

TRINITY LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF STEPHENS CITY VIRGINIA

810 Fairfax Street
Stephens City, VA
Sunday Worship, 9:30AM

(540) 869-4019

March 23, 2025

Third Sunday in Lent



I have come
looking
for fruit

LUKE 13:7

Zoom to Worship, 9:30AM Meeting ID: 893 4718 0792 Passcode: 173681

Dial 1-301-715-8592 US

Facebook Live: you must have internet, but you do not need to have a Facebook account

<https://www.facebook.com/trinitylutheranchurchstephenscityva/live/>

This week: Greeter: Mistie McPadalin, Reader: & Comm. Asst.: Susan Scheulen

Next week: Greeter: Marianne Watson, Reader: Barry Hockenberry, Comm. Asst. Carole Pfisterer

From Sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. From sundaysandseasons.com license #SAS024465. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License # A-720634 . All rights reserved. CCLI, copyright Lic. 11381030, Streaming lic. 20167089 Psalmody refrain from Psalter for Worship Year A © 2008 Augsburg Fortress, tone from Psalter for Worship Year C ©2006 Augsburg Fortress; Prelude: Public Domain.; Offertory Public Domain.; Postlude Public Domain

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One,
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love,
but our lives do not always reflect you
and your love for the world.**

**We do not show others the tender compassion
you have shown to us.**

**We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality
you grant to all people.**

**We oppress others,
even though you have set us free again and again.**

We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.

**Transform our lives
and guide us again in the way of the cross.**

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering ones home.

In ✙ Christ your sins are forgiven.

You have a place in God's house forever.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG*Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters*

(ELW 445)



- 1 Wash, O God, our sons and daugh-ters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
- 2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
- 3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.

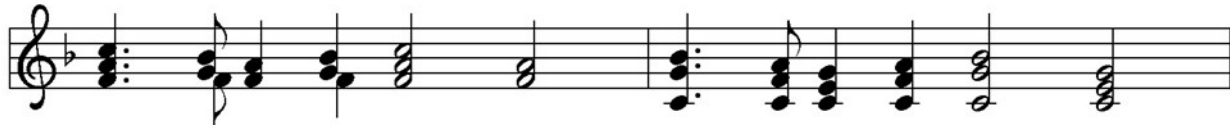


Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

KYRIE



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.
1, 3 Lord, . . . have mer - cy. Lord, . . . have mer - cy.
2 Christ, . . . have mer - cy. Christ, . . . have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
Chris - te e - lei - son.
Lord, . . . have mer - cy.
Christ, . . . have mer - cy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Sit

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts,

come to the waters;

and you that have no money,

come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,

and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,

and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me;

listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,

my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples,

a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;

⁷ let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 63:1-8



¹ O God, you are my God; eager-^l ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there^l is no water.

² **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your^l holy place,
that I might behold your power^l and your glory.**

³ For your steadfast love is better than^l life itself;
my lips shall^l give you praise.

⁴ **So will I bless you as long^l as I live
and lift up my hands^l in your name. R**

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the rich-^l est of foods,

and my mouth praises you with ¹ joyful lips,
⁶ **when I remember you up- ¹ on my bed,**
and meditate on you in ¹ the night watches.
⁷ For you have ¹ been my helper,
 and under the shadow of your wings I ¹ will rejoice.
⁸ **My whole being ¹ clings to you;**
your right hand ¹ holds me fast. R

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lenten Acclamation (Farlee)

(ELW 176)

Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?”³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

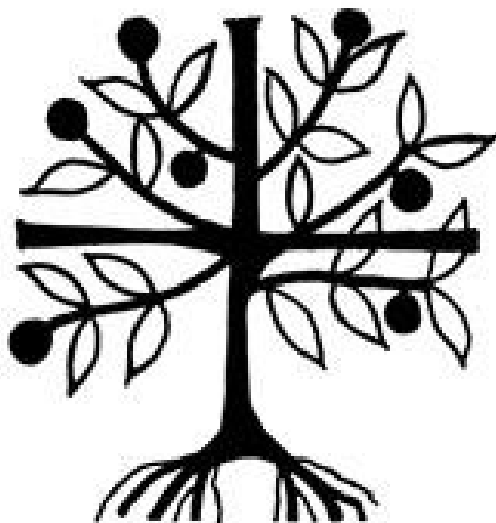
⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Rev. Larry Closter





1 As rain from the clouds will your word come to earth,
 2 As grain that is scat - tered your word has been sown
 3 As rays of the sun shall your word light the world,



as snow from the heav - ens re - fresh - ing the land.
 on rocks and on road - ways, in good earth and sand.
 a - wak - ing and warm - ing and heal - ing our land.



