

# TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

APRIL 2011

## Take Up Your Cross

**Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.**

**- Luke 14.27**

Some years ago participating in an ecumenical/interfaith High School Baccalaureate worship service, I was to give the closing prayer and benediction at the end of the service. Blessing and sending these young people off into the world following their accomplishment of graduating high school I struggled with what words would inspire and summon them to generative lives beyond what they had already achieved. I found those words in the following that is often attributed as *A Franciscan Blessing*:

*May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.*

*May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.*

*May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.*

*May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.*

*And the Blessing of God, who Creates, Redeems and Sanctifies, be upon you and all you love and pray for this day, and forever more. Amen.*

It is a strange blessing to give—to encourage discomfort, anger, tears, and foolishness—but so is it a peculiar calling we have, to take up our cross daily and to follow Christ.

But why? Why the cross? Is it about

suffering? Perhaps it is in part.

We know that suffering does play a role in our lives and is often negative, be it from a physical, mental, relational, psychological, or spiritual perspective. Yet we are also aware, as the Apostle Paul puts it in Romans 5 that “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” Therefore, sometimes (and certainly not always), good can come from suffering.

But the call to pick up one’s cross is not namely a call to suffer—as important of a role that suffering did indeed play in Christ’s encounter with the cross and whatever its part in the atonement and our redemption. The call to pick up one’s cross is about identity and identifying. In the cross, Jesus identified intimately, even sacrificially, with humanity. The crucifixion was one of the final steps of the incarnation, where God in Christ put on our flesh, so that we in turn could then put on our true image. We are created in the image of God and we see that image most fully in Christ. In Christ we discover our identity—who we are created and called to be. As his disciples we pattern our lives after him, to most fully become ourselves. But there’s more.

As God identifies with humanity most intimately—relationally—God calls us to that same kind of response, to love our neighbor as ourselves, to see Christ in the other, as Matthew 25 says,

*“for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me...Truly I tell you, just as you*

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

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*did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*

Taking up one's cross is about responding to the world as God does, bearing another's burdens, being willing to give of yourself for another.

In the weeks ahead as we continue our Lenten journey to the cross and to the resurrection, may we each pick up our cross and daily be transformed more and more into the people whom God created us to be.

In Christ's Grace & Peace,

Pastor Tom

### Holy Week Schedule

We will have a joint Maundy Thursday worship service at the United Presbyterian Church on Thursday April 21 at 7:00 pm. Communion will be served. On Good Friday, we will hold a worship service at 7:30 pm and will be joined by the Grace Notes Choir.

### New Consistory



With Marieanna Trautmann, Linda Morton, and Annalee Pfisterer retiring from consistory, Bobby Murphy and Erik Huneke were ordained as deacons and Kurt Andreas as elder. Lenny Schiefer is the new vice president of consistory.

### Church Committees

In order for our church to run more smoothly there are a number of committees which handle or oversee different activities here at Trinity. Members of the church are invited and encouraged to join these committees to help out. If you would like more information about any of them or would like to help out, please speak with the chairperson of the committee:

Worship – Karl Kurtz

Stewardship and Finance – Bill Voges

Property and Maintenance – Bob Bambach

Discipleship and Christian Education – Lenny Schiefer

Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism – Bobby Murphy

Church Life and Fellowship – Erik Huneke

### Liebe Leserin, lieber Leser!

*„Wer am meisten liebt, muss am meisten leiden“ (Th. Mann)*

**Gründonnerstag:** Jesus Christus betet am Ölberg: „Mein Vater, ist's möglich, so gehe dieser Kelch an mir vorüber; doch nicht, wie ich will, sondern wie du willst!“ Und damit sagt Jesus leidend: „Vater, ich gehe. Ich werde an ihnen leiden.“

**Karfreitag:** Der Vater gibt seinen geliebten Sohn. Seinen einzigen – der Vater hatte nicht noch einen zweiten, nicht noch einen dritten in her Hinterhand.

Ein alt gewordener Mann zeigte mir das Foto eines jungen Soldaten. Mit der Gefallenenmeldung aus dem Stalingrader Kessel war es bei ihm angekommen. Wie ein Heiligenbild lag es auf seinem Tisch. Dann sagte er mit tiefstem Schmerz und nach 60 Jahren nicht nachlassender Trauer: „Herr Pfarrer, das war mein Einziger.“ Jesus war der Einzige. Ohne ihn ist der Himmel leer. Ohne ihn ist die Erde wüst. Ohne ihn fehlt das Herzstück des Vaters. Aber Jesus geht. Kein Leibwächter beschützt ihn. Kein Gesandter begleitet ihn. Kein noch so winziges Abzeichen weist ihn als Sohn des Höchsten aus. Und gegen ihn schlägt blanker Hass. Die Menge, die vor kurzem noch lauthals rief: „Hosianna!“, sie ruft nun mindestens genauso lauthals: „Kreuzige ihn!“ Dann Folterqualen, Peitschenhiebe, Fusstritte. Jesus stirbt draussen vor dem Tor. Das ist der höchste Einsatz des Vaters. Das ist die Spitze seiner Liebe.

Und wenn Sie auch so viel Hass und Streit sehen und dann fragen: Wo ist denn der liebe Gott?, dann schauen Sie bitte nach diesem zusammengeschlagenen und ausgepeitschten Menschen.

