

Trinity Episcopal Church

Granford, in the Diocese of New Jersey



“The Risen Christ” — William Hart McNichols

The Second Sunday of Easter

Rite I Holy Eucharist

April 12, 2026 at 8 AM

The Reverend Andrew David Kruger, Rector & Presider

Anthony Rafaniello, Director of Music

Casey Woodruff, Senior Warden & Kathleen M. Murray, Junior Warden

*The Easter flowers are given to the glory of God
and in loving memory of all those we love but see no longer*

Welcome

Andrew Kruger

The bell is rung and the People stand.

Acclamation

BCP 323

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Collect for Purity

BCP 323

Presider Let us pray.

People **Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love thee,
and worthily magnify thy holy Name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Great Commandment

BCP 324

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Kyrie

BCP 324

Presider Kyrie eleison.

People **Christe eleison.**

Presider Kyrie eleison.

**Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace, good will towards men.
We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord;
thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Collect of the Day

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Presider Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in the Paschal mystery hast established
the new covenant of reconciliation:
Grant that all who have been reborn
into the fellowship of Christ's Body
may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

First Reading

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, “Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know — this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 16

Conserua me, Domine

BCP 599

1. Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you; *
I have said to the Lord,
“You are my Lord, my good above all other.”
2. All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, *
upon those who are noble among the people.
3. But those who run after other gods *
shall have their troubles multiplied.

4. Their libations of blood I will not offer, *
nor take the names of their gods upon my lips.
5. O Lord, you are my portion and my cup; *
it is you who uphold my lot.
6. My boundaries enclose a pleasant land; *
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
7. I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; *
my heart teaches me, night after night.
8. I have set the Lord always before me; *
because he is at my right hand I shall not fall.
9. My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices; *
my body also shall rest in hope.
10. For you will not abandon me to the grave, *
nor let your holy one see the Pit.
11. You will show me the path of life; *
**in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.**

Second Reading

1 Peter 1:3-9

Reader A reading from the first letter of Peter.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith — being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

The People stand.

Gospel

John 20:19-31

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.
People **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

Homily

Andrew Kruger

The People stand.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,
Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate
from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

BCP 328

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all humanity: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers especially Sarah, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sean, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Sally our Bishop, and Andrew our Rector, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land especially Donald, our President, Rebecca Michelle, our governor, and Kathleen, the mayor of this town, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty. And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear [*especially...*], beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

BCP 331

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

The People kneel.

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name.
Amen.**

Absolution

BCP 332

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Comfortable Words

BCP 332

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden,
and I will refresh you. *Matthew 11:28*

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3:16*

Peace

BCP 332

The People stand.

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Announcements

Andrew Kruger

Offertory Sentence

BCP 344

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory,
and the victory, and the majesty.

For all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine.

Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

1 Chronicles 29:11



*The Ushers pass the collection plates among the People.
Alternatively, you may give to Trinity online:
scan the QR code and go directly to our Breeze link.*

The Presentation of Gifts

1 Chronicles 29:14b

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord:

People **And of thine own have we given thee.**

Eucharistic Prayer II

BCP 340

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the very Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath won for us everlasting life. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The People remain standing.

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption.

He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
“Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying,
“Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins.
Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

Lord's Prayer

BCP 336

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread

BCP 337

The Presider breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is observed, then the Presider says

Presider Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Prayer of Humble Access

BCP 337

**We do not presume to come to this thy Table,
O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,
but in thy manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs
under thy Table.
But thou art the same Lord
whose property is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ,
and to drink his blood,
that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us. Amen.**

Invitation

BCP 338

Presider The Gifts of God:

People **For the People of God.**

Holy Communion

The ushers guide the people to receive Holy Communion. All who hunger for God, including children, are cordially invited to share the Gifts of God offered at this table. Whoever you are, wherever you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here.

All persons may, but no person must, receive communion in both kinds to receive the full spiritual benefits of communion. Wine is offered by way of a sip from the common cup. You may choose to receive only the host.