Then soft - en our soil that the good seed may grow
 Make fer - tile our soil that the good seed may grow
 Then shine in our hearts that the good seed may grow



and rip - en rich fruit to re - turn to your hand.
 and rip - en rich fruit to re - turn to your hand.
 and rip - en rich fruit to re - turn to your hand.



We praise you, our God, for the dew of your word;
 We praise you, our God, for the seed of your word;
 We praise you, our God, for the light of your word;



we thank you, good gar - d'ner, for your ten - der toil.
 we thank you, good gar - d'ner, for your ten - der toil.
 we thank you, good gar - d'ner, for your ten - der toil.



We bless you, best farm - er, for hun - dred - fold yield,
 We bless you, best farm - er, for hun - dred - fold yield,
 We bless you, best farm - er, for hun - dred - fold yield,



for har - vest of of grace in our once - bar - ren soil.
 for har - vest of of grace in our once - bar - ren soil.
 for har - vest of of grace in our once - bar - ren soil.

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion especially Barb, Shirley, Louise, Stephen, Paul, Hadley, Nikki, Michael, (*worshippers may add names silently or aloud*). Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict (*especially*). Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended *(especially)*. May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.



OFFERING

AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL

JESUS IS A ROCK IN A WEARY WORLD

TRINITY CHOIR

Offering is an act of worship that shows our gratitude to God for all that we are and have in our lives. The offering today will provide support for the ministries of Trinity both locally and in the world around us. You may provide your offering in person, scan the QR code adjacent or send it by mail. We thank you for sharing not only your monetary gifts but also your gifts of time and talent to further our mission to share Jesus' love in worship, fellowship, hospitality, and community, doing God's work with our hands.



OFFERING PRESENTATION

Create in Me a Clean Heart (Capers)

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.
Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me
with your free Spir - it. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,
and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.

The musical score is written on six staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a melody with various note values including quarter, eighth, and half notes, as well as rests. Phrasing slurs are used to group notes across measures. The lyrics are aligned with the notes on each staff.

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious Provider,
you set your immense treasures among us,
opening your heart to the world.
As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
deepen our commitment to sharing those
treasures with others,
through our Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

(ELW p. 108)

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

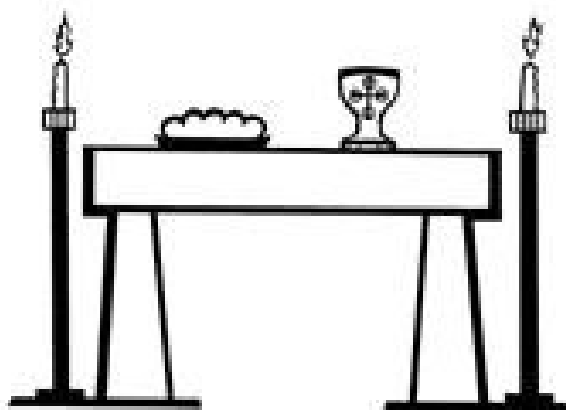
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

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.

