



4TH SUNDAY OF *Advent*

LOVE

December 22, 2024

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
38801 Blacow Road
Fremont, CA 94536
Church: (510) 793-6285

December 22, 2024
9:30 AM Service – Advent 4
Ministers: The People of HTLC
Web Site: holytrinityfremont.org

Welcome!

Our worship services are livestreamed on our YouTube channel and website. If you do not wish to be filmed, please do not sit in the first four pews or the last pew. Children’s Time and communion distribution are not filmed. All invitations to stand or kneel are for those who are able.

WELCOME TO THE STORY

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. From Mary’s magnificent song of praise to the letter to the Hebrews, we are reminded in no uncertain terms that Christ’s advent is for “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—“we proclaim the Lord’s death.”

A Story that Invites Us

SINGING BOWL

During the ringing of the bowl, you are encouraged to center your thoughts on God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter.

PRELUDE: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” – Bell Choir

WELCOME

Please Stand

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: As Mary greeted Elizabeth , may we greet one another with love.

All: As Elizabeth greeted Mary, may we greet one another with joy.

P: In love and joy, share words of blessing and signs of peace with one another. The peace of Christ is with you.

All: And also with you.

Please safely share God's peace with each other.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross,
the sign that is marked at baptism.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

All: Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Merciful Savior, you know the hunger of our hearts, the hurt of our world, and the weakness of our lives.

All: Feed us with faith and hope.

P: Comfort us with love and joy.

All: Forgive us with your grace.

P: Strengthen us with your Spirit and give us the faith of Mary.

All: For we yearn to proclaim your promises and draw strength from your vision of justice and peace in our weary world. In hope and trust, we pray. Amen.

P: Christ's mercy is for all. Christ's mercy and grace are sure and assuring.

All: May it be well with our souls. Amen.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: “Advent’s Holy Light”

Choir: As we watch for the dawn of a brighter day,
a candle of love lights the way.
As we look for the signs of the promised birth,
of a Savior who brings heaven to earth.

All:

Lord, we are wait - ing for peace to reign.

Lord, we are lis - tening for love's re - frain.

For hope, peace, and joy and love to u -

nite in the beau - ty and won - der of

Ad - vent's ho - ly light.

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below each staff. The final note of the piece is a G4, which is a half note in the key signature.

LITANY: *Fourth Sunday – Love*

Candles are lit.

P: Today the fourth candle, the candle of Love, joins the candles of Hope, Peace and Joy. Like the combined glow of many candles, let this season remind us of the strength found in unity as we come together to love and uplift one another. Let the warmth of love illuminate the connections that bind us together and foster us in a deep sense of belonging.

Love creates the bonds that provide us with deep meaningful relationships.

All: The greatest of all gifts is love.

P: Love inspires random acts of kindness and generosity.

All: The greatest of all gifts is love.

P: Love causes us to only look for the best in others.

All: The greatest of all gifts is love.

P: Love allows us to be accepted for who we are, flaws and all.


All: The greatest of all gifts is love.

P: Gracious Creator, we gather in your presence today, hearts brimming with gratitude for the extraordinary gift of love you have bestowed upon us. May the celebration of love extend beyond our immediate circles, creating ripples of compassion and unity in the world. In recognizing the beauty of love, may we become vessels of your light, shining brightly for all to see. Amen.


All:




Lord, we are wait - ing for peace to reign.



Lord, we are lis - tening for love's re - frain.



For hope, peace, and joy and love to u -



nite in the beau - ty and won - der of



Ad - vent's ho - ly light.

Choir: Advent's holy light.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Christ's love has called us here.

All: Our spirits rejoice in God, our Savior.

L: Christ's love is transforming the world.

All: In joy, we'll give thanks and sing.

L: Christ's love calls us to justice and peace.

All: In faith, we'll answer the call.

OPENING HYMN: "Comfort, Comfort Now My People" vs.

1,3



1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for-ev - er.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

GREETING

P: God of ancient days and future visions, we come into your presence to celebrate the joy of your Holy Spirit and the blessing of your Son, Christ Jesus.

All: Fill us with your Holy Spirit, as you filled Elizabeth long ago.

P: Sing through our songs of joy, as you sang through Mary.

All: Speak through our words and our thoughts, that we may grow closer to the justice and the peace of Christ Jesus, who calls us here today. In Christ's holy and blessed name, we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Stir up your power, O Redeemer Christ, and come.

All: With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Creator and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Be Seated

CHOIR ANTHEM: “We Await You”

The Story that Shapes and Forms Us

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORD

R: O God, help us know your ways. Teach us your paths and lead us in your truth.

All: As we hear these scriptures, may they open our hearts to your life-giving grace. Amen.

R: The first reading is from Jeremiah, chapter thirty-three, beginning with the fourteenth verse.

