

# TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

APRIL 2008

## THE EMPY CROSS AND EMPTY TOMB

**I**t is only the beginning of the month of April, and we have already celebrated Easter. Just in case you wondered why Easter was so early this year. Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, which this year was March 20. This dating of Easter is based on the lunar calendar that Hebrew people used to identify Passover, which is why it moves around on the Roman calendar. Based on the above, Easter can actually be one day earlier (March 22) than it was this year, but that is rare.

This year was the earliest Easter any of us will see for the rest of our lives, and only the most elderly, 95 years and above, have ever seen it this early. And none of us have ever, or will ever, see it a day earlier. As a matter of fact, the next time Easter will be this early will be the year 2228, which is 220 years from now. The last time it was this early was in 1913. The next time it will be a day earlier (March 22), will be in the year 2285, which is 277 years from now. The last time it was on March 22 was 1818. So no one alive today has or will ever see it any earlier than this year.

Even though Easter came earlier than usual this year, it can never come early enough in our own lives. It is never too early to receive God's wonderful gift and the promises that come with a faith and trust in his Son Jesus Christ. In my Easter message I spoke about the empty cross and the empty grave and the promises we can embrace as a result. We have all been fooled too many times to know that the world is full of empty promises. But in the empty cross and



Reinier & Leilani Potgieter singing "Born Again" as part of the Worship Celebration on Easter Sunday.

empty tomb, God gave us emptiness that is full of promise. For those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, the empty cross gives the promise of forgiven sins, and the empty tomb gives the promise of new and eternal life with God in heaven. I pray that these promises will encourage you and empower you every day as we continue in the days after Easter.

Easter Sunday also marked the end of our Journey of Stones that started on Ash Wednesday. Each week we placed a stone at the foot of the cross and confessed our many sins. On Good Friday, the final stone was rolled in front of Jesus' grave, and on Easter Sunday it was removed by God himself. Our stones, our sins have also been removed by God's gracious act. As we left the Sanctuary we received a final stone marked with the words "alive." Hopefully you still have your stone and it continues to remind you that the cross and the tomb are empty. Jesus is alive, and you are alive in Him!

Easter always blessings...

Rev. Dr. Albert Potgieter

## Fremdheit Gottes

Gott offenbart sich nicht als einer, den es gibt. Deshalb lässt sich Gott nicht erkennen aus der neutralen Distanz. Ich kann alles über Gott wissen, was die Theologen im Laufe der Jahrhunderte über ihn formuliert haben, und es bringt mich nicht weiter in meinem Fragen nach Gott. Ich kann alles lesen, was in Büchern über Gott gesammelt ist, und es hilft mir nichts in meinem Suchen nach Gott. Jedenfalls nichts, was über Information, Ansehen oder dergleichen „Es“ hinausginge. Nichts, was mich in Beziehung bringt zu Gott. Sage ich aber Du zu ihm, dann kann sich Begegnung ereignen zwischen ihm und mir. Gott offenbart sich als einer, der sich gibt, als einer, der in Beziehung tritt.

... „Du, den ich nicht kenne.“ In diesem Gebetswort von Dag Hammarskjölds ist beides enthalten: die Fremdheit Gottes und die

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Empty Cross & Tomb	1
Fremdheit Gottes	1
Relay For Life	2
Small Groups	2
Church Repairs	3
Class on Membership	3
Confirmation	3
Nursery	3
German-American	3
Fundraising Dinner	3
Interesting Signs	3
Worship Schedule	3



Our vision is  
to help  
people find  
New Life in  
Jesus Christ!

(Continued from page 1)

Beziehung zu ihm. Egal wie meine Geschichte mit ihm verlaufen ist, mit den folgenden oder ähnlichen Worten kann ich mich zu ihm in Beziehung setzen: Du, nach dem ich Sehnsucht habe. Du, der du für mich so ganz aus der Mode gekommen bist. Du, der du für mich wie ein undurchdringliches Geheimnis bist. Du, dem ich meine Sorgen anvertrauen. Du, von dem ich auch im Tod noch Leben erwarte. Du, den ich immer wieder verdränge und doch nicht völlig vergessen kann...

