

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

JUNE 2010

Reconciliation

We believe that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ, that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells.

-Confession of Belhar (3), September 1986

For some months now we have been talking about the Belhar Confession which lifts up “three key issues of concern to all churches: unity of the church and unity among all people, reconciliation within church and society, and God’s justice.” (*Prologue to Belhar*). This month the conversation continues concerning the second of those three issues, reconciliation. Certainly past Reformed confessions have spoken on the theological aspects of our reconciliation with God, i.e. doctrines of atonement. But no other Standard speaks so eloquently and forthright in affirming our call to be reconcilers:

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

-2 Cor. 5:17-20

The role of a confession of faith is not merely to teach us what we should believe but to move us to then ask, “and what difference does this make to me?” The Belhar not only extols central historical and biblical Christian beliefs, it calls the church to action. That is, if the church is listening. Following is section 3 of the Belhar Confession concentrating on reconciliation.

In Christ’s Grace, Peace, and Reconciliation,
Pastor Tom

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

We believe:

-that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ, that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells (2 Cor. 5:17-21; Matt. 5:13-16; Matt. 5:9; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21-22).

- *that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world (Eph. 4:17-6:23, Rom. 6; Col. 1:9-14; Col. 2:13-19; Col. 3:1-4:6);*
- *that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;*
- *that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.*

Therefore, we reject any doctrine which, in such a situation, sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and color

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

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and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.*

We believe that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only head, the church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence (Eph. 4:15-16; Acts 5:29-33; 1 Peter 2:18-25; 1 Peter 3:15-18).

Jesus is Lord.

To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.

Congratulations to the Febels

Congratulations to Hildegard and Philipp Febel who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in May. The couple was recognized during the May 23 worship service with a special prayer by Pastor Tom and the singing of a song in German by the congregation which had also been sung at their wedding.



Building Repair Fund Drive

As of May 23, a total of \$ 8,475 has been collected towards our goal of \$ 20,000 for the Building Repair Fund Drive. The fellowship hall windows are in, the electrical upgrades have been made, and the church office is almost finished. One of our members made a special donation for some new office furniture, and another member donated a dishwasher for the kitchen along with installation costs.

Unexpected and needed repairs have also arisen. We already reported on the leak in the parsonage walls which has to be taken care of. The toilet in the first floor parsonage bathroom had to be replaced and the church kitchen sink needed a new faucet. The church hot water heater also had to be replaced.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed. Additional offering envelopes are available in the narthex at church for the Building Repair Fund.

VCA Ministry Report

“You may be only one person in the world but you may also be the world to one person.” This statement is on a hand embroidered piece of artistry I have hanging in the entrance of my home. It caused me to think – one person, just one person, what can one person do? When you think of the world’s troubles: famines, diseases, floods, droughts, earthquakes, tsunamis, hunger, poverty, etc., the list could go on and on. Even one of the greatest lights of our time, Mother Theresa, could barely make a dent in the world’s problems. Thank God we are not required to. In the Gospels when the apostles were objecting to the woman who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume, Jesus said “Leave her alone, she did what she could.” What she could, what we can – this is what is required of us.

Two years ago here at Trinity we began participating in a ministry called Victory for the Children in Appalachia (VCA). We collect box tops and labels which we send to a company that processes them and sends them to the original manufacturers who then donate money. Through the efforts of many churches like us, mini vans, sports equipment, and other items have been purchased which help to improve the school life of many poor children in Appalachia. At the end of our second year at Trinity there has been a 175% increase in the number of box tops and labels collected compared with the first year. While we may never eliminate the problem of poverty in Appalachia, we can help to alleviate it. What we are accomplishing through a small effort on our part is helping to enrich the lives of Appalachian children and providing them with opportunities that they would otherwise not have.

As the actor Michael Landon once said “The world started with a few and it still takes only a few to change it.” Thank you and God bless all of you who help with this ministry. There is a box on the table at the back of the sanctuary where the labels and box tops can be deposited. There is also a sheet which gives further explanation about this project.

A special thank you goes out to Deacon John Sands of St. Matthias Church. He’s one person whose tremendous contribution to this ministry is making it the success it is.

Merilyn Amoroso

Successful Cake Sale

The Ladies Aid/Frauenverein conducted another successful cake sale and white elephant table on May 8. A total of \$919 was raised which will be used to help maintain our church.

Thanks to all who baked, sold, bought and supported this event.

