

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

April 5, 2026

Easter Sunday

GATHERING AND PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: “Low in the Grave He Lay (Christ Arose)” *arr. Raluca Bojor*

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

Scripture for Meditation and Memorization – As, throughout this Lenten season, we’ve meditated upon and were encouraged to memorize Jesus’ “I Am” statements as found in John’s Gospel, today we reflect upon His seventh “I Am” statement, where Jesus said:

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

CALL TO WORSHIP: (based on 1 Peter 1:3-5 and including Luke 24:1-9)

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Leader: On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” Then they remembered His words.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others.

People: Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has given us new life and hope. He has raised Jesus from the dead!

Leader: God has claimed us as His own.

People: He has brought us out of darkness. He has made us light to the world.

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

*GATHERING SONG:

“Glorious”
Acoustic Worship Team

Baloche/Brown

**Look inside the mystery, see the empty cross.
See the risen Savior victorious and strong.
No one else above Him, none as strong to save.
He alone has conquered the power of the grave.**

Chorus

**Glorious, mine eyes have seen the glory of the Lord.
Glorious, He stands above the rulers of the earth.
Glorious, Glorious, Lord, You are glorious**

**Look beyond the tombstone, see the Living God.
See the resurrected ruler of my heart.
No one else above Him, none to match His worth
The hope of His returning fills the universe. (Chorus)**

Close : **Oh -----, You are glorious. (Repeat)**

(The Christ Candle is carried into the Sanctuary during our Gathering Song.)

*OPENING UNISON PRAYER

O living Lord, on the first Easter Day You stood in the midst of Your disciples as the conqueror of sin and death and spoke to them of Your peace. Come to us, we pray, in Your risen power, and make us glad with Your presence; and so breathe Your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may be strong to serve You and to spread abroad Your good news, for the glory of Your great name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING AND REFLECTION FOR LENTEN SEASON AND EASTER:

Introductory words:

Throughout this Lenten season we have looked at what have been called the “I Am” statements of Jesus. These metaphorical statements have enabled us to view Jesus from six different perspectives, each complementing the other, to present a portrait of a loving, giving, caring Savior and Lord. These images presented Jesus as: “The *Bread* of Life,” “The *Light* of the World,” “The *Gate*,” “The Good *Shepherd*,” “The *Resurrection* and the *Life*,” and “The *Way* the *Truth* and the *Life*.”

Today we look at the seventh and final “I Am” statement of Jesus as found in the Gospel of John, where Jesus presents Himself as “The *Vine*,” with His people being the branches.

Scripture: John 15:1-8 (Pew Bible p. 1676-1677)

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain

in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Reflection on Jesus’ Seventh “I Am” statement:

Jesus says: “I am the *Vine* and you are the branches.”

We have seen over the past weeks how Jesus is the one and only protector, provider, guide and source of hope, both for today and for all time, to those who believe in Him.

On this Easter Sunday we are challenged, in the light of His resurrection victory over sin and death, to follow Jesus in complete dependence and trust. This means destroying our idols -- the deadliest being our own selves -- and instead of submitting to those idols, to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

But, to do that we must be willing to die to self and live for God. So, are you willing to do that?

As we reflect upon the implications of such a decision, listen to the words of Freda Hanbury as she writes about John 15:5 in a poem entitled “Only A Branch”.

‘Tis only a little Branch, a thing so fragile and weak,
But that little Branch hath a message true to give, could it only speak.

“I’m only a little Branch, I live by a life not mine,
For the sap that flows through my tendrils small is the life-blood of the Vine.

“No power indeed have I the fruit of myself to bear,
But since I’m part of the living Vine, its fruitfulness I share.

“Dost thou ask how I abide? How this life I can maintain? --
I am bound to the Vine by Life’s strong band, and I only need remain.

“Where first my life was given, in the spot where I am set,
Upborne and upheld as the days go by, by the stem which bears me yet.

“I fear not the days to come, I dwell not upon the past,
As moment by moment I draw a life, which for evermore shall last.

