

# Trinity Episcopal Church

Cranford, in the Diocese of New Jersey



“The Risen Christ” – William Hart McNichols

## *The Second Sunday of Easter*

Holy Eucharist - Rite II - April 12, 2026 at 10 AM



The Reverend Andrew David Kruger - Rector & Presider

Anthony J. Rafaniello - Director of Music & Organist

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

**Prelude**

“Easter Chant” – Gordon Young

*At the end of the prelude, the bells are rung and the People stand.*

I. Gathering of God’s People

**Gathering Hymn**

*Richmond*

Hymnal 212

1 A - wake, a - rise, lift up your voice, let  
 2 Oh, with what glad - ness and sur - prise the  
 3 those hands of lib - eral love in - deed in  
 4 His en - e - mies had sealed the stone as  
 5 O Dead a - rise! O Friend - less stand by

1 Eas - ter mu - sic swell; re - joice in Christ, a -  
 2 saints their Sa - vior greet; nor will they trust their  
 3 in - fi - nite de - gree, those feet still free to  
 4 Pi - late gave them leave, lest dead and friend - less  
 5 ser - a - phim a - dored! O Sol - i - tude a -

1 gain re - joice and on his prais - es dwell.  
 2 ears and eyes but by his hands and feet,  
 3 move and bleed for mil - lions and for me.  
 4 and a - lone he should their skill de - ceive.  
 5 gain com - mand your host from heaven re - stored!

**Gathering Sentences**

Book of Common Prayer 355

*Presider*

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People*

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

*The People sit and the Presider invites forward the parents and sponsors of Jack Ambuka, Jr., Lucille Blandy, Annabella Lopez-Cassano, and Margaux Ortiz and addresses them.*

*Presider* What do you seek for yourself and your child?

*Answer* Life in Christ.

*Presider* Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." Do you accept these commandments?

*Answer* I do.

*Presider* In baptism, you died with Christ to the forces of evil and rose to new life as members of his Body. Will you study the commitments of baptism, and strive to keep them in the companionship of this community?

*Answer* I will, with God's help.

*Presider* Will you open your heart and mind to receive anew the Good News of Jesus Christ?

*Answer* I will, with God's help.

*Presider* Will you be regular in attending public worship, to hear the Word of God and celebrate the mystery of Christ's dying and rising?

*Answer* I will, with God's help.

*Presider* Will you join us in our life of service to the powerless and the outcast?

*Answer* I will, with God's help.

*Presider* Will you work for mercy and justice?

*Answer* I will, with God's help.

*The People stand and the Presider addresses them.*

Will you support these persons by your prayer and example, and help them to grow in the knowledge and love of God?

*People* **We will.**

*The Presider extends hands over the parents and sponsors and says*

May God, our heavenly Father, grant you the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in faith and understanding that you may lead this child in the way of Christ. **Amen.**

*The children are presented by name to the Presider, who, with the thumb, marks a cross on the forehead, saying*

N., receive the sign of the Cross on your forehead and in your heart, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*The parents then write their child's name in the book and return to their seats.*

1. Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and  
 peace to his peo-ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven-ly King, al-  
 might-y God and Fa-ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we  
 praise you for your glo-ry. 3. Lord Je-sus Christ,  
 on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you  
 take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;  
 5. you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-  
 ceive our prayer. 6. For  
 you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,  
 7. you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the  
 Ho-ly Spi-rit, in the glo-ry of  
 God the Fa-ther. A - men.

**Collect of the Day**

BCP 224

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Presider* Let us pray.





The People stand and sing.

## Paschal Troparion

Christos Anesti

Greek Orthodox

Chri - stos a - ne - sti ek ne - kron, tha - na - to  
tha - na - ton pa - ti - sas ke tis  
en tis mni - ma - si, zo - in cha - ri sa - me - nos.  
Christ is ris - en from the dead, by death  
tram - pling down up - on death and to  
those in the tombs he has grant - ed life.

## Holy Gospel

John 20:19-31

Presider

✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.

People

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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 to you, Lord Christ.**

### III. Responding to the Proclaimed Word

#### **Homily**

Andrew Kruger

*Silence is observed and then the People stand.*

#### **Nicene Creed**

EOW1 53

**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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**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, \*  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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**

CW alt.

*The Presider says*

In joy and hope let us pray to the Father.

