

Trinity United Church of Christ Worship Bulletin

Letting God's light shine since 1901

We worship God and seek to share His Word with everyone through faith in Jesus Christ

March 30, 2025

www.trinityuccwestville.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity!

Gathering and Preparing to Worship

**Denotes to please stand in body or in spirit*

Thoughts Before Worship

By Nancy C. Townley

Our lives can get so noisy. In this moment, take the time to calm your spirit, rest your body.
Listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd who desires the best for you.

Checking in on social media

You are invited to take the time to check in on social media and let people know where you are.
First, it helps get the word out on Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville
Second, it can give you a good alibi, just in case you need one.

Sounding of the Bells

Throughout the centuries, bells have rung to call people to worship or bring them news.
We use the chiming of the bell to joyously call us to worship, and prepare ourselves.

Welcoming

One: Welcome to worship today at Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville Illinois. If you are worshipping with us on line, you can download a bulletin from our church's website
www.trinityuccwestville.org.
They are located in the events section under today's date,
Let us now pause for prayer to calm ourselves down and prepare our hearts to worship our living and loving God.

Opening with Prayer

By Nancy Townley

One: Let us pray...

Many: How incredible is your love, O God! We have been made new in your love and reconciled to you and to each other in peace and joy. Be with us this day as we hear your words of comfort and hope. Guide our lives that we may serve you more fully all of our days. Amen.

Announcements

Call to Worship

By Nancy Townley

One: How blessed we are that God forgives us and loves us!

Many: For all those times when we have fallen short of what God would have us be, we have been forgiven.

One: God makes us new in God's Spirit!

Many: Now is the time to joyfully accept the newness of life which God offers to us.

One: Come, let us worship and be thankful.

Many: Let us open our hearts to the peace and joy of God.

Hymn of Gathering

#648 Blue Hymnal

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1. Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down;
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling, All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation, Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit, Let us find that promised rest.
Take away our bent to sinning, Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning, Set our hearts at liberty.

3. Come, almighty to deliver, Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never, Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray and praise Thee without ceasing, Glory in Thy perfect love.

4. Finish then Thy new creation, Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation Perfectly restored in Thee:
Changed from glory into glory, Till in heav'n we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love and praise!

Call to Confession

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: We know our faults -- the way we have treated others, our alienation from God, our unwillingness to be faithful people. We will not hide our sin or remain silent, but confess them to the One who surrounds us with steadfast love. Please join me as we pray our prayer of confession,

Prayer of Confession and Letting Go

One: Let us pray...

All: On this very day God, we admit all the lengths to which we go so we might avoid you. You offer us that kingdom of joy and wonder, yet we would hide in places where temptation waits. You invite us to feast on your grace and peace, but we stubbornly refuse, because you also welcome those we call 'outsiders.' We are quick to see all the mistakes that those around us make, but hope you will ignore our foolish choices.

Please take a few moments of silence for personal reflection, and release back to God those things you need to be forgiven for, in your life

One: Let us continue...

All: Celebrating God, before we come to our senses, we find you running towards us, sweeping us up in your arms, tears of grace mingling with our cries of confession, a mighty river washing away our sinful ways to restore us to new life. In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we find no limitations on your grace, no reservations about your love, but a feast that overflows with wonder, a place we can finally call home.

Words of Forgiveness and Assurance

By Rev. Thom Shuman

*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.*

***Sharing of Christ's Peace**

By Lisa Frenz

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Welcome each other. Welcome the stranger. Welcome all who come. As Christ welcomed everyone, no matter what their background, no matter what their social status; as Christ welcomed enemies and friends, outcasts and leaders, foreigners and neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives. Let us be Christ to everyone we meet, and pass the peace of Christ.

Please type in, post and share the peace of Christ with those gathered.
Please make sure your comments are appropriate. You can use words such as
"The peace of Christ be with you,"

Listening for God's Still Speaking Voice

Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Dr. Joanne Carlson Brown

One: Let us pray...

Many: For these words of challenge and of hope, we give you thanks and praise Lord. May they enable us to lead lives that embody both challenge and hope, bound together by your love. Amen.

Scripture Readings for Today

Luke 15: 1 – 3; 11 - 32

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3 So Jesus told them this parable:

The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

11 "There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.' So, he divided his assets between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. **16** He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. **17** But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" **20** So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' **22** But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, **24** for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. **27** He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.' **28** Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. **29** But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.

³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father^[d] said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

A Refection on the Word

* Hymn of Response

#488 Blue Hymnal

Just As I Am

1 Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

2 Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

3 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

4 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Offering of Our Gifts and Our Lives

One: As God has so richly blessed us, in our gratitude let us return a portion of these blessings back to God, If you are able, please consider giving to the work and ministry of Trinity United Church of Christ. You may drop your offering for today in the offering plates as they are brought forward. Your gifts are used in service to others through the ministries and mission of Trinity UCC. We graciously thank all who are able to support Trinity UCC during this time. To mail your offering or pledge, please send it to

Trinity United Church of Christ, 311 E. Moses Ave. Westville, IL. 61883

Our morning Offering will now be received

*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.*

* Blessing What We Can Give Back to God

By Dawn Chesser

One: Let us pray...

Many: Gracious God, our refuge and restorer, we bring these gifts as a sign of our return to you. Like the prodigal, we long to feel your embrace and live in the light of your grace. As we observe this holy time of Lent, may our offerings reflect hearts that are turning back to you. Clear the clogs in our lives that separate us from you and one another and help us see the rainbow of your promise even in our struggles. Bless these gifts and our lives so that we may share your steadfast love with the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Please drop off any prayer requests in the basket located in the narthex, or in the offering plate.

Please only first names, and keep your prayers appropriate to our worship.

If you are worshipping via Facebook Livestream

Please type in and post in the comments section and share any prayer requests.

We will try and get to every prayer posted during worship.

If we don't get to your request, we will lift up your requests after worship.

After Pastor David reads the petition, he will say "Lord in Your mercy,"

and the congregation will respond with "**Hear our prayer...**"

The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

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

* Our Hymn of Departure

#343 Blue Hymnal

Amazing Grace

1 Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

5 When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun

* Charge and Benediction

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: God sends us forth,

Many: to be reconcilers of the broken and oppressed.

One: Jesus, our Brother, sends us to welcome everyone.

Many: We will embrace the prodigals with joy, we will make a feast for all of God's people.

One: The Spirit sends us with arms full of healing.

Many: We will go to bring hope to all we meet.

One: Go out into the world in peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and all your strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.

Many: We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

One: And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you, now and forever. And may laughter and joy go with you every step of your journey.

Many: Amen.

*Thank you for worshipping with us today! Remember, no matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity UCC*

