

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Lent

GATHERING AND PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed!

PRELUDE: "Bachiana on an Ancient Chorale"

Gordon Young

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

Scripture for Meditation and Memorization for Lent – Jesus' fifth "I Am" statement as recorded in John's Gospel, where Jesus said (John 11:25-26a):

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in Me will never die."

LENTEN CANDLE EXTINGUISHING.

Call to Worship: (selections from Psalm 62)

Leader: Our souls find rest in God alone; our salvation comes from Him.

People: God alone is our rock and our salvation; He is our fortress, we will never be shaken.

Leader: Find rest in God alone; for our hope comes from Him.

People: God alone is our rock and our salvation; He is our fortress, we will not be shaken.

Leader: Our salvation and our honor depend on God; He is our mighty rock, our refuge.

People: Let us trust in Him at all times; let us pour out our hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.

All: One thing God has spoken, two things have we heard: that You, O God, are strong, and that You, O LORD, are loving.

Scripture Reading: John 11:1-7, 17-27 (Pew Bible pp. 1668-1669)

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

Lenten Meditation.

How easy is it for you to believe God when you’re in the midst of a crisis – grief, or fear, or terror?

And how would you feel if one whom you loved and trusted let you down in the midst of that crisis?

Jesus was close to the entire family -- Lazarus, Mary and Martha. Yet in their time of greatest need it *seems* that Jesus was disinterested and unresponsive. Didn’t He understand? Lazarus was about to die and Jesus was His only chance to prevent that! He had to do something quickly or it would be too late!

But Jesus didn’t go to Lazarus in time; and Lazarus died. And Martha and Mary were hurting. They hurt at the loss of their brother, and they hurt at the apparent indifference of their friend, Jesus.

Martha and Mary knew Jesus well. They knew He could heal the sick for they had seen Him do it. Martha even stated that He was the Messiah, and that He will one day raise the dead to life. But they hurt then, and they wanted help then – not at some future time!

Jesus came into this world to help the hurting, the grieving -- including Mary and Martha, and even Lazarus.

But before He could bring the help they needed, He had to let them hurt, even as He Himself was hurting at the death of His dear friend Lazarus. Jesus knew that what Martha and Mary really needed for was hope. They needed hope for their brother and for themselves. But they needed not an empty hope, and not a short-term hope. Rather, they needed a hope that would deliver them from their present pain while offering comfort for the future – near and far.

Jesus was about to deliver such hope. So, after interacting with Martha and Mary in their grief, He went to Lazarus’ tomb and called Lazarus to come forth from that grave.

And Lazarus came forth.

Before giving that command, Jesus said of Himself that He is “the *Resurrection and the Life*,” so that whoever believes in Him will live even though they die; and whoever lives and believes in Him will never die.

He then demonstrated that truth by raising Lazarus from the dead.

Imagine the joy and amazement of Mary and Martha when their brother walked from that tomb. Their mourning turned to rejoicing!

And they knew at that moment that Jesus could and would do all that He had promised, even if His timing was different from theirs – even if it meant, for those who trust in Him, first experiencing hurt and heartache.

Sure, Lazarus died again, and Mary and Martha died. But at that moment, outside that now empty tomb, they knew for certain that they would also rise again for they knew that Jesus could bring them through death and into new life – into resurrection, not merely resuscitation life! And that is reason to have hope – a real, lasting hope.

Do you believe in Jesus but feel at times that He has abandoned you in your hurt, heartache and hardship? Do you ever feel that He has let you down? Do you ever find your hope – the hope God in Christ promised -- wavering? Have you sent for – prayed for help -- but fear that God may come too late?

This Lenten season know for certain that our Savior, your Messiah, knows our heart and will answer our prayers as is best for each of us -- at the proper time, in the proper place, through the proper means -- so that our faith may flourish and our hope never prove empty.

Jesus proved, through the death and resuscitation of His friend, Lazarus, and, even more through His own death and resurrection, that He is willing and able to be our help, to satisfy our hope – through this life and into eternity – for our ultimate good, and for His eternal glory.

Extinguishing a Lenten Candle.

Over the past four Sundays of Lent we’ve reflected upon the first four of the ‘I Am’ statements of Jesus as recorded in John’s Gospel. With those reflections we saw Jesus as the *Bread of Life*, the *Light of the World*, and the *Good Shepherd* who also serves as the *Gate* for His sheep, watching our comings and goings for our good. And with those reflections we observed a Savior who is our provider, guide, protector, and Lord.

As we extinguish the fifth candle of our Lenten Cross, we’re reminded that Jesus, being “*the Resurrection and the Life*,” is the One who gives us eternal life, when we trust in Him.

(Extinguish a purple candle.)

Unison Prayer: Let us pray together . . .

