

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Lent

GATHERING AND PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed!

PRELUDE:

“Meditation on Psalm 42”

Douglas Wagner

Readying Our Hearts (A time of silent prayer and reflection in preparation for worshiping God together.)

Scripture for Meditation and Memorization for Lent – Jesus’ third “I Am” Statement, where Jesus said:

“I am the Gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.” (John 10:9)

LENTEN CANDLE EXTINGUISHING

Call to Worship: (based on Psalm 91:2; Romans 10:9, 13)

Leader: Let us worship God. He is our refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust.

People: Let us confess with our mouths, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead.

Leader: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

People: Let us call upon our true God, believing in Him in our hearts, confessing faith in Him with our mouths, and worshipping Him in spirit and in truth.

Scripture Reading: John 10:1-10 (Pew Bible p. 1666).

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Lenten Meditation.

The shepherds in Jesus' time cared for their flocks in the hills and valleys away from the towns. They didn't have farms with corrals or holding pens within the towns where they could safely keep their sheep while they went about their business. A shepherd was responsible for the safety of his sheep. They would lead their sheep to pastures and water by day, and, at night they would lead their sheep to natural "corrals" – enclosures that often held more than one flock; places where the sheep could not wander; places where there was only one way to enter and to exit.

At night the shepherd would sleep at the entrance of that "corral," making himself the gate. Therefore if any person or any animal attempted to get to the sheep, or, if the sheep attempted to wander, they would have to pass right by – often even over -- the shepherd. As the gate, the shepherd served as a barrier between his sheep whom he knew and cared for as if his children, and the outside world which could easily destroy the sheep.

Only a thief would try to approach the sheep by another direction beside the gate because he knew the shepherd would not let him pass.

Jesus is *The Gate* that stands between us and destruction, both for this life and for the one to come. He offered Himself in order to defeat any attempt by the evil one to attack and destroy us. Jesus' desire is to care for us, to deliver us from temptation, to grant us peace with our Creator-God. He only asks that we go where He leads us and remain where He places us so that He may indeed care for us.

As we move into this third week of Lent, remember that there's nothing that happens to God's children that doesn't first pass by His watchful eye, and that God will work all things for the good of those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose.

Extinguishing a Lenten Candle.

As we extinguish the third candle of our Lenten Cross, we're reminded of God's strong hand to provide for us, to protect us, to keep us in His sovereign care such that, for those whom God calls His sheep, nothing in all creation can separate us from God's preserving love, which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord – the Great Shepherd of His sheep – our impenetrable Gate.

(Extinguish a purple candle.)

Unison Prayer: Let us pray together . . .

Gracious God, You are our shield and defender, our ever present help in times of trouble. You guard us with Your sovereign, steadfast-love as You demonstrated when You allowed Your Son to lay down His life for us. Help us to trust in You wherever You may lead us knowing that the pasture where You lead us will give us security, and that, despite how things seem to be going at times, You are there for us. Help us to avoid placing our confidence in the false god's of this world which may give momentary relief but which, like thieves in the night, rob us of the abundant life which You desire for us. We pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who is our strong *Gate* of protection. Amen.

*GATHERING SONG: “Come Thou Fount/Come Thou King”
Acoustic Worship Team

Robinson/Miller

Verse 1:

**Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing call for songs of loudest praise;
Teach me some melodious sonnet sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I’m fixed upon it mount of Thy redeeming love.**

Chorus:

**Come, Thou Fount, come, Thou King; come, Thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear Your bride, to You we sing; come, Thou Fount of our blessing.**

Verse 2:

**I was lost in utter darkness `til You came and rescued me;
I was bound by all my sin when Your love came and set me free;
Now my soul can sing a new song, now my heart has found a home;
Now Your grace is always with me and I’ll never be alone. (Chorus)**

Verse 3:

**O, to grace, how great a debtor daily I’m constrained to be;
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee;
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here’s my heart, Lord, take and seal it; seal it for Thy courts above. (Chorus)**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison prayer after a time of silent personal confession.)

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion forgive us of our transgressions. For we know our transgressions, and our sins are always before us. We have done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You accuse and justified when You judge. Wash away all our iniquities and cleanse us from our sins. Create in us pure hearts – hearts that seek Your face, O God. Restore to us the joy of Your salvation and grant us humble spirits and servant hearts. O Lord, open our lips and empower our speech that our mouths can declare Your glory, honor and praise.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (based on 1 Timothy 1:15, 17)

Leader: Here are words you may trust, words that merit full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. To all who confess their sins and resolve to lead a new life, He says, “Your sins are forgiven.” He also says, “Follow me.” Now to the One who rules all worlds, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

*All: (*Gloria Patri*)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 (Pew Bible pp. 443-444)

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

But Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me."

The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD."

