

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church



Third Sunday in Lent
March 23, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.

Service of Word and Sacrament

In the bulletin: The asterisk () invites you to stand as you are able.*

Boldface type indicates the congregation's responses. At the sign of the cross (✝), you are invited to make that same sign upon yourself in remembrance of your baptism.

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

AIR from Holberg Suite

Edvard Grieg

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Please stand if you are able.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gifts of love, mercy, and grace.

Amen.

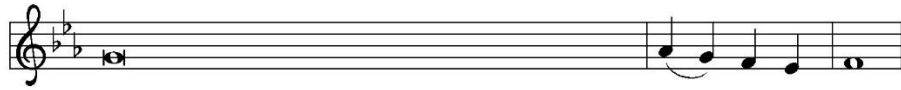
*Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



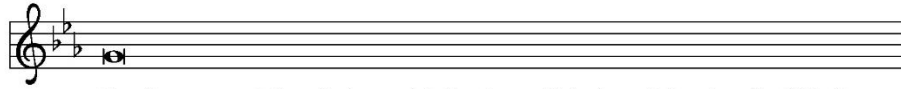
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



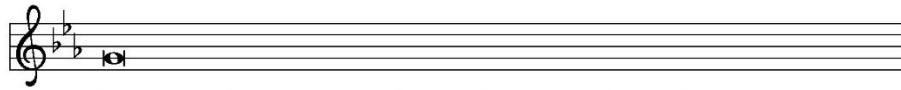
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

Let us return to God,
confessing our sin
In the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving God,
**we confess that we have turned from your way
to follow our own ways.**
Forgive us for the times
we have spoken or acted too quickly;
we have not spoken or acted at all;
we have hurt those closest to us;
we have hurt those we have yet to know;
we have thought more about ourselves than others;
we have thought less of ourselves than we ought.
Turn us around, and give us a fresh start,
so that we can live again as your children.

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering home.
In † Christ, your sins are forgiven.
You have a place in God's house forever.

Amen.

*Gathering Hymn No. 647 *Glorious Things of You Are Spoken*

1 Glo - rious things of you are spo - ken, Zi - on, cit - y
 2 See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, spring - ing from e -
 3 Round each hab - i - ta - tion hov - 'ring, see the cloud and
 4 Sav - ior, since of Zi - on's cit - y I through grace a

of our God! He whose word can - not be bro - ken
 ter - nal love, well sup - ply your sons and daugh - ters,
 fire ap - pear for a glo - ry and a cov - 'ring,
 mem - ber am, let the world de - ride or pit - y,

formed you for his own a - bode. On the Rock of A - ges
 and all fear of want re - move. Who can faint, while such a
 show - ing that the Lord is near. Thus de - riv - ing from their
 I will glo - ry in your name. Fad - ing are the world's vain

found - ed, what can shake your sure re - pose? With sal -
 riv - er ev - er will their thirst as - suage? Grace which,
 ban - ner light by night and shade by day, safe they
 plea - sures, all their boast - ed pomp and show; sol - id

va - tion's walls sur - round - ed, you may smile at all your foes.
 like the Lord, the giv - er, nev - er fails from age to age.
 feed up - on the man - na which God gives them on their way.
 joys and last - ing trea - sures none but Zi - on's chil - dren know.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.
 Music: BLAENWERN, William P. Rowlands, 1860–1937

Prayer of the Day

Please be seated.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Loving God,

your thoughts are not our thoughts,
and your ways are not our ways,
yet your patience with us is great
and your love for us even greater.

You have been our help in times of trouble –
tending to us and caring for us.

Gather us beneath your wings now,
that we might feel safe,
and in the warmth of that safety
find the strength to be
vulnerable,
honest,
repentant,
and joyful.

Clinging to you,
we join our hearts and minds
to worship you.

Amen.

Choral Anthem

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God
directed by Will Bowers

Carl Schalk

✠ WORD ✠

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to God will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

A reading from Isaiah.

- ¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
- ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
- ³ Incline your ear, and come to me;
 listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
- ⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
- ⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
 for the Lord has glorified you.
- ⁶ Seek the Lord while the Lord may be found,
 call upon God while God is near;
- ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way,
 and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, who will have mercy on them,
 and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.
- ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
- ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
 so are my ways higher than your ways
 and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 63:1-8

Refrain



¹O God, you are my God; eager-¹ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there¹ is
no water.