Aus: Werner Thissen, *Du bist mein Glück, Leben aus der Kraft der Begegnung*, Freiburg, 1988, Seite 104f/ 107f



## Relay For Life

We will be participating in the American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life" event at Juniper Valley Park on **June 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>**.

I hope that you can join us in some way for this activity. We need to sign up 15 people that will take part in the relay. We hope you will participate by joining up for the team, by giving a donation and by just appearing for a short time to support the team.

**What:** The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life is a unique celebration of life in honor and in memory of those whose lives have been touched by cancer. Relay for Life involves teams of people who take turns walking or running around a track all night long. A festive atmosphere prevails as team members camp out on the surrounding grounds for the duration of the event to enjoy music, food, fun, entertainment and activities while building camaraderie with fellow teammates and participants. Money is raised through team commitment fees.

**When:** Set-up begins on Saturday, June 21, 2008 at 12 noon, and volunteers are needed. Registration begins at 3:00 pm. The Opening Ceremony and Survivor's Lap is at 4:00 pm. The Luminaria Ceremony is at 10:00 pm and the Closing Ceremony on Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 at 8:00 am. Clean-up ends at 12:00 noon.

**Where:** The event takes place at Juniper Valley Park in Middle Village on the running track, off Lutheran Avenue, between Juniper Boulevard North and 71<sup>st</sup> Street.

**Who:** Everyone is welcome! Athletes and non-athletes join teams of individuals representing clubs, corporations, organizations, neighborhoods, churches and families at this fun, community-oriented event.

**Why:** The money raised helps support American Cancer Society programs in research, education, advocacy and service locally, statewide, and nationally. The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem

by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy, and service.

### What can you do specifically?

**Survivor's Lap.** At 4:00 pm cancer survivors are invited to take a victory lap and be cheered on by fellow participants in a true celebration of their courageous battle.

**Sign up for the team:** This can be done online or you may sign up by seeing Brigette Brady, the Trinity Reformed Team captain. If you want to sign up on the website, please give me your email address so I can send you a letter that will contain the link to get to the website. Signing up involves giving a donation and signing up for one or more hours from 6:00 pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> to 7:00 am on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Luminaria Ceremony:** At 10:00 pm a candlelight ceremony pays tribute to those who have been affected by cancer. Candles are placed in white bags filled with sand and are positioned around the track or bleachers. You may purchase one or more of these luminaries online, at the team website or directly from Brigette Brady, for \$10.00 per candle. The names of those being remembered or honored will be written on the bags and read aloud on the night of the event. The Luminaries are placed all around the track and are kept burning throughout the night.

**Participate in the "Wall of Hope" Sponsor Signs:** The Wall of Hope consists of signs that are printed out by the Cancer Society and posted around the track. Trinity has decided to purchase a sign for \$250.00. If you want to contribute towards covering the costs for this sign, please make your check out to Trinity, with a note mentioning the purpose of your donation.

If you have any questions about the event or how to make a donation, please do not hesitate to contact Brigette Brady.

## Weekly Small Groups Resume

After a break and somewhat irregular schedule over Lent and Easter, our Small Groups will resume their weekly meetings during the first week of April. We will continue with the "Disciples" curriculum and for the next five weeks focus on another of the four C's of discipleship – this time the C that stands for "Created."

In this study we will focus on how do we – ordinary, everyday men and women who have accepted the call to discipleship – get from who we are to being the glorious reflection of God's presence in the world? We will learn that this hardly ever happens overnight or in a single breakthrough moment. Maybe that's why the gospel writers took such great care to share with us the story of Simon Peter. At the moment of this calling as a disciple, Jesus renames him Peter, or "Rocky" – just as at the moment of baptism we are renamed "Son" or "Daughter" by God. But Simon Peter was hardly a rock of faith and commitment! Quick to question Jesus' authority, easily distracted by issues of honor and

rank, passionately opinionated, and unable to own up to being a disciple of Jesus when it really mattered, Peter was more like a sand dune than a rock. Peter was hardly even a dull reflection, let alone a polished mirror of God's glory for much of his discipleship with Jesus.

