A painting of a manger with a baby

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**Trinity Lutheran Church**

**The Nativity of Our Lord—Christmas Eve**

**December 24, 2023 7:00 p.m. Communion Service**

**WELCOME TO TRINITY!**

Thank you for worshipingwith us today. We want to know who you are, so please provide your contact information in the Friendship Book as it is passed during the Offertory. If you are visiting, honor us by signing the Guest Register in the Narthex.

There are times in our worship service where we stand or kneel. Feel free to participate in either as you are able or feel comfortable to remain seated.

Gluten-free wafers are available upon request during communion services. Please speak to the pastor before service if you wish to receive the host in this form.

Please ask an usher should you require a hearing assistance device.

(†) ~ Those who wish may make the sign of the Cross in remembrance of their Baptism.

**RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

If you are not a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, we ask that you speak with the pastor prior to the service before receiving the Lord’s Supper.

**REQUESTS FOR PRAYER**

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a Blue Card from the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. Prayer requests may also be emailed to [trinityoffice@bellsouth.net](mailto:trinityoffice@bellsouth.net) or to pastorjeffwebb@yahoo.com.

**FOR PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN**

We are delighted that you have brought your child to worship! We invite you to use the Cry Room as a courtesy to others if your little one gets a little rambunctious. Our Cry Room, complete with seating and children's activities, is located at the back of the Sanctuary. The service can be heard through the sound system. We hope your children feel glad they were here and that they are a part of the Trinity family!

***Our Vision:***

***Growing in God’s Word to Share Christ’s Love***

***Our Mission:***

***Led by God, equipped as disciples through Word and Sacrament,***

***we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all.***



**AS WE GATHER TODAY**

The Shepherds are a picture of the real gift this Christmas, the gift of a once & for all sacrifice brought into the world. May we follow the examples of the shepherds and share the life-changing message of Jesus with the world.

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**The Shepherds**

*Please Stand*

**✠ PREPARATION ✠**

**HYMN 379** “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

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**INVOCATION**

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

**People: Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES** *John 1:14; Psalm 96:3; Psalm 98:1*

Pastor: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**People: and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Pastor: Declare His glory among the nations,

**People: His marvelous works among all the peoples!**

Pastor: Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

**People: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**

**HYMN 367** “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

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**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: Joined in worship on this sacred night, let us make confession to our heavenly Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus’ sake.

*Silence for reflection on God’s Word and for self-examination*

Pastor: Almighty Father,

**People: we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We have not always given You the best of what we have and are, and have not fully made room for You in our lives. With repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: With joy I announce God’s Good News to You. Our gracious God in His mercy has given His Son to be born, to live, and then to die for you and to rise again in glory. For His sake God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Be at peace and rejoice in the Lord.

**People: Amen.**

**✠ WORD ✠**

**INTROIT** *Psalm 24:1, 3–5; antiphon: Psalm 2:7*

Pastor: I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to Me, “You are My Son; today I have begotten You.”

**People: The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.**

Pastor: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place?

**People: He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.**

Pastor: He will receive blessing from the Lord

**People: and righteousness from the God of his salvation.  
  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.  
  
I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to Me, “You are My Son; today I have begotten You.”**

**HYMN 370** “What Child Is This”

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**SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray.  
O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

*Be Seated*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Isaiah 7:10–14*

(Immanuel will be born to a virgin mother.)

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *1 John 4:7–16* (God sent His Son into the world as Redeemer.)

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

Pastor: To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

**People: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.**

Pastor: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

**People: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Pastor: Sing to the Lord a new song,

**People: for He has done marvelous things!**

*Please Stand*

**HOLY GOSPEL** Luke 2:1-20

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest,  
 and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

*Be Seated*

**HYMN OF THE DAY 366** “It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

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**SERMON**

*Please Stand*

**CREED** *Apostles’ Creed*

**People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
 maker of heaven and earth.  
  
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died and was buried.  
 He descended into hell.  
 The third day He rose again from the dead.  
 He ascended into heaven  
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy Christian Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

*Kneel or Be Seated*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Pastor: Let us pray for God’s great mercy, asking that He would hear our petitions and grant them according to His gracious will.  
  