FIRST READING: *Hebrews 10:5-10*

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,

but a body you have prepared for me;

in burnt offerings and sin offerings

you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

R: Here ends the reading. Faithful God, your promises are true. We trust you completely. You guide our steps, offering us forgiveness and new beginnings.

All: Ground our lives in your love and keep us alert, that we may see the signs of your transforming presence. Amen.

Please Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: tune – “*Angels We Have Heard on High*”

**All: Lord, to whom else shall we go,
Words of deathless life to know?
Not by bread alone we live,
But by ev’ry word you give.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

P: *The Holy Gospel according to Luke.*

All: Glory to you, O God.

GOSPEL: *Luke 3:1-6*

Within a few days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, where she entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.

As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, “Blessed are you among

women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!”

Mary said: “My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior. For you have looked with favor upon your lowly servant, and from this day forward all generations will call me blessed. For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your Name. Your mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear you. You have shown strength with your arm; you have scattered the proud in their conceit; you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places. You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty. You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy—the promise you made to our ancestors—to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”

P: The Gospel of the Risen Savior.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Be Seated

CHILDREN’S TIME – Pastor Tim



Please Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY: “My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness” vs. 1,2



1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav-ior's praise!
2 To all who live in ho-ly fear your mer-cy ev-er flows.



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.
With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem-ing hearts ex - pose.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless-ing shall pro - claim—
The ruth-less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.

Be Seated

MESSAGE – Pastor Tim

A Story that Feeds Us

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

L: We have been told the days are surely coming. We have been given signs.

All: The Promised One is coming, and we wait in expectation.

L: We have a message to give the world, a message of promises about to be fulfilled. Our offering will enable this church community to proclaim this message as clearly as we can.

All: It also enables us individually to show our gratitude, even as we wait. Amen.

THANKFUL OFFERING

Please Stand

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *“In the Bleak Midwinter”* vs. 3

All: What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man I would do my part;

Yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

L: We thank you, God, for the joy we feel this day.

All: We are blessed by this community of love, this sanctuary of acceptance.

L: We place our trust in you, knowing that you care for us.

All: With deep gratitude for all you provide to us, we offer our gifts to you.

L: Center our hearts during this season of giving.

All: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

L: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God’s presence. God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. God, in your mercy,

All: receive our prayer.

L: God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. God, in your mercy,

All: receive our prayer.

L: God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. God, in your mercy,

All: receive our prayer.

L: God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. God, in your mercy,

All: receive our prayer.

L: God of all, hear the prayers of our heart said either silently or aloud.

Here other prayers may be offered.

L: God, in your mercy,

All: receive our prayer.

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

All: Amen.

A CAROL SETTING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

THE PREFACE: tune – *“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”*

L: Oh, may the good Lord be with you.

All: And may the Lord be with you too.

L: Lift your hearts to God in praise.

All: To the Lord our hearts we raise.

L: Let us offer praises true.

All: It is fitting so to do:

Gratefully we sing to the Lord, our King!



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: How can we thank you, O God? For sun and moon and stars, for breath and life and all things good, for your steadfast promise and your faithful love, for the day that is surely coming when all things will be made new. With saints, with angels, and with the whole creation, we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

THE SANCTUS: tune – “From Heaven Above”

**All: As light breaks forth, we sing Your praise
To you, Redeemer of our days,
For we have found in Jesus’ birth
Good news of peace and human worth.**

CONSECRATION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed our Savior 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 in 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.”

You approach in holiness, God of every season, your Child, Jesus Christ, coming to bless us with joy. Setting aside his power and majesty, he came with tenderness and peace, so we might know your justice. Casting off the garments of glory, he put on the clothes stained by our sins, to leave them at the foot of the cross. Seeing the hope on your face, he turned towards death, tearing open the grave and striding forth into the resurrection promised to all.

As we prepare to celebrate his birth, as we anticipate his return, we tell the world of that mystery we call Advent:

All: Jesus was born that we might have hope. Jesus died and was raised that we might have life. Jesus will come again to welcome us home.

P: Pour out the spirit of Advent upon the gifts of the bread and cup, simple goodness transformed by your grace. As the Bread is torn to be shared by those gathered here, tear open our shuttered hearts so we might become more compassionate. As the Cup of Hope touches our lips, may we not only proclaim your love, but speak of peace, of reconciliation, of healing to all the broken places and people, until those words become the lives we have been called to lead as your people. And all of God's children said,

All: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language or translation of our hearts.

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

FRACTION RITE

P: Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.

All: Let us enter into the joy of this feast.

Be Seated

The ushers will invite you forward
after the Lamb of God is sung

LAMB OF GOD: tune – “*Twas in the Moon of Wintertime*”

All: O Lamb of God who takes away
our sins, have mercy.

O Lamb of God who takes away
our sins, have mercy.

O Lamb of God who takes away
the sins of all the earth, we pray:

Jesus, grant us your peace, grant us your peace.
Glory be to God on high.