Yet Peter's discipleship story is exactly the journey we're called to travel. We may start out as fearful and feeble followers, but by God's grace the Holy Spirit will shape our lives and hone our hearts into being faithful and growing disciples of Jesus Christ. Join us as we study what it means to be CREATED through a new birth, with a new name, for a new owner, for a new role and with a new purpose. The **Brady/Potgieter** group meets on Sunday after worship, the **Trautmann** group on Tuesday's at 1:00 pm and Pastor Albert's **Men's Group** on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. If you want to join a group or need more information, please contact Pastor Albert at the church office.

## Church Repairs Update



With Spring just around the corner, the workers should return shortly to finish the job on the exterior of the church. The only part that still needs to be done is the pointing of the very top above the front

entrance of the church. For this to happen they need to rent a special crane to reach the area.

In the meantime the job on the inside of the church is nearing completion. The inside walls in the area of the chairs leading up to the sanctuary and balcony were damaged by water seeping through the walls. This has since been repaired. Thank you again to all who contributed so generously to our Building Repair Fund Drive.

## Class 101 On Membership

Class 101 on Discovering Church Membership will be offered on **Sunday, April 13**, following the English Worship Celebration. If you have considered making Trinity your church home and need more information on what it means to belong to God's family, then we encourage you to sign up for this class. Only when you have completed Class 101 can you officially become a member of our church. A warm lunch will be provided for those who attend the class. To sign up for the class or in case you need more information, please contact Pastor Albert.

## Confirmation Candidate

Pastor Albert is currently mentoring Alexander Burzynski in order to prepare him for confirmation. The two of them will meet for 8 weeks, after which Alexander will meet with the Board of Elders. Once he has completed the preparation proc-

ess, a date will be announced when he will make a public profession of his faith in front of the rest of Trinity's faith-family. Please keep him in your prayers as he prepares for that day.

## Nursery In The Making

The church is currently, under the leadership of Linda Schiefer, looking to prepare an area that can serve as a nursery. We have had a number of mother's with babies worshipping at Trinity lately and we would like to provide for their needs. We will give you an update as soon as our short term plan has been implemented.

## German-American Afternoon

We invite everyone to our annual German-American Afternoon. We will sing, tell stories, travel to Germany per slide show and enjoy coffee and cake. It all happens on **April 27, 2008**, starting at 2:00 pm.

## Frauenverein Fundraising Dinner

The Frauenverein / Ladies Aid of Trinity will be holding a fundraising dinner on **April 17, 2008** at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. For only \$12.50 you will enjoy a full course dinner. Reservations can be made by contacting Justine Wittine at (718) 381-5509.

## Interesting Signs

- \* In a Podiatrist's office: 'Time wounds all heels.'
- \* On a Plumber's truck: 'We repair what your husband fixed.'
- \* On another Plumber's truck: 'Don't sleep with a drip. Call your plumber.'
- \* On a Church's Billboard: '7 days without God makes one weak.'
- \* At a Towing company: 'We don't charge an arm and a leg. We want tows.'
- \* On an Electrician's truck: 'Let us remove your shorts.'
- \* On a Maternity Room door: 'Push. Push. Push.'
- \* At an Optometrist's Office: 'If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place.'
- \* At a Chicago Radiator Shop: 'Best place in town to take a leak.'
- \* Outside a Muffler Shop: 'No appointment necessary. We hear you coming.'
- \* In a Veterinarian's waiting room: 'Be back in 5 minutes. Sit! Stay!'

## Worship Schedule for April

April 6, 13, 20, 27—Regular Worship Schedule

German—9:30 am

English—10:45 am

- \* Communion will be celebrated on April 6
- \* Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:30 am
- \* Junior Church each Sunday at 10:45 am