

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

May 4, 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.

Our Opening Prayer

One: Let us pray

Many: Sometimes, life can be overwhelming. But we need to remember that from God comes joy in the simple things. It comes in the birds that sing us awake, in the sun which warms us, in blue skies that mark the way, in the spring rain which nourishes new life. Open our eyes to see the joy of your creation all around us today, God. Amen.

Announcements

The Call to Worship

One: May the forth be with you!

Many: And also with you!

One: Welcome to worship. Today is a day of fun and remembrance.

Many: It is important that we have some fun during worship.

One: Avoiding any Phantom Menaces that may pop up
Many: We will strike back against the Empire of darkness

One: While we look back fondly at the memories of our youth.
Many: Together, we will have a new hope for the future.

***Our Opening Hymn of Praise** **Holy, Holy, Holy**

1 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who wert and art, and evermore shalt be.

3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, love, and purity.

4 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

The Call to Confession

One: While it's easy to have fun looking at the times of our youth, too many times we are held by our past actions and failures. But we need to remember that we worship one who will forgive our sins, and free us from the pits of Sarlacc we hold ourselves in. Let us join our voices together in our prayer of confession.

Our Prayer of Confession

All: Oh Lord, it seems like somedays we are lost in the woods of Endor without a speeder bike. We want everything to get better now, and sometimes find our lack of faith disturbing. Hear us, oh Lord, as we reach out to you to escape the dark sides of our lives.

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

All: Let us remember and shoutout that through our savior, Jesus Christ we are forgiven. This is the good news that we are to share with others. May we always walk with kindness in the light, following in the footsteps of Jesus. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness and Assurance

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Why should we weep? Joy comes to us this morning, and every moment of our lives. The Lamb of God has come, to share mercy and hope with us, so we can praise our God with joyous hearts.

Many: We will lift glad songs of joy, for all the blessings God has given to us. We will offer our hearts and hands in love and serve to others. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

***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.*

***The Sharing of Christ's Peace**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: The force is truly with us. In a sign of community and mutuality, let us share a sign of the peace of Christ with one another.

As a forgiven and renewed people, please share the peace of Christ with those around you.

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,"*

We Listen for God's Word

Our Prayer for Illumination

By Bill Hoppe

One: Let us pray...

Many: Help us to listen to your word, Lord. Grant us ears to hear what you would have us know.

We have watched you at work in the world, Lord. Grant us eyes to see what you would show us.

May your Word touch our hearts, Lord. Grant that we may feel your presence, and follow your guidance. Amen.

Our Scripture Reading for Today Acts 9:1-19

Saul's Conversion

9 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus

A Refection on the Word

By Rev. David Robberts-Mosser

We Respond to God’s Word

***Our Hymn of Response**

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: All that we have belongs to God. As we celebrate our unity as a community of faith and focus our hearts on the risen Christ, we joyfully lay our possessions at the altar. Through the grace of God and the bounty of this church, we have the ability to share our gifts so that all may have what they need to live. We thank God for the opportunity to truly be in fellowship with one another and with the world through our offerings today. If you are joining us online, you can send your offering or pledge to Trinity United Church of Christ

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

***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 Give Back to God

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

Many: We could keep our treasures locked up where they never see the light of your love, or we can offer them back to you so that those who live in the shadows of poverty might be fed, those who walk the streets of loneliness find a community, and those who long for peace will see an end to the violence

in their lives. And so we open our hearts and our gifts in joyous praise to you. Bless these gifts, gracious God, to do your will and work in our community. Amen.

The Sacrament of Communion

The Invitation to the Table

One: Christ invites us here. This meal is what connects us to that river of living water and the tree of life that never lacks food for bellies or shade for peaceful rest. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are invited to Christ's table of extravagant welcome

Many: O let us taste and see the goodness of the God who calls us to the table and meets us in every feast!

Our Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: May the God of morning joy be with you!

Many: May the God of gracious moments be with you!

One: Lift your hearts to God, children of love and hope!