²**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your¹ holy place,
that I might behold your power¹ and your glory.**

³For your steadfast love is better than¹ life itself;
my lips shall¹ give you praise.

⁴**So will I bless you as long¹ as I live
and lift up my hands¹ in your name. R**

⁵My spirit is content, as with the rich-¹est of foods,
and my mouth praises you with¹ joyful lips,

⁶**when I remember you up-¹on my bed,
and meditate on you in¹ the night watches.**

⁷For you have¹ been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I¹ will rejoice.

⁸**My whole being¹ clings to you;
your right hand¹ holds me fast. R**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

A reading from 1 Corinthians

¹I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing God will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

Please stand if you are able.

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

***Gospel: Luke 13:1-9**

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²Jesus asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶Then Jesus told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸The gardener replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Prayer for Understanding

Please be seated.

Bring your word near to us, O God.
May it rest not only on our lips,
but also reside in our hearts.

Amen.

Sermon

Pastor Becki Verbridge

Hymn of the Day No. 328

Restore in Us, O God



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933

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***The Apostles' Creed**

Please stand if you are able.

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**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.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Please be seated.

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

For the church around the world in all its forms: for pastors, deacons, bishops, chaplains, and mission developers; for church councils, committee chairs, and all lay ministry leaders; for congregations facing challenges as they move forward in ministry. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the health of this planet and the well-being of its creatures: for lands impacted by droughts and wildfires; for fig trees and vineyards that produce fruit for our nourishment and delight; for animal habitats threatened by climate change. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those serving in positions of civic responsibility: for judges, attorneys, and court administrators tasked with uncovering truth and delivering justice; for activists and community leaders who cast a vision of a more compassionate and equitable society. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who call upon you for mercy: for all who live in poverty and experience hunger; for any who feel tested beyond their strength; for those who are hospitalized or near death, and for all in need of healing. We pray for all those on our prayer list, especially...Alan. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the advocacy efforts of this congregation: for those whose faith leads them to speak difficult truths and engage in difficult conversations; for those who promote mercy over vengeance or retaliation. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those whose earthly journeys have ended, we give thanks. With all the saints, we praise you for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

✠ MEAL ✠

***Sharing of the Peace**

Please stand if you are able.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

We share the peace of Christ with one another and then we are seated.

Offertory Hymn No. 188

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670-1739

Offering Prayer

Please remain seated.

God our provider,
you have not fed us with bread alone,
but with words of grace and life.

Bless us and these your gifts,
which we receive from our bounty,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Invitation to the Table

Christ comes to us in, with and under the bread and wine to nourish our faith.
The uncontainable presence, grace, love, forgiveness and
mercy of Christ come to us in this simple meal that spans all time and space.
All of God's children – regardless of denominational background –
are welcome and invited to share it with us.

*The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand if you are able.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right,

our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***Prayer at the Table**

Holy are you, O God,
and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
Your Spirit led him into the wilderness,
where he fasted forty days and forty nights
in preparation for his ministry.

Now, as we prepare for the yearly Paschal feast
of your Son's death and resurrection,
you lead us to repentance for our sin
and the cleansing of our hearts,
that during these forty days of Lent
we may be gifted and graced to renew the covenant
you made with us through Christ.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world.

Through your Son † Jesus Christ, to whom,
with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory,
now and forever.

Amen.

***The Lord's Prayer** (*Ecumenical Version*)

Let us now pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever.**

Amen.

Please be seated.

The Communion

Here is food and drink for the journey.
Come and be filled.

Amen.

Communion Hymn

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

*Those celebrating with us from your homes: please share the bread and wine or grape juice with one another using these words: The Body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. An **Amen** or **Thanks be to God** is spoken in response to these gifts.*

Those celebrating with us in person: Please come forward by the center aisle to receive a wafer- gluten free wafers are also available - and an individual cup of wine or white grape juice from those serving. Please return to your seat by the side aisle.

Hymn No. 773

Precious Lord, Take My Hand



1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
2 When my way grows . . drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near,
3 When the dark - ness ap - pears and the night draws . . near,



I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
when my life is . . . al - most . . gone,
and the day is . . . past and . . . gone,



Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light.
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall.
at the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand.