Holy Communion is open to all.

Wine is red, grape juice is yellow, water is in the center of the tray.

Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Let an usher know if you need communion brought to you.

For communion at the altar rail:

When directed by the ushers, you may come up the center aisle to the altar rail, stand or kneel, and hold out your hand for the pastor to drop the host into. Eat. Then take a cup of wine (red), grape juice (light yellow), or water (clear) from the assistant. Drink. Then place your empty cup in the tray that follows. Rise and return to your seat via the side aisles.



COMMUNION HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>5 O come, O Key of David, come,
 and open wide our heav'nly home;
 make safe the way that leads on high,
 and close the path to misery. <i>Refrain</i></p> | <p>7 O come, O King of nations, come,
 O Cornerstone that binds in one;
 refresh the hearts that long for you;
 restore the broken, make us new. <i>Refrain</i></p> |
| <p>6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. <i>Refrain</i></p> | <p>8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear. <i>Refrain</i></p> |

**As soon as I heard
 the sound of
 your greeting,
 the child
 in my womb
 leaped for joy.**

Luke 1:44, NRSV



COMMUNION HYMN: "Canticle of the Turning"



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



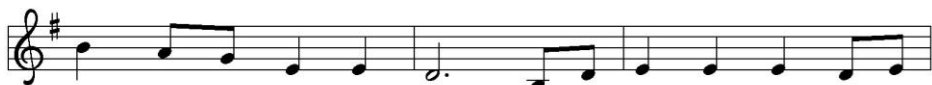
God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

SINGING BOWL

Please Stand

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.

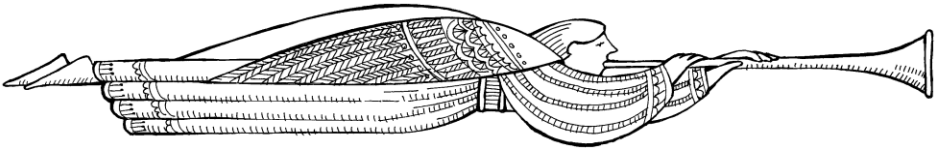
All: Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

POST COMMUNION THANKS: tune – “*God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*”

**All: Oh, thank the Lord and sing His praise,
What He has done proclaim!
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
And proudly bear His name
Who leads His thankful people forth
His promises to claim.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy,
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

Be Seated

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Please Stand

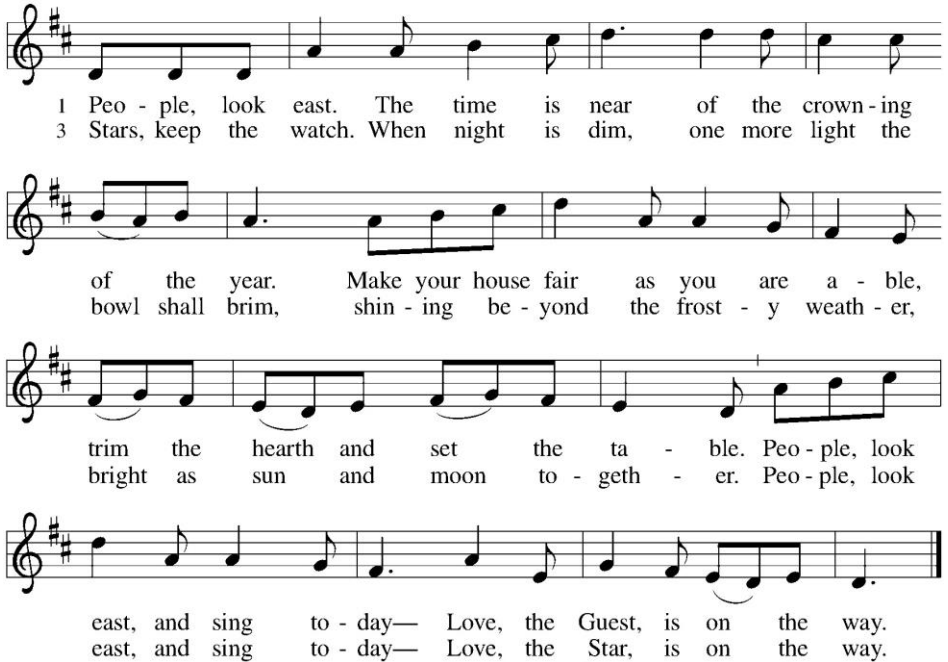
A Story that Sends Us Out to Love and Serve

BENEDICTION: tune – “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*”

L: Now may the good Lord bless and keep,
His love in you increase;
Lift up His face with shining grace,
And grant eternal peace.

**All: To Father, Son and Spirit,
Eternal One-in-Three,
Be thanks and praise through all our days,
And to eternity!**

SENDING HYMN: “*People Look East*” vs. 1,3



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE