scholarship Applications**

Attention High School seniors and current college students: Scholarship applications and re-applications for the 2024-2025 school year are available to pick up outside the church office. Forms are available on Trinity's website. Applications must be turned in to the church office by **March 1, 2025**.

**All year end contributions for 2024 need to be  
turned in to the church office by noon on  
December 31, 2024**

### **WEEKLY CALENDAR**

#### **Monday, December 23**

9:00 a.m. LectioDivina (Rm. 322)  
9:00 a.m. Quilting (Fellowship Hall)

#### **Tuesday, December 24**

### *Christmas Eve Services*

10:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 4:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.  
(See bulletin for more detailed information)

#### **Wednesday, December 25**

### *Merry Christmas*

Church Building and Offices Closed

#### **Friday, December 27**

4-11:00 p.m. Young Adult Christmas Hang Out

#### **Saturday, December 28**

5:00 p.m. **Worship Service**

#### **Sunday, December 29**

9:00 a.m. **Worship Service**  
NO Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. **Worship Service**

Next Weekend—December 28-29  
We will have Rite of Healing at  
all services.

# TRINITY CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24

- 10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service—HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED  
(*Family Friendly*) Pastor Beverly Butler Preaching
- 1:30 p.m. Traditional Worship Service—HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED  
Pastor Dan Gerrietts Preaching
- 4:00 p.m. Traditional Worship Service (*Family Friendly*)  
(Livestreamed on Trinity's Facebook and YouTube pages)  
Pastor Daniel Hanson Preaching
- 5:30 p.m. – Traditional Worship Service—HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED  
(*Family Friendly*) Pastor Daniel Hanson Preaching
- 10:00 p.m. – Special Christmas Prelude
- 10:30 p.m. – Candlelight Worship Service—HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED  
Pastor Dan Gerrietts Preaching  
(Livestreamed on Trinity's Facebook and YouTube pages  
and on KCMR 97.9)

Wednesday, Christmas Day, December 25—**No Service**

*Wednesday Night Alive*

Will resume on **January 8th**

Meal at 6:00 p.m and programming beginning at 6:30 p.m.