



An offering of reflection, prayer, and music

Ash Wednesday

02.14.2024

Welcome to Trinity's gathered community! We are together on-site and online!

Today is Ash Wednesday. The focus of the day is the contemplation of our mortality. We will engage in that contemplation by acknowledging our imperfections and by marking ourselves with a smudge of ashes or dirt. Due to the pandemic, we will each handle our own ashes or dirt, so that everybody who is worshiping today, whether online or in person, will share in the same practice.

If you are at Trinity in person, please maintain appropriate distance and wear your mask, considering the fact that some of us may not be fully vaccinated or may have other vulnerabilities.

If you are not on-site, rest assured that your presence online is felt and valued. **As you watch the Live Stream, feel free to add comments, likes, etc. to the comment section at any time!**

If you are on-site, feel free to use your mobile device to join the Facebook Live Stream to connect with other worshipers in the comment section. Just make sure your volume is all the way down!

WiFi internet access is publicly available. Please feel free to log onto the "Trinity Open" network with the password "Welcome!"

Every week the people of Trinity Church gather around a table piled high with spiritual food, and there is a place for you and everyone at the table, whatever your religious practice may be. On Sundays, when we share the sacrament of Holy Communion, we act out that gathering around the table. Today, our focus is a little different, so communion will not be part of this service. Trinity Church is a metropolitan house of prayer, a community of worship and spiritual inquiry, welcoming all people. Recognizing our common brokenness, yet rejoicing in the reconciling love of God through Jesus Christ, we nurture one another in our spiritual life together.

Trinity Church is an Episcopal Church and a member parish of the Diocesan Partnership of Western New York and Northwest Pennsylvania in the United States and is a part of the Anglican Communion, which is based in England, but found worldwide. If you would like to learn more about Trinity, see all our contact information on the last page.

PRELUDE

*Cover image:
Charred Cedar
Plank, Matt
Lincoln, 2020*

CENTERING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Gracious God,
Guardian of the Night, and Guarantor of the day:
This day is a gift from you.
This day is like none other you
have ever given, or we have ever received.
This Wednesday dazzles us with gift
and newness and possibility.
This Wednesday burdens us with the tasks of the day,
for we are already halfway home
 halfway back to committees and memos,
 halfway back to calls and appointments,
 halfway on to next Sunday,
 halfway back, half frazzled, half expectant,
 half turned toward you, half rather not.

But this Wednesday is a long way from home, and,
while all our Wednesdays are marked by ashes —
 we begin this day with that taste of ash in our mouth:
 of failed hope and broken promises,
 of forgotten children and frightened women,
we ourselves are ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
we can taste our mortality
 as we roll the ash around on our tongues.
We are able to ponder our ashness with
 some confidence,
 only because our every Wednesday of ashes

anticipates your Easter victory
 over that dry, flaky taste of death.

On this Wednesday, we submit our ashen way to you —
to you, Easter parade of newness.
Before the sun sets,
 take our Wednesday and Easter us.
Easter us to joy and energy
 and courage and freedom;
Easter us that we may be fearless for your truth.
Come here and Easter our Wednesday with
 mercy and justice and peace and generosity.

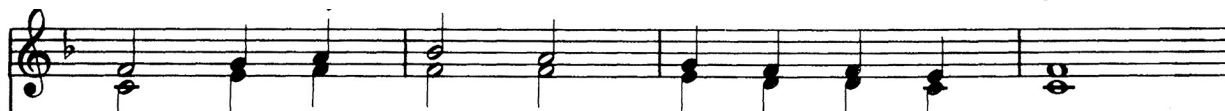
We pray as we wait for the Risen One who comes soon.
Amen.

