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Fourth Sunday in Advent

*Divine Service*

December 24, 2023

**Holy Communion** is celebrated this Sunday at Trinity Lutheran Church in the glad confidence that our Lord, as His Words say, gives not only bread and wine, but also His true Body and Blood for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins. Our Lord invites to His table those who believe He is truly present, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive as He forgives us. Because Saint Paul reminds us that we can receive the Lord's Supper to our judgment, we are very careful to administer the Sacrament only to those who are properly prepared. When we receive Holy Communion, we publicly declare our agreement with the teachings of the church from which we receive it. *Therefore, if you are not yet a member of this congregation, a sister congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and if you have not previously spoken to the Pastor about Holy Communion, please refrain from coming forward to receive Communion until you have first spoken with the Pastor.* If you cannot receive the Lord's Supper but desire a blessing, please join us at the Communion rail and cross your arms over your chest to tell the pastor of your intent.

**Opening Hymn**

*When All the World Was Cursed*

LSB 346

**Liturgy**

p. 184

**Introit**

- P: Shower, O heavens, | from above,  
and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;  
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear  
fruit;  
let the earth cause them | both to sprout;
- C: **The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,\*  
and the sky above proclaims his | handiwork.**

**Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and  
their words to the end | of the world.\***

**In them he has set a tent | for the sun,  
which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his | chamber,\*  
and, like a strong man, runs its | course with joy.  
Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to  
the | end of them,\*  
and there is nothing hidden | from its heat.**

**All:      Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
            and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
            is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**P:        Shower, O heavens, | from above,  
            and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;  
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear  
fruit;  
            let the earth cause them | both to sprout;**

**Kyrie  
Collect**

p. 186

**P:        Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your  
            might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted  
            by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father  
            and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**C:        Amen**

**Old Testament**

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (ESV)

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.” And the LORD said to me, “They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.”

## Gradual

**C:     The LORD is near all who | call on Him,\*  
          to all who call on | Him in truth.  
My mouth will speak the praise | of the LORD,\*  
          and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and | ever.**

**Epistle** Philippians 4:4-7 (ESV)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Alleluia** p. 190

**Gospel** John 1:19-28 (ESV)

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said. ”

(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**Nicene Creed** p. 191  
**Hymn of the Day**     *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* LSB 357

**Sermon** John 1:19-29  
**Offertory** p. 192

**Offering**

<b>Prayers</b>		
<b>Lord's Supper</b>		p. 194
<b>Distribution</b>	<i>Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People</i>	LSB 347
	<i>The Infant Priest was Holy Born</i>	LSB 624
	<i>Savior of the Nations, Come</i>	LSB 332
<b>Canticle</b>	<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>	p.199
<b>Prayer</b>		p. 201
<b>Benedicamus</b>		p. 201
<b>Benediction</b>		p. 202
<b>Hymn</b>	<i>Once He Came in Blessing</i>	LSB 333

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<b>Advent / Christmas / Epiphany</b>			
<b>Special Services</b>			
Responsive Prayer at 12:00 p.m.			
Evening services begin at 7:00 p.m.			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Day Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Text</i>
12/24/23	Christmas Eve	The Angel of Joy	Luke 2:1-14
12/25/23	Christmas Day	The Word Became Flesh	John 1:14-18
12/31/23	New Year's Eve	Shed for You	Luke 2:21
01/06/24	Epiphany	Joint at St. Paul — Fulda	Pastor Williams preaching