



Holy Trinity
Lutheran
Church
Buffalo, New York

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Buffalo, New York

Sunday, December 20, 2020
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Celebrating our 142nd Anniversary

Service of the Word 10:30 a.m.

Welcome to Holy Trinity!

Holy Trinity recognizes that each of us is a unique creation made in the image of God. We celebrate and give thanks for the many diverse gifts that God has bestowed on us. We proclaim ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation to all of God's people; welcoming into our ministry persons of every race, culture, age, gender identification, sexual orientation, ability, and economic status. We believe that our openness will allow us to grow in our faith through Christ's teaching to love one another as God loves us.

Share your story!

Check-in, Tweet, post, or send an Instagram about your experience at Holy Trinity.

Use #PowerofTrinity to share your Faith in an instant!

Find us on Facebook at:

Facebook.com/holytrinitybuffalo

Facebook.com/BuffaloHTLCMusic

INTRODUCTION

The opening words of Psalm 126 read, "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream." What does it look like to live as those who dream? The prophets, the psalmists, John the Baptist, Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, the shepherds and the Magi—they were all dreamers. They received, discovered, and responded to God's dreams for the world. In Advent, we step into the mystery and awe of God's dreams and pray they shape our reality. This Advent we are exploring what it means to dream alongside the prophets and angels, Mary and the Magi. Join us as we dream anew together and sow seeds of God's dreams for our world.

(Introduction and "Those Who Dream" by Sanctified Art LLC)

PRELUDE

O Sapineta and O Oriens
from *O Antiphon Sequence*

Cecilia McDowall
(b. 1951)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

As we gather from our homes, we invite you to place a bowl or cup of water in front of you, to remember our baptism.

WORDS OF CONFESSION

God of Good News,

You say to me, “You are highly favored,” but I struggle to see how that could be.

You say to me, “Do not be afraid,” but I am afraid all the time.

You say to me, “Even the impossible is possible, just look at Elizabeth!”

But hope slips through my hands like water.

The impossible still feels impossible.

So today I pray,

Today we pray:

Teach us to sing like Mary.

Teach us to laugh like Elizabeth.

Teach us to trust like the angels.

Forgive us when we can only do one at a time, or none at all.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN

All Earth Is Hopeful “Toda La Terra”

ELW 266

(vs. 1 & 3)



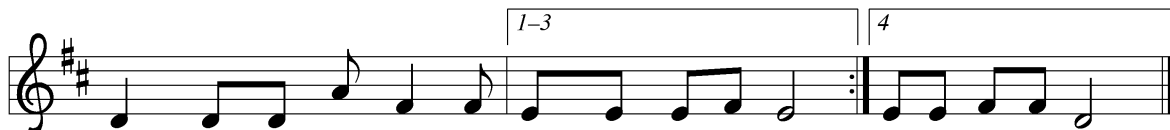
To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
“A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el”; she con -
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, “God with us,” our broth - er, whose birth re -
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

- 2 *Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:*
“De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel,”
será “Dios con nosotros,” hermano será,
con él la esperanza al mundo volverá.
- 3 *Montes y valles habrá que preparar;*
nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.
Él está ya muy cerca, venido a encontrar,
y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.

4 *En una cueva Jesús apareció,*
pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé

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GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

While we light the Advent Wreath we sing together:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel: ELW 257 vs. 1, 2, 3 & 4

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh: in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny; from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

A WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

The Rev. Lee M. Miller, II

THE READING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

The first reading for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is recorded in Samuel, the 7th Chapter.

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE SOLO

For, Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth, George Frideric Handel
The People That Walked in Darkness (1685 – 1759)
from *Messiah*

Shane Keyes, *baritone*

For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

The holy gospel according to Saint Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said,

“Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Lee M. Miller, II

SERMON MEDITATION

O Emmanuel from O Antiphon Sequence

Cecilia McDowall
(b. 1951)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. We pray for our ecumenical and inter-faith siblings in VOICE Buffalo, the Network of Religious Communities, and the Buffalo City Cluster: Grace, North Park, Parkside, Community of Good Neighbors, and Holy Trinity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. We pray for all those serving in the armed forces and their families. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence. We give you thanks for the life, love and family of Monroe Mitchell. We pray for those impacted by injustice, those on the front line of the pandemic, and all those we name out loud, or in the silence of our hearts and our minds. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Share a sign of peace with someone in your home, or share a message of peace via text, tweet, or post (or call someone after worship.)