*This prayer is adapted
from a poem by
Bible scholar Walter
Brueggemann.*

*In spirit or in body,
the congregation
stands to sing
hymns.*

HYMN

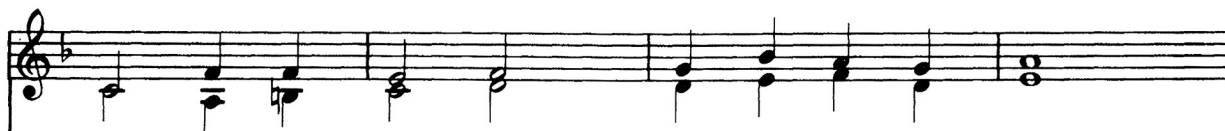
“Eternal Lord of love, behold your Church”



1 E - ter - nal Lord of love, be - hold your Church
2 So dai - ly dy - ing to the way of self,
3 If dead in you, so in you we a - rise,



walk - ing once more the pil - grim way of Lent,
so dai - ly liv - ing to your way of love,
you the first - born of all the faith - ful dead;



led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,
we walk the road, Lord Je - sus, that you trod,
and as through ston - y ground the green shoots break,



moved by your love and toward your pres - ence bent:
know - ing our - selves bap - tized in - to your death:
glo - rious in spring - time dress of leaf and flower,



far off yet here— the goal of all de - sire.
so we are dead and live with you in God.
so in the Fa - ther's glo - ry shall we wake.

Words: Thomas H. Cain (b. 1931)
Music: *Old 124th*, melody *Pseaumes octante trois de David*, 1551;
harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944)

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FIRST READING

JOB 42:1-6

Then Job answered God,

“I know that you can do all things: you have only to think something, and it is done.

“You asked, ‘Who is this obscuring my plans with such ignorant words?’

“That was me. I’ve been spouting off about things I can’t understand, about wonders beyond my experience and my knowledge.

*The Bible readings
are taken from
The Inclusive
Bible:
The First
Egalitarian
Translation by
Priests for Equality.*

“You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak; I will ask the questions and you will answer me!’

“Formerly I knew you only by word of mouth, but now I see you with my own eyes. And so I now take back all that I said, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

Thanks be to God.

MIDDLE READING

“OPENING WORDS” BY DENISE LEVERTOV

I believe the earth
exists, and
in each minim mote
of its dust the holy
glow of thy candle.
Thou
unknown I know,
thou spirit,
giver,
lover of making, of the
wrought letter,
wrought flower,
iron, deed, dream.
Dust of the earth,
help thou my
unbelief. Drift
gray become gold, in the beam of

vision. I believe with
doubt. I doubt and
interrupt my doubt with belief. Be,
beloved, threatened world.
Each minim
mote.
Not the poisonous
luminescence forced
out of its privacy,
The sacred lock of its cell
broken. No,
the ordinary glow
of common dust in ancient sunlight.
Be, that I may believe. Amen.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

Thanks be to God.

Denise Levertov (1923 – 1997) was English born and emigrated to the US in 1947. Here she published more than 20 volumes of poetry. In the 1960s, Levertov was active in the anti-war movement in the United States. Additionally, she worked as a poetry editor for The Nation in the ‘60s and for Mother Jones in the ‘70s.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

Jesus said, “Beware of practicing your piety before others to attract their attention; if you do this, you will have no reward from your Abba God in heaven.

“When you do acts of charity, for example, don’t have it trumpeted before you; that is what hypocrites do in the synagogues and the streets, that they may be praised by others. The truth is, they’ve already received their reward in full. But when you do acts of charity, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing; your good deeds must be done in secret, and your Abba God—who sees all that is done in secret—will repay you.

“And when you pray, don’t behave like the hypocrites; they love to pray standing up in the synagogues and on street corners for people to see them. The truth is, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go to your room, shut the door, and pray to God who is in that secret place, and your Abba God—who sees all that is done in secret—will reward you.

“And when you fast, don’t look depressed like the hypocrites. They deliberately neglect their appearance to let everyone know that they are fasting. The truth is, they have already received their reward. But when you fast, brush your hair and wash your face. Don’t let anyone know you’re fasting except your Abba God, who sees all that is done in secret. And Abba God—who sees everything that is done in secret—will reward you.

It is customary (but not required) to stand for the Gospel reading because it symbolizes the mystical presence of Christ.

