

## Invitation to Offering:

**Offertory:** "O Love" E. Hagenberg

**Doxology** UMH # 94

**Offering Prayer: Generous God, in light of your extravagant blessings– no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives– we offer our gifts and ourselves, and know that you transform what we plant into the produce of love. Amen.**

### A Blessing for Slowing Down

"Blessed are you who do not despise your realness. It may hurt. You may not recognize yourself in the mirror. But this is what we hoped for, right? To live and love. To be loved.

To have our experiences show on our faces and in our cells.

It is the real life of Jesus in us, being made visible, as all our seams show."

**\*Hymn:** "Stand By Me" UMH #512

### Benediction

**Postlude:** "Prelude in F Major" J. S. Bach

*All liturgy and leader parts Marcia McFee © [www.worshipdesignstudio.com/goodenough](http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com/goodenough). Used and adapted with permission.*

"A Blessing for Slowing Down [excerpt]" from [Good Enough: 40-ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection](#) by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Used with permission.

### We thank those who participated in today's service:

**Accompanist:** Vera Baker

**Acolytes:** Mason Hedeem, Anthony and Nicholas Skridulas

**Altar Flowers:** In loving memory of Gary Turner.

**Altar Guild:** Vera Baker and Deb Garth

**Carillonneur:** Thomas St. Marie

**Fellowship Hour:** Erica Weida and volunteers

**Liturgist:** Don Evans

**Soloist:** Teri LaFleur

**Ushers:** Head Usher, Sheila Womble; Asst. Head Usher, Don Cushing; Ushers, Jacki Barden,

Ginger Elliott, Deb Garth

**Video Team:** Nicole Baker, Brian Crawford, Nic Odell, Jack Rust, Eric Wing



**Celebrate** God's love

**Nurture** relationships with God and one another

**Serve** our community and world, as we share the light of Christ

## Trinity United Methodist Church

361 Sumner Avenue, Springfield, MA 01108

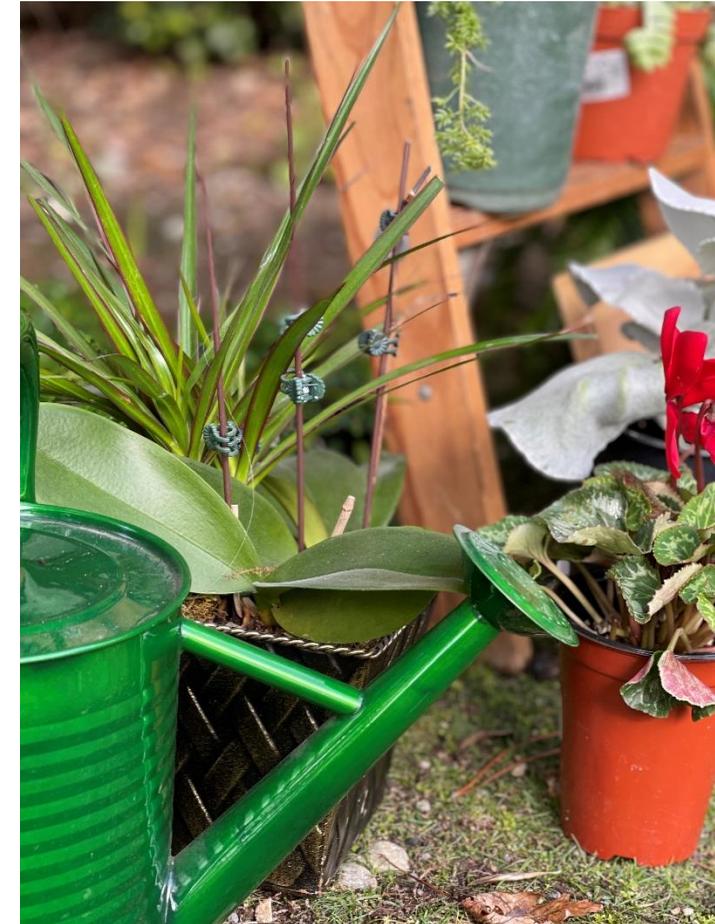
[www.trinityspringfield.org](http://www.trinityspringfield.org)