Anniversary Day Parade Canceled

The Ridgewood Glendale Sunday School Association which sponsors the annual Anniversary Day Parade has decided to cancel the parade which was to be held on June 10. Because of the City's budget cuts the Police Department wanted to shorten the parade route. They were also unable to provide a police escort for churches farther out in Glendale who would be bringing floats to the parade route. In addition, there was a poor turnout for last year's 100th Anniversary Day Parade and it was felt that there might be fewer participants this year.

The Sunday School Association will be meeting at the end of June and will consider possible future alternatives for the Parade.

Stewardship and Finance Committee Report

<u>Expenditures for Month of</u>	<u>April 2010</u>
Personnel Expenses	5,144.00
Utilities	1,190.00
Ministry/Supplies	988.00
Maintenance	0.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	207.00
Other Disbursements	5,909.00
Total Expenditures	\$13,438.00

<u>Receipts for Month of</u>	<u>April 2010</u>
Weekly Envelopes	3,925.00
Weekly Plate	268.00
Benevolences	432.00
Memorial Fund*	1,805.00
Special Offerings	3,144.00
Other Receipts	689.00
Total Receipts	\$10,263.00

*Includes donations to Memorial Fund and Building Repair Fund.

Please remember that during the summer our bills still keep coming.

Summer Schedule

This will be the last issue of the *Trinity Chimes* until September. During the summer our Sunday church schedule will remain the same with worship services at 10:00 a.m. followed by a coffee/iced tea fellowship.

Our church secretary Liz Burzynski will not be working during the summer and Pastor is not always in the office during the regular work week. Please leave a message on the answering machine if you need any assistance and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Our "High Seas Expedition" Vacation Bible School will be held from July 26 to 30 and should be a fun time for everyone.

Remember that God doesn't take a vacation during the summer. Plan on worshipping with us.

Couples and Friends Club

The Couples and Friends Club will have a picnic, weather permitting, on June 19 at Westbury Gardens.

Questionnaire

Enclosed with this newsletter is a questionnaire that we'd like our members and friends to complete. We are trying to update our church records and want to make sure that we have the correct information. Either mail the questionnaire back to church or bring it with you on a Sunday and hand it to one of the ushers or to our church secretary Liz Burzynski. Thanks.

Passing of Frieda Diener

Frieda Diener, who was a long time member of Trinity Reformed Church, passed away in May. She was living in New Jersey at the time of her death.

Worship Schedule for June

June 6, 13, 20, 27 —Regular Worship Schedule
10:00 a.m.

* Communion will be celebrated on June 6

* Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 am

* Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 am

Something To Think About

Change, change you can believe in. It seems there is a lot of talk today about change, but have things really changed? Let's pick a decade in the past and see how much things have changed.

The 1960's were a volatile time. The Vietnam War was raging, there was unrest and demonstrations on college campuses, there were protests for civil rights, assassinations, and the rock and roll group The Beatles had a #1 hit song entitled *All You Need Is Love*. But that was then. This is now.

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider highways but narrower viewpoints.

We spend more but have less, buy more but enjoy less, have bigger houses but smaller families, have more conveniences but less time, have more degrees but less sense.

We have more knowledge but less judgment, have more experts yet more problems, and have more medicine but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We have learned how to make a living but not a life. We have been all the way to the moon and back yet we have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We have done larger things, not better things. We have cleaned up the air but polluted the soul. These are the times of fast food and slow digestion, big men and small character, two incomes and more divorce, fancier houses and broken homes. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom.

Remember, spend some time with your loved ones because they are not going to be around forever. Say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Give a warm hug to the one next to you because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent. Say "I love you" to your family and friends but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside you.

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again. Give time to speak, give time to share, but most of all give time to love.

Isn't that strange, it seems all we still need is love. The more things change the more they remain the same!

Ein Liebes Wort

Ein liebes Wort ist wie ein Licht, das in den Alltag scheint...
es ist wie Balsam für das Herz das manchmal heimlich weint.

Ein liebes Wort zur rechten Zeit ist Trost und Kraft zugleich...
es ist des Herzens Dialog und macht uns froh und reich.

Ein liebes Wort ist schnell gesagt, doch fällt es oft so schwer...
es scheint, als ob die Ignoranz in uns einfacher wär.

Ein liebes Wort verändert viel, bringt Friede in die Welt...
es ist das Regenbogenlicht, das in die Seele fällt.

Ich wünsche dir für jeden Tag, dass man dir, viel Liebe Worte sagt....



Birthday Celebration

We celebrated Linda Schiefer's May 16 birthday a day early at Couples and Friends Club on May 15. Linda's daughter-in-law, Jessica Schiefer, made the empty nest themed birthday cake. Granddaughter Julie looks on with Linda.