THE OFFERING

Thank you for your gifts and offerings which make our ministry possible. You may share your offering by clicking the “Contribute Today” link below this Livestream and on our Homepage, or by mailing your gift to the church office. Thank you!

SOLO AT THE OFFERING

Nun wandre, Maria

Hugo Wolf

from *Spanisches Liederbuch: Geistliche Lieder*

(1860-1903)

Text: from Ocaña, Spain

German Tr.: Paul Ludwig von Heyse (1830-1914)

Shane Keyes, *baritone*

Journey on, now, Mary, keep journeying. the cocks are crowing, and the place is near.

Journey on, beloved, my jewel, and soon we shall be in Bethlehem. Then you shall rest well and slumber there. The cocks are crowing, and the place is near.

I will see, my lady, that your strength is failing; I can hardly, alas, bear your agony. Courage! We shall find some shelter there. The cocks are crowing, and the place is near.

If only your hour of pain were over, O Mary, I should handsomely reward the happy tidings. This little ass here I'd gladly give away! The cocks are crowing, Come! The place is near.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God,

Before you could speak, you were speaking –

Leaping in wombs, kicking, stretching, jumping for joy.

You have always found a way to show up in our midst,

Particularly on our fearful and lonely days.

**So today, as we crack open our Bibles,
Fluttering through these old beloved pages,
We ask that you would move again.**

Stir in us.

Speak to us.

Fill us with the Holy Spirit.

**And if we are not able to hear your Word clearly,
Then give us Elizabeths
Who will point out your presence in delight and joy.**

**Before you could speak, you were speaking.
So here and now, Creator God, we are listening.
Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
**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, forever and ever.**

Amen.

BENEDICTION

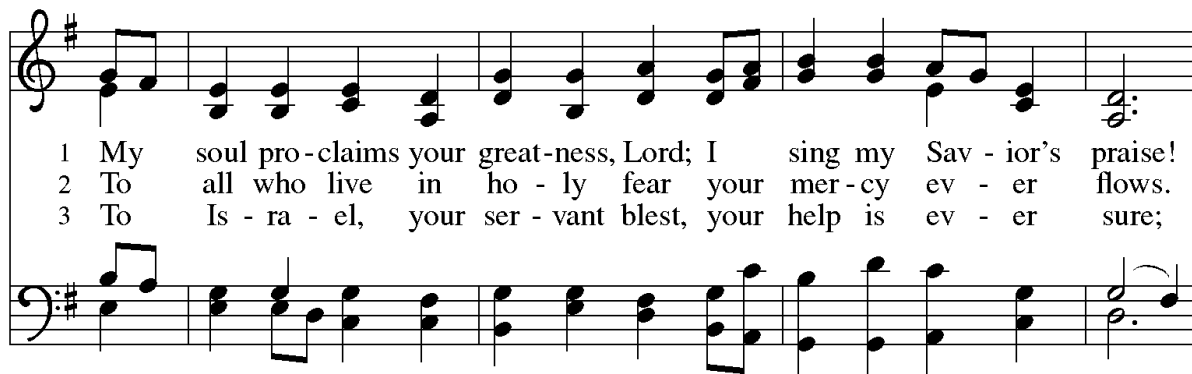
The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
✠ now and forever. **Amen.**