*Pastor, Rev. René Perez*

*Director of Music Ministry, Michael Carney*

*Director of Family Ministries & Connections, Rob Powell*

*Spiritual Director, Cathy MacGovern*



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*Believing that all persons are created in God's image and are of sacred worth, that Jesus' message was one of inclusion of those rejected by mainstream society, and that each member makes inherent and valuable contributions to the Body of Christ, we of Trinity Church welcome into this congregation people of every age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic condition, family structure, and physical or mental ability.*

**GOOD ENOUGH:**  
*Embracing the Imperfections of Life and Faith*  
**Fourth Sunday in Lent**

**March 27, 2022**

**10:30 a.m.**

**Bold items are the congregation's part. \* Stand if you are able**

**Music for Gathering:** "Draw Me Close" K. Carpenter arr. M. Hayes

**Welcome and Announcements**

*(Visitors/members please sign & date the red folder & pass it on. Please remember late comers.)*

**Introit:** "Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy"

**\*Call to Worship:** Leader: Each week of this Lent season, we are focusing on ways that we can practice a counter-cultural theology that emphasizes the beauty and grace of the reality of life-right-now rather than waiting with increasing judgment to reach some vision of a perfected existence. Our ladder-climbing efforts sometimes end up taking us down a rung or two as things don't work out just right. And so let us continue to turn ladders into gardens, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.

**People: This Lent, we will take time to turn ladders into gardens, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives. Life sometimes disappoints and yet, God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.**

**\*Hymn:** "All My Hope Is Firmly Grounded" UMH #132

**Extinguishing the Fourth Candle and Prayer: (*Process and Faith*)**

It's Sunday morning. Last week, with all its demands, is over. The coming week, with yet another round of challenges and demands, is not quite here. I invite you to close your eyes and be in the moment. No matter where you are in your thoughts and feelings—relieved about what you have accomplished, anxious about what's left undone, concerned about people or projects—no matter where you are in your journey this day—I encourage you to set all that aside and consider where you are right now. Whatever is true for you right now, in this moment, whether it be joy or sadness, gratitude or anxiety, let it come forward. When it is fully present, then listen . . . for God is present in these moments, too. God meets you where you are and calls you forward, moment by moment, guiding you slowly but surely toward transformation. As we extinguish today's candles (candles are extinguished), we acknowledge the darkness and pain caused by the lack of basic needs—lack of food, of shelter, of education, of healthcare, of love.

Let us pray: **Holy One, we thank you that you are with us, and that we may call upon you no matter where or how we are. Keep us mindful of your presence and trusting in your promise—that you are working with us in the moment-by-moment unfolding of our lives. Open us this day to your counsel, helping us be more merciful, more grace-filled, so that we might rejoice in simple and good enough moments that fill our days. Amen.**

**\*Special Music:** "Come As You Are" D. Crowder

**\*Waving the Peace of Christ**

A "Good Enough" Procession

**Children's Moment**

**Honest Questions, Compassionate Response:**

Leader: Today we will hear how the Prodigal Son lives high on the hog and then famine strikes in the land of his dream vacation. And so he heads home, expecting that he has lost it all. To his surprise, his extravagant failure is met with extravagant love and grace. We can be pretty hard on ourselves when things don't go as planned. Guilt, shame, and fear of being seen as a failure can leave us wallowing in the pig pen. Our delusions of a perfectible life keep us disappointed in ourselves. Truth is, life is a big ole risk every single day and facing whatever each day holds is not only good enough, but worthy of love and grace. Do you find yourself being unrealistically hard on yourself? Let us take a moment of silent reflection... *Silent Reflection*

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from the Second Letter to the Corinthians: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the guilt and shame of our past failings and our present unrealistic expectations. We are invited to rejoice that each day is a new beginning, so that we might enjoy, and not dread, the life before us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now. **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God! Amen.**

**Joys, Concerns and Prayers for the People**

*Moment of Silence*

**The 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, forever. Amen.**

*Prayer Response*

**\*The Word in Music:** "Spirit Song" UMH #347

*(At the start of this hymn children ages 7-12 are invited to go to the Chapel for Chapel Kids.)*

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 (NRSV)

N.T. pp. 73-74

**Thoughts About an Imperfect Life and Faith:**

"We Often Believe We Are the Problem"