



trinity @7

05.18.2025

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Our centering prayer is written by Rex A E Hunt and excerpted from a longer version.

Trinity @7

welcomes you in person and via Zoom. This is a time where we enjoy jazz combined with poetry and a thoughtful reflection. We're always glad to see you and to share this special time together. Even though some of us are in person and others on Zoom, we are one community for a little while. What joy!

No matter the venue, may you experience stillness when it is needed and much joy and laughter when they are needed, or perhaps when least expected. Besides beautiful music and words, we hope this evening brings you a little bit of peace.

welcome

a moment with nature

a centering prayer

In this moment of life, may we be sustained
in the silence of our own thoughts and reflections . . .

Let us quiet the throbbings of the past week.
May we become the people we are meant to be. (Pause)

May we in our gathering and this sacred space be blessed.
May we open ourselves ever more fully
to that mystery which lures us onward
toward life and creativity.
May we hold one another
in the deep and tender places with compassion,
and may we grace one another
by sharing our own vulnerabilities,
being ever mindful of the divinity within that makes soul mates of us all . . .
amen

interlude

The Story of Imaginal Cells

from Imaginal Labs.com

The term "imaginal" has connotations of imagination, the process of creating new ideas and concepts of things that do not yet exist.

But in biology, the term is applied to imaginal cells – and the startling science behind imaginal cells is where we get our inspiration for the work we do.

We all grew up knowing a bit about the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly. The truly amazing part of this process, however, is in the scientific detail of how it actually happens in nature.

After a period of ravenous consumption, a caterpillar finds an appropriate perch and forms a chrysalis – so far so good. The end result, we know, is a butterfly, but the truly astonishing thing is that there is no structural similarity at all between a caterpillar and a butterfly.

Inside the chrysalis the caterpillar, unable to move, actually dissolves into organic goop. Cells, which had been dormant in the caterpillar and which biologists have the poetic genius to call “imaginal cells,” begin a process of creating a new form and structure.

At first these imaginal cells – the seeds of future potential, which contain the blueprint of a flying creature—operate independently as single-cell organisms. They are regarded as threats and are attacked by the caterpillar’s immune system. But they persist, multiply, and connect with each other. The imaginal cells form clusters and clumps, begin resonating at the same frequency and passing information back and forth until they hit a tipping point. They begin acting not as discrete individual cells but as a multi-cell organism – and a butterfly is born.

interlude

Imaginal Cells

by James Crews

Like caterpillars born with imaginal cells
that know how to become a thing with wings,
we too carry a dream inside ourselves
of a different, better world. There will be
struggle, yes, as we claw our way out of
a chrysalis that can no longer keep us trapped,
as we give the heart room to breathe, space
to seek the nectar of flowers, and the nectar
of mud and dung alike, feeding on darkness
when darkness is all there is. If we can
imagine a body that breaks free of its own
container, if we can envision a place where
everyone feels safe and welcome, then we can
become anything. Perhaps it begins
with a small yes stirring in a cluster of cells,
and the trust that this—whatever this might be
is never the end of the story.

interlude

What Imaginal Labs says about itself on its website: “We believe that courageous leaders are the imaginal cells within their organizations to help them transform to meet the challenges of our times. Our life’s work is to find new and more effective ways to help courageous leaders imagine a better future and work with others to make their dreams a reality.”

James Crews is the editor of several best-selling anthologies and author of volumes of poetry and essays. He leads workshops and retreats on mindfulness, kindness, and writing. He lives in Vermont with his husband in the woods of Southern Vermont.