The four Gospels hold the core of Christian spiritual wisdom, reflecting the earliest stories and images of Jesus. Like all Scripture, they are not definitive prescriptions but narrative stories requiring endless interpretation.

Continued on next page

The homily invites your curiosity and thoughtfulness about the theme of worship, and is intended to evoke your thoughts rather than direct them. A recording of the sermon is posted to the parish website each week, usually by Tuesday.

A Blessing for Ash Wednesday by the painter and liturgical writer Jan Richardson.

“Don’t store up earthly treasures for yourselves, which moths and rust destroy and thieves can break in and steal. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can destroy them and thieves cannot break in and steal them. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be as well.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

THE REV. MATT LINCOLN

MUSICAL REFLECTION

AN INVITATION TO RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS OF OBSERVING LENT

To receive this blessing,
all you have to do
is let your heart break.
Let it crack open.
Let it fall apart
so that you can see
its secret chambers,
the hidden spaces
where you have hesitated
to go.

Your entire life
is here, inscribed whole
upon your heart’s walls:
every path taken
or left behind,
every face you turned toward
or turned away,
every word spoken in love
or in rage,
every line of your life
you would prefer to leave

in shadow,
every story that shimmers
with treasures known
and those you have yet
to find.

It could take you days
to wander these rooms.
Forty, at least.

And so let this be
a season for wandering
for trusting the breaking
for tracing the tear
that will return you

to the One who waits
who watches
who works within
the rending
to make your heart
whole.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Gracious and merciful God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all, blessing those who have engaged in a fearless moral inventory and sought to be reconciled with you, with one another, and within themselves. Create in us now, O Lord, new and reclaimed hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins we will have opened ourselves fully to accept your forgiveness.

A period of silence is kept.

MARKING OURSELVES WITH DIRT OR ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given life and life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Savior we now pray. **Amen.**

PSALM 51: 10-12, 14-17

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.
Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice;
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

*"To forgive is to set
a prisoner free and
discover that the
prisoner was you."
~Lewis B. Smedes*

MUSICAL REFLECTION

LITANY OF PENITENCE AND HEALING

Let us pray.

Gracious God:

**We confess to you and to one another,
and to the whole communion of saints
that there is a far distance
between what we claim to believe and value
and how we actually live our lives.**

A moment of quiet is held.

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. **Have mercy on us.**

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness; the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives, **we confess to you, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, **we confess to you, O God.**

*These Lenten
prayers are adapted
from Gleanings by
Episcopal Liturgist
Ruth Myers.*

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,
we confess to you, O God.

Our devotion to materialism and creature comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,
we confess to you, O God.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,
we confess to you, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, **accept our repentance, Lord.**

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, **accept our repentance, Lord.**

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, **accept our repentance, Lord.**

Restore us, Beloved, and keep us close;
Favorably hear us, **for your mercy is great.**

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
That we may show forth your glory in the world.

Help us to remember that we are of the Earth, formed of the primal stardust, and to Earth we will return; that whether we live or die, we belong to you, O God; that we can never be lost, only found, more and more.

O God, we ask that you bless us as we enter this holy time of Lent, that it may be a time of healing and nurture for us. Protect us from self-hatred, self-violence, and addiction; help us to be faithful, gentle, healing followers of Jesus' teaching and way of life; and comfort us with your unconditional love. Help us to encounter a place of healing in our woundedness, protect us from the power of evil, and bathe us in the hope of your Resurrection.

Remind us now that we are forgiven, absolved of all we have confessed and for which we seek repentance and reconciliation. Help us to know that you do not desire our death but that we turn from our estrangement and self-orbit. May we give you thanks and praise as we receive your healing power and Holy Communion, and begin this journey of Lent. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Now, as Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

A PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM

Let us pray:

**Gracious God, you have given us grace at this time
with one accord to make our common supplication to you;
and you have promised through your well-beloved Son
that when two or three are gathered together in his Name
you will be in the midst of them:
Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us;
granting us in this world knowledge of your truth,
and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.**

BLESSING

Life is short. We do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who make the journey with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind. And may the blessing of God, who made us, who loves us, and who animates and guides us be with you now and always **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Take your leave, trusting that we are made one in Christ, to shine in the world with God's light.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

This version of the Lord's Prayer is what many of us grew up learning. It is also the version shared at the end of many 12 Step meetings. Although it is important to stay fresh and engaged by the words of our prayers, it is also important to be reminded that we as individuals are part of a great cloud of witnesses who have been inspired to turn to God in prayer throughout the ages.