Almighty and everlasting God, as we recall the first Christmas, we thank You for the gift of Jesus Christ, who came to earth in deep humility. We bless You that there was room in Your heart for the people of earth and for the sacrifice of Jesus as He left the glory of Your eternal kingdom in coming to earth to be our Savior, our Brother and our Friend. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: As we think of Your chosen servants Mary and Joseph, we thank You for the gift of family. Grant that we always treasure the gifts we receive through them and seek to be those who cherish our family, our church family, our friends, and our neighbors. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: As we fill this sacred space with song, we thank You for the gifts of poetry and music and for writers and composers who have enriched our celebration with their devotion and creativity. Grant that we ever seek to bring You all that is the best and most beautiful in our worship. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: As we hear again of the shepherds to whom the angel brought the greatest of news, we thank You for those who serve in the various vocations of life, including those whose daily work goes unnoticed or underappreciated. We commend to Your special care, Lord, those in the military, our first responders and medical personnel, and all whose service keeps them distanced from their family homes in these days. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: We pray for all situations and conditions of people, especially those on our hearts at this time [*including* . . .]. Be with all who need our petitions and our concern. Bless them according to their needs, Lord, and give us opportunities to be of comfort and assistance in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: As we pray, gracious God, we remember our dear ones who have completed their earthly lives and now are in Your eternal keeping. Grant that we follow their footsteps in ways of peace and love throughout our lives as we live to Your glory as those on whom Your favor rests. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: These and any other things You would have us ask of You, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

*Be Seated*

**OFFERING** *(Please fill out and pass the red Friendship Book at this time; and fill out the blue card in the pew rack for prayers.)*

**CHOIR ANTHEM** “How Far Is the Star?” *by Bradley Ellingboe*

*Please Stand*

**OFFERTORY**

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*Be Seated*

**✠ SACRAMENT ✠**

*The Sacrament, or Lord's Supper, is a special gift from God that brings us into personal communion with Jesus Christ. "In, with and under" the bread and wine we receive His body and blood for forgiveness and renewal. If you are a repentant sinner, come to the table expecting to receive God's wonderful gifts for you!*

*Communicants will take their own wine cups as they are passed. Those requiring non-alcoholic grape juice will take the cups with white grape juice from the middle of the tray.*

**OUR EXAMINATION**

Pastor: In preparation for Holy Communion, St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29, “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.” So that we may properly examine ourselves prior to receiving the Lord’s Supper, I ask you to reflect on these questions:

* Do you repent of all your sins of thought, word, and deed?
* Do you believe that Jesus Christ is your only Savior from all sin, Satan, and death?
* Do you believe that the Risen Christ is really present in the Sacrament and that in, with, and under the bread and wine you receive His true Body and Blood?

If you answer in faith "Yes!" to these questions, and are properly instructed, you are invited to come forward and partake of the Lord's Supper during Distribution. If you are unable to answer yes to any of these questions, you are invited to come forward, cross your arms as Pastor approaches you and receive a blessing. By your coming forward, "You proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

*Please Stand*

**PREFACE** *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**PROPER PREFACE**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**HYMN 384 vv. 1, 5** “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

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**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Blessed are You, Creator of all that exists, for You have had mercy on us and sent Your Son into our flesh to be our Savior. In His name we ask You to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Gather us together with all the faithful until that Day we join them at the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. To You alone, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**THE WORDS OF OUR LORD** *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20;  
1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”  
  
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

**PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST** *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

**People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**LORD’S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

**People:** **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.**

**PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

**AGNUS DEI**

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*Be Seated*

**DISTRIBUTION HYMNS**

**HYMN 361 vv. 1, 4** “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

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**HYMN 393** “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

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**HYMN 364** “Away in a Manger”

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**CANDLELIGHTING**

*The Pastor takes the light from the Christ Candle and passes it to the ushers. They pass the light to the congregation. Tip only the unlighted candle.*

Pastor: With renewing faith, growing hope, and expanding love on this most holy night, we sing “Silent Night, Holy Night.”

**HYMN 363** “Silent Night, Holy Night”

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**CLOSING PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray.  
O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**BENEDICTION** *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN 387** “Joy to the World”

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*Please extinguish candles.*

**TO THE GLORY OF GOD**

The Altar flowers are given to the glory of God

by the Altar Guild and the Congregation.

***For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.***

***Luke 2:11***

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 1.

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**At Home with the Family**

Spend some time talking about the ways the prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled. As you prepare to unwrap your gifts tonight or tomorrow, spend some time in prayer for each giver, including God. With older children and adults, talk about how one of the gifts you received reminds you of the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Find an opportunity to share the Good News with someone else and have a blessed Christmas!