Gluten-free wafers are available by simple request to the priest.

Post Communion Prayer

BCP 339

Presider Let us pray.

The People stand, and all pray together

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Blessing

BCP 339

And now may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The ministers recess.

Dismissal

BCP 340

Presider Alleluia, alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**



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For Friends, Visitors and Newcomers

Welcome to Trinity Episcopal Church in Cranford, New Jersey. Thank you for joining us in worship. The bulletin is designed to make you feel at home and includes everything you need for the service (liturgy, hymns, rubrics, etc.). Please connect with us; introduce yourself to the ushers so they can make you feel more comfortable.

All are invited to Fellowship Hour in Sherlock Hall immediately after the service. An email blast is sent every Thursday by 2 PM with hyperlinks to sign-up sheets, methods to contribute to the parish or other charitable organizations, ways to contact individuals or receive information. Please contact the parish office to receive it or alternative methods of communication.

What you need to know today...

Enrollment for Baptism Sunday, April 12 at the 10 AM service. The following will be enrolled: Jack Ambuka, Jr., Lucille Blandy, Annabella Lopez-Cassano, and Margaux Ortiz. Baptism will be offered on Pentecost Sunday, May 24. The Baptismal Preparation Class is on Saturday, April 25, from 9 AM to 11 AM in Witherington Hall.

Sunday School During the 10 AM Eucharist for children in PreK-3 through Grade 4.

Easter Flowers Please take as many of the flowers around the sanctuary and enjoy them at home this week (remember to water them).

Children's Choir There is rehearsal at 11:30 AM in the church.

"Wells & Water Systems" Outreach is collecting for the Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) project, today is the last day. The goal is to raise \$750 for a share of a well. More information is in the email blast. Please donate online or make out checks to Trinity Church with "Wells" in memo line.

What you need to know this week...

The Daily Offices Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are offered online from Monday to Thursday at 8:30 AM and 5 PM this week.

Parish Office Hours The office is closed this week; please leave messages on the phone and they will be answered. Office Manager Marion Nechuta is available Tuesday through Thursday from 12:30 to 3:30 PM. Please call before arriving; at other times she may still be contacted via parish email.

Trinity Women's Group Monday, April 13 from 7 PM to 8 PM online; the group meets on the second Monday of the month.

Rector at Mission Conference Fr Andy will be away from Tuesday, April 14 through Friday, April 17 for the annual Missio Conference at St. Gregory of Nyssa Church in San Francisco.

Handbells and Choir Rehearsals This Wednesday, April 15; rehearsal for Handbells is 7 to 7:50 PM and Adult Choir is 8-9 PM.

Fellowship Luncheon This Thursday, April 16 from 12:30 to 2 PM in Witherington Hall. Guest speaker is fellow parishioner Matt Nazarro, Cranford's Chief of Police, who will advise on policing and safety issues. Stuffed peppers, salad, rolls, and desserts are planned. Contact Susan Nelson (908-397-3944) or Susan Olszewski (908-757-9561) to volunteer help.

Trinity's Spring Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner Friday, April 17 from 5 PM to 8 PM. (gluten-free available). Come for a delicious meal and fun evening. 50/50 and basket raffles available. Tickets for adults are \$20; children under 12 are \$5. To purchase tickets, see Cynthia Kolby after the 8 AM service, see Kathy Murray or Susan Nelson after the 10 AM service.

Outdoor Workday Saturday, April 18 (Rain date April 25) from 10 AM to 12 noon. A new landscape bed will be created along the front of Trinity Episcopal Day School (TEDS). To participate, please contact Paul Trader (paulsvny@yahoo.com or 845-499-6674).

What you need to know in the future...

Garden Team A group is being organized to help maintain the gardens and plants around Trinity. To join the team or learn more, contact Paul Trader (paulsvny@yahoo.com or 845-499-6674).

