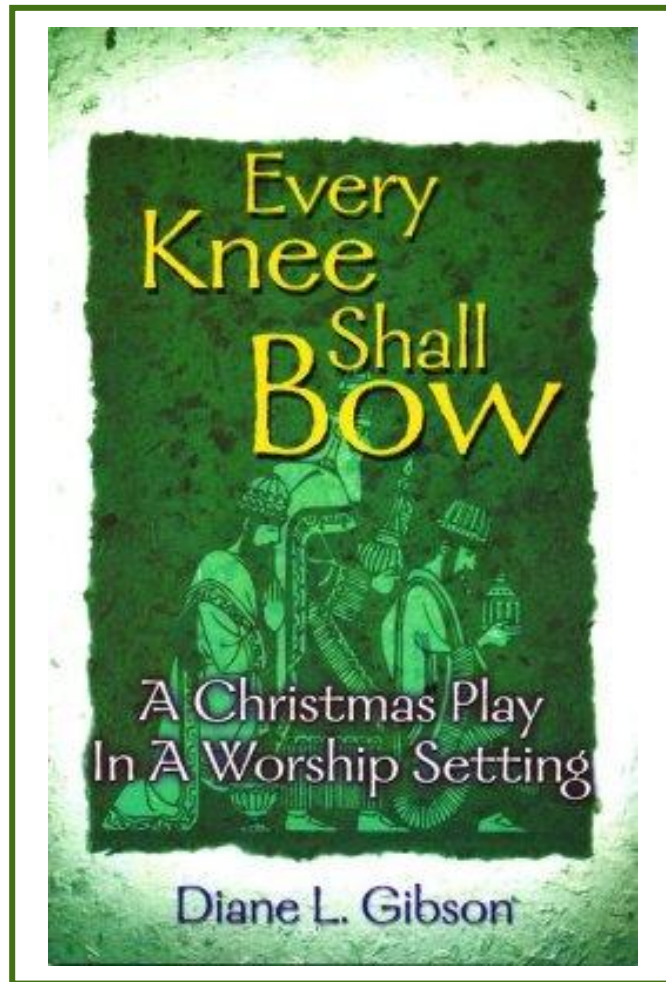


Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Children's Christmas Program December 8, 2024



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page,
our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.

GATHERING

- **Prelude** **Roxanne Groff**
- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**
- **Welcome** **Pr Mel Musser**
- **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

1: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

2: We light this first candle in the hope of your coming.

3: We anticipate the time when you will pour out your spirit upon all flesh.

4: We light this second candle in love for you and our neighbors.

*** GATHERING SONG “O Little Town of Bethlehem” LBW 41**

(First verse only)

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;

yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below each staff, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The first staff ends with a fermata over the final note. The second and third staves end with a fermata over the final note. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line.

*** APOSTOLIC 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.

-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

December 8, 2024

Page 2 of 16

*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray... Almighty God, we heed Joel's call to return to you, and we seek your forgiveness. Renew our spirits and empower us to live in accordance with your ways. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

WORD

Every Knee Shall Bow

Characters

Angel 1-Lexie Angles	Mrs. Jones- Kami Schmitmeyer
Angel 2- Rhyan Cool	Tommy- Callie Schmitmeyer
Voice of God- Micah Angles	Alice- Finley Schmitmeyer
Mr. Charles- Noah Harleman	Rock Singer- Pastor Mel
Mr. Executive- Jackson Baker	Sarah- Ruby Baker
Football Player- Miles Baker	Young Boy- Gabe Angles
Mr. Jones- Josh Schmitmeyer	Passersby Dean Thompson

Scene 1 – *Come and Worship*

Angel 1: *(To another angel)* Did you see what's happening in town this year? They set up a manger in the center of the town square and are encouraging everyone to come and worship Jesus over the Christmas season.

Angel 2: Do you really think people will come? Last year Santa Claus was in the center of town square. People always come to see him.

Angel 1: Well, there are signs up all over town inviting everyone to come. Even People from Trinity Lutheran church will be ringing bells to raise money for the community and encouraging those who pass by to come and worship.

Angel 2: Oh, if the people could only know who Jesus really is -- they'd see how much he loves them.

Angel 1: Yes, there really would be peace on earth if they would let him into their hearts as their Savior and Lord.

Angel 2: They would see that his gifts are far greater than anything money can buy.

Voice of God: You have spoken well, my angels. Now listen, for I have an important job for you this season. Many people will pass through the square this Christmas. Many will be in a hurry and will be reluctant to stop at my manger. I want you to lead them to the manger and guide them to kneel before me.

Angel 1: Yes, Lord, we will.

Angel 2: But whom shall we lead? There are so many.

