

An Offering of Reflection, Prayer, and Music

Third Sunday of Advent

12.13.2020

Welcome to Trinity's online community!

As you watch the Live Stream of this service, feel free to add comments, likes, etc. to the comment section at any time!

You might want to light a candle and place it near you. During the service, you will be invited to light a candle if you haven't already, so at least gather what you need for that moment if you wish to participate.

This service, streamed live on Facebook, is a complete offering in itself. Nevertheless, it is followed by an opportunity to participate in online communion via Zoom. A link to that Zoom meeting will appear in the comments on Facebook at the end of this service.

*Cover image:
"Annunciation
Creek" by Matt
Lincoln, 2006*

When we don't have to practice social distancing, 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. For now, this is a time of sharing and connecting with one another, knowing that we are bound together by God's love. 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

"COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS" ARRANGED BY L.H. BRISTOL, JR.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

We light the first, second, and third candles of Advent.
(Three candles are lit)

We look to John, the one you sent, to point us to your light. The light will come into our world and enlighten everyone.

God sent John the Baptizer to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. John called people to repent of their sins and to live faithfully. His baptism symbolized washing away the old to start fresh. John declared that Christ, the one who would follow him, would bring new life. During Advent, we ask for God's mercy and a joyful new beginning.

Merciful God, we give thanks that you send messengers like John to call us to greater faith. We ask that in these days we prepare for you in prayer and acts of holy compassion. Forgive us and lead us to your light. **Amen.**

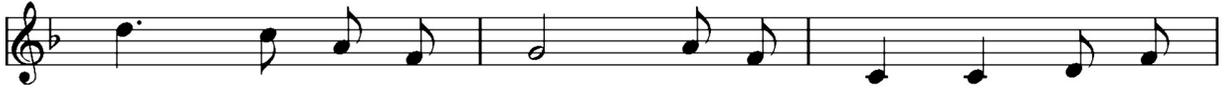
*Adapted from the
United Church of
Christ's Susan A.
Blain, Minister for
Faith Formation:
Curator for Worship
and Liturgical Arts.*

OPENING HYMN

"YE WHO CLAIM THE FAITH OF JESUS"



1 Ye who claim the faith of Je - sus, sing the
 2 Bless - ed were the cho - sen peo - ple out of
 3 There-fore let all faith - ful peo - ple sing the
 4 "Mag - ni - fy, my soul, God's great - ness; in my



won - ders that were done when the love of God the
 whom the Lord did come; bless - ed was the land of
 hon - or of her name; let the Church, in her fore -
 Sa - vior I re - joice; all the a - ges call me



Fa - ther o - ver sin the vic - tory won, when he
 prom - ise fa - shioned for his earth - ly home; but more
 shad - owed, part in her thanks - giv - ing claim; what Christ's
 bless - ed, in his praise I lift my voice; he has



made the Vir - gin Ma - ry mo - ther of his on - ly Son.
 bless - ed far the mo - ther, she who bore him in her womb.
 mo - ther sang in glad - ness let Christ's peo - ple sing the same:
 cast down all the might - y, and the low - ly are his choice."

Words: Sts. 1-3, Vincent Stuckey Stratton Coles (1845-1929), alt; st. 4, F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984), metrical *Magnificat*
 Music: *Julion*, David Hurd (b. 1950) Copyright ©1983, G.I.A. Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

FIRST READING

LUKE 1:46-55

Mary said to her cousin Elizabeth,
 "My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
 and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.
 For you have looked with favor
 upon your lowly servant,
 and from this day forward
 all generations will call me blessed.
 For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,
 and holy is your Name.
 Your mercy reaches from age to age
 for those who fear you.
 You have shown strength with your arm;
 you have scattered the proud in their conceit;

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

Nobody set out to write The Bible. The Hebrew Scriptures were created over many centuries by many people to record the Jewish People's experience of God. The same is true of the Christian Scriptures, some of which were letters written to a specific audience in response to specific needs—and were then found to be helpful to the faithful even after fulfilling their original purpose.