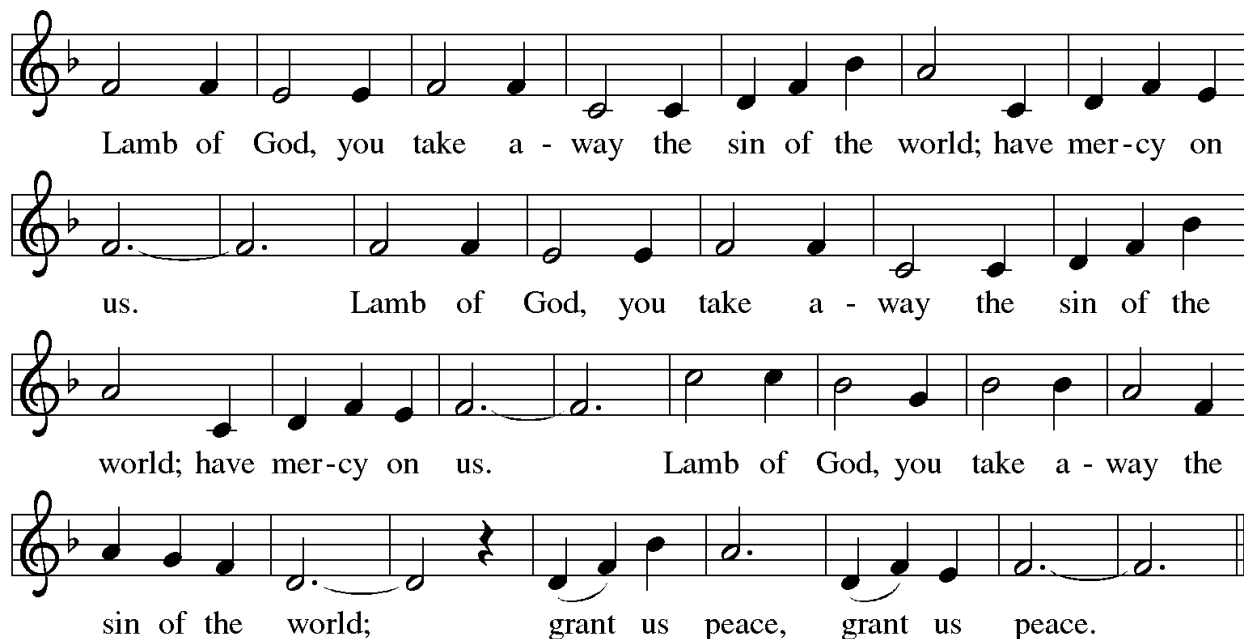
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All who are hungry, come!
The feast of grace is spread.

Those communing from home, have your package ready to open, but do not consume the elements until the pastor acknowledges those at home and says: "All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread." Then you may partake.



COMMUNIONSONG



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

SONGS DURING COMMUNION

God Extends an Invitation: Nuestro Padre nos invita

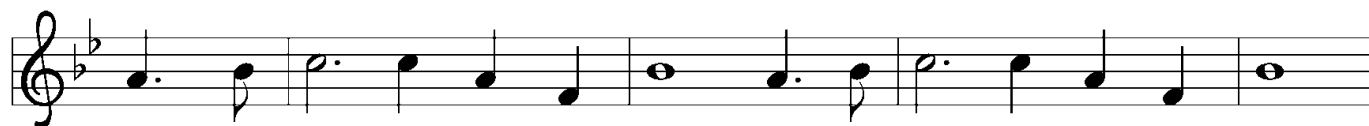
(ELW 486)



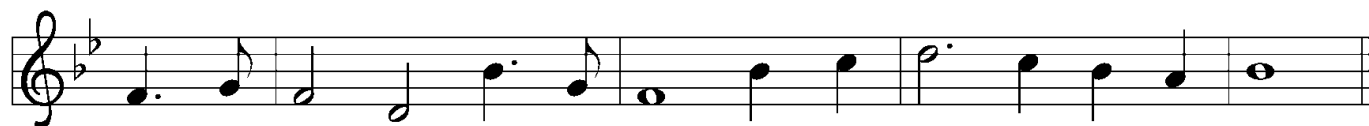
Nues-tro Pa - dre nos in - vi - ta a la me - sa de la
God ex - tends an in - vi - ta - tion to the ta - ble of cre -
vi - da, don - de hay vi - no, luz y pan; y no -
a - tion, where there's wine and light and bread. Here we
so - tros nos reu - ni - mos, y lo nues - tro com - par - ti - mos, pues a -
gath - er in thanks - giv - ing and we of - fer all our liv - ing. Here the
sí - es la co - mu - ni - ón; pues a - sí es la co - mu - ni - ón.
feast of life is spread; here the feast of life is spread.



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
 2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
 3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
 4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
 could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
 Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to thee for grace;
 when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
 all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
 foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

Stand

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous Host,

you have shared your feast with us and made us new.

Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
 that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
 in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Sit

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

God our tender parent,
God the crucified one,
God the reconciling Spirit,
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

Here On Jesus Christ I will Stand

(ACS1024)

Refrain



Kwa - ke Ye - su na - si - ma - ma, ndi - ye
Here on Je - sus Christ I will stand. He's the



mwam - ba ni sa - la - ma. Ndi - ye mwam - ba ni sa - la -
sol - id rock of my life. He's the sol - id rock of my



ma, ndi - ye mwam - ba ni sa - la - ma.
life. He's the sol - id rock of my life.



