

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

March 5, 2025 2:00 p.m.



TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520 717-569-1632 Website: www.trinityeastpete.org E-Mail:secretary@trinityeastpete.org The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus The Rev. Dr. Carolyne Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director Ms. Karen Karosas, Organist Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant Mr. Michael Querry, Sexton Mrs. Amy Grube, Preschool Director

ASH WEDNESDAY 2:00 P.M.

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

Welcome all visitors! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book in the Narthex. If you are interested in church membership, please give your name and telephone number to the Pastor.

Welcome to the Eucharist! All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion. *Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.*

Prayer As You Enter: Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY

TRINITY U.C.C. VISION STATEMENT:

All will know the love of God through the teachings of Jesus!!

Trinity U.C.C. is called by God to:

--Share God's love with our community --Serve God's children --Bring healing and wholeness to those in need

--Share the Gospel in liturgy, music and study

Why no alleluias or hymn of praise during Lent? You may have noticed that the act of praise following the assurance of forgiveness is missing from our worship. We join other churches in omitting alleluias, glorias, and other hymns of praise as we turn again to our Lenten journey of exile and repentance. We long for the eschatological New Jerusalem "...the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother" (Galatians 4:26). We walk in darkness awaiting the city of God where... "there will be no more night; the servants of God need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever" (Revelation 22:5). Until then, we travel with our Lord Jesus into the desert to face the devil, we join him in his triumphant procession into Jerusalem, we pray with him in the garden of Gethsemane, and we follow him to the painful cross and to the cold dark tomb. We trust that our journey with Christ does not end there. On Easter we once again join the praises of the choirs of heaven: "The Lord is risen; the Kingdom has come; our joy is complete; and, in concert with the angels and saints, we greet the risen Lord with shouts of 'Alleluia!'" (http://catholicism.about.com/od/worship/f/No Alleluia.htm).

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

CALL TO WORSHIP

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Welcome to a season of self-examination; this is a time for reconciliation with God and neighbor.

Welcome together to meet God, longing for the abundant mercy of our Creator.

Seek to know God's presence here and everywhere; let the wisdom of God guide you in truth.

Through hardship, affliction, and calamity, we reach for the power of God to steady us.

Prepare yourselves for a period of testing. Be open to the grace that enables your growth.

With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning, we seek the steadfast love of God.

We come to this sacred table not because we must, but because we may. Come not because we are fulfilled, but because in our emptiness we stand in need of God's mercy and assurance.

Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence and to pray for the Spirit.

Come to this table, then, sisters and brothers, as we are. Partake and share. It is spread for us that we might again know that God has come to us, shared our common lot, conquering sin and death, and invited us to join the community of God's own people.

CONFESSION OF SIN

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, study, and works of love help us to return to that love. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to love God and neighbor by confessing your sin and by asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline. Let us confess our sin in silent prayer. *(SEATED OR KNEELING)*

SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND SELF-EXAMINATION

Let us confess together.

Most holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our 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, O God.

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, O God.**

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in 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 intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in our 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 neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty. Accept our repentance, O God.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us. Accept our repentance, O God.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us. Accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us. Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(Those who desire to receive ashes may come forward to the communion rail. The pastor and assistant will apply ashes in the sign of the cross on the forehead of each person with these words, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.")

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, **that we may show forth your glory**.

By the Cross and Passion of your Son, our Lord, bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST LESSON

Joel 2:1-2,12-17

Because of the coming day of the Lord, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community declares that God is gracious and asks God to spare the people lest the nations doubt God's power to save.

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?""

The Word of the Lord. Thanks Be to God.

PSALTER

Psalm 51:1-17

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

SECOND LESSON 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.'

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

Glory Be to You, O Lord

"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise Be to You, O Christ

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SERMON

"The Shadows of the Cross"

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

OFFERING DEDICATION

As you have been bountiful toward us, loving God, we would be generous in supporting the mission of your church. You have made us rich, even in the face of poverty. You have given us all we need, even when it seems we have little. Help us to find the right priorities for all you entrust to us, that our hearts may follow our treasure to their rightful home. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation and the gift of life and for your abiding love which brings us close to you, the source of all blessing. We thank you for revealing your will for us in the giving of the law and in the preaching of the prophets. We thank you especially that in the fullness of time you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom Jesus loved. We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave you raised Christ with power to become sovereign in your realm. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life. Because you have come to us in Jesus Christ, enduring the Cross so that we might know eternal life, it is right that we should give you thanks and praise. With angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, the church on earth and the church in heaven we praise you with your holy name:

Holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God, Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

(Congregation may be seated)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

AGNUS DEI

Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us. Jesus, redeemer of the world: give us your peace. Amen.

RECEIVING THE GIFTS OF GOD

(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. The pastor will serve you the host, saying, "The Body of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" The assistant will present you with the cup, saying, "The Blood of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements at the back of the sanctuary and commune in your pew or ask the ushers to have the pastor and assistant come to you in the pew. The pastor will offer a blessing everyone has communed.)

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you. And also with you. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

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

God of our journeys, we pray for the church as the season of Lent begins. Guide your people in spiritual practices and preparation for baptism. Strengthen communities of faith in discipleship and witness for the sake of the gospel. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**.

