

A SERVICE OF HEALING

HELENA OF CONSTANTINOPLE
PROTECTOR OF HOLY PLACES
330

MAY 22, 2024
6:00 p.m.



The Reverend Hannah E. Atkins Romero, Rector
The Reverend Dale Klitzke, Priest Associate

Alex Jones, Organist and Choirmaster
April Sloan-Hubert, Co-Director of the Trinity Jazz Ensemble
Pelayo Parlade, Co-Director of the Trinity Jazz Ensemble

***Making God's Presence Real
By Sharing Christ's Life-Changing Love***

A Public Service of Healing

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The Word of God

Presider: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

After a period of silence, the Minister then says the following Collects.

Gracious God, we commend to your loving care all who suffer, especially those who come here seeking your healing grace for themselves and for others. Give them patience and hope in their distress; strengthen and uphold them in mind and body; and grant, by your intervention, that all your people may be made whole according to your desire, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Most Merciful God, who blessed your servant Helena with such grace and devotion to you that she venerated the very footsteps of our Savior; Grant unto us the same grace that, aided by her prayers and example, we also may always behold your glory in the cross of your Son. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson

Micah 4: 1-4

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Psalms 2

- 1 Why are the nations in an uproar? *
Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?
- 2 Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt, and the princes plot together, *
against the Lord and against his Anointed?
- 3 "Let us break their yoke," they say; *
"let us cast off their bonds from us."

- 4 He whose throne is in heaven is laughing; *
the Lord has them in derision.
- 5 Then he speaks to them in his wrath, *
and his rage fills them with terror.
- 6 "I myself have set my king *
upon my holy hill of Zion."
- 7 Let me announce the decree of the Lord: *
he said to me, "You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.
- 8 Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance *
and the ends of the earth for your possession.
- 9 You shall crush them with an iron rod *
and shatter them like a piece of pottery."
- 10 And now, you kings, be wise; *
be warned, you rulers of the earth.
- 11 Submit to the Lord with fear, *
and with trembling bow before him;
- 12 Lest he be angry and you perish; *
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
- 13 Happy are they all *
who take refuge in him!

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 5: 17-21

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel

Luke 23: 26-32

As they led Jesus away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

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

A Litany of Healing

The Celebrant introduces the Litany with this bidding

Let us name before God those for whom we offer our prayers.

The People audibly name those for whom they are interceding. A Person appointed then leads the Litany
God the Father, your will for all people is health and salvation;

We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

God the Son, you came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly;

We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

God the Holy Spirit, you make our bodies the temple of your presence;

We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

Holy Trinity, one God, in you we live and move and have our being;

We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

All you Holy Angels, Archangels, and bodiless powers of heaven;

Stand beside us to guide and guard us on our way.

Holy Mary, Mother of God;

Pray for us and the people of the world.

For all who grieve the death of family, friends, and citizens;

Give them courage and strength to meet the days ahead, O Lord, and the consolation of your love.

Pour out your healing grace on all who are sick, injured, or disabled, that they may be made whole;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are afraid, anxious, or overwhelmed, a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Give peace, courage, and hope to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by human sin, in our lives, in our nation, and in the world;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Bless physicians, nurses, and all others who minister to the sick and suffering, keep them safe and healthy, and grant them wisdom and skill, sympathy, and patience;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Open our eyes to see that you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth and that our life and death are with each other;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Give us compassion for those in need, patience in this time of distress in our country, and love for our neighbors;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

Let our hearts be not afraid;

Hear us, O Lord of life.

You are the Lord who does wonders:

You have declared your power among the peoples.

With you, O Lord, is the well of life:

And in your light we see light.

Let us pray:

A period of silence follows.

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Confession of Sin

The Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People:

God of all mercy,

we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives.

**We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves,
and in the world you have created.**

**We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,**

and the evil done on our behalf.

Forgive, restore, and strengthen us

through our Savior Jesus Christ,

that we may abide in your love

and serve only your will. Amen.

The Priest, stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

Prayers for Healing

*The minister may invite each person to give her or his name and any particular request for prayer.
The minister then prays silently, then prays aloud using one of the following forms or similar words.*

I lay my hands upon you in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, praying you will be strengthened and filled with God's grace, that you may know the healing power of the Spirit. *Amen.*

After all are anointed

May the God who goes before you through desert places by night and by day be your companion and guide; may your journey be with the saints; may the Holy Spirit be your strength, and Christ your clothing of light, in whose name we pray. *Amen.*

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Blessing

May God the Father bless us, God the Son heal us, God the Holy Spirit give us strength. May God the holy and undivided Trinity guard our bodies, save our souls, and bring us safely to his heavenly country; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Dismissal

Officiant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Amen.**

Helena of Constantinople, Protector of Holy Places

Helena was the mother of the Emperor Constantine of Rome and a devout Christian, but she is perhaps most renowned for her discoveries of holy sites related to the life of Jesus.