1 There's no oth - er place I can hide till the
2 It is not the work of my hands that has
3 When my days on this earth are done, and I



storm that rag - es sub - sides. My voice cries to God from the
washed a - way all my sins. I'm re - deemed, and all of my
stand at God's ho - ly throne, my heart will not have an - y



Refrain
flood, and I'm saved be - cause of his blood.
days, Je - sus Christ will be my heart's praise.
fear; in Christ's righ - teous - ness I am here.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Fughetta

Johann Pachelbel(1653-1706)



Notes to the Congregation

Last Chance to Order: 🌸 Easter Flower Order Form 🌸

The **Altar Guild** invites you to help decorate our sanctuary with **beautiful tulips and hyacinths** for Easter! These flowers will add to our celebration and may be taken home after the Easter services. * Please see BACK Page to remove for orders 😊

Special Thanks

"Trinity Church is incredibly grateful to the amazing Ladies of the LCW, Sewing for the Savior, and the generous Martha Cooley for their heartfelt support in funding the beautiful landscaping on our church grounds. Your kindness and dedication have truly transformed our space, and we couldn't be more thankful!"

Reminders

-
- [Please Take a free Lenten devotional \(in the Narthex\)](#)
 - **Sewing for the Savior** will meet @9:30 am in room 204. | Contact Sue Scheulen
 - **The Prayer Team** has a beautiful table located at the entrance to the Sanctuary (just inside the doorway to the right). Everyone is welcome to fill out a card and place prayer request in the box. Also, if you would like to add to the Prayers of Intercession please contact Mistie McPadalin.
 - **HOSPITAL VISITATION**- Pastor Closter is registered clergy for Valley Heath he visits patients in the hospital when we are aware that someone has been admitted and sees this as important pastoral care. Because of HIPPA, the hospital does not contact the church to let us know when a parishioner is a patient. If you want him to visit, please contact the church office at 540-869-4019, or after hours, please call the pastor 540-848-5325 or send an email. You may also reach out to our prayer team contact, Mistie McPadalin or Matha Cooley.

- March 26 the Community Meal will take place in lieu of the Soup Supper. Menu: breaded Fish, broccoli, mac-n-cheese, and dessert. Watch the bulletin board in the parish hall for ways you can participate.
- **Wednesdays in Lent**
Lenten Soup Suppers at 5:30pm with worship at 6:30pm
 There is a signup sheet located on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall if you'd like to sign up to bring a crockpot of soup or bread. We are looking for only 2 people to sign up to bring soup and 1 person only to sign up to bring bread and each of the Wednesdays. The dates are, April 2 and April 9. Please note that on March 26 the Community Meal will take place in lieu of the Soup Supper. Thanks so much for considering helping with this ministry!
- **Food pantry donation** request for March: canned peas.
- **Happy Birthday this week:**
 - 23rd Christine Cornwell
 - 24th Mike Perritt

Save the Date

- **April 13, Palm Sunday** worship with Palms
 - **April 17, Maundy Thursday** there will be a Christian Seder meal at 5:30PM followed by worship with stripping of the altar
 - **April 18, Good Friday** worship will be at 6:30PM
 - **April 20, Easter Sunday** 8:00 am a potluck breakfast casserole meal precedes Worship at 9:30AM
-

*If you'd like to be added to our weekly Trinity Times Newsletter, please fill out a welcome card (small basket on table in Narthex) leave your name and email and we'll be happy to add you.

Easter Flower Order Form

The Altar Guild invites you to help decorate our sanctuary with beautiful tulips and hyacinths for Easter! These flowers will add to our celebration and may be taken home after the Easter services.



Order Deadline: Sunday, March 23

💰 Cost: \$14.50 per plant

👉 How to Order:

1. Complete this form.
2. Attach payment (check payable to Trinity Lutheran Church).
3. Place in the offering box or mail it to the church office.

Your Order Details

🌿 Flowers Given By:



♥ In Honor Of:



In Memory Of:



☀ How Many Would You Like?

- Tulips: _____
- Hyacinths: _____

Total Plants Ordered: _____

Total Amount Paid: \$_____

(at \$14.50 per plant)



✨ Thank you for your support in making our Easter celebration beautiful!
"He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay." – Matthew 28:6