



**An offering of reflection, prayer, and music**  
Ash Wednesday  
02.18.2026

# 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.

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.

**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. This communal worship service is many things, including an offering of your prayers. If you are onsite, you may light a candle on one of the candle walls at any time during worship as a tangible way to make a prayer offering for yourself or on behalf of those who are online. If you are not on-site, rest assured that your presence online is felt and valued.

Children, with all their sounds and movements, are a welcome part of the gathering for worship. It is perfectly appropriate to keep your kids with you in the pew. If your baby or toddler would be happier being able to crawl around and play, there are Kids' Corners in both side aisles. These are enclosed and safe spaces for small children (attended by their parents) to play quietly on the floor while staying in church. Additionally, there is a room in the back left corner of the church that has a rocking chair and a changing table where you can attend to your child's needs. Also, on Sundays, just through the door near the baptismal font near the front-right side of the church, there is a staffed nursery, which is available for toddlers through age 5.

**If you would like to receive more information about Trinity Church,** please sign our guest book located near the entrance. Everyone is welcome to enjoy refreshments and conversation after worship. Trinity Church is an Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Western New York and is a part of the Anglican Communion which is based in England but found worldwide.

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

### PRELUDE

## 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.

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

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.**

*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.

## FIRST READING

JOB 42:1-6

**T**hen 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.

"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.**

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

## 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

**J**esus 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.

**J**"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

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

*Continued on next page*

*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 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.

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.

"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.*

### **BEING MARKED WITH 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.**

### **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.**

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

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.**

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.**

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

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

### **Episcopal Q, A & O!**

Questions, Answers, and Opinions with Matt on the **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday** of the month, February 22, following the 10:30am service in the big church side chapel. Grab a coffee, then join him. All are welcome!

### **Jung Center Book Study**

The Jung Center is delighted to offer a Zoom-based book study series on Carl Jung's best known book, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* from 7-8pm on the **second Tuesday of each month**. Please contact Franklin LaVoie at [lavoie888@gmail.com](mailto:lavoie888@gmail.com) for a Zoom link. Donations are gratefully accepted but not required. We hope you will join us. More information about this and other programs is on their website: [www.jungbuffalo.org](http://www.jungbuffalo.org)

### **Krista Seddon Trinity Blue Note Jazz Series**

Starting **February 20** featuring "Women of the Blues"

Performances are in the chapel at Trinity, starting @7pm. Tickets \$30 [click here](#) for tickets.

New this season: Student tickets for \$10 at the door with valid ID.

For more info about upcoming concerts, you can follow Krista on social media:



Volunteers are needed for setup and ticket table. Use [this link](#) to signup. Volunteers receive a complimentary plus one ticket for a friend. Also new this season, we are looking for businesses to sponsor our programs. Email Tim Lane at [t.w.lane@outlook.com](mailto:t.w.lane@outlook.com) if you have any contacts who may be interested.



### **The Coldest Night of the Year**

is a winterrific family-friendly fundraising walk in support of Compass House, which provides shelter and services for homeless and runaway youth and young adults in the Buffalo area. Let's gather together on **Saturday, February 28**, at Delaware Park to raise funds and awareness for their amazing mission. Visit <http://www.cnoy.com/buffalo> to register and join Team Trinity! If you have questions, please reach out to team captain Missy Stolfi at [missy.stolfi@gmail.com](mailto:missy.stolfi@gmail.com) or (716) 998-6816.

### **Parking at Trinity's Franklin Street Lot**

Trinity has a parking lot behind the church on Franklin Street. Parking is free during the weekly services (Sundays 10am-1pm and 6-9pm, Wednesdays 11:30am-1:30pm, and Thursdays 6-9pm) You can use the lot any other time 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.

### **Visiting Trinity**

The church is open by appointment for private prayer or meditation. Contact our parish administrator, Colleen O'Neill, at [coneill@trinitybuffalo.org](mailto:coneill@trinitybuffalo.org) to schedule an appointment.