**Jesus revealed a new, personal sense of relationship with God by addressing God as something like "Papa." Always feel free to use your most meaningful name for God in saying the Lord's Prayer.*

This prayer is found in both Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer.

This blessing is based on the words of Henri Frederic Amiel (1821-1881).

Our spiritual practice is renewed as we leave here and begin again to work the promises of the covenant.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Explore Buffalo

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 will be leading a tour of Trinity's windows as part of its Sacred Spaces series. The next date is **Saturday, February 25 @10am**. You can help the wider community appreciate the resources Trinity has to share. Post this link on your social media or email it to friends. Better yet, invite someone to come on the tour with you. <https://explorebuffalo.org/sacred-spaces/trinity-episcopal-church/>



Coldest Night of the Year

Registration is now open for the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walk to benefit Compass House. Trinity helped found Compass House to serve homeless and runaway youth and young adults and continues to support their mission to this day. CNOY is a winterrific family-friendly walk in support of local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness. It will take place on **Saturday, February 24 @4pm** in Delaware Park.



Link to Team Trinity page to register and/or donate: [PLEASE SPONSOR Team Trinity](#)

Contact Missy Stolfi for more info or to help out at missy.stolfi@gmail.com or 716-998-6816.

Trinity Discussion Group Lenten Program: A Spring in the Desert

On Wednesdays during Lent starting February 21, we explore desert spirituality through videos by Frank and Victoria Logue who discuss themes from scripture, the ancient desert mothers and fathers, and personal insight to help to deepen our faith. For more information, see this introductory video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0f-cldhhr8I>

Join Tim Lane and Jeffrey Tooke on **Wednesdays @7pm** using the zoom link below:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81668634672?pwd=eTVjZXFoNzVYdHZvSHZONGlNUUowZz09>

Meeting ID: 816-6863-4672 Passcode: trintalk

Send an email to Jeffrey Tooke at jeffreytooke@outlook.com if you need more information.

Comfort and Care Team

A new committee has formed with the purpose of offering care and comfort to members of the Trinity family who may be experiencing health or other life challenges. There are currently four of us on the committee, and we are inviting and welcoming others who are interested in this ministry and/or have ideas for us. We are excited about this new initiative and have already begun to implement some of our activities. Please contact any of the four of us with your interest, ideas, or for more information. We look forward to hearing from you!

Phoebe McKay, phoebemckay@gmail.com; Judy Atkinson-Miller, jatk1812@gmail.com; Susie Green, susie432@gmail.com; Patti Nisbet, tudorspace@aol.com

Friends of Night People

We are looking for volunteers to help out at Friends of Night People, which provides food, clothing, medical care, counseling, and other necessities to people in our community experiencing homelessness and poverty. We would love to have you join us on the second Monday of each month from 4:45-7. For more information, please speak to Emily Carlin or email: emily.g.carlin@gmail.com

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





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Chris Cuccia
Sue Doherty
Connie Ervin
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Christina Kinney
Sabrina Petrie
Laura Schleicher, Section Leader
Sue Doherty
Carol Siracuse
John Clayton, Section Leader
Steve Shanley
Timothy Lane, Section Leader
Ignacio Villa

All services are in person AND online:

Sunday @10:30am

In-person worship while live streaming on Facebook and YouTube. The Sunday online Live Stream service remains accessible as a video recording on Trinity's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages after the service is over.

Sunday @7:00pm

Featuring poetry and jazz, in person and on Zoom.

Wednesday @Noon

PrayerPrayer and holy conversation, in person and on Zoom.

Thursday @7pm

Offering the wisdom and fellowship of 12-Step recovery, in person and on Zoom.

Email your request for a [link to the Zoom worship services here](#).