



Introducing

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH of HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

A Place of Welcome, Hope, and Healing

WHO WE ARE

We are an urban parish, located in the Asylum Hill district of Hartford, Connecticut. Our campus is surrounded by large insurance companies and by housing and small businesses built in the Victorian era. Over the past 50 years we have moved from being a parish with members mostly drawn from white middle to upper middle-class suburban families to a parish with a broadly diverse ethnicity: White, African, African-American, Caribbean, Hispanic, and Asian. LGBTQ+ people have found a warm welcome here. We are strongly committed to women's and lay ministry in all areas of parish leadership including our vestry and our wardens. In addition to forums on social justice Trinity has been the home, some say the incubator, of programs such as sponsorship of immigrants, HeadStart, Loaves and Fishes, a Salvation Army senior center, Chrysalis (which supports people dealing with mental health issues), Integrity (addressing issues of sexuality), and most recently Trinity Academy. We are a congregation that celebrates racial, sexual, gender, and class diversity. We have developed a solid and robust identity that needs a leader who will reaffirm that identity and help us find new and exciting ways to express it more widely.

HOW WE PRAISE GOD IN WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Worship is at the core of everything that happens at Trinity, Hartford; it is what feeds our diverse flock of parishioners, providing "welcome, hope and healing" for all who come to our services. It is something with which our parish takes great care, striving for what a parishioner once described as "friendly excellence."

Pandemic and post-pandemic financial constraints have forced us to reduce the number of services offered each week at Trinity to a single service at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday. During this time of transition, our retired clergy have supplemented our supply priests, and allowed us to continue to offer a Rite II Eucharist **in person** every Sunday. These services are also offered online through a YouTube link on our website.

The present constraints have not diminished the quality of what we offer to our worshippers. The music is lovely, and diverse; those who serve at the altar, read the lessons, and offer individual intercessory prayer following Communion are capable and committed, exercising great care in carrying out their duties. Preaching is a particular strength at Trinity; we have a long and cherished tradition of offering our pulpit to not only our paid staff clergy but also to other clergy who are members of the parish and several of our gifted lay people. Those who worship at Trinity deeply value the chance to hear and be inspired by a number of different voices.



Trinity has been blessed to have been able to maintain its 135-year-old neo-Gothic buildings, and their furnishings, so that they continue to provide a functional and lovely backdrop to our worship experience. A large gallery organ, a smaller portative organ, two pianos, plus an array of handbells and drums support the offering of a variety of music by our choirs and congregation. Under the expert direction of our half-time Director of Music, Markus Centola, we experience the joy of singing music from diverse sources and traditions in addition to the standard Anglican repertoire. We are led in our singing by an adult choir joined each Sunday by members of the Choir School of Hartford.

The Choir School of Hartford, founded and resident at Trinity Church, is a unique tuition-free program designed for young people age 8 – 18 in which they receive a high-quality music education through a structure based on the Royal School of Choral Music curriculum focused on vocal training, ear training, sight singing, and harmony studies. Our choristers are engaging deeply with traditional choral repertoire while also exploring diverse styles, including Latino, African, spirituals and Gospel music, where they learn to swing the rhythms—a wonderful blend of education and cultural appreciation.

In the past 12 months, the adult choir along with the Choir School have performed in special concerts at Trinity Church and at Trinity College. One of the concerts included both choirs, a small instrumental ensemble, and a contemporary ballet company. The choristers of the Choir School of Hartford have also sung with the choirs of St. Bartholomew's in New York City and performed at St. Peter's in Hebron, CT.

Seating in the sanctuary consists entirely of movable chairs - no pews since the present church building was built in the 1890's! – and the altar currently in use is moveable, so the possibilities for configuring the church for a variety of worship experiences are wide-ranging, and we tend to keep thinking up new ones. In the summertime, our large and lovely Memorial Garden, with a small labyrinth, is sometimes used as our Sunday morning worship space.

Worship is important to Trinity's members; it's not just something we have to do because we are a church. It's something we need to do, and do well, because we are a church community. We come from different towns all around the Hartford area, but we come together each week to feed our souls and build our special community of love and fellowship, and we do our best to worship with care and devotion to God and to each other.

HOW WE LIVE OUR FAITH IN ACTION

Trinity has a long history of Faith in Action, both through outreach and through parish care. Since the 1940s, our refugee ministry has helped settle families from Germany, Bosnia, Cuba, Liberia, Myanmar, Syria and Afghanistan. Trinity started, supported and for a long time housed the Loaves and Fishes feeding program and we supported and housed Trinity Academy, a tuition free, grade 1 -4 magnet school. Despite our decline in members and budget which limit our corporate efforts, we are still engaged in outreach through the efforts of our individual lay members who have a long personal involvement in various activities. Trinity remains committed to using its buildings and resources for service to all of God's people.



LOCAL OUTREACH

Covenant to Care - Trinity participates in the Adopt-a-Social-Worker program of Covenant to Care for abused, neglected or at-risk Hartford children. Parishioners provide back-to-school backpacks and materials in the fall, gifts asked for by the children from our Advent Giving Tree, and other items during the year.

Church by the Pond in Bushnell Park - Several times a year, Trinity supports the Ecclesia Ministry and Church Street Eats program coordinated by Christ Church Cathedral. Our volunteers make lunches at Trinity which we offer, with personal care items, after the Eucharist at the park. Through the Cathedral, we provided personal hygiene products, not covered by food stamps, to Capital Community College students.

Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance – In 2021, Trinity joined GHIAA, a coalition of 52 Christian, Jewish and Muslim organizations, which does community-based research on social justice issues in our area, organizes and trains members and lobbies CT legislature and executive branch on mutually agreed issues like gun violence, housing, mental health and education.

Refugee Resettlement – Our Refugee Resettlement Committee works with partners in several other local faith communities to resettle refugee families in the Hartford area. Working closely with Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services (IRIS), Trinity has sponsored and supported two Afghan families whose husbands had worked for the US military and one Syrian family. Members of the committee provide support in families' day-to-day settlement activities, including school enrollment, medical care, jobs and transportation.

Several members are Connecticut Foodshare distribution volunteers and we participate in its fundraising walk and a cystic fibrosis walk. We printed Trinity T-shirts which we wear on the walks and similar events to publicize our involvement.

Trinity is a long-time member of the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association, formed in 1997 to empower community residents and stakeholders (non-profits, churches, merchants and corporations) to improve the quality of life in Asylum Hill. Trinity has long hosted weekly 12-step AA, NA and Al-Anon group meetings.

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

Five Talents, the microenterprise program of the Anglican Communion, works through the staff of local Anglican Churches in over eight countries. It helps the poorest, mostly women, save money and start small businesses, as well as providing training on literacy, basic math, trauma healing, peace building and agriculture, as needed. Trinity has supported its work in Bolivia, Rwanda and South Sudan and has sponsored requests for significant donations from our diocese's Sustainable Development Grant fund. American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is a ministry strongly supported by parishioner donations and special occasion envelope and loose plate offerings approved by the Vestry. Our support in recent years has been for Ahli Hospital in Gaza. Parishioner donations to AFEDJ were matched from the outreach budget. We also fund it by offering Palestinian ornaments for sale in Advent.



PARISH CARE

Faith in Action at Trinity also takes the form of care for the church and parishioners. While we seek a new priest-in-charge, pastoral care has primarily taken the form of parishioners taking care of each other. We have several members who are retired priests and they have been generous in providing emergency support to the parish on a voluntary basis.

Members of our Intercessory Prayer Team are available during communion each week to pray individually with people who feel in special need of God's healing presence. Team members meet monthly for fellowship and conversation as a means of deepening their own spiritual life. Office Volunteers assist our Administrator and Financial Manager with tasks and projects for Trinity. We also have several book groups which meet regularly. Several of our members are trained Stephen Ministers.

Our property team works with the Facilities Manager to maintain all aspects of the buildings and grounds including applying for grants and arranging work days, mowing the lawn and caring for the plantings and labyrinth in our Memorial Garden.

HOW WE LEARN AND GROW IN FAITH

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Our parish has a long history of offering adult forums for presentation and robust discussion of how we, as individuals and as a parish, develop an understanding of how to live out our faith in the world around us.

These forums encourage parishioners to share their views on a variety of topics, often under the guidance of a member of the parish, a retired priest, or occasionally an 'expert' from outside the congregation. Forums are on Sunday mornings after the 10:00 service but sometimes in the evenings if the subject requires more time

We have considered issues of social justice for the past 50 years, taking up subjects such as the role of moral values in political and economic areas, taxation, the free market, the ecological crisis, sexuality, and affordable housing. These and other moral issues challenge and inspire our spiritual formation and offer opportunities to understand morality's application to the world beyond our congregational boundaries. In addition to these social-justice focused forums we have had presentations on church music and light-hearted sessions on "how to become an Episcopal millionaire" testing our knowledge of hymns and other aspects of Episcopal liturgy and history. We also have monthly adult Bible study on Sunday mornings. We have tried to provide a forum on a bi-weekly basis.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN FORMATION - GODLY PLAY

Godly play is a program for children ages 2½ and up to learn stories of the Bible, baptism, and church seasons. It is held on the second, third and fourth Sundays of each month at 10:00. The main storyteller and another adult are always there to help. A story is told very simply with simple props and without interpretation or moral instruction. Next is what is called Feast, with water and snacks introduced by a song to serve as a grace. Then the two adults help the children to work with the story props or to use clay, markers, or other materials which each child chooses in response to what they found most important or interesting in the story. The program is finished by forming a ring to pass the peace to each other and let anyone give thanks for something that happened in their life that week. Then the children join their families in the church for the rest of the service, usually between the confession and the passing of the peace.

OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OUR NEXT PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

We seek a priest who will join us in our joyful and inclusive worship, appreciating the rich diversity of voices from our pulpit and from our congregation.

With our long history of connecting with other local congregations through shared worship, music and formation programs, we hope for a priest who will help us strengthen and broaden our connections to other faith communities.

We seek a priest who will help us live as a people who take care of one another in times of need.

We seek a priest who will help us make the most of our considerable diversity through intentional programming and through strengthening and growing our fellowship opportunities.

We have experienced much loss in recent years and we seek a priest who will love us through our mourning and help us grow in grace as we process our grief.

We plan to continue and grow our work on behalf of people in need through our work on social justice, refugee resettlement, and outreach efforts to our local community and around the world. We seek a priest who will share our commitment and help us grow as Christians in a hurting world.

We recognize that we are at a crossroads between who we have been and who we will become. We seek a priest who will shepherd us through the process of defining how we will live into God's call to us for today and beyond.