Take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

Text: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899-1993
Music: George N. Allen, 1812-1877, adapt. Thomas A. Dorsey
Text and music © 1938, 1966 Unichappell Music Inc., admin. Hal Leonard Corp.

PRECIOUS LORD
Irregular

✠ SENDING ✠

Prayer after Communion

Please remain seated.

Holy God,
you have welcomed us to this meal
and fed us at your table.
Send us now to welcome all
and to be at peace with one another,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

***Blessing**

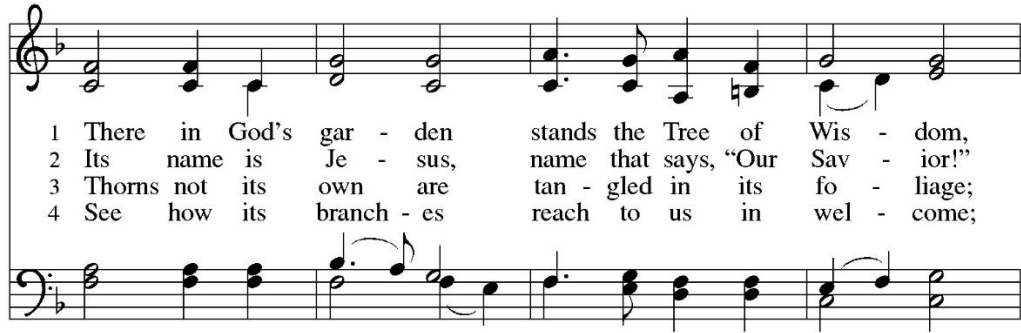
Please stand if you are able.

God, who fills the creation with abundance,
Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness,
Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us,
✠ bless you and bring you to life everlasting.

Amen.

*Sending Hymn No. 342

There in God's Garden



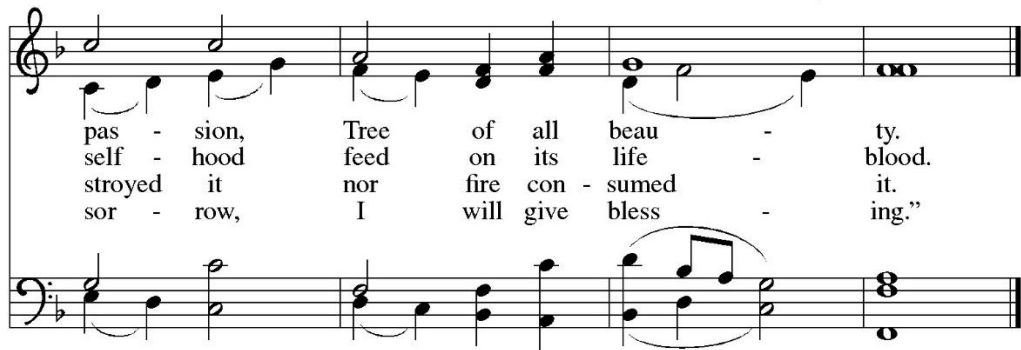
1 There in God's gar - den stands the Tree of Wis - dom,
2 Its name is Je - sus, name that says, "Our Sav - ior!"
3 Thorns not its own are tan - gled in its fo - liage;
4 See how its branch - es reach to us in wel - come;



whose leaves hold forth the heal - ing of the na - tions:
There on its branch - es see the scars of suf - f'ring;
our greed has starved it, our de - spite has choked it.
hear what the Voice says, "Come to me, ye wea - ry!



Tree of all knowl - edge, Tree of all com -
see there the ten - drills of our hu - man
Yet, look! it lives! its grief has not de -
Give me your sick - ness, give me all your



pas - sion, Tree of all beau - ty.
self - hood feed on its life - blood.
stroyed it nor fire con - sumed it.
sor - row, I will give bless - ing."

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Be assured of God's grace.

We go to connect people to Jesus through love and the Word of God.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Baroque Overture

Seth Bingham

*As the last act of worship, you are invited to remain for the Postlude.
If you do not wish to stay, please be respectful of those who are listening.*

+ + +

Your tithes and offerings are important to our ministry. On-line donation options are available at holytrinityakron.org/donate or by contacting Financial Secretary Jim Minisall at jminisall@holytrinityakron.org. Or simply mail your offerings to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 50 N. Prospect Street, Akron, Ohio 44304. Thank you for your generous and regular support.