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Leader: This is the word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM: "Kyrie Eleison" ("Lord Have Mercy")

Choir

Michael Ware

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 6:39-45 (Pew Bible pp. 1601-1602)

[Jesus] also told them this parable: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”

Leader: This is the word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: “Evangelism from the Inside-Out: Being an Authentic Ambassador”

**RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD THROUGH AFFIRMATION,
OFFERING, AND PRAYER**

*SONG OF REFLECTION AND RESPONSE: #559 “Here I Am, Lord”

**I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?**

Refrain:

**Here I am, Lord. Is it I? Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.**

**I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne My people’s pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My Word to them. Whom shall I send? (Refrain)**

**I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them. Whom shall I send? (Refrain)**

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER AND OFFERING

Invitation

Affirmation of Faith: (Heidelberg Catechism Question #1)

Q#1. What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

That I belong -- body and soul, in life and in death -- not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of His own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that He protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit His purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution

Partaking of the Elements and the Giving of Our Offering

“Still the King”

Price/Cates/Mecum

Verse 1

**When I think of the cross
The cross of Christ
Praise begins to rise
Praise begins to rise
When I look on the Lamb
The wounded Lamb
My hands will lift to Him
My hands will lift to Him**

Chorus 1

**Isn't He worthy of all our worship
Isn't He worthy of the praises we bring
How could my heart not sing hallelujah
For the blood is still the blood
And the King is still the King**

Verse 2

**When I recount the cost
The cost of grace
You bought my sin and shame
I'll never be the same
When I look at my life
How good You've been
Oh I can't hold it in
I'll never hold it in**

Verse 3

**When I think of the tomb
The empty tomb**

**I'm filled with gratitude
Endless gratitude
For He defeated death
And He reigns above
No grave could hold His love
No grave could hold His love**

Chorus 2

**Isn't He worthy of all our worship
Isn't He worthy of the praises we bring
How could my heart not sing
Of all You've done for me
For the blood is still the blood
And the King is still the King**

(For those joining us in the Sanctuary this morning, you are invited, as you come forward to receive the Communion Elements, and as you feel so led, to place your offering in one of the plates up front. For those unable to be with us physically, you are encouraged to partake of the elements in your home at this time. Also, as you are able, we invite you to set aside your offering as an act of personal dedication at this time, either to be mailed in, dropped off at the church, or brought in when you are able to join us in worship. Let this time be one of receiving from and offering yourself to our Lord -- to the praise of His glory.)

Prayer of Commitment

*Sung Response (Doxology)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER OF INTERCESSION/SUPPLICATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BRINGING OUR WORSHIP INTO OUR WORLD

*SENDING SONG: #551 "As a Fire Is Meant for Burning"

**As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name.
Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbors everywhere.
We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.**

**We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble listening spirit, we would live to God's delight.**

**As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness' mid earth's peoples, many hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious dawn.**

*BENEDICTION: (Hebrews 13:20-21)

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Postlude:

“Agincourt Fanfare”

Gordon Young

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Note: Church's email address – office@trinitychurchtroy.org. Website address – www.trinitychurchtroy.org.)

1. If you would like to help support the work of Hope 7 in our local community, we encourage you to drop off **non-perishable food items, toiletries and other hygiene items** either at Trinity Church, or at Hope 7 directly (M-F 9:30-11:45), or call Sue Laz (518-892-4042) to arrange for a pick-up.
2. **We are receiving new or gently used clothes for the Capital City Rescue Mission (CCRM).** There is a box in the narthex for donations. You may bring your items to the church or call Sue Laz to arrange for a pick-up.
3. **Church “business-style” cards** are available in the narthex. You are encouraged to take some to hand out as you invite others to join us in worship.
4. **Sunday morning prayer, 8:30-9:00am** in the Prayer Room/Library. Join us as we pray for Sunday's worship as well as other needs, concerns, praises, and thanksgivings.
5. **Adult Sunday morning Bible Study** meets before worship (9:15-10:00am). We're doing a short study (approx. 8 weeks) on “Revival: Spiritual Awakening in the Reformed Tradition.”
6. **To go along with our Lenten sermon series on Evangelism** there are some resources in the literature rack in the narthex to aid us in praying for and sharing our faith with others.
7. **LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS, Wednesday evenings at 6:15.** You are invited to join us as we gather to share a meal of homemade soups and bread followed by an informal time of worship. If you would like to bring soup, bread, or cookies to share please indicate that on the sign-up sheet in the narthex.
8. **Through the CarePortal ministry** we have agreed to provide a toddler bed and mattress, a vacuum cleaner, and a toddler car seat to families in need in our community. If you have an item to donate please speak with Sue Laz. If you would like to make a monetary gift to help purchase items you can place your gift in the offering plate noting that it is for CarePortal. If you would like to help with delivering these items please speak with Sue Laz.
9. **International Crossroads Game Night, March 21st, 4:00 – 9:00 PM.** We have the privilege of hosting a game night for international students and their friendship partners on March 21st. There will be snacks and time to play various board games, along with the always popular ping pong tournament! We will have pizza and end the night by watching a movie that presents the gospel message. Everyone is encouraged to come and join in the fun for all or just part of the evening. If you can help with set-up, clean-up, or serving, please speak with Andy, Sue, or John.