



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

1308 Mt Holly Rd

Burlington, NJ 08016

(609) 387-1202

HOLY TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

www.holytrinityelc.org

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License # A-713124 for music where applicable.

December 21, 2025

10:00am

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Introduction

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRELUDE

* THE CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ✚ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

* Please stand as you are able

THE GATHERING SONG: #288

Good Christian Friends Rejoice

*** THE GREETING**

P: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

*** THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH See Insert

THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Then the Lord spoke to Ahaz again and said, “Ask for a sign from the Lord your God to prove to yourself that this is true. You can ask for any sign you want. The sign can come from a place as deep as Sheol or as high as the skies.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask for a sign as proof. I will not test the Lord.” Then Isaiah said, Family of David, listen very carefully! Is it not enough that you would test the patience of humans? Will you now test the patience of my God? But the Lord will still show you this sign:

The young woman is pregnant and will give birth to a son. She will name him Immanuel. He will eat milk curds and honey as he learns to choose good and refuse evil. But before he is old enough to make that choice, the land of the two kings you fear will be empty.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POEM: “Mary’s Song” by Charles Causley

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Shepherd of Israel, listen to us. You lead your people like sheep.

You sit on your throne above the Cherub angels. Let us see you.

² **Shepherd of Israel, show your greatness to the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh. Come and save your people.**

³ God, accept us again.

Smile down on us and save us!

⁴ **Lord God All-Powerful, when will you listen to our prayers?**

How long will you be angry with us?

⁵ Instead of bread and water,
you gave your people tears.

⁶ **You made us the target of everyone’s hatred.**

Our enemies make fun of us.

⁷ God All-Powerful, accept us again.

Smile down on us and save us!

¹⁷ **Reach out and help your chosen one.**

Reach out to the people you raised up.

¹⁸ Then we will never leave you.

Let us live, and we will worship you.

¹⁹ **Lord God All-Powerful, accept us again.**

Smile down on us and save us!

YOUTH CHOIR HYMN: *The Angels’ Message*

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Greetings from Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus. God chose me to be an apostle and gave me the work of telling his Good News. God promised long ago through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures to give this Good News to his people. The Good News is about God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. As a human, he was born from the family of David, but through the Holy Spirit he was shown to be God’s powerful Son when he was raised from death. Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle—to lead people of all nations to believe and obey him. I do all this to honor Christ. You are some of those who have been chosen to belong to Jesus Christ. This letter is to all of you in Rome. God loves you, and he has chosen you to be his holy people. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

* **THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Sung page #151a

***C: Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

* P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 1st chapter

* C: **Glory to you, O Lord!**

Gospel: : Matthew 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah happened. His mother Mary was engaged to marry Joseph. But before they married, he learned that she was expecting a baby. (She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit.) Mary's husband, Joseph, was a good man. He did not want to cause her public disgrace, so he planned to divorce her secretly. But after Joseph thought about this, an angel from the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to accept Mary to be your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. You will name him Jesus. Give him that name because he will save his people from their sins." All this happened to make clear the full meaning of what the Lord said through the prophet: "The virgin will be pregnant and will give birth to a son. They will name him Immanuel." (Immanuel means "God with us.") When Joseph woke up, he did what the Lord's angel told him to do. He married Mary. But Joseph did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And he named him Jesus.

P: The Gospel of the Lord!

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOOD NEWS 101

THE SERMON

***THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

* **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

THANKSGIVING

**OFFERING
SPECIAL MUSIC**

* **CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING :**

184

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

THE MANGER

YOUTH CHOIR HYMN: *Away In A Manger*

POEM: *"The First Christmas" by Elizabeth Fleming*

THE SENDING

* **THE BLESSING**

May God who comes among us,
Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.
Amen.

* **ALL SING:** *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*

* **THE SENDING SONG:**

#257

O Come, O Come Emmanuel v. 1—4

* **THE DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Keep Awake
Thanks be to God.

THE POSTLUDE

Serving Today: December 21, 2026

Acolyte: Scarlett Johnson

Lector: Sunday school

Usher: Amber Johnson

Musician: Michelle Foster

Sound System: Amber Johnson

Serving Next Week: December 28, 2025

Acolyte: TBD

Lectors: Hank & Judy Bariexca, Nicole & Baylee
Rodig & Bonnie Mazza

Ushers: TBD

Musician: Michelle Foster

THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible.

The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE CALL the church office (609-387-1202) whenever a family member, neighbor, or friend who is a member of Holy Trinity is hospitalized or moves from one hospital to another. Due to stricter privacy laws, hospitals do *not* notify the church when a member is admitted to the hospital and keep us informed of hospitalizations so Pastor Haab can visit and keep people in our prayers.

SUNDAY MORNING: Worship 10AM every Sunday. Everyone is invited and welcome to attend our Worship at 10 AM every Sunday. Our blended worship is back on the 4th Sunday of each month.

MORE INFORMATION: on these and other upcoming worship times and events can be found on the church Facebook page [HolyTrinityBT](https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityBT) and the church website: www.holytrinityelc.org

BIRTHDAY FELLOWSHIP and LOUD OFFERING. The first Sunday of each month, Phillip the bucket makes a special appearance for our loud change offering. We also have a special birthday fellowship immediately following worship.

CHURCH DE-GREENING: January 10 at 1pm

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND POTLUCK FEBUARY 1, 2026: Immediately following Worship. Mark your calendars for this important meeting. It is crucial to have as any members attend the annual meeting. Please see sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

PRAYER SERVICE

Beginning on January 7, 2026, at 12 noon, we will be starting a prayer service. This service will continue every month thereafter on the first Wednesday of each month at noon.

United in Faith and Prayer

Holy Trinity Evangelical
Lutheran Church

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Christmas Eve

December 24th 7 & 10pm

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 28 @10am



A
Holy
and Blessed
Christmas

We are so glad you worshipped with us today.

**Our hope is that you have a blessed week and we
will see you again next Sunday.**

If you are visiting and have any questions about

**Holy Trinity, please ask Pastor Haab, one of our
Greeters, Ushers or any of our wonderful members.**