The Middle Reading fills the role of a Bible reading, but it doesn't come from the Bible. It is our way of trying to listen for God's ongoing word as it is spoken outside the limits of the Bible. Most often, we turn to contemporary poets for this reading.

Lucille Clifton (1936 – 2010) was an American poet, writer, and educator from Buffalo (Depew), New York. She graduated from the State University of New York College at Fredonia. From 1979 to 1985 she was Poet Laureate of Maryland. Clifton was a finalist twice for the Pulitzer Prize for poetry.

you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places. You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty. You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy—the promise you made to our ancestors—to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”

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

Thanks be to God.

MIDDLE READING

after the all been done and i
one old creature carried on
another creature's back, i wonder
could i have fought these thing?
surrounded by no son of mine save
old men calling Mother like in the tale
the astrologer tell, i wonder
could i have walk away when voices
singing in my sleep? i one old woman.
always i seem to worrying now for
another young girl asleep
in the plain evening.
what song around her ear?
what star still choosing?

Mary, Mary, astonished by God on a straw bed
circled by beasts and an old husband
Mary Marinka, holy woman, split by sanctified seed
to mother and mother for ever and ever
we pray for you sister woman
shook by the awe-full affection of the saints

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

Thanks be to God.

ALTO SOLO

"PREPARE THYSELF ZION" FROM THE CHRISTMAS ORATORIO BY J.S. BACH

*Prepare Thyself Zion with tender affection,
The purest, the fairest this day to receive.
Thou must meet Him with a heart,
With love overflowing.
Haste then with ardor the Bridegroom to welcome.*

THE GOSPEL

LUKE 1:26-38

Six months later, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a young woman named Mary; she was engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. Upon arriving, the angel said to Mary, "Rejoice, highly favored one! God is with you! Blessed are you among women!"

Mary was deeply troubled by these words and wondered what the angel meant. The angel went on to say to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. You'll conceive and bear a son, and give him the name Jesus — 'Deliverance.' His dignity will be great, and he will be called the Only Begotten of God. God will give Jesus the judgment seat of David, his ancestor, to rule over the house of Jacob forever, and his reign will never end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have never been with a man?"

The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you — hence the offspring to be born will be called the Holy One of God. Know too that Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has conceived a child in her old age; she who was thought to be infertile is now in her sixth month. Nothing is impossible with God."

Mary said, "I am the servant of God. Let it be done to me as you say."

With that, the angel left her.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

THE REV. ISAIAH "SHANEEQUA" BROKENLEG
PRESIDING BISHOP'S STAFF OFFICER FOR RACIAL RECONCILIATION

MUSICAL REFLECTION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

FROM THE MAORI PEOPLE OF NEW ZEALAND

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who loved and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.**

**You are our God. We worship you.
Amen.**

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.

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

Like all summaries of historic and communal belief, this affirmation of faith is intended as a symbol of unity and continuity rather than a litmus test of one's individual commitment to a particular dogma.

COMMUNITY PRAYER: RECEIVING AND RELEASING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

If you haven't already lit a candle near where you are seated, you are invited to do so now. For the next few moments, sit quietly and offer your prayers to God for yourself, those close to you and all of the human family. Today's invitation to pray for each other, the church and the world is based on the prayers of Walter Brueggeman and several others. Words will alternate with music, giving you a chance to listen to the still small voice only you can hear, and to respond in the comment section if you wish.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Loving God, you have set us in families and clans, in cities and neighborhoods.

Our common life began in a garden, but our destiny lies in the city.

You have placed us in and around Buffalo. This is our home.

Your creativity is on display here through the work of human hearts and hands.

We pray for Buffalo today—for the East Side and the West Side, North Buffalo and South Buffalo.

Musical Response

We pray for our poorest neighbors and for powerful people in banks and businesses downtown.

We pray for people from the First Ward and the Fruit Belt.

We pray for neighboring communities from Olcott to Olean, from Angola to Albion, and a thousand other cities connected to our own.

Musical Response

In all our neighborhoods this day there will be crime and callous moneymaking; there will be powerful people unable or unwilling to see the vulnerable who are their neighbors.