*The Intercessor continues*

That our risen Savior will fill us with the joy of the glorious and life-giving resurrection.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That isolated and persecuted churches may find fresh strength in the good news of Easter.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That God will grant us humility to be subject to one another in Christian love.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That those who lack food, work or shelter will be sustained and fulfilled.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That, by Christ's power, war and famine will cease through all the world.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That the light of Christ's presence will be revealed to the sick, the weak and the dying.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That all who have died in the faith of the resurrection may be raised on the last day.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

That the fire of the Holy Spirit will ignite us to bear faithful witness to the resurrection.

Lord have mercy: **Christ have mercy.**

*The Presider prays*

God of mission, you raised Jesus as the first born of the dead: by your Holy Spirit, empower us to witness to Christ, so that those who have not yet seen, may come to believe in him who was and is and is to come.  
**Amen.**

## **Peace**

*Presider*           The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*             **And also with you.**

*The People greet one another in the Name of the Lord.*

## **Announcements**

Andrew Kruger

## IV. Celebrating at the Lord's Table

### **Offertory Sentence**

1 Chronicles 29:11

*The Presider says*

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. For everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom, and you are exalted as head over all.

*Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offering of bread and wine to the Holy Table.*



*The Ushers pass the collection plates among the people.  
Another option is to give to Trinity online –  
scan the QR code and go directly to our Breeze link.*

## Offertory Anthem

“Most Glorious Lord of Life” – William Harris  
Text by Edmund Spencer

Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day  
didst make thy triumph over death and sin,  
and having harrowed hell, didst bring away  
captivity thence captive, us to win:

And that thy love we weighing worthily,  
may likewise love thee for the same again;  
and for thy sake, who dost all grace supply,  
with love may one another entertain;

This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,  
and grant that we for whom thou diddest die,  
being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,  
may live for ever in felicity:

So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought;  
love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

*The ushers bring the collection plates to the ministers and the People stand.*

## Offertory Hymn

Truro

Hymnal 182

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. His cross stands  
2 Christ is - a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant  
3 Not throned a - bove, re - mote - ly high, un - touched, un -  
4 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where co - lor,  
5 Christ is a - live! His Spi - rit burns through this and


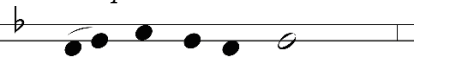

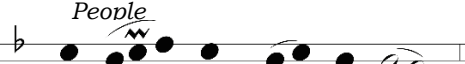
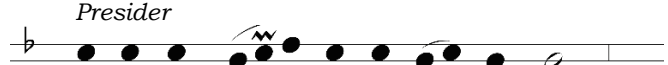
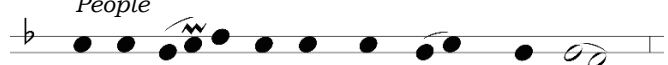
1 emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with  
2 years in Pal - es - tine, he comes to claim the  
3 moved by hu - man pains, but dai - ly, in the  
4 scorn or wealth di - vide, he suf - fers still, yet  
5 ev - ery fu - ture age, till all cre - a - tion

1 prais - es ring. His love in death shall nev - er die.  
2 here and now and con - quer ev - ery place and time.  
3 midst of life, our Sa - vior with the Fa - ther reigns.  
4 loves the more, and lives, though ev - er cru - ci - fied.  
5 lives and learns his joy, his jus - tice, love, and praise.

*Presider* Source of all life, everything in heaven and on earth is yours:  
*People* **All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. Amen.**

**Eucharistic Prayer for Pascha**

Celebrating Sunday

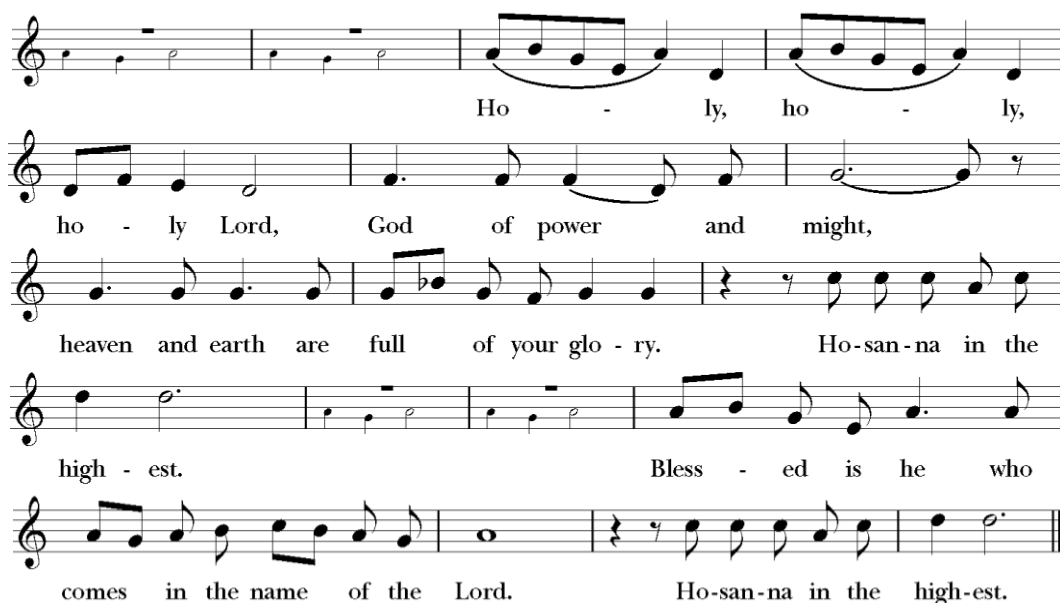
<p><i>Presider</i></p>  <p>The Lord be with you.</p>	<p><i>People</i></p>  <p>And al - so with you.</p>
<p><i>Presider</i></p>  <p>Lift up your hearts.</p>	<p><i>People</i></p>  <p>We lift them to the Lord.</p>
<p><i>Presider</i></p>  <p>Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.</p>	
<p><i>People</i></p>  <p>It is right to give our thanks and praise.</p>	