Classis Assessment

As a part of the Reformed Church, we must pay an annual assessment to the denomination for each active adult member in our congregation. For 2010 the assessment is \$ 91.45 per person, so we have to pay a total of \$ 6,035.70 based on our current membership. This means that the first \$ 91.45 you donate to Trinity during the year gets sent to the denomination rather than helping us with our own programs.

There is one "Classis Assessment" envelope in your box of offering envelopes. If you would prefer to pay your assessment quarterly or monthly instead of all at once, you can place your donation in an envelope, mark it "Classis Assessment", and hand it in with your regular offering envelope. Please remember to write your envelope number and name on the envelope.

“There Is No Law”

Six Israeli soldiers carrying automatic weapons move slowly down the narrow streets of the old city of Hebron. We follow. We are members of a Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) delegation visiting Israel and the Occupied Territories. Our purpose is to be a visible and non-violent presence in a situation of conflict. On this particular afternoon we encounter the soldiers on one of our regular walks through the city. One of the soldiers turns toward us. "You must keep back at least 10 meters."

"Last week we were told 3 meters," one of the CPT members replies. "Which is it? We will comply, but what is the law?"

"There is no law," says the soldier.

We continue to follow them through the narrow streets. The soldiers come to a home and enter through a doorway. They do not bother to knock. They do not ask for permission. They are not invited in. They simply enter. "There is no law."

They go up the stairs and through the living area and pass three young boys. Later we learn that some weeks earlier the boys had been taken by Israeli soldiers and detained for several hours. Why? Perhaps they had thrown stones. Or been in the wrong place at the wrong time. Or had been insolent. They had no lawyer. No charges were filed. Yet they were among the more fortunate. After a few hours they were released. Some children have been imprisoned for months. "There is no law."



Earlier in the week we had visited an Israeli settlement. "Rachel" graciously welcomed us into her home and shared her story with us. She had grown up in a nominally Christian family in the U.S., converted to Judaism as a young adult, and emigrated to Israel. Like many who emigrate to Israel to live in a settlement, she benefited from government policies that facilitated her path to Israeli citizenship, subsidized her housing, and helped to locate her and her family in an upscale community in the West Bank. This is the law.

But she has also suffered greatly. Her sixteen-year-old son, a student at a Jerusalem Yeshiva, was shot and killed by a Palestinian extremist. There is no law that will bring him back.

We were also hosted by a Palestinian family. Their home is in a refugee camp in Bethlehem. 13,000 people, over half of them children, are crowded into half a square kilometer. All of them are former residents or descendants of former residents of small Palestinian villages near Jerusalem just a few kilometers away. In 1947 they were forcibly removed from their homes. Some of those who resisted were killed. The villages were destroyed. The site of the former villages has been converted into "green space," American Independence Park and Menachem Begin Park. The Palestinians have never been compensated for their loss. They are not allowed to return. They are not even permitted to enter Jerusalem. This is the law.

We are praying for a different world; a world where laws do not persecute some and benefit others. A world where laws bring people together rather than drive them apart. A world of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, and self-control. Against these things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

This article originally appeared on the RCA website, www.rca.org. Members of the Reformed Church in America and Christian Reformed Church in North America participated in a Christian Peacemaker Team delegation to Palestine and Israel in April. Members of the Christian Peacemaker Team delegation included Tom and Sharon Arendshorst, Barbara Carville, Fathiyeh Gainey, Tom Goodhart, Sarah MacDonald, Gloria McCanna, John and Marilyn Paarlberg, Sandra Milena Rincon, and Marlin Vis.

Other news...

You may likely be receiving this issue of the Trinity Chimes on the last Sunday in May when we as a church will celebrate with Anthony Famighetti as he makes Profession of Faith (Confirmation). Anthony is the son of Rosemary and Tony Famighetti and the grandson of Elisabeth and the late Adam Roth.

Belonging/New Members Class is also currently underway and we look forward to welcoming new members to our church family in June.

Also in June, from the 9th to 15th, the highest assembly of our denomination, the Reformed Church in America's General Synod, will meet in Orange City, Iowa. Pastor Tom will again be attending as a Corresponding Delegate in his role as the Moderator of the Commission on Christian Action. Bobby Murphy will also be attending as a student observer/participant. Please pray for them and for the RCA as our church meets over important business.

Our new church office conversion and remodeling is *almost* complete. Along with our wonderful new church secretary, administration is already improving. Please stay tuned to future issues of the Trinity Chimes for more coverage on these and other exciting news!