

A SERVICE OF HEALING

EUPHROSYNE/SMARAGDUS OF ALEXANDRIA

MONASTIC

FIFTH CENTURY

SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

6:00 p.m.



The Reverend Hannah E. Atkins Romero, Rector
The Reverend Luz Cabrera Montes, Associate 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
Euphrosyne/Smaragdus of Alexandria
Monastic
Fifth Century

September 27, 2023

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**

Merciful God, who looks not with outward eyes but discerns the heart of each: we confess that those whom we love the most are often strangers to us. Give to all parents and children, we pray, the grace to see one another as they truly are and as you have called them to be. All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our only mediator and advocate. **Amen.**

First Lesson

Exodus 16: 2-15

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days." So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?" And Moses said, "When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord."

Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.'" And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'"

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 19

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, *
and the firmament shows his handiwork.
- 2 One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.
- 3 Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,
- 4 Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.
- 5 In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; *
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.
- 6 It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again; *
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.
- 7 The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; *
the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.
- 8 The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; *
the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.
- 9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; *
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
- 10 More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, *
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.
- 11 By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.
- 12 Who can tell how often he offends? *
cleanse me from my secret faults.
- 13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.
- 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, *
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 6: 1-8

When any of you has a grievance against another, do you dare to take it to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? Do you not know that we are to judge angels—to say nothing of ordinary matters? If you have ordinary cases, then, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to decide between one believer and another, but a believer goes to court against a believer—and before unbelievers at that? In fact, to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? But you yourselves wrong and defraud—and believers at that.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

Luke 14: 25-33

Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions."

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.**

Euphrosyne/Smaragdus of Alexandria, Monastic

Euphrosyne was born in the fifth century, the beloved only child of a couple in Alexandria. She had a warm and loving family life, but her mother died when she was still a young girl. Her father, Paphnutius, instructed her in the Christian faith, and often used to take her to visit the monasteries outside of the city.

As she grew to adulthood, her father arranged what he thought was an excellent future for her—marriage to a wealthy and handsome young man from a prominent family. But Euphrosyne would have none of it. She and her father quarreled, and she ran away from home in anger without even saying goodbye. She cut her hair, changed her clothing for men's attire, and adopted the name of Smaragdus.

Smaragdus entered a monastic community outside of Alexandria, where he made great progress in prayer and in wisdom. Many years later, Paphnutius came to that same monastery, seeking consolation in his bereavement over the daughter he had lost, whom he believed to be dead. The abbot of the monastery (perhaps perceiving the situation more clearly than he had ever admitted) sent Paphnutius to Smaragdus for spiritual direction and guidance. Paphnutius was then instructed in the spiritual life by Smaragdus for years, coming weekly to the monastery for his wisdom and advice, but during all that time he failed to recognize his own child.

It was only as Smaragdus was ill and near to death that Paphnutius' eyes were finally opened, and he recognized that the beloved daughter he had mourned as dead and the monk who had guided him through his grief were in fact the same person. He nursed Smaragdus lovingly during his final illness, and then became a monk himself, occupying the same cell that his child had lived in for the rest of his life.

from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2022*, page 436

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.

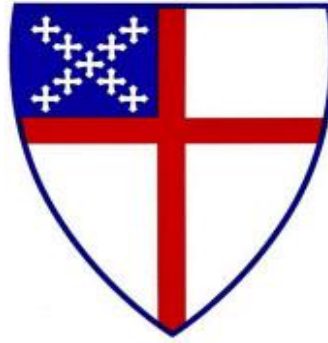
Founded in 1893 as a mission of Christ Church, Houston's first Episcopal church, Trinity located southwest of downtown. After a quarter of a century of existence in wooden buildings, Trinity parish built its present imposing structure (1917 - 1921) in Houston's South End, at the corner of Main Street 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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