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; but chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Sanctus**

Hymnal S 128



Ho - ly, ho - ly,  
 ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,  
 heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the  
 high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

Praise and thanksgiving be to you, Lord of all, for by the Cross we gain eternal life and death is swallowed up in victory. In the first light of Easter, glory broke from the tomb and changed the women's sorrow into joy. From the garden the mystery dawned that he whom they had loved and lost is with us now in every place for ever.

The Risen Lord was recognized in the breaking of the bread, the fearful disciples received a blessing of peace, and the weary fishermen found a ready welcome on the lakeshore. To them all Christ renewed the pledge of his presence and the promise of new birth in the Spirit.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, recalling the night of Israel's release when slaves walked free, at supper with his disciples, Jesus took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this to remember me."

And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ's coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

**Dying, you destroyed our death.  
Rising, you restored our life.  
Christ Jesus, come in glory!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be to us the Body and the Blood of your Christ. Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power, may be a people of hope, justice and love. Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with all your people into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

### Great Amen

Mathias/Kruger



### Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

*Presider* And now, as our Savior Christ has 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.**

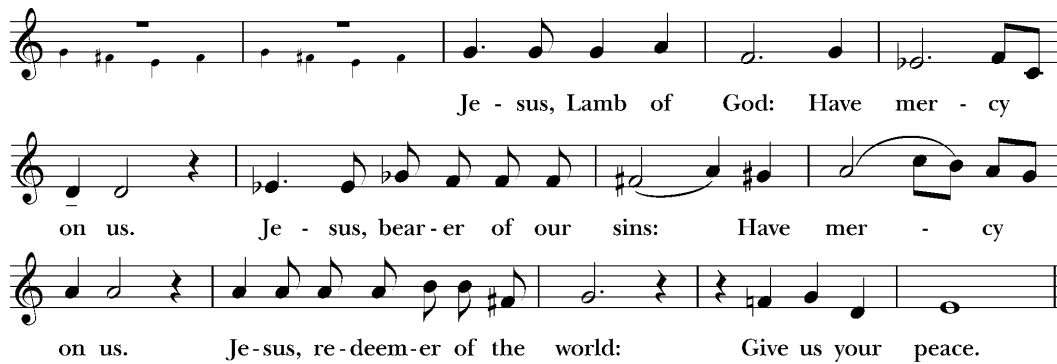
### Breaking of the Bread

BCP 364

*The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

**Agnus Dei**

Hymnal S 165



Je - sus, Lamb of God: Have mer - cy  
 on us. Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: Have mer - cy  
 on us. Je - sus, re - deem - er of the world: Give us your peace.

**Invitation**

BCP 364

Presider The Gifts of God:  
 People **for the People of God.**

*The ushers guide the people to receive Holy Communion. 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 request to the priest.*

**First Communion Hymn**


St Botolph

Hymnal 209




1 We walk by faith, and not by sight; no  
 2 We may not touch his hands and side, nor  
 3 Help then, O Lord, our un - be - lief; and  
 4 that, when our life of faith is done, in  
 gra - cious words we hear from him who spoke as  
 fol - low where he trod; but in his prom - ise  
 may our faith a - bound, to call on you when  
 realms of clear - er light we may be - hold you  
 none e'er spoke; but we be - lieve him near.  
 we re - jice, and cry, "My Lord and God!"  
 you are near, and seek where you are found:  
 as you are, with full and end - less sight.