The Love Offering for March will go to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Thank you for your generosity!

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Choral Anthem: *O Christ, Thou Lamb of God*, Carl Schalk, Copyright: 1964 Concordia Publishing House.

This Week at Holy Trinity

Sunday, 3/23	10:00 a.m.	<i>Worship</i>
	11:15 a.m.	<i>Coffee Fellowship</i> - Chapel Lounge
	11:45 a.m.	<i>Special Council Meeting</i> - Church Office
Tuesday, 3/25	6:30 p.m.	<i>Derbytown Chorus</i> - Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, 3/26	9:00 a.m.	<i>Morning Devotions</i> - Facebook
	12:00 p.m.	<i>Lenten Devotions & Lunch</i> - Room 202
Thursday, 3/27	6:30 p.m.	<i>Bell Choir</i> - Sanctuary
	7:30 p.m.	<i>Chancel Choir</i> - Sanctuary
Friday, 3/28	9:00 a.m.	<i>Faith 5 Check-In</i> - Zoom
Sunday, 3/30	10:00 a.m.	<i>Worship</i>
	11:15 a.m.	<i>Coffee Fellowship</i> - Chapel Lounge

March 23, 2025 Worship Stewards

Reader: Mike Ameling
Assisting Minister: Rachel Núñez
Communion Assistant: Alexa Sandmann

In Our Prayers...

March 23: Alan Keener (brother of Bob Keener).

March 16: Gloria Woodford (member), Tom Bouton (member).

March 9: Brad Bowan (Pr. Becki's father), Theresa McGee (friend of Steve White).

March 2: David Bledsoe (relative of Joan Amon), Cindy White (relative of Steve White), Art White (relative of Steve White), Thomas Lavin (friend of Steve White), Harry Jackson (friend of Steve White).

The names of those making the request will be printed next to the name of the person being prayed for. We kindly ask those making the request to keep our prayer list coordinators updated as to the status of the person they are requesting prayer for. We would be glad to continue praying for individuals (adding them for another four weeks) upon request. If you have updates or additions to the prayer list, please contact Sally Richenbacher, Rachel Núñez, or Pastor Becki Verbridge.

...Ministry Team Leaders...

Ministry Team	Team Leader(s)	Phone
Congregation Care & Connection	Amanda Archbold	(330) 322-6554
Finance	John Guran	(330) 606-3915
Invite-Welcome-Connect	Sandy DeLuca	(330) 703-4870
Meditation Memorial Garden	Sonya Nagle	(330) 410-4160
Outreach & Social Concerns	Gregg Loesch	(330) 733-4081
Personnel	John Stefanik	(330) 666-3579
Property	Kevin Heckel	(330) 283-2866
Worship & Music	Frederica Cohen	(330) 535-3037

...Our Staff...

Interim Pastor	Becki Verbridge	bverbridge@holytrinityakron.org
Director of Cong. Care & Connection	Rachel Nunez	rnunez@holytrinityakron.org
Dir. of Music Ministry	David Lines	dlines@holytrinityakron.org
Financial Secretary	Jim Minisall	jminisall@holytrinityakron.org
Communications Coord.	Sandy DeLuca	sdeluca@holytrinityakron.org
Parish Secretary	Annmarie Demko	ademko@holytrinityakron.org
Maintenance Coord.	Bruce Mansour	mansour@holytrinityakron.org
Sexton	Vince Simmons	

...Activity Coordinators...

Activity	Coordinator	Phone
Altar Guild	Deborah Ickes	(678) 353-7444
Assisting Ministers	Rachel Núñez	(330) 634-6597
Communion Assistants	Deborah Ickes	(678) 353-7444
Council President	Diane Chambers	(330) 388-5018
Men's Bible Study	Jack Harig Tom Baumgardner	(330) 644-9862 (330) 603-3691
Prayer Chain	Sally Richenbacher	(330) 650-1175
Readers	Nancy Riemenschneider	(330) 239-1086
Stewardship	Jack Harig	(330) 644-9862
Ushers	Gregg Loesch	(330) 733-4081
Women's Bible Study	Rachel Núñez	(330) 634-6597

50 N. Prospect Street Akron, OH 44304
(330) 376-5154