There will also be beautiful acts of compassion and creativity in all these places—forgiveness and generosity; neighbors working together for a more just community.

Help us see this place as something other than a battleground between us and them, where our imaginations are limited by win/lose propositions and endless rivalry.

Show us a deeper reality, God: Show us your Beloved Community.

Musical Response

We pray also for all who are sick or lonely, all who are overwhelmed by difficult circumstances, or trapped in harmful relationships. We pray for all who grieve, and all who live in fear. We pray for all who are dependent on the compassionate care of others, and for those who work tirelessly to care for the ones who are in need.

Prosper our city, and help us to trust that you are God, we pray in the name of the one who wept over the city.

Amen.

Musical Response

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Now would be a great time to add a comment to the Live Stream!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your financial support is not only a practical necessity. It can also be a very meaningful symbolic gesture, expressing your gratitude for the blessings in your life and your hope for health in the world. While the church is not open, Trinity has made a commitment to keep staff on the payroll. Plus, all the Trinity services are available online, either with Zoom or Facebook live streaming. You can [donate online here](#). You can also mail a check to Trinity at 371 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14202. Thank you!

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.

The prayer of St. Chrysostom is found in both Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All Hail" said he, "Thou lowly maiden Mary
Most highly favored lady" Gloria!

For known a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy son shall be Immanuel by seers foretold;
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me be as it pleaseth God" she said.
"My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name"
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

Of her, Immanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

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.**

PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM

**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.**

"THE ANGEL GABRIEL" ARRANGED BY MALCOLM ARCHER

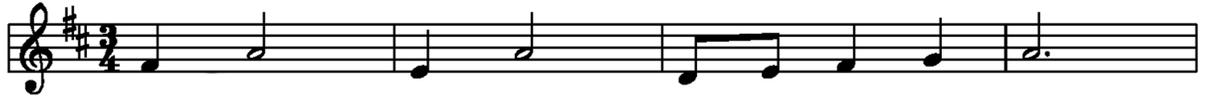
BLESSING

Now, may the Holy Spirit
enfold us with love,
indwell our homes with joy,
build this community and this city in peace,
And the blessing of God, who made us, who loves us,
and who animates and guides us, be with you now and always.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"STAR CHILD"



1 Star - child, earth - child, go - be - tween of God,
2 Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
3 Grown child, old child, mem - ory full of years,
4 Spared child, spoiled child, hav - ing, want - ing more,
5 Hope - for - peace child, God's stu - pen - dous sign,



love child, Christ child, hea - ven's light - ning rod,
hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,
sad child, lost child, sto - ry told in tears,
wise child, faith child, know - ing joy in store,
down - to - earth child, star of stars that shine,

Refrain



This year, this year, let the day ar - rive, when



Christ - mas come for ev - ery - one, ev - ery - one a - live!

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Music: *Star-Child*, Carlton R. Young © 1994 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.
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DISMISSAL

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

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE

"LET ALL MORTAL FLESH KEEP SILENCE" ARRANGED BY KRISTA SEDDON

Please take a snapshot of your creche or nativity set and [upload it here](#) so it can be incorporated into the online service on Christmas Eve! Matt has clearly lost his mind, but let's humor him! He really wants pictures of as many of OUR nativity sets as possible! The due date is **Friday, December 18.**

SERVICES @TRINITY

In the interest of staying connected and sharing what we can of our spiritual life together, here's our service lineup:

SUNDAY MORNING @10:30 Live streaming on Facebook. The Sunday online Live Stream service remains accessible as a video recording on Trinity's Facebook page after the service is over.

TRINITY @7 Zoom gatherings on Sunday night @7pm featuring poetry and jazz.

WEDNESDAY @NOON Zoom gatherings offering prayer and holy conversation.

THURSDAY @7 Zoom gatherings @7pm offering the wisdom and fellowship of 12-Step recovery.

This plan will be in place for the foreseeable future. It's clear we will not have any sizable groups for many months to come. If you have ideas about safe ways to use our building for spiritual enrichment, please contact the church office to share your ideas and plans for implementation. Please continue to read the newsletters to stay informed.

