

Trinity Episcopal Church

Granford, in the Diocese of New Jersey



“Blessed are the Meek” — Jen Norton

The Feast of All Saints

Rite I Holy Eucharist

November 1, 2026 at 8 AM

The Reverend Andrew David Kruger, Rector & Presider

Anthony Rafaniello, Director of Music

Casey Woodruff, Senior Warden & Kathleen Murray, Junior Warden

*The Sanctuary Candle and the Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God
& in loving memory of Donald Shelton from the Nechuta Family*

Welcome

Andrew Kruger

The bell is rung and the People stand.

Gathering Sentences

BCP 323

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

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

Presider There is one Body and one Spirit;

People **There is one hope in God's call to us;**

Presider One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

People **One God and Father of all.**

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.**

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

BCP 194

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Presider Let us pray.

Almighty God,
who hast knit together thine elect
in one communion and fellowship
in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord:
Give us grace so to follow thy blessed saints
in all virtuous and godly living,
that we may come to those ineffable joys
that thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,
who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth,
one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

First Reading

Revelation 7:9-17

Reader A reading from the Revelation to John.

I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 34:1-10, 22

Benedicam Dominum

BCP 627

1. I will bless the LORD at all times; *
 his praise shall ever be in my mouth.
2. I will glory in the LORD; *
 let the humble hear and rejoice.

3. Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD;
let us exalt his Name together.
4. I sought the LORD, and he answered me *
and delivered me out of all my terror.
5. Look upon him and be radiant, *
and let not your faces be ashamed.
6. I called in my affliction and the LORD heard me *
and saved me from all my troubles.
7. The angel of the LORD encompasses those who fear him, *
and he will deliver them.
8. Taste and see that the LORD is good; *
happy are they who trust in him!
9. Fear the LORD, you that are his saints, *
for those who fear him lack nothing.
10. The young lions lack and suffer hunger, *
but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.
22. The LORD ransoms the life of his servants, *
and none will be punished who trust in him.

Second Reading

1 John 3:1-3

Reader A reading from the first letter of John.

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The People stand.

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew.

People **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

Homily

Andrew Kruger

Affirmation of Baptismal Faith

The people stand and the Presider moves to the Font.

Friends in Christ, Baptism is not the rite of a moment but the commitment of a lifetime. In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with our Lord. Therefore let us reaffirm our Baptismal Vows together with all those who celebrate the anniversary of their baptism this month.

Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil
and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

I do.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread,
and in the prayers?

I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and
return to the Lord?

I will, with God's help.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as your self?

I will, with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of
every human being?

I will, with God's help.

Blessing the Water

Celebrating Common Prayer

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord:

People **God is worthy of all thanksgiving and praise.**

The Presider pours water into the Font.

Blessèd are you, Sovereign God of all, to you be glory and praise for ever! You are our light and our salvation. From the deep waters of death you have raised your Son to life in triumph. Accept our sacrifice of praise, we pray, and sanctify these waters of your new creation, that we, with all who have been born anew by water and the Spirit, may be renewed in your image, walk by the light of faith, and serve you in newness of life; through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit we lift our voices of praise, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People **Blessèd be God for ever.**

The Presider sprinkles the people with the aspergillum.

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.**

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; who, in the multitude of thy saints, hast compassed us about with so great a cloud of witnesses, that we, rejoicing in their fellowship, may run with patience the race that is set before us; and, together with them, may receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

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.**

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 338

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

Traditional

Presider Let us pray.

The People stand, and all pray together

**Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee,
For that thou hast fed us with this holy sacrament,
to knit us in one with Christ our Savior,
and to grant us a foretaste of that Heavenly Banquet
which thou hast prepared for all peoples. Amen.**

Blessing

BCP 339

The Presider pronounces the blessing

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.**



Copyright Acknowledgments

- *The Book of Common Prayer - (1979) of the Episcopal Church of the USA. The US Book of Common Prayer is in the public domain.*
- *Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.*

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. Father Andy is in the narthex (entrance) at the end of the service; it is an opportunity to connect on a more personal level. 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 on events, etc. Please contact the parish office to receive it or alternative methods of communication.

Cover Art

From Jen Norton: "One of the pillars of just about every religious tradition on earth is that of treating others as you would like to be treated. In a world with increasing violence towards those seen as disposable, it's worth revisiting this idea and pondering why it has been a universal ideal throughout known history. This piece is part of my book, "Arise to Blessedness" from Ave Maria Press. Also available on Amazon and Etsy.

The Feast of All Saints

On All Saints' Day, we celebrate the great communion of saints: all those, known and unknown, whose lives bear witness to God's grace. It is a particularly fitting occasion for Baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows, for Baptism is our entrance into this communion. We are joined to Christ and to one another, called to share in the life and holiness of God. As we renew our baptismal vows today, we reaffirm our place among the saints and our calling to follow Christ.