God of creation, we pray for the earth. As you once brought forth life from the dust, breathe healing and renewal into all places where ecosystems are stretched and strained. Nurture organic cycles of life, death, and rebirth. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**.

God of the nations, we pray for an end to wars and occupations that reduce communities to ash. Turn leaders away from fearful decision-making, and lead all people into the justice and compassion of your reign. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**.

God of the suffering, we pray for all who live with any pain. Comfort people living with chronic or terminal illnesses, addictions, or anxiety. Grant that all who dwell in the dust of grief know your presence there. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**.

God of community, we pray for those who accompany the dying: for first responders, health care and hospice workers, chaplains, and those who facilitate burials of the dead. Sustain them as they serve their neighbors in life and death with dignity and care. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**. SILENT PRAYER

Let us pray together.

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.

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

BENEDICTION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ministering This Afternoon

Pastor/Celebrant	Rev. Dr. Christopher Rankin
Lector/Assistant	Rev. Sandy Morris
Greeters	George & Sandy DeLong

LENTEN SERVICES 2025 "SHADOWS OF THE CROSS"

Each Wednesday we will focus on a particular event in Christ's journey to the cross. The shadow of the cross looms over every interaction, to give spiritual insight.

March 12 (The Shadow of Betrayal): Rev. Ken Trauger

March 19 (The Shadow of Servant Leadership): Rev. Sandy Morris

March 26 (The Shadow of Denial): Rev. Dr. Carrie Call

April 2 (The Shadow of False Accusations): Dr. Randall Zachman

April 9 (The Shadow of a Last Chance): Rev. Dr. Joel Hummel

April 16/Holy Wednesday Order of Healing (The Shadow of Death): Rev. Jack Esbenshade

April 17 (Maundy Thursday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.) Rev. Dr. Chris Rankin April 18 (Good Friday Tenebrae Service at 7 p.m.) Rev. Dr. Chris Rankin



MEN OF TRINITY (M.O.T.) BREAKFAST MEETING: The men will be meeting at the Family Fare Restaurant for breakfast March 15 (weather permitting) at 8:00 AM. This is open to all men of the congregation! You are encouraged to invite other men to the breakfast.

PRAYER SHAWL GROUP: The Knit in God's Love Prayer Shawl Group will be meeting on March 18 at 1:00 p.m. and will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of each month! Come and bring a friend. Hope to see many of you there! Contact Betty Tyndall for more information.



Set your clocks forward one hour Saturday night.

A Message from Christian Education for March

"For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin, for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11-12, NRSV)

The apostle Paul needed years to process what was revealed to him on the road to Damascus and beyond it, the reasons it happened, and for him to describe the theology that he would take to the Gentile world. Paul needed time to pray in solitude, to study and to seek out God.

During the 9:00 am Sunday School hour this month, beginning March 2nd: The Children's Class will be continuing work with SPARK! in the downstairs Sunday School room as we explore additional opportunities in which to engage our children.

Youth and adults are invited to join The Wired Word studies with Diane Rice meeting in the Choir Room, or in a study of Adam Hamilton's <u>The Call – The Life</u> <u>and Message pf the Apostle Paul</u> led by Pastor Chris, Sue Bowman and others in Isenberg Hall. Paul's struggle to learn what was expected of him as a person of faith has impacted people the world over. This study invites the participant to hear Paul's story and his message, to reflect on the meaning of his life. At this time of Lenten introspection, we are invited to look within to discern how to respond to God's call to become the people we were meant to be at this time.

COMMUNITY MEALONMARCH 27 AT ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LANDISVILLE: Trinity will be cooking and serving a sit-down community meal at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church at 85 East Brandt Blvd. in Landisville on Thursday, March 27th at 5:15 PM. **Sign-up sheets are posted in the table across from the church office for food donations and servers.** Persons helping to serve the meal must arrive at Zion Lutheran by 4:30 PM. Contact Nancy Enders or Paula Dennes with questions. Thank you for your continued support of this important mission.

LENTEN DEVOTIONALS are available on the table across from the church office!

WELCOME LUNCHEON: The Evangelism Committee is sponsoring a welcome luncheon after the 10:30 service on March 30 to welcome new members or recent visitors to Trinity Church. This is a way for us to share with our guests about Trinity's story through the DVD and conversations around the tables. Mike Lichtenwalner and Pastor Rankin have updated the DVD! We hope that Trinity members will attend the luncheon to welcome new people to the congregation! Look for the sign-up sheet on the table across from the church office!

EASTER ORDER FORMS are available on the table across from the church office. The deadline to place your orders is Sunday, March 16. If you have any questions, contact Dan Otthofer.



Preschool Fundraiser Announcement

Sign-up sheet on table outside office

LENTEN DENIAL ENVELOPES: The Board of Deacons decided to support the work of Church World Service (CWS) through this year's Lenten Denial offering envelope. CWS and other faith-based relief organizations have been denied government funding for the important work that they do with refugees. This lack of funding has also impacted the way these organizations put an end to hunger and poverty and respond to natural disasters in the U.S. and around the world. Our offering will be sent to both the national office and the Lancaster office of CWS. You can find that envelope in your box of offering envelopes.





Trinity UCC

2340 State St., East Petersburg, PA 17520 www.trinityeastpete.org 717-569-1632

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Concert - 3:00 PM

Freewill Offering Benefits McCaskey Friends of Music and Trinity's Music Ministry



