

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 2011

Welcome and Hospitality

It's good to get away. And it's just as good to come back home.

This has been an *incredibly* full and active summer here at Trinity! Therefore, I was grateful to have a chance to get away for a while and take a vacation during the week leading up to Labor Day. A great aspect about vacation is that it can provide you with opportunities for rest, renewal, and rejuvenation—necessary for one's life and vocation. They can also help you experience a new place or activity. But one of the best things about a vacation is the way that it provides perspective—a chance to simply think about things, including the joy of returning home.

I've been thinking a lot about that recently, home that is. What is it about home? How is it that we "make a house a home"? What are the elements that makes something feel like home. And let me be clear here, I'm not talking about a place. Home is certainly related to place but I'm concentrating on something deeper, something more significant. Nor am I referring nostalgically to the place we are from or when and where we grew up. No, what I'm pondering is what it means and how it feels to be "at home."

Something about home has to do with welcome. And hospitality. Home is that place, but its really not simply a place, maybe environment would be a better description. Home is that environment and relationship where you feel, maybe even better, where you know, that you are welcome. And with that welcome comes a kind of comfort, a kind of peace.

Don't get me wrong, the idea of home that I'm thinking about can certainly include some chaos and disarray. I'm not talking about some sort of Pollyanna perfection. For instance, in my travels I spent time with some very dear friends who have three children ages five, three, and thirteen months. When I was at their home,

there was certainly some chaos. But there was also incredible welcome and gracious hospitality. I felt like home.

Allow me to get a little spiritual and churchy with y'all: I believe that God desires that all God's children find their home with and in God. That at the core of God's being is an incredible welcome and gracious hospitality. We experience the fullness of that identity in Jesus Christ. And when we find our home with God we discover that God is at home even within us.

Then this thing about home is less about where we go or where we are. It really becomes more about who we are—this environment and relationship that oozes God's incredible welcome and gracious hospitality.

This is a very mystical thing we're talking about. Mystical, but not magical. It requires a kind of effort, a practice. As Christians, as followers of Christ, we put into action what we believe of God, to use the somewhat cliché phrase, we practice what we preach. And living out and extending God's welcome and hospitality takes practice. It's part of what discipleship means, following and doing as Christ does.

"...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."

Matthew 25:35-36

But then again, being at home with God makes us different. We experience the world differently. We understand life differently. It's not just about being "good people" as important as that may be. It's about being at home in God and God at home with us.

The Church is at its best when it lives out its identity, God's identity, when it is willing to risk and extend God's incredible welcome and gracious hospitality to all God's children.

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

I've been thinking a lot about home lately, about our home, our church home of Trinity. As I shared in the opening, this has been an incredibly full and active summer. Much of that can be attributed to the various things you will read about in this edition of the *Chimes*—like the VBS and building maintenance issues. In part, these are perfect examples of how we at Trinity are extending God's welcome and hospitality to our neighbors. Many families who participated in Pandamania expressed to me how welcomed they and their children felt here. And although the building and maintenance concerns that we've been focusing on this Summer may not be glamorous, in dealing with them we maintain ministry facilities that enable us as Trinity to use our building to extend God's welcome and hospitality so much so that there are groups and individuals that fill our halls every day of the week. We are by no means an empty church!

But the real environment where God's welcome and hospitality is nurtured and practiced is each of you who are part of our Trinity Church family and who share God's "home" wherever you live and work or go to school.

Summer is a time for vacations and travel; now that Autumn is arriving, it's back to school and to a different rhythm of life. If perhaps during the summer months you haven't been able to be as present at Trinity, I invite you to "come back home." I would also like to encourage you to explore the ways in which we at Trinity both individually and corporately can strengthen practices of welcome and hospitality. And finally, it is my prayer for each of you that we may all experience the fullness of feeling at home in God.

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Tom

Vacation Bible School



*God made you.
God listens to you.
God watches over you.
God loves you no matter what.
God gives good gifts.*

THANK YOU GOD!!!

