

To you is born
this day a Savior

LUKE 2:11



TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor

The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr.Carolyn Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission

Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director

Ms. Karen Karosas, Organist

Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist

Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Michael Querry, Sexton

Mrs. Amy Grube, Preschool Director

CHRISTMAS EVE

10:30 P.M.

SILENT REFLECTION

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shine in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

WELCOME ALL VISITORS! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us again in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book. **Welcome to the Eucharist!** All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion. *Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.*

★ **CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY** ★

TRINITY U.C.C. VISION STATEMENT:

All will know the love of God through the teachings of Jesus!!

Trinity U.C.C. is called by God to:

--Share God's love with our community

--Serve God's children

--Bring healing and wholeness to those in need

--Share the Gospel in liturgy, music, and study

BY YOUR SILENCE OTHERS MAY HEAR THE STILL SMALL VOICE OF GOD!

PRELUDES

Of the Father's Love Begotten
Plainsong, Mode 1
Puer Natus in Bethlehem
Veni, Veni, Emmanuel
Allegro Vivace

acc. Bruce Neswick
acc. Bruce Neswick
acc. David Hurd
acc. Richard Proulx
G. F. Handel

COMING FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

THE PROPHETIC WORD

Isaiah 60:1-3

(Lighting of the altar candles)

VOCAL SOLO

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam/Slechta

Theodore Slechta; Michael Slechta, Pianist

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let us pray together.

True God of God, Light from Light Eternal, make us faithful. Help us live the prophet's vision of peace, your vision of peace, bringing love to the world, living the Kingdom. May we adore you with our songs, our lives, and our gratitude; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ADORATION AND PRAISE

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

No. 112

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM and INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** (sung)

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Our time of waiting is over. Christmas is here. Our days of preparation are completed. What has not been done will now have to be left undone. We have witnessed to this very hour, this very night, and we hope that the world has heard the good news which we have spoken.

Our circle of Advent candles is lit; now tonight we light the central candle, reminding us that Christ is the light of the world, the center of our lives, the shining beacon of hope for all the universe. Christ is born. Praise God!

Let us pray together.

We thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ's coming makes hope, peace, joy, and love possible for every person in every nation. Encourage us to do our part to bring goodwill and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. Now let your Spirit put us in touch with you, the living God, through the words and music we hear tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

RESPONSE

Sing For Joy All the Earth

Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe
December 2014

Piae Cantiones; arr. Gustav Holst

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Sing for joy all the earth, God is love, sing it forth, praise to God for the birth of his Son our Sa - vior, for the Spi-rit's pow - er. Sing for hope, peace, love! Sing for hope, peace, love!" The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody. There are some fermatas and repeat signs in the piano part at the end of the piece.

17
Sing for joy! Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

17

17

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three staves: a vocal line at the top, a piano accompaniment on the right, and a bass line at the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are 'Sing for joy! Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!'. The piano part features chords and arpeggiated figures. The bass line has a few notes and rests. There are some markings below the bass line, possibly indicating fingerings or pedal points.

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

What a rare gift this season brings. God loves us so much that God came to us in Jesus.

Let us humble ourselves and confess our sins before the God of love.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess in the presence of God and one another.

God-with-us, we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter, claiming there is no room when we have plenty. We have made power and wealth our idols, while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger. We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging. Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace. Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant us the grace to begin again. Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin, through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us. (sung)

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us. (sung)

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us. (sung)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND CHORAL AMEN

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ADORATION AND PRAISE

PRAISE VERSICLE and RESPONSE

Praise the Lord!

The Lord be praised!

Let us sing praise to God!

HYMN OF PRAISE

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

No. 102

THE WORD OF GOD

COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Let us pray the collect together.

Gracious God, tonight we prepare for your good news of great joy which has come to all people. Refresh our amazement at the birth of Christ that we may be open to the new life you create among us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