Sandwich Sunday Next Sunday, April 19; contact Marion Nechuta (marionnechuta@yahoo.com or 908-451-4498) for more information. There are several ways to participate in this ministry (links to sign up are in the email blast):

- Sign up to supply items needed for the bags and the sandwiches
- Saturday, April 18 from 10 AM to 11 AM – assemble food bags in Sherlock Hall
- Sunday, April 19 – assemble sandwiches between services and after 10 AM service
- Sunday, April 19 after Fellowship Hour – transport the sandwiches and food packets to St John's and help serve food

Anti-Racism Commission The Diocese of New Jersey offers training several times each year. The next session is this spring, from April 21 through June 16, on Tuesday mornings from 9 AM to 11 AM. If interested, see this week's email blast.

Spiritual Hike with Outdoor Eucharist Saturday, May 2 at 10 AM. This was so popular the first two times that it will now be a semiannual event. Experience a unique encounter with the Eucharist celebrated in the splendor of God's creation. Meet in front of the Trailside Nature Center (452 New Providence Road, Mountainside). From there, it is a very short walk to a seating area where a special outdoor Eucharist liturgy will be celebrated. An easy one-hour hike will follow. Those who choose not to hike can sit quietly in the beauty of the Watchung Reservation after the service. This is a great activity for families and promises to be a memorable event. Please contact Senior Warden, Casey Woodruff (woodruff5073@gmail.com), to register or with any questions.

Today's Gospel & Absolution

"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven" -[John 20:22-23] has long stood at the center of Christian reflection on absolution. Across traditions, it is read as a commissioning of the Church to participate in Christ's reconciling work, yet the nature of that participation is understood differently.

In Roman Catholic theology, this passage grounds the sacrament of penance. Christ entrusts to the apostles, and their successors, a real authority to forgive sins. In priestly absolution, forgiveness is not merely declared but effected: Christ acts through the ordained minister. Thus, absolution is a sacramental act in which grace is objectively conveyed. The Church here functions as a true instrument of divine forgiveness, with a defined and necessary role in its administration.

By contrast, many Protestant traditions - especially those shaped by the Reformation - interpret this authority declaratively. The Church does not mediate forgiveness but proclaims it. Ministers announce the promise of the gospel: those who repent and believe are forgiven by God directly. Absolution, therefore, is a reassurance grounded in God's Word rather than an act that itself conveys grace.

Anglican theology seeks a middle way between these positions. It affirms that God alone forgives sins, yet also that the Church is genuinely entrusted with a ministry of absolution. In this view, absolution is more than a reminder or encouragement; it is an authoritative proclamation through which God truly gives what is promised. At the same time, it is less than a mechanical guarantee, as if grace were automatically dispensed by ritual action alone.

Thus, Anglicanism holds together declaration and participation. The Church speaks forgiveness with confidence, trusting that the Holy Spirit is at work in and through its ministry, while always recognizing that the source and power of forgiveness remain in God.

The Paschal Troparion – *Christos Anesti*

The Paschal Troparion – often sung in Greek as *Christos Anesti* – is among the most beloved and enduring hymns of the Christian tradition. Its words are simple, ancient, and profound:

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν,
θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας,
καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι,
ζωὴν χαρισάμενος!

Christos anesti ek nekron,
thanato thanaton patisas,
ke tis en tis mnimasi,
zoin charisamenos!

Translated:

*Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs
bestowing life!*

This brief hymn, chanted repeatedly throughout the Easter season in the Eastern Church, serves as both proclamation and praise. It is not merely a song about the resurrection; it is an announcement that resounds with the very victory it declares.

The origins of the Paschal Troparion lie deep within the early centuries of Christian worship in the Eastern Mediterranean. Though its precise authorship is unknown, it likely took shape within the vibrant liturgical life of the Byzantine Church, where theology and worship were woven together in poetic and musical form. The troparion became the central hymn of Pascha (Easter), sung at the midnight vigil when the resurrection is first proclaimed, and then echoed again and again throughout the fifty days that follow. In this way, it forms the heartbeat of the Easter season – a refrain that carries the Church's joy beyond a single day into an entire way of being.