Voice of God: Yes, there are many. I will show you who to lead as they come through the square.

Song: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" Verse 1

Scene 2 – The Groundskeeper

Voice of God: Let us begin with Mr. Charles, the town groundskeeper. I want to talk with him.

(Bells play as a summons to come. Angels surround Mr. Charles and lead him to the manger.)

Mr. Charles: I sure am glad the town board voted to allow the manger to be set up this year. It seems like it's been years since we've had it at the center of the square.

(Pauses as he looks around.) It looks like everything's in place – the manger, the baby, some lights, a little kneeler ---- and all the signs encouraging everyone to come and worship. Although I think people are in too big of a hurry to stop and worship.

Voice of God: Mr. Charles come and kneel before me. I want to talk with you.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

Mr. Charles: (*Peers closely at the sign beside the manger and begins to read.*) Let's see now, "Take time to pause at the manger and worship."
(*Removes hat as he slowly kneels.*) Stop and worship, eh. You know, this is quite unique. Lots of towns have nativity scenes. But stopping to worship – well that's another matter. You know, Lord, I'm not real good at words, and, well, I'm not even sure what I should say. All I know is that I've known you since I was a kid. And I know you came to save us and everyone else in this crazy world. Nobody really deserves your love, but you love us just the same. And well – I just want to say thanks, Lord, and uh – Merry Christmas!

Voice of God: Mr. Charles, you have a special place in my heart. I am pleased to hear your words of love for me. Blessed are you for keeping my ways. You cannot even imagine the wonderful things I have ready for those who love me. Go in peace; I will be with you always.

Mr. Charles: (*As though coming out of a trance.*) Boy, I don't know what it was, but that was wonderful! It was as if the Lord himself was right here talking to me. I felt such wonderful love! There just might be something to this worshiping business. I'll have to come back here again and encourage others to come, too.

Song: "Oh, Come all Ye Faithful" Verse 1

Scene 3 – Mr. Executive

Voice of God: There's Mr. Executive speeding by. Slow him down and draw him to me. (*Angels hover around Mr. Executive, who is busy talking on his cellular phone.*)

Mr. Executive: Oh, man! This is too much! If one more associate messes up, this deal is going to fall through. I need a break. I think I'll take a short walk around the square. (*Angels lead him to the center square as bells ring in the distance. Mr. Executive peers more closely at sign by the manger.*) "Pause and worship ... kneel ..." Well, God, I don't know if I'll worship, but I do have a few things I'd like to say to you. You know, every time I hear the songs, "Peace on earth, good will to men,"

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

and all that, but, well – I just don't see it. If you ask me, this world is just getting worse all the time. It's a rat race. People are dishonest, they'll stab you in the back to make themselves look good ... Oh, I don't even want to talk about it – it just makes me angry.

Voice of God: Yes, I know all about the mess, Mr. Executive. And it's because of sin that the world is in such a mess. That's why I sent Jesus – to save the world of all its sin and grief.

Mr. Executive: But I don't get it. Nothing's changed. In fact, things are getting worse.

Voice of God: Look hard at the baby in the manger, Mr. Executive. It is this baby that won the victory over sin. His death forgave every sin, once and for all.

Mr. Executive: So then why is the world still in such a mess?

Voice of God: Millions have not accepted my gift, and the new life Jesus came to bring. They have pushed aside the very thing that can change their hearts and the course of the entire universe.

Mr. Executive: Well, if you're God, why don't you just make everyone believe?

Voice of God: I will not force obedience on anyone. I offer the gift of faith in the heart of anyone who would accept me. I offer myself to you right now, Mr. Executive.

Mr. Executive: I'm not sure what I believe. God, you have always been a part of my life.

Voice of God: I don't want to just be a part of your life but in all your life. It won't change all those around you, but it will do miracles for your own life.

Mr. Executive: Oh, God, I want to believe you. Help me to believe! (*He buries his face in prayer.*)

Song: "Oh, Come all Ye Faithful" Verse 2

Scene 4 – *The Christian Family*

Voice of God: Here comes the Jones family. Draw them all to me. (*Angels gather the family together as bells ring.*)

Mr. Jones: Come on, everyone. We all agreed to come do this. (*They all gather around the manger.*)

Alice: Yes, this is really different.

Mrs. Jones: I think it's a wonderful idea.

Tommy: It's just a manger with a doll in it.

Mr. Jones: Well, the idea is to take time and worship Jesus. Let's all kneel down together.

Alice: I feel kind of strange. Now what should we do?

Mrs. Jones: Well, when you worship you tell God how much you love him and thank him for who he is and for what he has done. It could be a prayer or a song, or something like that.