Many: We offer them to the One who fills us with life!

One: Let us sing glad praises to our God!

Many: Our voices join all creation in glad songs!

You looked, and in the midst of chaos, you heard the Spirit singing creation into existence, Wondrous God,
You sent the prophets to us who, through their words and actions, reminded us that we had been shaped
to be as upright as mountains, but we continue to allow sin to form us into molehills.
Dismayed, you could have hidden your face, but sent us your heart instead.

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who loves us more than these.

Creatures of heaven, earth, under the earth, and in the sea join in extolling you.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the Lamb who is worthy.

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, God who leads us by the hands out of the dark sides of our lives,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, who feeds us light and life.

When we cried, he came to wipe away our tears; when we were speechless, he taught us songs of praise;
when we dressed in ashes, he gave us grace's garments; though we loved sin and death
more than we loved him, he went to the cross, filling death's nets with his spirit,
so its power over us might be emptied forever.

As we remember the Lamb who is worthy,
as we come to the Lamb's Feast this day,
we sing of that mystery we call faith:

Christ died, as God's heart broke;

Christ was raised, as all creation sang in joy;

Christ will come, as we are gathered in the fullness of time.

Lead us by the hand, gracious God, to the Table where the bread, the cup, and the guests all receive the Spirit
which is poured out upon them. Pour out your Spirit upon these your gifts of loaf and cup, that the bread we break

and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who follow in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every time and place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, help us to be the body of Christ in the world. Let us, as the body of Christ, pause to lift up those in need of our prayers this morning...

Prayers of intercession may be offered here.

Help us, O God, to love as Christ loved. Knowing our own weaknesses, may we stand with all who stumble. Sharing in his suffering, may we remember all who suffer. Held in his love, may we embrace all whom the world denies. Rejoicing in his forgiveness, may we forgive all who sin against us. And when the past is finally behind us and we are gathered in the new Jerusalem with our sisters and brothers of every time and place, we will join our hands around your feast, and sing your praises from the depths of our hearts. We ask these things, both spoken and unspoken, in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray

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**

The Words of Institution

On the night on which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This bread is my body, given for you. Do this remembering me."

And in the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood, given for the forgiveness of sin. Drink from it, all of you. Do this remembering me."

The Sharing the Elements

Christ, our host, offers us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Come, all has been prepared.

The bread of life will now be distributed to the congregation.

Please take what you are using for the bread of life and hold it up.

The body of Christ, broken for you, take and eat.

The cup of salvation will now be distributed to the congregation

Please take what you are using for the cup of salvation and hold it up

The cup of Salvation, poured out for you, take and drink.

Our Prayer After Communion

One: Let us pray

Many: Gracious God, we thank you for this meal and for all of the ways you nourish us. Help us to grow so that we may nourish others. Sustain us as we press toward the goal of your call to serve all of your children in the name of our savior, Christ Jesus. Amen.

We Go to Love and Serve God in God's World

***Our Hymn of Parting In the Bulb There is a Flower**

1. In the bulb, there is a flower

In the seed, an apple tree

In cocoons, a hidden promise

Butterflies will soon be free

In the cold and snow of winter

There's a spring that waits to be

Unrevealed until its season

Something God alone can see

2. There's a song in every silence

Seeking word and melody

There's a dawn in every darkness

Bringing hope to you and me

From the past will come the future

What it holds, a mystery

Unrevealed until its season

Something God alone can see

3. In our end is our beginning

In our time infinity

On our doubt there is believing

In our life, eternity

In our death, a resurrection

At the last, a victory

Unrevealed until its season,

Something God alone can see.

***The Charge and Benediction**

One: Now it is time to get up and go.

Many: We will leave in order to follow God into the world.

One: Now it is time to enter the brokenness all around us.

Many: We will go to bring the healing and peace of Jesus to all.

One: Now it is time to bring words of hope and grace to all.

Many: The Spirit will give us the words we need in every moment, to share with those who are in need.

One: Now it is time to 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.

Sing "A-Men"

***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***