“I bask in the sun’s bright beams, which with sweetness fills my fruit,
Yet I own not the clusters hanging there, for they all come from the root.”

A life which is not my own, but another's life in me:
This, this is the message the Branch would speak, a message to thee and me.
Oh, struggle not to "abide," nor labor to "bring forth fruit,"
But let Jesus unite thee to Himself, as the Vine Branch to the root.
So simple, so deep, so strong, that union with Him shall be:
His life shall forever replace thine own, and His love shall flow through thee.
For His Spirit's fruit is love, and love shall thy life become,
And for evermore on His heart of love, thy spirit shall have its home.

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

Almighty God, You have raised Jesus from the grave and crowned Him Lord of all. We confess that often we do not bow before Him or acknowledge His rule in our lives. Often we conform to the world and fail to give Him the glory He deserves. Gracious Father, bring new life where we are worn and tired; new love where we have become hard-hearted; forgiveness where we feel hurt and where we have brought hurt; and the joy and freedom of Your Holy Spirit where we are prisoners of our selfish concerns. Deliver us from our sinful inclinations that we may be Your faithful people, obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all and head of the church, His body. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON: (from 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57)

Leader: Death has been swallowed up in victory.

People: Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?

Leader: The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

People: But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: Know, therefore, that by the mercy and grace of God, you are forgiven of the guilt of your sins.

***All:** (sung response # 734 -- *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: John 20:1-9, 19-23 (Pew Bible pp. 1685-1687)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went

straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM:

"See, What a Morning"

Getty/Townend

Choir

SCRIPTURE READING: Colossians 1:13-23 (Pew Bible pp. 1832)

[The Father] has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation -- if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: "The Gospel Paul Preached: Christ Crucified and Resurrected"

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

*SONG OF REFLECTION AND RESPONSE: #288 “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”

**Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
All creation, join to say Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens and earth reply, Alleluia!**

**Love’s redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise. Alleluia!**

**Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once He died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!**

**Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Him, like Him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies. Alleluia!**

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER AND OFFERING

Invitation (based on Luke 13:29, 24:30-31)

Sisters and brothers in Christ, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! People will come from east and west, from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God. When our risen Lord was at table with two of His disciples, He took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. This is the Lord’s Table. Our Savior invites those who trust Him to share the feast that He has prepared.

Affirmation of Faith: The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The LORD be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the LORD.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the LORD our God.

People: It is right for us to give Him thanks and praise.

Leader: It is indeed right; it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places, to give You thanks and praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty and eternal God. We give thanks that in the creation of the world, when You laid the earth's foundation and set its cornerstone in place, the morning stars sang in chorus and Your angels shouted for joy. By the power of Your Spirit You made the universe; by the might of Your Word You gave us life. We give thanks that in the new creation, when You gave Your Son to raise us up again, since we and all our human race had fallen, You claimed us for Your own people, that we might proclaim the glorious deeds of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. By the life of Your Spirit You fill the hearts of the faithful; by the light of Your Word You give us strength and love. Therefore, with Your people of all places and times and with the whole company of heaven we proclaim Your greatness, saying:

People: Holy, holy, holy LORD, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD. Hosanna in the highest.

Leader: In tune with all the heavenly hosts, we here on earth acknowledge Your glory and give You thanks that in the fullness of time You sent Your Son to be our Savior. We bless You for His incarnation among us, His holy birth, His perfect life on earth, His suffering for us, and His triumph over death; for His ascension to Your right hand and His gift of the Holy Spirit; and for the promise of His coming again. Remembering His work and passion and pleading His eternal sacrifice, we follow His example and obey His command. Send down Your Holy Spirit to bless us and these Your gifts of bread and drink, that the bread we break may be for us the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup of blessing we bless may be the communion of the blood of Christ; that we, receiving them, by faith may be made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to nourish us and help us grow in grace, to the glory of Your most holy name. And here we offer and present to You our very selves to be a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for Your acceptance through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are Yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Partaking of the Elements and the Giving of Our Offering

