

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BAKE SALE UPDATE

Last Sunday, December 10, Liam Richmond and helpers held a bake sale to benefit the Baobei Foundation. The previous week, Liam sent several emails advertising the sale and soliciting bakers. When people filed out of church on Sunday, they found a couple of tables laden with cookies, brownies, breads and other items.

Liam's goal was to raise 2000¥. At the end of the sale, the proceeds amounted to 4,395¥!! Every bake sale item was sold! Thank you, people of Trinity Congregation, for making this possible and for supporting the Baobei Foundation as it seeks to provide medical treatment for children.

Just so you know: The Baobei Foundation was founded in Shanghai in 2008 by a native Chinese and three expatriates. Baobei provides surgeries and post-surgical rehabilitation for Chinese orphans with life-threatening birth defects. The name Baobei, which means "precious" or "precious child" in Chinese, reflects our belief that each child is precious and each child has a unique contribution to make to this world. Baobei has provided over 200 surgeries for over 100 orphans who were near death, but are now healthy and living with permanent families. Thanks Liam — and everyone! — for making this happen!

### BACKGROUND ABOUT THE ADVENT BANNER

Notes from the artist, Joan Lueth:

HOPE: Rich red Chinese silk brocade reminds us of the richness of God's love for us here in China.

PEACE and JOY: Jesus is Lord of the smallest details in the green earth as well as the vastness of indigo skies.

LOVE: Our Savior began his earthly life in a humble stable.

These colors also represent Fire, Earth, Air and Wood.

### ADVENT & CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Next Sunday, December 24:** NO WORSHIP AT 11 A.M.

**Next Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve** — Service of Lessons & Carols in large sanctuary, 10 p.m.

**December 31:** NO WORSHIP AT 11 A.M. Worship at 5 p.m. with AGIF congregation in large sanctuary, Pastor John preaching.

**January 7:** Worship at 11 a.m.

### Prayer Requests

- For all those who are traveling over the holidays
- For those facing complicated family situations
- For Danielle Richmond upon the sudden death of her father this past week.
- For little Will, 6 years old, who is now home for Christmas with his new heart.

### Electronic Giving or Giving in the USA

Would you prefer to give electronically?

Please see our Treasurer, John Ideker, for details.

根据中华人民共和国的法律，只允许外国护照持有人在场参加。  
In accordance with the laws of the People's Republic of China, only foreign passport holders are allowed to attend services here at Trinity Congregation.

Visit us at: [TrinityShanghai.org](http://TrinityShanghai.org)

# TRINITY CONGREGATION

OF ABUNDANT GRACE

鸿恩

SHANGHAI



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2017, 11 AM

Please remember to silence your smartphone and other devices during the worship service! Thank you!

# THE GUIDE TO MORNING WORSHIP

*\* All who are able may rise to praise God.*

**Prelude:** “Adeste Fideles,” An Improvisation for Organ, by M. Dupré

Ignatius Banda

**\*Opening Hymn:** “The Friendly Beasts”

No. 227

**\*Invocation**

Pastor Timothy

**\*Passing the Peace**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Lighting the Candle of JOY in the Advent Wreath**

Tim and Barbara Boyer and Will Boyer

**Epistle Reading:** *1 Thessalonians 5:16-28*

Jonathan Borden, *Reader*

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Beloved, pray for us. Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**\*The Gospel:** *Mark 13:24-37*

Pastor Timothy, *Reader*

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’ And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ Then they said to him, ‘Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?’ He said, ‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord”’, as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, ‘Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?’ John answered them, ‘I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.’ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

*Reader:* The Gospel of the Lord

**ALL: Praise to you Lord Christ.**

**Sermon:** “Merely Christian: Being a Christian Is Not Complicated”

Pastor Timothy

*Sixty-five years ago, C.S. Lewis’ book Mere Christianity was published.*

*It became one of the century’s most important and influential books.*

**\*Hymn of Response:** “He Is Born”

No. 228

**Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer**

No. 895

**Conversation with the Children**

**Offering and Offertory**

“All Praise to Thee”

(Sung as a round, MEN begin, and WOMEN follow at circle)

No. 682 *Verse 5 only*

## HOLY COMMUNION



*Celebrant:* The Lord be with you;

**People: And also with you.**

*Celebrant:* Lift up your hearts;

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

*Celebrant:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God;

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise!**

**Prayer of Confession before Communion**

**Call to Confession**

*Celebrant:* We are a sinful people in need of restoration, but some-times we are too stubborn or ignorant to even realize it. We are capable of wrongdoing as well as goodness. Let us confess our sins that we might be washed of our sinful ways, and so that we might be able to welcome the goodness that God's intends for us.

**Prayer of Confession** (Based on John 1 and Isaiah 64)

Merciful God, how many John the Baptists, how many prophets of your light, have we ignored because they were not what we were looking for? How many times have we ignored voices crying in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord”? How many times have we breathed a sigh of relief and turned our backs on your messengers because they did not speak the message we expected to hear? Help us hear anew, the cry of those who would lead us to Christ. Tune our ears to your heralds, that we might also testify to your light. Amen.

**Words of Assurance: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**

May the God of peace sanctify you completely. And may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful. It is the Lord who will do this.

— adapted from The Abingdon Worship Annual 2008, © 2007 Abingdon Press by B.J. Beu. Posted on the Ministry Matters website.

**Vocal Interlude:** “Sure on this shining night”

James Stovall and Tim Geisler

Of star made shadows round, kindness must watch for me this side the ground.

The late year lies down the north. all is healed, all is health.

High summer holds the earth. Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder wand'ring far alone of shadows on the stars.

**Communion Meditation**

Pastor Timothy

**Words of Institution**

**Distribution of the Communion Elements**

*Celebrant:* We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

**People: We who are many are one body,  
for we all share in one bread.**

**Affirmation of Faith—Unison**

We believe in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess to the glory of God: Jesus Christ is Lord! Amen.

—Based on *Philippians 2:5-11*

**\*Recessional Hymn:** “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks”

No. 238 (vv. 1, 2, 6)

**\*Benediction**

Pastor Timothy

**Postlude:** “In Dulci Jubilo,” by J. S. Bach

Ignatius Banda

**Worship Leaders**

The Rev. Timothy Merrill, the Rev. John Willison,

Stephen Minister Judy Kim

**Our musicians:** Sara Preus and Ignatius Banda

**Acolytes:** Masha Doering, Natalie Williamson, Alexandra Cimpian

**Greeters:** Jonathan and Soon-Ok Borden

**Advent banner:** Joan Lueth

**Communion Bread Provider:** Jeanie Merrill

**Set-up, Clean-up & Ushering:**

**Altar Flowers:** Sarah Dai

**Please feel free to contact our pastors:**

Pastor Timothy: revtmerrill@aol.com;

Pastor John: jpwillison@yahoo.com;

Stephen Minister Judy: judyxkim@gmail.com

**Weekly News & Updates**

**Want to receive Trinity emails?** Send Pastor Timothy an email at: revtmerrill@aol.com.

Or drop your business card in the offering plate.