Helena was born into a lower-class family in the middle of the third century, though we are unsure about where. Many believe she was born in Drepana (now Helenopolis) in northern Asia Minor but this is uncertain. There are also later legends that place her birth in England, and for that she is honored with numerous holy wells across the country. Regardless of birthplace she would eventually become the wife, or at least consort, of Constantius I, who was co-emperor and ruled over Gaul (France) and Britannia (Britain). During this time Helena would give birth to a son, Constantine, in the year 272, but she would soon be divorced and live in the East in the palace of Diocletian.

Once her son gained the Western Empire in the year 312, she returned to Rome and was granted the title Augusta, or Empress, in 325. It was during this time that she made her famous journey to the Holy Land to find the places mentioned in the Gospels, with the most important finds being the Cross of the Crucifixion and the site of the Resurrection.

Long after the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70, the Emperor Hadrian had the area rebuilt. As part of this restoration a pagan temple was built on the very site of the Resurrection. Helena ordered this temple destroyed, had the area excavated, and discovered three crosses along with the epitaph that said, "Jesus, King of the Jews." To ensure it was truly the cross of Christ, a woman near death was carried to the site and touched each cross in turn. On the third one she was cured and Helena declared this to be the one. She ordered that a church be built which would be called the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Regardless of the truth of the legend itself, it is certain that she claimed to have found this and many other holy sites and relics on her journey, and that many of these remain prominent sites of Christian pilgrimage to this day. Unfortunately, she would not live to see the completion of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as she died in 330, five years before its completion.

Helena also had a reputation as a faithful Christian who cared for the poor. After her death several towns would be named in her honor and she would also eventually be given the title of "Equal to the Apostles" in the Orthodox Church. Helena's faith in her Lord was not a detached spirituality, but an embodied and historical one, such that she eagerly sought to find the very places where the Son of God had walked, taught, died, and rose again.

from Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2022, page 240

A HISTORY OF TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Trinity Episcopal Church of Houston has existed as a house of worship and a center of its community for over a century. As such, it has adapted to the changing nature of the city, as Houston grew from a regional town of approximately 40,000 souls to a dynamic metropolitan giant, the fourth largest city in the United States. With a congregation that grew from a few founding members in the 1890s to several thousand parishioners at its peak, Trinity Church is an example of how spiritual people have contended with the challenges presented during a city's most crucial period of urban development.

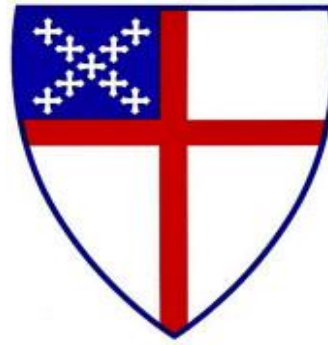
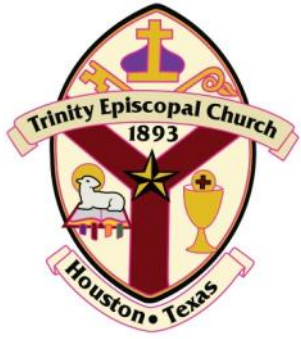
Founded in 1893 as a mission of Christ Church, Houston's first Episcopal church, Trinity located southwest of downtown. After a quarter of a century of existence in wooden buildings, Trinity parish built its present imposing structure (1917 - 1921) in Houston's South End, at the corner of Main Street and Holman Avenue. That structure, designed by Ralph Adams Cram of Boston and William Ward Watkin of Houston became an architectural landmark constructed in the neo-Gothic style with Texas limestone and a 97 foot bell tower.

During the late 1910s and 1920s, Trinity entered an era of explosive growth, paralleling that of the city, and became an important center of the Episcopal faith. The congregation's many youth and adult activities were community events that attracted wide attention among the general populace. An integral part of its city, Trinity likewise maintained special relationships with Houstonians of other faiths. With a membership numbering 1,900 parishioners in 1930, Trinity emerged as the largest Episcopal parish in the Diocese of Texas and one of the largest in the nation.

After World War II, Houston's growth presented Trinity with perhaps its greatest challenge. As the city physically expanded into the new postwar suburbs, Trinity's membership began to decline. Rather than abandon its historic location, the congregation showed itself to be steadfast. Resurrecting itself from this period, Trinity reaffirmed its mission, this time as a beacon in the inner city where it has become a leading institution in the heart of Houston, determined to enhance the quality of urban life for everyone.

While our neighborhood has gone through many changes, the parish has remained steadfast, and actively ministers to a diverse congregation and to the poor in its midst. As the Midtown Houston neighborhood began redeveloping, starting in the early 2000s, Trinity Church has rededicated itself to its spiritual mission, and has become an active part of the Midtown area for music and other creative art expressions.





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