*Antiphon*




Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



1 O sons and daught - ers, let us sing!  
 2 That night the a - pos - tles met in fear;  
 3 When Thom - as first the tid - ings heard,  
 4 "My pierc - ed side, O Thom - as, see;  
 5 No long - er Thom - as then de - nied,  
 6 How blest are they who have not seen,




1 The King of heaven, the glo - rious King,  
 2 a - midst them came their Lord most dear,  
 3 how they had seen the ris - en Lord,  
 4 my hands, my feet, I show to thee;  
 5 he saw the feet, the hands, the side;  
 6 and yet whose faith has con - stant been,



1 o'er death and hell rose tri - umph - ing. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 2 and said, "My peace be on all here." Al - le - lu - ia!  
 3 he doubt - ed the dis - ci - ples' word. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 4 not faith - less, but be - liev - ing be." Al - le - lu - ia!  
 5 "Thou art my Lord and God," he cried. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 6 for they e - ter - nal life shall win. Al - le - lu - ia! [Ant.]

*Antiphon*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

**Post Communion Prayer**

CW

*Presider* Let us pray.

*The People stand.*

**Lord God our Father, through our Savior Jesus Christ  
 you have assured your children of eternal life  
 and in baptism have made us one with him:  
 deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life  
 in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
 by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
 Amen.**

*The Presider blesses the people*

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
 that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant,  
 make you complete in every good work to do his will,  
 working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;  
 and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son,  
 and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

**Sending Hymn**

*Salzburg*

Hymnal 174

1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing praise to our vic-tor-ious King,  
 2 Where the Pas-chal blood is poured, death's dark an-gel sheathes his sword;  
 3 Might-y vic-tim from on high, hell's fierce powers be-neath thee lie;  
 4 Eas-ter tri-umph, Eas-ter joy, these a-lone do sin de-stroy.

who hath washed us in the tide flow-ing from his pierc-ed side;  
 Is-rael's hosts tri-um-phant go through the wave that drowns the foe.  
 thou hast con-quer-ed in the fight, thou hast brought us life and light:  
 From sin's power do thou set free souls new-born, O Lord, in thee.

praise we him, whose love di-vine gives his sa-cred Blood for wine,  
 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas-chal vic-tim, Pas-chal bread;  
 now no more can death ap-pall, now no more the grave en-thrall;  
 Hymns of glo-ry, songs of praise, Fa-ther, un-to thee we raise:

gives his Bo-dy for the feast, Christ the vic-tim, Christ the priest.  
 with sin-cer-i-ty and love eat we man-na from a-bove.  
 thou hast o-pened par-a-dise, and in thee thy saints shall rise.  
 ris-en Lord, all praise to thee with the Spi-rit ev-er be.

*Presider* Alleluia. Alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Postlude**

“Fanfare and Processional” – Lynn Trapp

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:paulsvny@yahoo.com) or 845-499-6674).

**Sandwich Sunday** Next Sunday, April 19; contact Marion Nechuta ([marionnechuta@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

## 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.

*From The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year. © 2007 Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing, NYC*

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- † **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.
- † **Prelude** – "Easter Chant" by Gordon Young (1919-1998) was an American organist and composer of both organ and choral works, based on *O Filii et Filiae*; from "Fourteen Pieces for Organ" –[©1969, Sacred Music Press]
- † **Gathering Hymn** – Words: Christopher Smart (1722-1771), an English poet and high church Anglican; his father-in-law locked him away in a mental asylum over Smart's supposed religious "mania". Even after Smart's eventual release, a negative reputation continued to pursue him as he was known for incurring more debt than he could repay; this ultimately led to his confinement in debtors' prison until his death. Music: melody Thomas Haweis (1734-1820); adapt. Samuel Webbe (1740-1816).
- † **Service Music** – William Mathias (1934-1992) –[© 1976 Oxford University Press]. "Music was an ever-present force for my father. I was aware from a very early age that the creative process was something always present for him – even when he was doing something else – and that it was a force which he could turn in any desired direction or channel at a given time. Hence his ability to compose a wide variety of orchestral, choral, instrumental or chamber music, as well as music for the church and for young people." – [daughter Rhiannon Mathias]
- † **Collect of the Day** – This collect, new to this Book, is also appointed for use on Maundy Thursday and after the seventh lesson in the Great Vigil of Easter. It dates to the Gregorian sacramentary. The translation is a revision of that by William Bright in *Ancient Collects*. –[Notes on the American Prayer Book by Marion Hatchett]
- † **Acts of the Apostles** This book with its description of the life of early Christian community, characterized by an intense awareness of the risen Lord's presence and the apostolic preaching of the Resurrection, has had an important place in the church's liturgy. In recent years, the liturgical revisions among Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Lutherans have placed it again in the Easter liturgy.