Tommy: But there are a lot of people around here. I'm kind of embarrassed to do this in front of everybody.

Voice of God: You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify me.

Mrs. Jones: We can be proud to know Jesus and what he has done for us. Let's sing a simple song and then close in a prayer.

Alice: Well ... okay.

Together they sing:

Joy to the world, the Lord is come,
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare him room
And heav'n and nature sing.
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

Mr. Jones: Oh, Lord, thank you for coming for us. It is because of you that our sins are forgiven, and we have eternal life.

Tommy: Dear Jesus, thank you for coming for me. I wish everyone in the world knew about you, because you love everybody.

Alice: Dear Jesus, thank you for coming and dying for my sins. I know you are with us all the time and will always take care of us. I love you, Lord.

Mrs. Jones: Oh, Lord, help us always to keep you close in our hearts, to love you more each day, and to share the light of your love wherever we go. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Voice of God: Fight on for me, dear family. Stand firmly in the truth of the eternal life I have given you, and continue to confess my name boldly before others. I love you, too, and will fill your home with many blessings. Go in peace.

Song: "Joy to the World" Verse 2

Scene 5 – *The Rock Singer*

Voice of God: Here comes the singer. I've been working on him for a long time. Lead him to my manger. (*Angels try to lead him and at the same time avoid being hit by his swinging guitar and wild movements.*)

Rock Singer: (*Comes in singing and rocking with guitar.*) Hey, what's this? Is this all the better our town could do for Christmas? What gives? Who was the turkey who came up with this idea? (*Leans over to read small sign by the manger.*) Kneel and worship? Hah! Not me! You'll never catch me kneeling before anyone! Jesus is for wimps and nobodies. I got where I am today because of me alone, thank you very much!

Voice of God: Woe to you, oh man of the world. Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourself of all the offenses you have committed and get a new heart and a new spirit. I do not want anyone to perish, but I want all to come to repentance. Repent and live!

Song: "It came upon the midnight Clear" Verse 1

Scene 6 – *The Child*

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

Voice of God: Do you see that young girl standing in the distance? She has such childlike trust that is an example to many. Lead her to my manger.
(*Angels surround young girl, leading her to the manger.*)

Sarah: Hello, Jesus. I love you. I'm so glad you came at Christmas. You love everybody so much. You are my best friend. Even when I'm very bad I know you still love me and died for my sins. Someday I'm going to be with you in heaven. I can't wait. It will be the best place of all and we'll be so happy. Merry Christmas, Jesus.

Voice of God: You are so precious to me, Sarah. I will be with you all the days of your life. You will see much sin and sorrow all around you as you grow up. But always remember that I am holding you in my arms and will protect you. I will bless all your days and one day will bring you safely home to me in heaven. I can hardly wait, too. It will be wonderful.

Song: "Away in the Manger" Verse 1

Scene 7 – *The Football Player*

Voice of God: Do you see who is coming now, my angels?

Angel 1: Why, yes, it's that famous football player who was injured.

Angel 2: Do you want us to guide him to the manger?

Voice of God: Yes, we shall have a good chat. (*Angels lead the football player to the manger as he comes in on crutches.*)

Football Player: Kneel at the manger? Yes, I can kneel all right since I can't stand on my own two feet anymore! What a joke! One minute I was on top of the world, and next – well, look at me now – a cripple! I will never play football again! Do you hear me, God? Never! My life is over!

Voice of God: Do you really think your life is over, John?

Football Player: Of course I do! My whole life was football and now I won't even be able to play a backyard game of it with my own kids. It stinks!

Voice of God: Your life is far from over, John. Why it's just beginning.

Football Player: Just beginning? Not hardly!

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

Voice of God: I never planned for any man’s worth to come from what he could do or accomplish on the outside. Your worth comes from within – from what *I* have made you.

Football Player: From within? There’s nothing within me that can even come close to the way I could handle a football.

Voice of God: Right now you might not think so. But I know better. My Son’s death has made all my children worthy, and I have blessed them with every gift they need for this life. My life is in you, John, and even if you never pick up a football again, you are of inestimable worth.

Football Player: Well, if that’s true, you’re gonna have to show me, because right now I just can’t see it!

Voice of God: John, I only ask you to have faith that what I am telling you is true. Trust me, John. You are a whole person when I live in you, and I can do much with your life. There are so many more joys you can experience with me that you never even dreamed about when you were playing football. Allow me to show them to you.

Football Player: Oh, God, I want to believe you! Please lift me up out of this pit!

Voice of God: I will, John. We are embarking on a new journey – together! Call to me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things which you do not know.

Songs: “Oh Little Town of Bethlehem” Verse 2

Scene 8 – *The Questioning Child*

Voice of God: There is a little boy standing behind the Christmas tree.