From the James Crews newsletter

It seems such simple wisdom: we become what we believe. If we are told over and over that we are divided as a country, we will feel divided and find countless reasons for why this is true. If we are told over and over that we can only be one thing as an individual, eventually, we will embody that as a given fact. Yet this is why I find the transformation of caterpillars into butterflies so fascinating and rich a metaphor for all the ways that we can still transform ourselves on a personal and global level. Caterpillars are born with cells that know how to change, and can imagine themselves into an unlikely new body. These “imaginal cells,” as they are known, help the caterpillar to form a cocoon, and dissolve its old self, so that it may become what it was meant to be all along, perhaps without its conscious knowledge. When we are in the midst of our own transitions—going a new way, grieving some old life or love—we don’t have to have a map of all the twists and turns; we don’t have to know exactly where we will end up. We just have to trust that, perhaps in some small corner, a cluster of cells is already reshaping us into a new creation. There will be struggle, of course, and often a great deal of pain in the transformation—change is no easy thing. But even in despair, fear, or doubt, we can choose to believe that some wiser part of us, no matter what we call it, is already stepping in on our behalf, knowing the way forward. Like the caterpillar, we may need to dwell for a time in a place of darkness before we emerge, as we always will, on the other side. Even in grief, there comes a day when we wake up feeling somehow lighter and freer, as if gifted with a pair of wings we never would have asked for in the beginning.

interlude

Quotes about Transformation

You can't have a physical transformation until you have a spiritual transformation. Sen. Corey Booker

interlude

There is nothing about a caterpillar that tells you that it will be a butterfly. Buckminster Fuller

interlude

Asking the proper questions is the central action of transformation. Questions are the key that causes the secret doors of the psyche to swing open. Clarissa Pinkola Estes

interlude

I think that any time of great pain is a time of transformation, a fertile time to plant new seeds. Debbie Ford

interlude

It is never too late to be what you might have been. George Eliot

interlude

reflection

interlude

meditation

interlude with candle lighting

While Krista plays, feel free to light a candle at one of the walls. Let's do so mindfully and one at a time, leaving space between you and the person in front. If you're lighting a candle at home, do so as if you were in a sacred space. You are.



closing prayer for the road

Beloved,
Gather your wisdom around us,
Guide us carefully as we make choices
about how to use our energy positively.
place your discerning touch on our minds
so that we will think clearly.
place your loving fingers on our hearts so that we will be more fully
attentive
to what is really of value.

Teach us to hear your voice,
to be aware of what is in our minds and hearts,
to attend to your wisdom in those around us,
to acknowledge our intuitions and ponder our dreams,
to listen to the earth and all of life,
for in each piece of our existence you are guiding us.

Guide of our lives,
thank you for all you have given to us.
Reveal our spiritual path
and direct us in the living of it.
Lead us to inner peace and oneness with you.
amen

The closing prayer
was written by
Joyce Rupp who
calls it, "Psalm for
Guidance."

postlude

announcements

Trinity Discussion Group: Spring 2025 Book Study

Join Tim Lane and Jeffrey Tooke on **Wednesdays @7pm** through June 18 via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 816-6863-4672 Passcode: trintalk) for a study of John Pavlovitz's new book *Worth Fighting For: Finding Courage and Compassion When Cruelty Is Trending*. Explore how to maintain our Christian values and perspective within the current challenging environment that threatens our democracy and our desired values of compassion and mercy. Books are available to borrow from the church or purchase [here](#). Please email Jeffrey Tooke at jeffreytooke@outlook.com for more information.

Pride Paraders Wanted!

Sunday, June 1, meet at Buffalo State College @10am. Shirts can be ordered by **May 25**, \$TBD. Decorating the float for a wedding theme on **Thursday, May 29**. Artificial flowers will be needed. Please contact Christian at 716-830-4365 or christian.eshelman@yahoo.com

Jung Center of Buffalo to host The Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox: "Navigating the Dark Night of Soul, Society, and Our Species: Lessons and Archetypes from Mystics Hildegard de Bingen, Mechtild of Magdeburg, Hafiz, and John of the Cross," on **Friday, May 23 @7pm** via Zoom. In this presentation, Dr. Fox likens the current world crisis to a "dark night of the soul," a phrase attributed to St. John of the Cross. The question before us is, "How do we navigate this dark night, how do we find meaning in this challenging time facing our nation and world, spiritually, psychologically, politically, economically, and environmentally?" Dr. Fox looks for the source of guidance in the wisdom of the mystics from the major world faith traditions. You may reserve your spot on Zoom at info.jungcenterbuffalo@gmail.com. A suggested donation of \$10 would be gratefully accepted on our website at jungbuffalo.org. More details can be found at <https://www.jungbuffalo.org/events/save-the-date-zoom-watch-with-the-rev-dr-matthew-fox>