RECESSIONAL HYMN

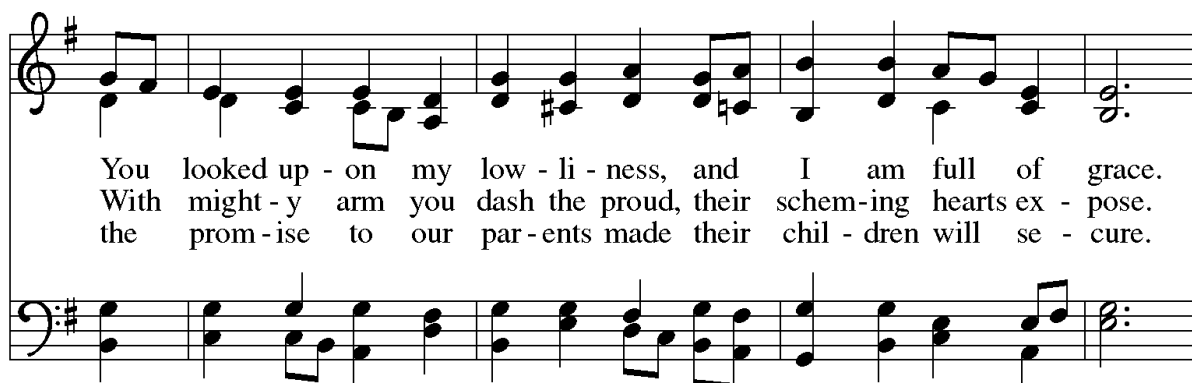
My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness “Kingsfold”

ELW 251

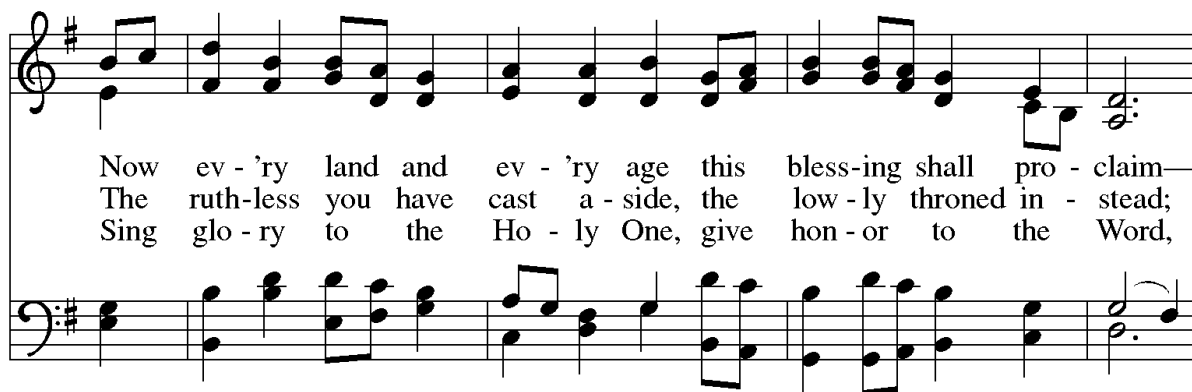
(vs. 1 & 3)



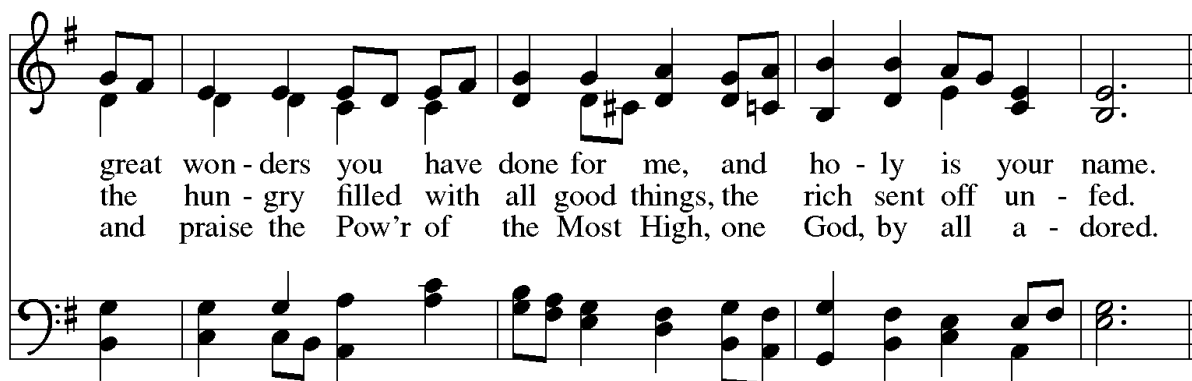
1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!
2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer - cy ev - er flows.
3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.
With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.
the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—
The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;
Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

Text: *With One Voice*, 1995, based on the Magnificat

Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

O Clavis David from *O Antiphon Sequence*

Cecilia McDowall

(b. 1951)



The flowers on the altar are given In Loving Memory of my father David Ray Rice and in celebration of what would be his 84th birthday by Pastor Brenda Maynor; and In Loving Memory of W. Dana Jones and Elizabeth Jones by Kevin, Helen, Ann Marie and Randi Jones.