Und wenn Sie auch so viel Neid und Lieblosigkeit erfahren und dann fragen: Wie lieb ist denn der liebe Gott?, dann blicken Sie bitte auf diesen ausgebluteten Sohn des Vaters. Und wenn Sie auch so viel Not und Tod erleiden und dann fragen: Warum leidet denn der liebe Gott?, dann lernen Sie bitte diesen geschundenen und gekreuzigten Jesus Christus kennen. „Wer am meisten liebt, muss am meisten leiden.“ Schlagen wir ihn nicht wieder mit unseren Gott-ist-tot-Argumenten. Spucken wir ihm nicht wieder mit unserer gelebten Gleichgültigkeit ins Gesicht. Schicken wir ihn nicht wieder mit unserer Undankbarkeit bis ans Kreuz. Er hat wahrlich genug gelitten. Und ist gestorben. Jesus leidet durch uns und stirbt für uns.

**Ostersonntag:** Das Ende vom Lied ist keine Strafaktion. Wäre unser Gott ein menschlicher Machthaber, dann hätte er jetzt seine Truppen zusammengezogen, einen Belagerungsring um diese Welt gezogen, sie unter Dauerbeschuss genommen, sie schliesslich gestürmt und die Flagge auf dem rauchenden Turm gehisst. Aber Gott startet keine Strafaktion, sondern eine Rettungsaktion. Am dritten Tag wird der Sohn aus dem Tod geholt. Die Welt bleibt intakt. Jesus wird zum Besitzer ernannt: „Mir ist gegeben alle Macht“, sagt er. Rebellion oder Provokation? Gottes Geschichte mit uns spricht von Passion. Der Sohn leidet an uns, durch uns and für uns. Das aber ist die Revolution der Liebe.

### English Summary:

Thomas Mann wrote: *"He who loves the most, must suffer the most."*

The writer applies this to Christ's passion.

1. Maundy Thursday: Jesus prays and accepts the Father's will to suffer and to die.
2. Good Friday: The Father gives His only begotten Son - the height of sacrificial love.
3. Easter Sunday: God does not punish the world, as well He might, but instead lovingly provides for our salvation.

Questions people ask:

1. Where is this loving God?
2. Why does this loving God permit suffering?

Answer to both questions: Look to Jesus and realize "He who loves the most, must suffer the most."

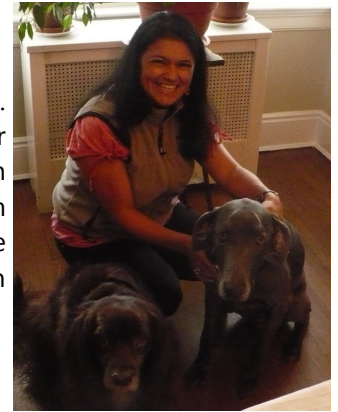
*[A note about the German-language Trinity Chimes articles: Trinity celebrates from whence we came! As an immigrant church for over a century and a half we continue to honor the histories, cultures, and language of our spiritual forebears—and for that matter, many of us who still make up the Trinity family. While holding fast to traditions, we at the same time wish to continue to grow into the future as a welcoming congregation. As such, to be most welcoming and inclusive to the broadest Trinity constituency, we request that all future German-language submissions also include an English-language translation in its entirety. Thank you.]*

### Ladies Aid Cake Sale

The Ladies Aid/Frauenverein will hold their Cake Sale on **Sat., May 7th** from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. There will be baked goods and a sale table. Over the years we have come to know that these home baked goods are truly delicious and disappear quickly! So come early, support the sale and enjoy your favorites!

## Second Sunday Symposium

We would like to thank Ms. Sandra Milena Rincon for her presentation at our March Second Sunday Symposium about her work with the Christian Peace Maker Team in Columbia.



## Stewardship and Finance Committee Report

Expenditures for Month of	February 2011
Personnel Expenses	\$5,392.00
Utilities	\$1,702.00
Ministry/Supplies	\$94.00
Maintenance	\$ 0.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	\$ 0.00
Other Disbursements	\$2,291.00**

**Total Expenditures** **\$9,479.00**

Receipts for Month of	February 2011
Weekly Envelopes	\$6,516.00
Weekly Plate	\$ 193.00
Benevolences	\$ 538.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 240.00
Special Offerings	\$ 540.00
Other Receipts	\$ 980.00*

**Total Receipts** **\$9,007.00**

\*Donations for Classis

\*\*Payments towards Classis

## Worship Schedule for April

April 3, 10, 17, 24 — Worship 10:00 am

Lenten Bible Study — April 6, 13 at 7:30 pm

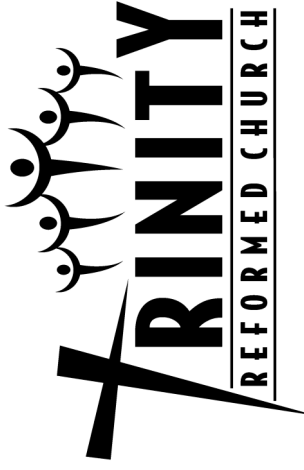
Joint Service on Maundy Thursday at United Presbyterian Church April 21 — 7:00 pm

Good Friday Service — 7:30 pm

\* Communion will be celebrated on April 3

\* Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 am

\* Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 am



# April 2011

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am  Last Belonging: New Members Class	4	5	6 Lenten Bible Study 7:30 pm	7 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm	8 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm	9
10 Worship Service 10:00 am Second Sunday Symposium  Last day for Easter flower order	11	12	13 Lenten Bible Study 7:30 pm	14	15	16 Couples and Friends 6:30pm
17 Palm Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am	18	19	20 Frauenverein/ Ladies Aid 1:00 pm  Lenten Bible Study 7:30 pm	21 Maundy Thursday Service at United Presbyterian Church 7:00 pm	22 Good Friday Worship Service 7:30 pm	23
24 Easter Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am	25	26	27 Consistory Meeting 7:30 pm	28	29	30
				<i>Their Daily Bread</i> collection 1st. Sunday of the Month	Junior Church Sundays at 10:00am	Prayer Meeting Sundays at 9:00 am