Compass House Golf Classic

Join our friends at Compass House for the Richard L. Martin Memorial Golf Classic! Get ready for a fun-filled day at River Oaks Golf Club in Grand Island on **Monday, June 23**, filled with great food, an exciting raffle, amazing prizes, and fantastic golf — all in support of the homeless and runaway youth at Compass House. Tickets are available now using the link or QR code.

To volunteer at the event, reach out to Adam Noonan at anoonan@compasshouse.org or Missy Stolfi missy.stolfi@gmail.com can connect you. Tickets: [click here](#).

Comfort and Care Team

The Comfort and Care Team is here to help and support you or someone you know experiencing health or other life challenges. Email any one of us to request prayers, a caring phone call, notes, information on resources, a friendly visit, or arranging meals.

Phoebe McKay, phoebemckay@gmail.com

Marie Keane, MNMKeane@gmail.com

Susie Green, susie432@gmail.com

Sara Merritt, smerrit172@gmail.com

Patti Nisbet, tudorspace@aol.com

Explore Buffalo - May 29 is the next scheduled date.

Learn more about Trinity's windows and the impact they have had on American art history. Share this Buffalo treasure with your friends! Explore Buffalo leads tours of Trinity's windows as part of its Sacred Spaces series. Check the website or scan the QR code for the schedule. <https://explorebuffalo.org/sacred-spaces/trinity-episcopal-church/>



Parking at Trinity's Franklin Street Lot

Trinity has a parking lot behind the church on Franklin Street. Parking is available for no fee on Sundays from 9am - noon. You can use the lot any other time you are in the neighborhood so that Trinity gets the parking fee! Use your smartphone to pay. You may wish to download the Premium Parking app ahead of time to make it easier to park and go.



Lyanda Lynn Haupt Visits Trinity!

On **June 4 @7pm**, join the WNY Land Conservancy in welcoming renowned naturalist and author Lyanda Lynn Haupt who will share insights from her book *Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature, and Spirit*—a thoughtful reflection on living in harmony with creation. Through lyrical and grounded prose, Haupt invites us to rediscover our connection with the earth, offering a vision of “rootedness” that speaks to both spirit and stewardship. For more information, click here: <https://www.wnyc.org/haupt>





Trinity is an Episcopal Church in the Diocesan Partnership of Western New York and Northwest Pennsylvania.

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371 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14202

Many thanks to Krista Seddon, our gifted pianist.

Thank you to Matt Lincoln for bringing us together in every way he can imagine and then for being with us and reflecting from his heart.

Thank you to our host and readers.

Gratitude to our tech volunteers, Karen and June.

Thank you to all the poets and musicians in the world who reflect life back to us in the most beautiful ways.

And of course, thank you.



Sign up [here](#) to get Trinity's eNews to stay in touch!

If you'd like to visit Trinity Church in person for some quiet contemplation or to view the stunning stained glass windows, you can schedule an appointment with the parish administrator Colleen O'Neill, coneill@trinitybuffalo.org.



Your donation can be an expression of your gratitude for Trinity and all the blessings in your life.

You can [donate online here](#), scan the QR code, text the word "give" to (716) 221-8580 OR as you exit, you can make a contribution in the Big Blue Urn.

Thank you for your participation and contribution. Peace.



All services are in person AND online.

Sunday @10:30am Includes communion at an open table

Sunday @7:00pm An encounter with God through poetry, jazz, and meditation

Wednesday @Noon Prayer and holy conversation

Thursday @7pm 12steps@Trinity, based on 12-step spirituality