Office Staff may be reached by phone daily Monday – Friday.

Please call the church office should you need anything.

As always, the Pastors are available by appointment.

We will continue to share information regarding life and worship at Holy Trinity. You can always check out the website for up-to-date information.

CHRISTMAS EVE - ONLINE

3:00pm - Family Christmas Story-time Live on Facebook

7:30pm - Celebration Service with Candlelight –
Facebook and Website

10:30pm - Celebration Service with Candlelight –
Facebook and Website

CHRISTMAS DAY - ONLINE

10:30 a.m. Service of the Word

Our Pastors and Church Council have made the very difficult decision to hold Christmas Eve Services **ONLINE ONLY**.

This decision is out of love and care for our members, guests, and greater community. Our decision follows in line with similar congregations to our own. This year, even the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and St. Peter's in New York are suspending in-person gatherings. We stay apart now in our homes, so that when we are able to gather together, we are all still here.

We know that Christmas Eve Services are a very special part of all of our Christmas celebrations. We will miss being with you in person. However - God's promises and assurance of grace in Christ Jesus still come to us anew in this season.

To us a child is born, who is Christ the Lord!

We shall give thanks!

We shall celebrate and even join together
through our computer screens!

We will pray and remember!

And soon and very soon, we will gather together again.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANGEL TREE GIFTS FOR STUDENTS AT P.S. #17. We had another successful year! Thank you to so many who were very generous this year, members and guests alike!!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: The annual meeting will take place on Sunday, January 24, 2021. Mark your calendars for the meeting and more details to follow.

ALTAR FLOWERS: Each Sunday, the beautiful vases of flowers gracing the chancel are often dedicated by members of our congregation in memory of or honor of loved ones. Looking ahead, the following dates are available- January 3rd and January 10th- 1 vase each. Please contact Linda Schmidt with your request for these or any other specific date during the year. She can be reached at msmarylschmidt@gmail.com or 716-835-3325. Vases are currently \$40.00 each.

MONDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY: Via Zoom at 9:30 am at <https://zoom.us/j/427428740?pwd=YlBZdUdLL3l4YU5QWnJUUTdkRlk4Zz09#success>. Join via Zoom ID 427 428 740. Password 849195.

FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP Happy Hour – Join us each Friday via Zoom at 5:00pm. We'll meet together through safe physical-distancing while being able to check in with each other and enjoy the company. Bring your favorite beverage to the computer. Zoom Meeting ID: 285 453 435. Password 299123.

CRISIS SERVICES: For anyone feeling down, lonely or depressed, Crisis Services is working around the clock to respond to and combat the impact COVID-19 has on our community. Their hotline number is 834-3131 and are available 24-hours a day. If you are looking for counseling services, we share a partnership with Pat Greene, LMHC, and he may be reached at 716-361-4615.

HOLY TRINITY LEADERSHIP

Congregational Council

Uli MacDonald, President
Emily Notari, Vice-President
Guy Huber, Treasurer
Jennifer Yap, Secretary

Theedralyn Bradley, Kathy Crissey, Ryon Fleming, Richard Lee,
Juan Perez, Raúl Saona, Elizabeth Vihnanek and Barb Wozniak

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Justin Pomietlarz, Choirmaster
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Carol Littlefield, Parish Accountant
Judy Reifsteck, Faith Community Nurse (632-3448)
John Busch, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Charles Ryniec, Steward of Buildings and Grounds

The Rev. Lee M. Miller II, Senior Pastor
pastor.lee.miller@holytrinitybuffalo.org

The Rev. Brenda Maynor, Pastor
pastorbrenda@holytrinitybuffalo.org

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