### **Trinity Worship Volunteers**

Worship volunteers are needed for the coming season. Opportunities include altar preparation, greeter, acolyte, reader, communion minister, coffee hour host, and cybersacristan (livestream). Ready to sign up for a slot? Visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c4fafaf629a3f58-trinity2> If you have any questions, please reach out to Jeffrey Tooke, email [jeffreytooke@outlook.com](mailto:jeffreytooke@outlook.com) or phone cell (716) 912-8557.

### **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](mailto:phoebemckay@gmail.com)

Marie Keane, [MNMKeane@gmail.com](mailto:MNMKeane@gmail.com)

Susie Green, [susie432@gmail.com](mailto:susie432@gmail.com)

Sara Merritt, [smerrit172@gmail.com](mailto:smerrit172@gmail.com)

Patti Nisbet, [tudorspace@aol.com](mailto:tudorspace@aol.com)



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

Dinner & Discussion  
with  
Neighboring  
Episcopal  
Churches

Wednesday evenings, 5:00-7:00  
including a simple supper served by  
each hosting congregation

Feb 25th St. Philip's  
March 4th St. Mark's & All Saints  
March 11th Trinity  
March 18 St. Paul's Cathedral  
March 25th St. John Grace

# UNBOUND

SEEKING THE FREEDOM OF GOD'S LOVE

This Lenten season, join fellow Buffalo Episcopalian in following Jesus through the wilderness and into the heart of the Empire. Along the way, we'll wrestle with what it means to be truly free: to remove our masks, reject false power, center the excluded, accept God's love, and choose life even in the shadow of darkness and despair.

This year, the program is offered in person only, meeting at each of the churches listed.

If you would like to help Trinity host on March 11, please let Colleen know.



*Trinity is an Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Western New York.*

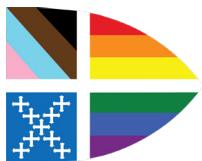
371 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14202

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[Instagram: @trinity.church.buffalo](#)

[www.trinitybuffalo.org](http://www.trinitybuffalo.org) • (716) 852-8314



## STAFF

**The Rev. Matthew R. Lincoln, Rector**  
mlincoln@trinitybuffalo.org  
(716) 852-8314 ext. 2

**Krista Seddon, Director of Ensembles; Pianist**  
krista@kristaseddon.com  
www.kristaseddon.com

**Paul Cena, Organist and Choir Director**  
prcena@verizon.net

**The Rev. Deacon Jeffrey Tooke, Curate**

**The Rev. William Roberts, Assisting Priest**

**Colleen O'Neill, Parish Administrator and  
Director of Children's Ministries**  
coneill@trinitybuffalo.org  
(716) 852-8314 ext. 1

**Jennifer Frey, Office Volunteer**  
clerical@trinitybuffalo.org

**Rich Mpelezos, Facility Manager**  
rmpelezos@trinitybuffalo.org

**Willow D'Agostino, Caretaker**  
Jay Mpelezos, Caretaker

## VESTRY

JoAnne Sundell, Senior Warden  
Timothy Lane, Junior Warden  
Bing Sherrill, Treasurer  
Elaine "Gretchen" Lodick, Clerk  
Clint Brown  
Connie Ervin  
Barbara Hall-Griesmann  
Jane Kearns  
Vicky Kearns  
Meg Knowles  
Jess Poleon  
Missy Stolfi  
Cindy Stroud

## CHOIR MEMBERS

John Clayton, Section Leader  
Sue Doherty  
Christina Kinney  
Tim Lane, Section Leader  
"Gretchen" Elaine Lodick  
Laura Munson, Section Leader  
Tom Owen  
Jennifer Ross  
Laura Schleicher, Section Leader  
Chris Schmigel  
Steve Shanley  
Carol Case Siracuse  
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

Prayer 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](#).