



TRINITY MERRILL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Reverend Scott Gustafson
Reverend Jonathan Chapa

December 28, 2025 - 10:30 AM
The First Sunday After Christmas

The message will be shared with us today by Pastor Scott Gustafson and with Eileen Hass as our pianist.

AS WE GATHER The stores are processing gift returns, but we dare not return our greatest Christmas gift—our Lord Jesus! God is gracious and forgiving, remembering His promises. He leads us, as we hear He did for the Israelites in the Old Testament Reading. We need no one else, as we are God's dear children, which Paul reminds us in the Epistle. It is not that we do not have enemies—even Joseph had to figure out what to do—but we have Jesus with us. It is still Christmas.

WELCOME & GREETING

OPENING SONG

"Do You Hear What I Hear"

Vs.1 *Said the night wind to the little lamb
Do you see what I see
Way up in the sky little lamb
Do you see what I see
A star a star dancin' in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite*

Vs.3 *Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king
Do you know what I know
In your palace warm mighty king
Do you know what I know
A Child a Child shivers in the cold
Let us bring him silver and gold
Oh let us bring him silver and gold*

Vs.2 *Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear
Ringing through the sky shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear
A song a song high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea*

Vs.4 *Said the king to the people ev'rywhere
Listen to what I say
Pray for peace people ev'rywhere
Yeah listen to what I say
The Child the Child sleepin' in the night
He will bring us goodness and light oh yeah
He will bring us goodness and light*

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

PSALM *Psalm 111:1-10*

Pastor: Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,

Men: *in the company of the upright, in the congregation.*

Women: *Great are the works of the LORD,*

ALL: *studied by all who delight in them.*

Men: *Full of splendor and majesty is His work,*

Women: *and His righteousness endures forever.*

Pastor: He has caused His wondrous works to be remembered.

ALL: *the LORD is gracious and merciful.*

Women: *He provides food for those who fear Him;*

Men: *He remembers His covenant forever.*

Pastor: He has shown His people the power of His works,

ALL: **in giving them the inheritance of the nations.**

Pastor: The works of His hands are faithful and just; all His precepts are trustworthy;

Men: *they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.*

Women: *He sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever.*

ALL: **Holy and awesome is His name!**

Pastor: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.

ALL: **His praise endures forever!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION Galatians 4:4; Isaiah 63:14

Pastor: O Lord God, we confess that although we usually prepare for, as Paul put it, "the fullness of time," that is not true in our personal lives.

People: **Forgive our impatience for taking matters into our own hands, forgive our not trusting that You are in control of all things, and forgive our failing to acknowledge You above all else.**

Pastor: We confess, O Lord, that unlike obedient Joseph, we have not always listened to Your commands and instructions.

People: **Forgive our desire to be in control, forgive our avoiding difficult decisions, and forgive our thinking that we are able to arrange all things for our own benefit.**

Pastor: Forgiveness has been won for you! The babe born in Bethlehem is the only-begotten Son of God and your elder Brother. The Spirit urges you to cry, "Abba! Father!" As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

MONTHLY VERSE (Isaiah 7:14)

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

SONG

"Emmanuel"

Verse *Emmanuel Emmanuel*

His name is called Emmanuel

God with us revealed in us

His name is called Emmanuel (Repeat)

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NICENE CREED

People: **I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who**

proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and Apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 63:7-14*

⁷ I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. ⁸ For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior. ⁹ In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity, he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. ¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore, he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them. ¹¹ Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹² who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name, ¹³ who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. ¹⁴ Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.

SECOND READING *Galatians 4:4-7*

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

GOSPEL READING *Matthew 2:13-23*

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." ¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: ¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more." ¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³ And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

SONG OF THE DAY

“One Small Child”

Vs.1 One small Child in a land of a thousand
One small dream of a Savior tonight
One small hand reaching out to the starlight
One small city of life O

Vs.2 One king bringing his gold and riches
One king ruling an army of might
One king kneeling with incense and candlelight
One King bringing us life O

**Chorus 1 See Him lying a cradle beneath Him
See Him smiling in the stall
See His mother praising His Father
See His tiny eyelids fall**

Vs.3 One small light from the flame of a candle
One small light from a city of might
One small light from the stars in the endless night
One small light from a face O

**Chorus 2 See the shepherds kneeling before Him
See the kings on bended knee
See His mother praising His Father
See the blessed Infant sleep**

Vs.4 One small Child in a land of a thousand
One small dream in a people of might
One small hand reaching out to the starlight
One small Savior of life O

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MESSAGE

ATTENDANCE /CONNECT TIME / OFFERING

During this time, please sign the attendance book found in the pew or use your mobile device to fill out the Connect Card or submit prayer requests on our app or online at www.trinitymerrill.com/live. You can also visit our app or www.trinitymerrill.com/give to learn more about other ways to support the ministries at Trinity. (When filling out the attendance book, please include your last names and list the names of everyone in attendance in your family.)

PRAYERS OF GOD’S PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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.

✠ WELCOME TO THE LORD’S TABLE ✠

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION SONGS

"It Came Upon The Midnight Clear "

LSB 366

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,
From heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.
2. Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats
O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.
3. All you, beneath your heavy load,
By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way
With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour,
Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace;
Of Him the angels sing.
4. For lo, the days have come to pass
By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years
Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth
God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear
The song the angels sing.