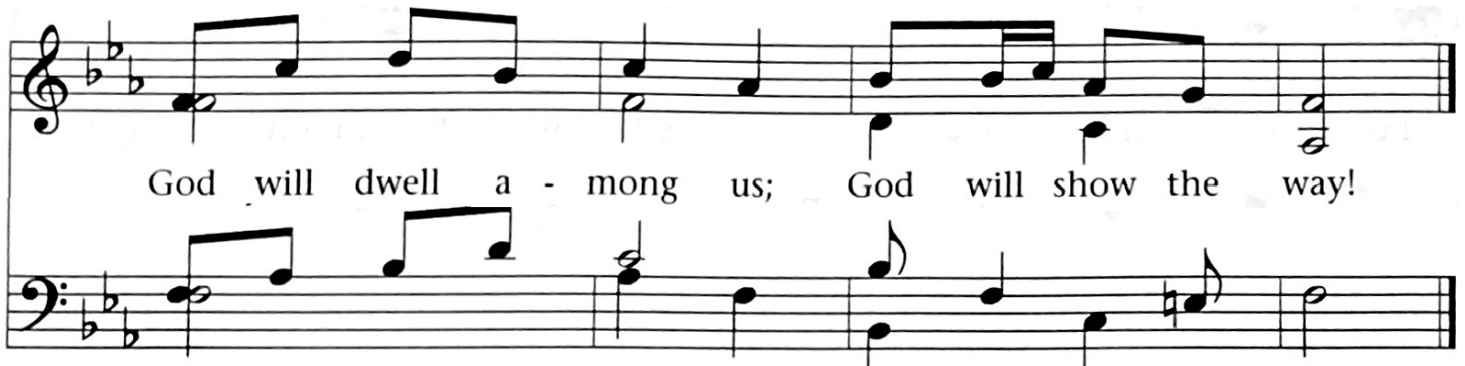
This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

PSALTER

Psalm 96

Refrain



God will dwell a - mong us; God will show the way!

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O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it.

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Repeat Refrain

THE SECOND LESSON Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE 2:1-20

Glory be to You, O Lord

#498

HERE ENDS THE READING OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ

#498

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

MEDITATION

"The Newborn King!"

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

No. 108

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was

crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

CHOIR ANTHEM

Christmas Grace

Words Traditional

Incorporating Away in a Manger and Amazing Grace

Music Arranged by Philip Kern

Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.
The stars in the heavens look down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.

“Christmas Grace” Arr. by Philip Kern © 1989 GlorySound (A Division of Shawnee Press) All Rights Reserved. Reprinted under One License #A-711879.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Khorurd Metz

Trad. Armenian Carol

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

OFFERING RESPONSE

These Gifts, O Lord, We Offer
words by Pastor Rankin

The musical score is written for voice and piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line begins with the lyrics 'These gifts, O Lord, we of - fer, These gifts, O Lord, we of -'. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand. The second system continues the vocal line with 'fer, With cheer - ful a - do - ra - tion, Praise to the Lord.' and concludes with a double bar line. The piano accompaniment also concludes with a double bar line.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels and gather us at your table of celebration.

Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Mighty God, Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. In ancient days, you created us in your image to be reflections of your glory. When we fell short and dimmed the brilliance of your light shining through us, you held our hands and walked with us out of the garden into all the corners of the earth. When we are afraid to look upon your glory, you came as a quiet traveler, as a burning bush, and as a pillar of light. You called us to be people of light, to walk no longer in darkness, and always, you light our way. Even when we walk in darkness, you shine your light and offer your grace, awaiting our return to you. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reveal your glory and grace. And so, with your people on earth and all the angels in heaven, we praise your holy name and join their unending hymn.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

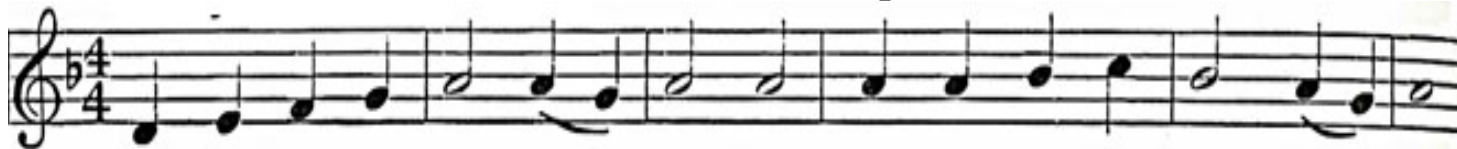
BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

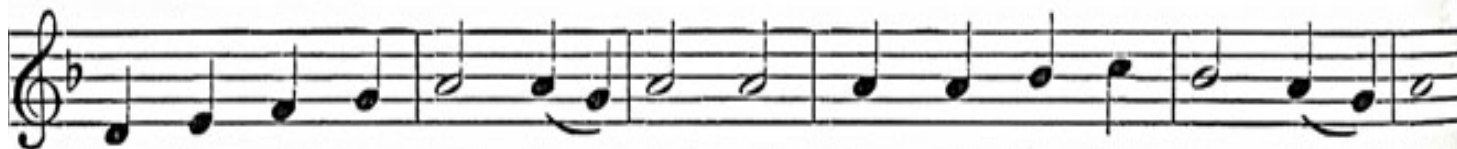
The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