The theology contained within these few lines is remarkably rich. The phrase “trampling down death by death” expresses what the early Church Fathers often called the “harrowing of hell.” In Christ’s death, death itself is overthrown from within. By entering fully into the depths of human mortality, Christ breaks its power, transforming the grave from a place of finality into a gateway to life. This is not resurrection as mere resuscitation, nor as a private miracle for Jesus alone. Rather, it is cosmic in scope: “upon those in the tombs bestowing life.” The resurrection is for all, reaching backward and forward across time, extending even to those who had long awaited redemption.

Spiritually, the Paschal Troparion invites us into a posture of joyful defiance. It teaches us to sing in the face of death – not because suffering is denied, but because it has been transformed. The repetition of the hymn, so characteristic of Eastern worship, is itself formative. As it is sung again and again, it begins to take root within the heart, shaping our imagination and our hope. It becomes less something we say, and more something we inhabit.

For us, in the Episcopal Church, hearing and chanting *Christos Anesti* opens a window into this ancient stream of Christian faith. It reminds us that the resurrection is not only to be proclaimed in words or preached from the pulpit, but sung, felt, and experienced as a living reality. The melody, the cadence, and even the unfamiliarity of the Greek language can draw us out of our usual patterns of worship and into a deeper attentiveness to the mystery we celebrate.

As the Paschal Troparion is woven into our Easter liturgy, it offers us a gift: the chance to join our voices with Christians across centuries and continents in proclaiming the same good news. Christ is risen. Death is defeated. Life is given. And so we sing – not as spectators of a past event, but as participants in a present reality – allowing this ancient hymn to become our own Easter song.

Cover Art

“The Risen Christ” by William Hart McNichols (b. 1949), an American Catholic priest. In 1971, McNichols was a member of a group of 27 Jesuit seminarians who denounced the Selective Service System in a joint statement. In solidarity with other young men being drafted, they publicly turned in their draft cards stating they would no longer accept their 4-D exemptions as ministerial students. Each Jesuit knew they were risking being drafted. They had been inspired by Robert Drinan, a Catholic priest turned Congressman, who was elected on a platform opposing the war, as well as fellow Jesuit activist, writer, and poet Daniel Berrigan. McNichols has been out as gay since 1983. “I felt I had to stand up for gay people and gay priests,” he said. From 1983 to 1990, McNichols worked as a chaplain with the AIDS hospice team of St. Vincent’s Hospital in NYC. On All Souls Day, he takes the lists of those to whom he ministered and places them on the altar during mass.

Lectionary & Liturgy

We continue today to celebrate the Lord's resurrection, a celebration which will last for fifty days in all (and which is celebrated again every Sunday throughout the year). The Gospel reading begins with the first Easter Day when Jesus appeared in the evening to the disciples and gave them his Spirit. The story continues with his appearance the following Sunday when Thomas met the Lord and confessed his faith. It concludes with words for us: "Blessed are they who have not seen, yet believe."

On the Sundays of Easter, the first reading is always from the Acts of the Apostles. In today's reading from Acts, we hear a portion of Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost proclaiming the resurrection. God has raised Jesus; and Peter and the other Apostles are witnesses of the resurrection.

The second lesson on the Sundays of Easter this year comes from Peter's first epistle. This is a sermon on the meaning of baptism. Today the message is about our rebirth into new life in God as we died and rose with Christ in baptism. Nevertheless, in the world we will still have trials and persecutions, Peter tells us, but in them, our faith is strengthened and purified.

As we gather as Church to celebrate the Lord's resurrection, we find the living presence of Jesus in his Word, in the sacraments, and in our life as the community of the Body of Christ. We find ourselves made by the Holy Spirit into a community that is the visible and living sign of the risen Christ.

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