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COMMUNION BLESSING & BENEDICTION

CLOSING SONG

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

LSB 388

Refrain *Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!*

1. While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. **(Refrain)**
2. The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. **(Refrain)**
3. Down in a lonely manger
The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn. **(Refrain)**

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Today's radio broadcast is sponsored in loving memory of Walter, Ann & Bob Koebe by Jim Koebe.

The flowers on the altar today are sponsored by Shawn & Laurie, Molly & Bethany Schultz in loving memory of Herb & Grace Lau.

2026 Church Offering Envelopes should be arriving soon! Please keep your eyes on the weekly bulletin so you know when to pick up your envelopes from downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. If you are unable to find them, please call the church office. Reminder: Do not use them until 2026. Thank You.

Men's Club Chili Luncheon

The Trinity Men's Club is hosting a Chili Luncheon in the church basement following the 8:00 a.m. Worship Service on **Sunday, February 1st, 2026**. The meal will feature 10 varieties of chili, including Beer Chili, Pineapple Chili, Lo-Sodium Taco Chili, EX-TREME Chili, White Chicken Chili and 5 choices of mild or medium chilies. We will also have macaroni & cheese (for non chili-lovers). Beverages (milk, juice and coffee) are included in the price. Shredded cheese, raw onions, crackers, bread and desserts will be offered at no additional cost. Serving will take place between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Carry-outs will also be available. Ticket prices are \$8.00 for adults, \$3.00 for kids 5 through 12. The meal is free for kids under 5.

TRINITY MEN'S BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY

The Trinity Men's Breakfast and Bible Study will be resuming our gatherings in the new year, with our next meeting scheduled for **Saturday, January 17th**. We hope you'll join us then for a morning of fellowship, food, and time in God's Word. We meet the third Saturday of each month in the church lower level fellowship hall. Breakfast is at 7:30 and Bible study starts at 8:00.

RIGHT NOW MEDIA

We are excited to share that our church now has unlimited access to **RightNow Media**—the world's largest streaming library of video Bible study resources. This extensive library has **more than 20,000 videos** taught by leaders like Francis Chan, Jennie Allen, J.D. Greear, Dr. Tony Evans, and many more. There's even a **library just for kids with over 2,000 safe, entertaining videos**. RightNow Media has a free app that's available on all major streaming devices so you and your family can access content anywhere, anytime. You should have already received an email invitation for FREE access to RightNow Media. (If you haven't received it yet, be sure to check your spam or promotions folder.) Or Contact the Church office to receive an email invitation.

The Kleinschmidt Bible Study will resume on Monday, January 5th at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall downstairs of church.

GriefShare begins Feb. 23, 2026 and meets weekly both online (Zoom) and in person for 13 weeks. Whether it has been recent or many years since the loss of your friend, spouse, parent, sibling or child, all are welcome! (Church membership is not required.) Registration is available at <https://find.griefshare.org/groups/275994>, and includes a participant guide, (if you haven't attended previously) and access to videos and other content useful in the journey from mourning to joy. Joy may seem out of reach when learning to live without our loved ones, yet the support of others and focusing on God's word make room for the seemingly impossible process of healing. **Join us and learn more at www.Griefshare.org.** Grief is difficult. Share your burdens and grow through your unique healing this spring online and in person through GriefShare at Trinity Lutheran Church, Merrill. "For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ." 2 Corinthians 1:5 NIV Questions call Manda Norman (715) 351-1399.

Join us for our New Years Eve Service on Wednesday, December 31st
at 6:00 PM with Communion. Ring in the New Year in Fellowship with your
Trinity Family and friends.



TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Help Us Spread the Word - Open House Invitation - January 28, 2026

Trinity families, we'd love your help! We are excited to welcome new families to Trinity Lutheran School and invite you to share our upcoming 4K–8th Grade New Student Open House with friends, neighbors, coworkers, and relatives who may be looking for a Christ-centered school community. Our Open House will be held 5:30–7:00 PM on the last Wednesday in January, and it's a wonderful opportunity for prospective families to see what Trinity is all about—faith, strong values, leadership, meaningful friendships, and academic challenges that help students grow.

Families will be able to:

- Meet our teachers and staff
- Tour classrooms and learning spaces
- Learn about Full-Day 4K, our STEM-Innovation Lab, and the Wisconsin Choice Program & tuition assistance

Experience the welcoming, family-focused environment that makes Trinity special

Trinity is partnering with HOPE Life Center throughout the month of January. Hope provides confidential help, compassionate care and free services, to those faced with an unplanned pregnancy, possible STD, or dealing with a past abortion. We take time to build relationships and encourage individuals to make good choices. Most importantly, we share the love and forgiveness found only in Jesus Christ. With your support, we are committed to building a community of grace that extends beyond the birth of their child. Operation Baby Bottle (OBB) provides support for the mission of Hope, and is a simple way for our congregation to get involved. Please pick up a bottle as you leave church, fill the bottle with coins, bills or checks, and then return the bottle to church. You can also donate online at HOPEWI.ORG/DONATE Trinity is collecting throughout the month of January.



Stop in the church office to reserve your radio broadcast for 2026. Broadcasts are \$190. Radio broadcasts make a great gift for the hard to by for friend or family member. Our broadcasts are an important part of our ministry – reaching those households who may not be able to come to church.

Please help us beautify our church – sign up on the chart in the hall by the Conference room to put flowers on the altar in 2026. Call the church office at least a week in advance to notify Robin of the occasion for the flowers.