COMMUNION HYMN *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

1. Let all mor-tal flesh keep si-lence, And with fear and trem-bling stand;
2. King of kings, yet born of Ma-ry, As of old on earth He stood,



Pon-der noth-ing earth-ly - mind-ed, For with bless-ing in His hand,
Lord of lords, in hu-man ves-ture—In the bod-y and the blood-



Christ our God to earth de-scend - eth, Our full hom-age to de-mand.
He will give to all the faith-ful His own self for heavenly food.

(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. We will commune by each section. The pastor will give you the wafer and you will dip it in the chalice held by the assistant. Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you need the pastor and assistant to come to you, please indicate that to someone near you or the pastor. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements in the narthex and commune in your pew. The pastor will offer a blessing after all have communed.)

SILENT PRAYER BEFORE COMING TO THE ALTAR

I do not presume to come to your Table, Lord Jesus, trusting in my own righteousness, but in your great mercy. I am not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you, Lord, have promised always to have mercy. Therefore, I ask you to have mercy upon me and to enable me to receive your real life and presence through this Sacrament of Holy Communion. Fill all of us with the gift of your Holy Spirit so that we may grow in love for you and for each other. Cleanse us of all sin. Increase our love for you and all your people. Enable us to know that you are here and that you invite us to enter into a deeper and fuller union with you, our Lord and our God. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER UPON RETURNING FROM THE ALTAR

I bow before you, Lord Jesus, in awe and wonder. You have blessed me with the gift of your life and presence. I am not worthy, but you invite me to come to be washed, loved, and empowered. For this great gift, I thank you with my whole being. As you live in me, mold me and transform me so that I may be a sign of your presence and a vessel through which your love touches the persons I encounter. May my heart and soul and all my words and actions give glory and praise to you, my Savior and my Redeemer. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

Angels sing with praise, and shepherds run with haste. As we glorify and praise you in this place, send us into the world, proclaiming the salvation you have revealed this night. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

The seas roar, and the trees of the forest sing for joy. As creation resounds with praise, inspire us with awe, reverence, and a renewed care for all that fills the fields, skies, and seas. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

The nations declare your glory. Uphold the leaders of the earth with your justice and righteousness. Break the rod of the oppressor in every land, and bring peace where there is conflict. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

The holy family finds shelter around the animals' manger. Draw near to persons experiencing homelessness, those who are alone this holiday season, and all for whom this world makes no room. Wrap all your children in bands of love and mercy. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A child is born for us and light shines on the weary. Watch over those who give birth this night and attend to those who are dying. Be present in our joys and in our sorrows. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Let us pray together.

Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by his goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. Amen.

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

HYMN

Silent Night

No. 101

Please stand when all candles are lit.

The pastor will direct you to raise your candle at the beginning of the fourth verse.

SCRIPTURE READING

St. John 1:1-14

Please extinguish your candles after the reading.

HYMN

Joy to the World!

No. 120

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SILENT PRAYER and EXTINGUISHING OF CANDLES

BENEDICTION AND THREEFOLD AMEN

POSTLUDE

Silent Night

arr. Bert Carlson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancel Flowers are given by **Bob and Hedwig Hunsicker** with gratitude to the Rankin family.

The Worship Aids are given by **Jerry & Carmen Richards** in honor of our family.

Ministering Tonight

Pastor/Celebrant	Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin
Lector/Assistant	Diane Rice
Ushers/Greeters	Karen Olley, Rich & Pam Weeber

Thank you to all who are assisting with our service this evening! A special thanks to all of the musicians for sharing their musical gifts with us tonight.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on December 25!

NEWS FROM THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: No Sunday School classes on December 29! A Holiday Koinonia will be on Sunday at 9:45 a.m.!

DECEMBER 29 SERVICES: We will continue to celebrate Christmas this Sunday with two services at 7:45 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Both services will include Holy Communion. The 10:30 service is an adaptation of the Festival of Lessons & Carols at King's College in Cambridge.

DEVOTIONALS: The January-March edition of These Days are available on the table across from the church office or on the lower level by the portico entrance.