Angel 1: Yes, I see him, Lord.

Angel 2: He looks frightened.

Voice of God: He is frightened and unsure. He wants to come to my manger. Gently prod him over. (*Angels lead the child to the manger.*)

Boy: (*Stands quietly in front of the manger in cautious wonder.*) Who is this baby? I see this scene every Christmas, but no one has ever told me what it means. (*Calls to someone passing by.*) Hey, who is this baby?

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

(People walk by looking at him but hurry on without responding. Boy shakes his head.) Won't anyone tell me what this is all about? Somehow, I think it's very special, but no one will tell me.

Voice of God: And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Boy: (Looking around to those passing by) Hey! What's this all about? Who is this baby?

Passerby: Why, that's Jesus. Haven't you ever heard of Jesus?

Boy: Well, I've heard people say Jesus, but only when they're mad.

Passerby: *(Slowly kneels next to the boy.)* Well, let me tell you, son. There are a lot of people who don't know who Jesus really is, except as a curse word. But he really is someone special.

Boy: Why is he special? Is he still a baby? What does he ...

Passerby: My, my. You really don't know anything about him, do you? Well, let me see. How shall I begin ... *(Passerby and boy pretend to be in conversation together as the organ or piano softly plays "What Child is This?" and as God speaks.)*

Voice of God: Oh, yes! Listen, spread my Word. So many have not heard the news of my love. Tell them about how I came for them and died for them. Tell them how much I love them and will make their lives new and fulfilled. Tell them how I am with them wherever they go and that someday I will take them home to heaven to live with me forever. Tell them ... tell them ... Yes! ... Tell them.

Song: "What Child Is This?" Verse 1

. (As the song is sung, all characters from the play gather around the manger and kneel.)

Recessional Hymn

Special Music by Larry Harter

* **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

L: Confident in your grace and truth, we pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

L: We pray for the outpouring of your Spirit on all peoples. Grant us the wisdom to follow you each and every day, on the path you have set before us. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for change and conviction in how we care for creation. Open our eyes to the interconnectedness of all living things and help us to live more sustainably. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for ethical and compassionate leadership around the world. Help leaders to focus on the needs of the most vulnerable and guide them to champion policies that promote equity and opportunity for all. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for healing for all in need. May we provide support and comfort for those in our care, and may you draw near to all who cry out to you. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for all who are facing injustice. Help us to see situations from the perspectives of those most affected, and to advocate for solutions addressing the root causes of injustice. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We pray to honor the saints who have gone before us. Even as we grieve their loss, may we be grateful for the time we shared with them in this life. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We lift up all of our prayers, spoken and unspoken to you. In Jesus' name we pray.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

C: Amen.

MEAL

*** OFFERING**

P: As we collect our offering here in person, those worshipping with us through the internet, may you go to our website located at www.pitsburgtlc.org where you'll find a button labeled "Give to Trinity." You can make your offering to God through our secure website.

*** OFFERTORY PRAYER**

While the congregation is standing say:

P: Let's pray for the offerings we receive this day.... Generous God, you have poured out upon us an embarrassment of riches. Receive now this portion of what you have given us and bless these resources for the good of all creation.

C: Amen.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: We are united together by this heavenly food, which is the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. So, let us pray as Jesus taught...

C: 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.

SENDING

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** SENDING BLESSING**

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit remain upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

December 8, 2024

• Please be seated

Page 13 of 16

*** SENDING HYMN “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” LBW 55**



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!

*** DISMISSAL**

P: Until the next time we gather together as God’s people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ’s Love.

C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

*** POSTLUDE**

Roxanne Groff

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<p>Health Tips for the Week MIND: Make a Christmas craft. BODY: Smile SPIRIT: Sing Christmas Carols</p>

- * Please stand if able
- Please be seated

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser

This Week @ Trinity – December 8 thru December 15, 2025

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, Dec. 8	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Children’s Christmas Program
Wed, Dec. 11	6:30 pm	Advent Soup Supper/Video Bible Study
Fri, Dec. 13	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, Dec. 15	9:00 am	Confirmation Class
	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service

Save The Date!

December 4, 11, & 18 @ 6:30 pm	Advent Soup Supper & Video Discussion
December 18 @ 9:30 am	GRCC Soup Kitchen
December 20 & 21 @ 10 am-8 pm	Darke County Christmas Fund Drive
December 24 @ 4 & 10 pm	Christmas Eve Worship Services
December 29 @ 10:30 am	Ugly Christmas Sweater Sunday

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- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated



Scripture readings for next Sunday, December 15th
Isaiah 61:1-11

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.

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- * Please stand if able
- Please be seated