**Thank you for the cross, Lord.
Thank you for the price You paid.
Bearing all my sin and shame,
In love You came and gave amazing grace**

**Thank you for this love, Lord.
Thank you for the nail pierced hands.
Washed me in Your cleansing flow;
Now all I know Your forgiveness and embrace.**

**Worthy is the Lamb seated on the throne.
Crown You now with many crowns;
You reign victorious,
High and lifted up, Jesus Son of God,
The Darling of Heaven crucified.
Worthy is the Lamb. Worthy is the Lamb.**

(For those with 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 up to our Lord -- to the praise of His holy name.)

Prayer of Commitment

Leader: The peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray together. . .

All: O Risen Lord, You are alive. Alleluia! We celebrate the new life You bring to us this day through Your resurrection. We no longer need to fear the future, because we know what lies ahead for us. We can face the future with confidence, knowing that You are paving the way to the mansions above, where a place is being prepared for us. As we head into our future days, let our confidence in knowing how our stories end give us newfound joy and peace in our daily living as Easter people. Amen.

*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. Amen.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

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:

“In Christ Alone”

Getty/Townend

Acoustic Worship Team

**In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease.
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.**

**In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied.
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.**

**There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then, bursting forth in glorious day,
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine,
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.**

**No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,**

**Can ever pluck me from His hand;
`Til He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand!**

*BENEDICTION (from Hebrews 13:20-21)

May the God of peace -- who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant -- equip you with everything good, that you may do God's will, working in you what is pleasing in God's sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE:

“Toccata on Psalm 150”

Douglas Wagner

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. (On Easter morning prayer time will be from 8:45-9:15.)
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.” (There will be no Sunday school on April 12.)
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. 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.
8. **Serving at the Capital City Rescue Mission, Saturday, April 18th.** We will meet at the church at 5:00 for those wishing to carpool to the mission or you can meet us there around 5:30. Serving involves ensuring the tables are set for dinner, serving the meal, and cleaning up the tables afterwards. If you can help, please speak with Sue Laz.
9. **Spring Clean Up Day, April 25th at 9:00** If you can help please speak with Andy Miller. The tasks to be done will be determined based on the volunteers available to help.
10. **Blood Drive – Saturday, May 2.** We will be hosting a blood drive with the American Red Cross. Please keep this in your prayers that God will bring donors to our church to help supply blood donations that are so desperately needed. Consider donating yourself -- your small act of giving blood can be a lifesaving blessing to someone in need. If you would like to provide some snacks for the donors we could use fruit juice boxes, oranges, granola bars or homemade cookies. If you would like to help during the drive either checking in donors or talking with them at the refreshment table, please speak with Peter Laz.
11. **Community Yard Sale, June 6th from 9-2.** If you would like to reserve a space, please speak with Andy Miller. If you would like to help with set-up, clean-up, or manning the food table or church information table, please speak with Sue Laz.



Easter Flowers



Given by:

Sal Sceccitano
Peter and Sue Laz
Holly Steciuk

Nancy Boyle
The McCartney Family
Ruth and Howard Dickson
Colleen Dominy

Diane Morlock
Kelly Valerio
Ginny Steffen

In Memory of:

Rose, Tom, and Joanne Sceccitano
Jules and Lois Multunas; Ted and Anna Laz
Robert and Jean Steciuk; Jack and Ruth
Tashjian
My mom, son Tim, and sister Louise
Lois and Harry McCartney and Ethel Schutt
Our Loved Ones
Irene Venuti, Andrew Yanney, Robert
Yanney, Carol Yanney
Fred and Jeff
Doris and Lee Dennis; Joshua Valerio
Loved Ones

Given by:

The Third Church Family
Diane Morlock
The McAuley Family

Deena Dominy

In Honor of:

The McAuley Family
Karen, Pete, and Laura
In gratitude for our family
In honor of our church family
My sister, Colleen Dominy