These were the Bible Points for **PANDAMANIA**, this year's Vacation Bible School, where 97 children from our church and community learned that God is **WILD** about them! From

September 2011

July 24-31, Trinity was transformed into a bamboo forest filled with bamboo trees, lotus flowers, and of course Pandas! It was our 10th annual VBS and proved to be the biggest one yet - 97 VBS'ers and 47 volunteers!



We had a fantastic week filled with worship songs, hands-on Bible stories, tasty snacks, fun crafts and exciting games. At the end of each night we met in the sanctuary to share what we had learned with each other and our parents and friends. They were so excited to share this time with us and many of them had learned our worship songs and were singing right along with us! You can see pictures of our adventures on Trinity's website www.trinityqueens.org.

Again this year we participated in "Operation Kid To Kid"—one of the world's largest child-to-child service outreach programs. This year each of our children decorated back-packs for less fortunate children in Latin America, to help reinforce the importance of education. For \$2.00 per back-pack, Biblica would provide a Spanish Bible to send along with each back-pack and I am happy to say that thanks to all the donations we received from the families of our VBS'ers that week, we were able to send a Bible with each of the back-packs that we made!

Our **PANDAMANIA** team would like to thank all the members of Trinity for their prayers, love and support and generous donations. Without you, we could never offer this wonderful experience to the children of our community.

And to the 47+ tireless volunteers---**THANK-YOU!!!** Thank you for your weeks of hard work, dedication, energy and enthusiasm. This week our children learned not only how wild **God** is about them, but also how wild **you** are about them. It is because of all of you and what you do that they keep coming back year after year.

As always, it was a pleasure and a blessing sharing this time with you. I look forward to seeing you all next year for "SKY" where **EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD!!!**

Love and Peace,
Liz ☺

CROP Walk

The Ridgewood Glendale Sunday School Association will sponsor another CROP Walk on Saturday October 1 at 9:00 a.m. at Juniper Valley Park in Middle Village. The money that is raised will be donated to Church World Services to help alleviate world hunger. Last year Trinity Reformed Church raised \$ 1,000.00. We hope we can do at least as well this year.

If you would like a little exercise, then plan to walk with us and be at the park at 9:00 a.m. If you can't walk, then sponsor a walker. If you have any questions, please speak with Gerard Tate or Bill Voges.

New Members



Joanna Pan and Thomas Goodman publicly made their profession of faith and joined Trinity Reformed Church last May. Joanna was baptized and Tom made reaffirmation of faith.

An Old Blessing

The following is a German adaptation of an Irish blessing.

Mögen sich die Wege vor deinen Füßen ebnen;
Mögest du den Wind im Rücken haben;
Möge die Sonne warm dein Gesicht bescheinen,
Möge Gott Seine schützende Hand über dir halten,
Mögest du in deinem Herzen dankbar bewahren
die kostbare Erinnerung der guten Dinge
in deinem Leben.

May the roads before you be smooth;
May the wind be at your back;
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
May God hold His protecting hand over you;
May you treasure in your heart with gratitude the
Precious memory of all the good things in your life.

Property Committee Update

The property committee was busy this summer with a number of projects. The one wall of the front storage room next to the fellowship hall had leaked for several years and mold had developed behind it. The closets and sheet rock were removed, the mold was cleaned up, and we then had an outside contractor coat the wall with cement and paint it. The outside foundation in the front of the church was also sealed to prevent water from getting in again. We want to thank Andy Burzynski and Tony Famighetti for all of their hard work in removing the closets and sealing things up outside. Consistory decided at its June meeting not to rebuild the closets in case the leak should come back in the future. We will instead get shelving and large plastic containers for items to be stored in.

During the heavy rainstorms we had this summer, water came into the church basement through the men's room and sinks. We had the sewer lines cleaned which we hope will alleviate this problem.

You may remember that a while back a severe wind storm uprooted one of the big pine trees in the back yard and raised a large portion of concrete. That slab of concrete in the garden has now been removed and replaced with pavers. In addition, a square of concrete that was raised by tree roots on Palmetto Street was replaced.