Click here to [find the readings](#).

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

THURSDAY @NOON TO 2PM OR BY APPOINTMENT The church will be open for private prayer or meditation. You can chat quietly with one of the volunteers, or if you need, you can ask them to pray with you. Please wear a mask. You are required to sign a registry at the entrance to be used in the event contact tracing is necessary.

The **Journeying the Way of Love: Advent** discussion group, facilitated by Tim Lane and Jeffrey Tooke, continues this Tuesday at 7pm. Based on the Episcopal Church's Way of Love commitment to practices for a Jesus-Centered life, the Advent curriculum **Journeying the Way of Love** offers the opportunity to explore how we can live the Way of Love while we await the coming of Christ by exploring the first two chapters of Luke. We invite you to make this discussion group part of your spiritual practice for Advent. Use this zoom link for the discussion group on Tuesdays at 7pm:

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81668634672?pwd=eTVJZXFoNzVYdHZvSHZONGlNUUowZz09>

Meeting ID: 816-6863-4672

Passcode: trintalk

Our journey during Advent will include the following focus:

December 15, 7pm: Advent Three: The Birth of John the Baptist: Journeying with Community

Download the materials for Advent Three for December 15:

https://1drv.ms/b/s!AI-L5d_Lxgichtpe0YwFm2MMWE_4VQ?e=sXcDFU

Advent Calendar 2020: https://1drv.ms/b/s!AI-L5d_Lxgichtp06lx6DoB8oK2vg?e=mgamDW

December 22, 7pm: Advent Four: The Birth of Jesus: Journeying with the World

If you are interested in joining the discussion group or have questions about the group, please send an email to Jeffrey Tooke at jeffrey@bayharboradvisors.com to receive more information.

Hamlin Park School's social worker and school program director have asked that the kind folks of Trinity consider buying earbuds for the kids to use with their iPads. If you are able and willing to help, please order as many of [these headphones](#) as you are comfortable and have them shipped to Trinity at 371 Delaware Ave, Buffalo NY 14202. As everyone knows, headphones are not durable, so they are hoping for 1,000 of them.

Homespace is hoping to provide pre-lit trees and decorations for all their families to make their homes more festive this holiday season. The families won't be able to gather in groups this year and most are not going home for the holidays. They have provided a link with trees, decorations, and tree skirts that can be used to order items and have them shipped directly to Homespace. Please [order tree items here](#). Additionally, they are asking for sponsorship for catered Christmas dinners from Wegmans. You could place Wegmans gift cards in the Trinity mailbox in the atrium, or order from the comfort of your home by [ordering dinners here](#).

Save the Date: February 24, 2021 On that Wednesday, at 7pm, Trinity will host a Zoom appearance from Debby Irving, author of "Waking Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race." While in her 40s, a graduate course in "Race and Cultural Identity" started Irving on her journey to comprehend how much she had benefited over the years because she was white. Irving writes plainly and clearly about her discoveries and how she began to question her long held assumptions about race and culture. We encourage you to read the book though it is not a requirement. Info on tickets to come.



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Bing Sherrill, Treasurer
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Karen Hall
Jane Kearns
Christina Kinney
Kayla Kisenwether
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Tom Owen

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Carol Case Siracuse
John Clayton, *Section Leader*
Peter Dow
Dan Galley
Steve Shanley
Tyler Mecklenburg, *Section Leader*
Peter Curtis
Tom Owen

TODAY'S WORSHIP TEAM

Vocalists: Laura Munson, Suzanne Fata, John Clayton, Brandon Mecklenburg
Guest Musicians: Claire Fisher, violin; Nancy Baun, cello
Readers: Kayla Kisenwether, Patti Nisbet, Raymond Neil
Advent Wreath lighting: Lily, Deanne, and Nelson Montgomery
Cyber Sacristan: Jeffrey Tooke

Sunday @10:30am Reflection, prayer, and music

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

Wednesday @Noon Prayer and holy conversation

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

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