LANCASTER AGO CHRISTMAS AT THE ORGAN: DECEMBER 29, 3:00-5:00 PM
Christmas at the Organ, our annual Carol Sing, this year at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 409 Cherry St., Columbia 17512. The Midler-Hunter organ was installed in 1951, upgraded by Columbia Organ Works in 1997, and completely restored and expanded by Peragallo in 2017. The church is beautiful at Christmastime, and the acoustic of the room creates vibrant singing, making the Carol Sing one of the highlights of our year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR
From the Staff of Trinity United Church of Christ





Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to everyone who purchased poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary!!

Name	# of flowers	In Honor /In memory of
Betsy Bailey	2	In memory of my "daughter", Glenna Bishop In memory of my husband, John Bailey
Roger & Mary Ann Bradley	1	In honor of our family
Lily & Andrew Brennan	1	In honor of all our grandparents
Nancy Crawford	2	In honor of Chris, Anne, Nikki, Heather, Tara, Quinn, Zach, Rachel, & Andrew In memory of Keith Rankin, Jackie Meisky, and Johnnie Meisky.
Donna Geisler	1	In memory of my father, The Rev. George R. Geisler, Pastor Emeritus, Trinity UCC 1964-1989 & in memory of my mother, Janice "Danny" Geisler
Greg Gruber	2	In memory of Leon & Ethel Gruber
Jeff Hackenberger	2	In memory of parents & brother
Charles & Elizabeth Hambrick-Stowe	4	To the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, Immanuel
Janet Harriger	2	In memory of my parents Dr. Miles Harriger & Dorothy J. Fasnacht
Hedwig & Bob Hunsicker	2	In memory of our parents: Verda & Paul Hunsicker, Madlene & Heinz Stege
Chuck & Sue Husted	7	In memory of Gail Boettger In memory of Linda Haines In honor of grandchildren & great grandchildren In memory of their son, Christopher Husted In memory of their grandson, Gabryl Husted In memory of our parents In honor of our grandchildren & great grandchildren
<i>Miyah, Hannah, Hannah, Jayson</i>		In honor of Stan & Pat Seachrist
Members of Trinity	1	Rev. Dr. Chris Rankin, Pastor
Members of Trinity	1	Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant
Members of Trinity	1	Michael Slechta, Director of Music & SOT Choir Director
Members of Trinity	1	Amy Grube, Preschool Director
Members of Trinity	1	Karen Karosas, Organist
Members of Trinity	1	Michael Querry, Sexton
Jack & Karen Olley	2	In honor of our family In memory of our parents
John & Sarah Paulukow	2	In honor of St. Luke members that have become our church family In memory of all the special ones we have loved & lost
Denise Pfeiffer	2	In memory of Mr. & Mrs. William Montgomery In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Ken Pfeiffer

Pastor Chris & Anne Rankin	3	In honor of Zachary, Rachel, and Andrew
Pastor Rankin	2	In honor of the Trinity Staff
		In honor of the Pastor Parish Committee
Jerry & Carmen Richards	1	In honor of our family
Dottie Schadt	2	In memory of Jere R. Schadt
		In memory of Kevin Schadt
Stan & Pat Seachrist	2	In honor of Sue & Chuck Husted
		In memory of deceased parents
Autumn & Steve Shenk	1	In memory of Lee & Lenora Williams (Autumn's parents), Helen & Amos Shenk (Steve's parents) & Jack Williams (Autumn's brother)

THE PEW CANDLE HOLDERS, made by John Barr, were given by John and Dolly Barr.

THE NATIVITY SCENE ON THE FRONT LAWN was made by Mike Wagner.

THE CRECHE ON THE LOWER LEVEL BY THE ELEVATOR was made by Mike Wagner.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE NORTH WINDOW is given in memory of Leon L. & Ethel Gruber by son Greg, daughter Sharon Armstrong, and granddaughter Jessica.

THE CHRISMON TREE: The Chrismons on the small tree in the stairwell were made by the late Edythe Geib. Several people have asked about the Chrismon tree. The term "Chrismon" comes from the Latin "Christi monnogramma" which simply means "monogram of Christ". Therefore, a Chrismon is a Christian symbol that represents Christ. There is a descriptive list of the various Chrismons next to the tree.

THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CHRIST CANDLE are dedicated to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Grace M. Dodson (mother) and Dolores A. Dodson (aunt) of Donna Wolf, given by the family and friends. The candle stand and wreath are in memory of S. Leona Wolf, mother of the late John Wolf.

Nativity of Our Lord

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Psalm 96

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

[¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

Next Sunday's Readings: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52.

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