Several slate roof tiles on the church were also replaced and a crack was found and sealed up near the roof which seems to have stopped the water coming in on the wall in the staircase going up to the choir loft. A new gutter was also installed outside on the church by the kitchen roof.

A number of people have expressed concern about going up the steps to the upper chancel to the lecturn when they are involved with the worship service because there is no hand rail to hold on to and the stairs are narrow. In response to this we are having a wrought iron hand rail installed on the staircase at the right side behind the pulpit so that people will feel more secure when going up and down from the upper chancel. We will encourage people to start using these stairs when they participate in the worship service.

Our next project will involve updating the parsonage kitchen. The wall oven which was in poor condition finally broke and the refrigerator is also old and needs to be replaced. Because we want to get a regular stove instead of replacing the wall oven and counter top range, we plan on having the kitchen cabinets refaced and also have the old and worn countertops replaced.

The Humor Corner

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up and asked, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago."

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

(from: http://www.jaredstory.com/church_children.html)

Stewardship and Finance Committee Report

Expenditures for Months of: May, June & July 2011

Personnel Expenses	17,336.00
Utilities	3,165.00
Ministry/Supplies	247.00
Maintenance	1,077.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	347.00
Other Disbursements	1,987.00

Total Expenditures **24,159.00**

Receipts for Months of: May, June & July 2011

Weekly Envelopes	15,173.00
Weekly Plate	490.00
Benevolences	948.00
Memorial Fund	1,525.00
Special Offerings	801.00
Other Receipts	3,295.00

Total Receipts **22,232.00**

Please be mindful of the following members and friends of our congregation in your prayers:

Sister Kaethe; Margarethe Roth; Janet Roth; Martha Bauer; Frederick Dalm; Groezinger Family; Philipp & Hildegard Febel; Laura Kurtz; Helga's grandson Nicholas; Trudy Mische; Alona; Debra Meraglia; Jon Reeverts; Andrea Mayorga; Eleanor Rizzo; Donna Dowd; Pedro Rodriguez; Steven Chin; Doris Church; Family of Douglas Bacconi; Melissa and Jeff Donaldson; Irmgard Maines; Lucia (Puselia's mother); Chloe Holland-Anderson; Andrew Stoneman; Theodora's family; United Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood; Juergen Schroder; Family of Mark Ortiz; Reformed Church in America; Dave & Char Alexander (RCA missionaries in Taiwan); Doug Leonard (RCA missionary in Oman); Peter Mark Trautmann (The Navigators at NYU); Leonard and Linda Schiefer (Gideons International); Pastor Tom and the Consistory.

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Diana Albanese and her family on the death of her mother, Lucille Albanese.

Come to the Unity Dinner!

Last year, our church hosted the first Unity Dinner, which brought together members from three different congregations in the greater Ridgewood area. The event was a great success, and for its second year it has been expanded to encompass six churches. You are hereby cordially invited to enjoy an afternoon of ecumenical fellowship and a tasty dinner!

When: October 2, 2011, 3:00 p.m.

Where: Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 62-81 60th Place at Bleecker Street

Cost: \$10 for adults, \$5 for children up to the age of twelve

To purchase your tickets for the Unity Dinner, please speak with Erik Huneke or e-mail him at ehuneke@umich.edu. We look forward to seeing you there!

Worship Schedule for September

September 4, 11, 18, 25 – Regular Worship Schedule
10:00 a.m.

- Communion will be celebrated on September 4
- Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
- Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

September 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm	2 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm	3
4 Worship Service 10:00 am <i>Their Daily Bread Collection</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am	12	13 Consistory Meeting 7:30 pm	14	15	16	17 Steuben Day Parade
18 Worship Service 10:00 am	19	20	21 Frauenverein/ Ladies Aid 1:00 pm	22	23	24 Couples and Friends 6:00 pm
25 Worship Service 10:00 am	26	27	28	29	30	Prayer Meeting Sundays 9am Junior Church Sundays 10am