Almighty and merciful God, give us the faith to know that our hope in You is never in vain. When our hearts waver and our hope flickers, so reveal Yourself that we may be refreshed and renewed in our love and zeal for You. Help us to see that we

are never alone in our hurt and despair. We thank You for Your deep love for us, and we ask that You enable us to live in faith, serve in love, and walk in the sure hope that through Your Son, Christ Jesus our Lord, we can be confident and comforted in knowing that we have life-eternal with You, all to the glory and praise of Your holy name. Amen.

*GATHERING SONG: #253 “Lead Me to Calvary”

**King of my life, I crown Thee now, Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn crowned brow, lead me to Calvary.**

Refrain: **Lest I forget Gethsemane, lest I forget Thine agony,
Lest I forget Thy love for me, lead me to Calvary.**

**Show me the tomb where Thou wast laid, tenderly mourned and wept;
Angels in robes of light arrayed guarded Thee while Thou slept. (Refrain)**

**Let me, like Mary through the gloom, come with a gift to Thee;
Show to me now the empty tomb, lead me to Calvary. (Refrain)**

**May I be willing, Lord, to bear daily my cross for Thee;
Even Thy cup of grief to share, Thou hast borne all for me. (Refrain)**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison prayer after silent confession)

Almighty God, we confess how hard it is to be Your people. You have called us to be the church, to continue the mission of Jesus Christ to our lonely and confused world. Yet we acknowledge we are more apathetic than active, isolated than involved, callous than compassionate, obstinate than obedient, legalistic than loving. Gracious Lord, have mercy upon us and forgive our sins. Remove the obstacles preventing us from being Your representatives to a broken world. Awaken our hearts to the promised gift of Your indwelling Spirit. This we pray in Jesus’ powerful name. Amen.

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: Romans 14:1-13, 19 (Pew Bible pp. 1765-1766)

[Paul wrote] “Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. One person’s faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

“One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

“For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. It is written:

‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

“Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”

Leader: This is the word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM:

“The Journey Home”
Choir

Stewart/Courtney

SCRIPTURE READING: John 17:6-23 (Pew Bible pp. 1680-1681)

[Jesus continued to pray:] “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one -- I in them and you in me -- so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

Leader: This is the word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: “Living In But Not Of the World: Separation for ‘Critical Participation’”

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

*SONG OF REFLECTION AND RESPONSE: #553 “Go to the World!”

Go to the world! Go into all the earth.

**Go preach the cross where Christ renews life’s worth,
baptizing as the sign of our rebirth.**

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Go to the world! Go into every place.

**Go live the Word of God’s redeeming grace.
Go seek God’s presence in each time and space.**

Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Go to the world! Go struggle, bless, and pray;
the nights of tears give way to joyous day.**

As servant Church, you follow Christ’s own way.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Go to the world! Go as the ones I send,
for I am with you till the age shall end,
when all the hosts of glory cry, “Amen!”**

Alleluia! Alleluia!

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

“How Great Is the Love”
Acoustic Worship Team

Paul Baloche

Thank You for the way that You love us -- how You love us.

Thank You for the way You have made us.

We were created for Your pleasure, for Your presence,

For the glory of Your name.

Thank You for the way that You love us.

Chorus:

Jesus, faithful King, Lord, with grateful hearts we sing:

How great is the love, how great is the love of our Savior.

The weight of the cross, the curse of our shame,

You carried it all and rose from the grave.

How great is the love, how great is the love of our Savior.

Thank You for Your grace that has saved us -- You forgave us.

Thank You for the way You have freed us.

We have been ransomed, we've been rescued,

We've been purchased with the price of Your own life.

Thank You for the way that You love us.

Bridge

Thank You for the way that You love us -- how You love us. (3x)

Thank You for the way that You love us.

(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:

"Let it Be Said of Us"
Acoustic Worship Team

Steve Fry

**Let it be said of us that the Lord was our passion,
That with gladness we bore every cross we were given,
That we fought the good fight, that we finished the course,
Knowing within us the power of the risen Lord.**

Chorus:

**Let the cross be our glory and the Lord be our song,
By mercy made holy, by the Spirit made strong.
Let the cross be our glory and the Lord be our song,
'til the likeness of Jesus be through us made known.
Let the cross be our glory and the Lord be our song.**

**Let it be said of us: We were marked by forgiveness,
We were known by our love and delighted in meekness.
We were ruled by His peace, heeding unity's call,
Joined as one body that Christ would be seen by all. (chorus)**

*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:

"Grand Recessional"

Christoph Gluck

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Note: Church's email address – office@trinitychurchtrov.org. Website address – www.trinitychurchtrov.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. **Holy Week Services – Maundy Thursday (4/2),** soup supper at 6:15 followed by worship with communion at 6:45; **Good Friday (4/3),** worship at 7:00PM.
9. We will hold a **clothing giveaway on April 18th from 10-1.** This is a great time to interact with families in our community and fill a need they have, and hopefully have opportunities to share our faith and invite them to worship with us. If you can help with setup Friday morning and/or Saturday during the event please speak with Sue Laz.