- † **Paschal Troparion** – At the funeral of Pope Francis, the patriarchs, archbishops, and metropolitans of the Eastern Catholic Churches stood beside his coffin. After thrice chanting the Paschal troparion and chanting prayers, one of the patriarchs censed the coffin. This ritual was also performed at the funeral of Pope John Paul II.
- † **Nicene Creed** – Contains “all the expansive language texts currently authorized.” It is almost identical to the BCP version. The omission of the words ‘and the Son’ (*filioque*) restores the text of the Creed to the original wording agreed upon at the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381 CE). The addition was a later development implemented in the Western Church and without approval of a General Council.
- † **Prayers of the People** – It is important to notice that it is not the leader of those prayers who does the praying. That person – whether ordained or not – simply announces the theme, and all of us, the baptized royal priesthood, pray in the power of the Spirit to the Father.
- † **Offertory Anthem** – Words: Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), one of the greatest poets in the English language; like most Protestants near the time of the Reformation, Spenser saw a Catholic church full of corruption, and he determined that it was not only the wrong religion but the anti-religion. Music: English organist and composer Sir William H. Harris (1883-1973).
- † **Offertory Hymn** – Words: Brian A. Wren (b. 1936) –[© 1975 Hope Publishing]. His hymns have been influential in raising the awareness of theology in hymns. A major part of Wren’s work has been with inclusive language as well. Married to his writing partner, a United Methodist pastor, he says hymns are poetry and theology, instead of simply music: “A hymn is a poem, and a poem is a visual art form. The act of reading a hymn aloud helps to recover its poetry and its power to move us—the power of language, image, metaphor, and faith-expression.” Music: melody from *Psalmodia Evangelica, Part II*, 1789; harm. Lowell Mason (1792-1872).
- † **First Communion Hymn** – Words: The Most Rev. Henry Alford (1810-1871), Dean of Canterbury Cathedral. Three of his hymns were printed in the 1940 hymnal and this hymn is new to the 1982 version. Roughly based on the appearance of Jesus to Thomas. Music: Gordon Slater (1896-1979), named for St. Botolph’s Parish Church in England, where Slater was organist from 1919 to 1927, following his service in the British army in France during World War I. That church honors St. Botolph, the seventh-century abbot of an influential monastery destroyed during the Danish invasions. He taught at various British colleges and universities and was an organ recitalist for the BBC.
- † **Second Communion Hymn** – “This hymn is for the Second Sunday of Easter and St. Thomas’ Day.” Words: attributed to 15<sup>th</sup> cent. French Franciscan monk Jean Tisserand, who founded an order for penitent women. Translated by John Mason Neale (1818-1866) who wrote, “It is scarcely possible for anyone, not acquainted with the melody, to imagine the jubilant effect of the triumphant Alleluia attached to apparently less important circumstances of the Resurrection. It seems to speak of the majesty of that event, the smallest portions of which are worthy to be so chronicled.” Music: may have originated as a chant tune or as a French folk melody, but there is no scholarly consensus on the issue.
- † **Sending Hymn** – Words: Latin, 1632; tr. Robert Campbell (1814-1868). Music: melody Jakob Hintze (1622-1702); harm. J.S. Bach. Hintze traveled widely as a youth, including trips to Sweden and Lithuania. In 1659 he settled in Berlin; he is known mainly for his editing of the later editions of Johann Crüger’s *Praxis Pietatis Melica*, to which he contributed some sixty-five of his original tunes.
- † **Postlude** – The inscription at the top of the music says “For John Romeri, Christ Cathedral, Orange California” (the former Crystal Cathedral is now Roman Catholic). He was the first Music Director there and retired due to Covid; now semi-retired and a Cranford resident, his grandchildren were taught by our own Anthony Rafaniello. He is an extraordinarily accomplished church musician (see his bio at johnromeri.com). After substituting around the area in recent years, he very recently became the organist at Grace Episcopal in Newark.

205 North Avenue, E, Cranford NJ 07016  
 Parish Phone: (908) 276-4047  
 Email: [TrinityCranford@gmail.com](mailto:TrinityCranford@gmail.com)



The Rev. Andrew David Kruger, Rector  
 Personal Cell: (609) 933-5227  
 Email: [fr.andrew.kruger@gmail.com](mailto:fr.andrew.kruger@gmail.com)



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