**POINSETTIAS**

Thank you to everyonewho donated poinsettias to decorate the beautiful Altar:

**THOSE WHO GAVE IN CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS**

John & Mary Helen Anander, Cindy Baldwin & Lizzie, Alison & Robert Bowden, Cathy Crotwell, Barbara Duch, Chris & Teresa Garretson, Gretchen Holmes, Sherry Kreger

**THOSE WHO GAVE IN LOVING MEMORY or IN HONOR OF SOMEONE**

Tracy Chance in memory of Tom Deemer and Harold Chance

Jim & Carole Eckes in memory of Mark MacPhail

Chris & Teresa Garretson in memory of Roger & Prudence Garretson and Richard & Eloise Wilson

Carolyne Graham in memory of Carolyn Heidt Sowell

Sheila Herman in memory of E. M. Herman

Bill and Sharon Johnson in memory of our parents

The Johnson family in memory of Joe & Pat Kass

Shirley Lewis in memory of Jack & Robert Lewis and in appreciation of Bob & Karen Hanovich

Doug and Shirley Masini in memory of Floyd & Norma Chester

Marilyn McKee in memory of Darren McKee

Betty Morrell in memory of Richard Morrell & family members

John Morrison in memory of Margot Morrison

Barbara Prieto in memory of Edna Herrmann

Catherine Rogers in memory of Clara Brant

Tom & Bethany Wayman & family in memory of Robert & Magdalyn Wayman and Russell & Rebecca Roethler

Wayne White in memory of Chris White

**HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP**

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion – 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship with Holy Communion – 10:00 a.m.

**SEASON OF THE CHURCH YEAR**

We begin the church year with an ending and a beginning. Advent is the season before Christmas during which we anticipate the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is in this Second Coming that He will judge the earth and raise all the dead. Those who have faith will be given their reward in heaven and live with Him eternally. Advent is a beginning as well. For we look forward to the time we celebrate Christ’s first advent, His birth on this earth, which we celebrate on Christmas day. The color for Advent is blue, which suggests hope for us while we wait.

**THE SYMBOLS OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

The evergreen wreath symbolizes eternal life in Christ. The candles are symbolic of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. The act of lighting more candles each week anticipates the imminent coming of Christ.

Each candle has a specific meaning:

1. **Prophecy Candle** announces a period of waiting for our Lord. – **Hope**
2. **Bethlehem Candle** symbolizes preparing to receive the Christ Child. – **Love**
3. **Shepherd’s Candle** symbolizes sharing of the news of Christ’s birth. The pink color is representative of their joy and witness to so great an event! – **Joy**
4. **Angels’ Candle** symbolizes Christ’s final coming on Judgment Day when He will appear in glory with all His angels. – **Peace**
5. **Christ Candle** is lit on Christmas Eve. This central candle signifies that the Light of the World, **Jesus, has come**.

**A black and white drawing of a wreath with candles

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**THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS**  *Matthew 1:1–16*

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of **David**, the son of **Abraham**.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by **Tamar**, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by **Rahab**, and Boaz the father of Obed by **Ruth**, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the **wife of Uriah**, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of **Joseph** the husband of **Mary**, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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fax 912-925-4056 www.trinitylutheransavannah.com

Contact Pastor: 717-333-6263; pastorjeffwebb@yahoo.com

**STAFF**

Jeff Webb, Pastor

Traci Schumacher, Administrative Assistant

Helen Williams, Church Custodian

**BOARD OF ELDERS**

Mark Waltz, Head Elder (C – E)

Mike Fajen (K – Mc)

Todd Freesemann (F – J)

Sonny Massey (A – B)

Bob Reynolds (Me – Sa)

Tom Wayman (Sc – Z)

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

Kip Wiltse, President

Eric Thompson, Vice President

Cathy Crotwell, Secretary

Karl Schumacher, Treasurer

Jennifer Wolfe, Board of Education

Mark Waltz, Board of Elders

Chris Garretson, Board of Evangelism

Chris Cesaroni, Board of Property Management

Karen Hanovich, Board of Social Ministry

Lonna McEwen, Board of Stewardship

Cindy Reynolds, Financial Secretary

Bob Hanovich, Board of Youth

**ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS**

Cindy Baldwin, Comfort Dog Top Dog

Jackie Deemer, Director of TLC Singers & LWML President

Katie Fester, Sunday School Superintendent

Rosemary Gerdes, Quilters

Karen Hanovich, TLC Marketing

Lonna McEwen, Altar Guild

Rose Pitt, Prayer Team