Baptismal Anniversaries

When we think about birthdays, we immediately recall the date we were born and took our first breath in this world. But if we take a moment to reflect, we will realize that we have another "birthday" of even greater significance: the day we became members of the body of Christ – our Baptismal birthday.

Through the waters of baptism, the Holy Spirit anoints us and sets our inner compass, to walk in a path that is pleasing to God, to do all good works that God has planned for us, and to "seek God's face" [Psalm 27:8]. This is the path that ultimately leads us into abundant life both in this earthly existence, and in the world to come. Whether baptized as a child or an adult, we prayerfully grow in our understanding and appreciation of our baptismal identity, as individuals and as a community.

Once a month, we acknowledge those who have a baptismal "birthday" during that month and share with them in the renewal of baptismal vows. We hope this recognition of our "birth from above" [John 3:3] will allow us to develop a deeper appreciation for the essence of our baptism. These parishioners are celebrating their Baptismal Anniversaries in November:

Piper Ross Ferriter	Nov. 4	Linda Kurdilla	Nov. 24	Aleksandar Ilich	Nov. 3
Abigail Behnke	Nov. 2	Maeve Milas	Nov. 3	Holly Ives	Nov. 24
Jacob Broccoli	Nov. 4	Dylan Rees	Nov. 3	Bernhard Kolbe	Nov. 9
Andrew Broccoli	Nov. 3	Brandon Strawder	Nov. 11	Charli Rydelek	Nov. 6
Samantha Cieslak	Nov. 7	Sophie Strawder	Nov. 11	Hayden Parker Tsiolas	Nov. 5
Patricia Clark	Nov. 13	Ryan Ditzel	Nov. 5	Maxwell Ardente	Nov. 3
Damian Conceicao	Nov. 3	John Witherington	Nov. 8	Lucas Ardente	Nov. 6
Daniel J. DeMarco	Nov. 2	Fran Witherington	Nov. 5	Iris Frumolt	Nov. 6
Maxwell Ardente	Nov. 3	Hang Li	Nov. 1	Allison Hosler	Nov. 18
Matthew Nazzaro	Nov. 8	Rowan Harty	Nov. 3	Jackson Hosler	Nov. 2
Arlene Fricke	Nov. 21	Antonio DiFonzo	Nov. 5	Elena Taglia	Nov. 5
Christian Gardner	Nov. 4	Dionne Frank	Nov. 5	Mary Testori	Nov. 8
Ryan Hosler	Nov. 1	Mary Cheress	Nov. 1	Rowan Tsiolas	Nov. 5
Eliana Aravena	Nov. 15	Theodore Aravena	Nov. 2	Chris Blandy	Nov. 6

What you need to know today...

The Sacrament of Baptism The Baptism of Austin Anthony Bain is today, during the 10 AM Eucharist.

Stewardship Pledges were dedicated last Sunday. For those who have not yet returned pledge cards, they are available in the narthex.

Sunday School During the 10 AM Service Children (PreK-3 through Grade 4) gather in the church at the beginning of the service. Children and teachers receive a blessing after the collect of the day, depart for class, then return in time for Holy Communion. Younger children, supervised by their parents, are welcome in the nursery section of the narthex.

Fellowship Hour In Sherlock Hall, immediately after this service; coffee, tea and snacks are provided.

Children's Choir Today from 11:30 AM to 12 noon in the church.

Outreach Committee Meeting Today at 11:30 AM in Witherington Hall. Outreach thanks the congregation for their generous donations at the bake sale for Musaga Richards, Cameroon Orphan who the parish sponsors. \$551 was collected.

Collection for Two Thanksgiving Baskets Outreach is collecting items for Cranford Family Care; there is a link in the email blast for items needed. Please note, there is no need for turkeys; another company is supplying them. Please bring in items by Sunday, November 22. Thank you.

Confirmation Class Today in Witherington Hall from 5 PM to 7 PM.

Kitchen Cleaning Many thanks to Ron DeVelde, Jack Ambuka, Holly Ives, Jean Harris, Nancy Noonan and Marion Nechuta for cleaning the kitchen on Tuesday, October 27.

Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Candle Both are individually available for personal attribution, to remember loved ones, to honor others, to celebrate lives. Anyone can make a request; there is no fee. Email the office by 4 PM Wednesday each week; multiple attributions are allowed. Altar flowers cost the parish \$75 per week, and are a line item in the church budget. Donations towards that are gratefully appreciated and may be made anonymously via the collection plate or through the office.

What you need to know this week...

The Daily Offices Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are offered online from Monday-Friday at 8:30 AM and 5 PM. Add and update prayer requests via the link in the email blast. The list is prayed twice a day at Morning and Evening Prayer.

Parish Office Hours Office Manager Marion Nechuta is available from Tuesday to Thursday from 12 noon to 3:30 PM.

Handbell Choir Rehearsals This Wednesday, November 4 from 7 PM to 7:50 PM in the church.

Trinity Adult Choir This Wednesday, November 4 from 8 PM to 9 PM in the church.

Compline Thursdays at 8 PM online. A contemplative Office that emphasizes spiritual peace.

Trinity Men's Group This Saturday, November 7 from 8 AM to 9 AM in Witherington Hall.

What you need to know in the future...

Rector in South Africa Fr Andy will return to South Africa to officiate his nephew's wedding, he will be away from Friday, November 6 through Saturday, November 14.

Trinity Women's Group Monday, November 9 from 7 PM to 8 PM online.

Acolyte & Thurifer Training Sunday, November 15 immediately after the 10 AM Eucharist for all current and aspirant acolytes.

Fellowship Luncheon Thursday, November 19, 12:30-2 PM in Witherington Hall. The Thanksgiving Feast is chicken pot pie and sides; instead of a speaker, everyone is given a chance to say a few words about what they're thankful for this year. It's a very special time.

Cranford Community Thanksgiving Service Monday, November 23 at 7 PM at Temple Beth-El Mevor Chayim, 338 Walnut Avenue, Cranford.

St Mark's Gospel Saturday, November 28, 10 AM to 12:30 PM in Witherington Chapel. The Gospel will be read from cover to cover.

Ecclesiasticus & the Midterms

Last week, our Daily Office readings brought us to a passage from Ecclesiasticus (also known as Sirach) that seems especially timely as we approach the midterm elections. Though written more than two thousand years ago, Sirach 10:1–18 offers a searching reflection on government, political power, and the responsibilities of those who exercise it. The passage begins by affirming the importance of wise government. Good leadership helps a community flourish; reckless leadership can bring it to ruin. Yet Sirach is equally clear about the dangers of power: “Arrogance is hateful to the Lord and to mortals, and injustice is outrageous to both” (10:7). Authority is necessary, but it is never beyond criticism or accountability.

One verse deserves particular care. Sirach declares that God will raise up “the right leader for the time” (10:4). It would be a mistake to take this as divine endorsement of whoever wins an election. God’s sovereignty is not permission to sanctify the decisions of human institutions. Indeed, just a few verses later, we read that God overturns the thrones of rulers and raises up the lowly in their place (10:14). Those who govern remain answerable to a power greater than their own authority.

Our Anglican tradition offers a helpful perspective through the *via media*, or middle way. This is not simply a matter of seeking the political center or finding a comfortable compromise between competing ideologies. Rather, it reflects a willingness to hold together truths that are sometimes difficult to reconcile. We recognize our responsibility to participate in the institutions of society, while retaining the freedom, and indeed the obligation, to critique those institutions when they fall short of the demands of justice and mercy.

Whether we have already cast our ballots, are preparing to vote on November 3, or are not eligible to vote (like me), we all share a responsibility for the common good. Sirach invites us to consider whose interests are being served, whose dignity is being upheld, and whose needs are being neglected. It also calls us to examine our own loyalties and prejudices, recognizing that political power requires scrutiny even when exercised by those with whom we mostly agree.

In the days ahead, I encourage you to pray the prayers *For Sound Government* and *For an Election* from the *Book of Common Prayer* (see below). These prayers remind us that our concern is not merely with the outcome of an election, but with the wisdom, justice, and integrity of those entrusted with public office. Long after the votes have been counted, our Christian responsibilities will remain: to pray for those who govern, hold them accountable, seek justice and mercy, and love our neighbors across political divisions. Our hope rests not in the permanence of any government, but in the enduring faithfulness of God.

Prayer for an Election

(BCP 822)

Almighty God,

to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges:

Guide the people of the United States

in the election of officials and representatives;

that, by faithful administration and wise laws,

the rights of all may be protected

and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Website: TrinityCranford.org

Instagram: [@trinity_cranford_1872](https://www.instagram.com/trinity_cranford_1872)

Facebook: Trinity Episcopal Church, Cranford

Connect to Online Services and Meetings: us04web.zoom.us/j/595488321

Meeting ID: 595 488 3214

Password: 1872

205 North Avenue, E, Cranford NJ 07016

Parish Phone: (908) 276-4047

Email: TrinityCranford@gmail.com

The Rev. Andrew David Kruger, Rector

Personal Cell: (609) 933-5227

Email: fr.andrew.kruger@gmail.com