

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

January 2012

And the Beat Goes On

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

-Matthew 5:14-16

Merry Christmas!

I know, I know, you're probably thinking, well he's a little late with that, been done and over with for a while now. And it's true, by the time you read this message, Christmas will have come and gone. But while this is being written, (Wednesday, Jan. 4th) Christmas is still very much upon us. Call me a snooty traditionalist, but Christmas is just too much to be done and over with in just one day or a holiday weekend, therefore we need—just as that Christmas carol repeats—twelve days of it. And the twelve days of Christmas will come to their conclusions on Thursday, Jan 5th followed by the Epiphany (more on that in a moment.)

Now you, like me even, may be a little tired with the holidays. Ready to clean up, put things back in their appropriate place, and move on in this New Year. I get that. Sure. For many of us, it seems “Christmas time” started back in November just after Thanksgiving. Still for others, it was back in late October, around Halloween. (That was when we had snow, right?) Well, this is what the stores and media have been serving up as Christmas. Make no mistake, the only “war on Christmas” is how capitalism and marketers have made it all about buying gifts or buying other such things to make the season merry and bright.

But obviously, you and I know differently. You and I know that Christmas is not about buying stuff. It's about God with us, Emmanuel! Christmas is about the humble

child born in a manger. Christmas is about the Word becoming flesh and dwelling with us. Christmas is about the light of the world!

Getting ready for Christmas, thus, really does take some preparation—that's what we Christians call Advent—four long weeks of expectant waiting and thoughtful soul preparation, readying ourselves not only to commemorate the first birth of Jesus (and for that matter the birth of the Holy Spirit in our lives), but also Christ's coming again!

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter.” That's from the Pete Seeger song by the Byrds. Also, from the bible, Ecclesiastes 3:1. Important words, from whomever you hear them. For you see, we live in seasons and times, and we need that. No matter how much we may like to climate control our lives and move to whatever rhythm we choose, we are created as part of a cosmos, as part of an ordered system. Sure, that system is out of whack, oftentimes we're out of whack, but there is an order and a rhythm nevertheless. There's a beat. The beat of God.

The church year—which is not the beat either—is an attempt to connect us to the rhythm of Christ—who is the beat. Don't get me wrong, as followers of Christ, we dance to a different tune—one that is not the world's nor is all our own—but is harmonized in Christ. Advent prepares us for the song, and in Christmas the beat is born into our world, and we are invited to welcome it—to welcome Christ—into our hearts. Thus we take twelve days for Christmas for it takes a little while for our hearts to beat the same. Stand on the hillside with the shepherds a while. Approach the manger softly. Hold the newborn infant and allow your breathing to connect with his. Be changed by this small child.

Which leads us to Epiphany. We in the Western church (Roman Catholic and Protestant) primarily commemorate Epiphany, January 6th as the day the magi worshiped and adored Christ, lead to him by a star, the light

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6630 60th Place
Ridgewood, NY 11385
718 821-2700

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

of God shining forth revelation to the Gentiles (us!). The Eastern church (Orthodox churches) celebrates the baptism of the Lord where along with God the Father who's voice is heard accompanied by the Holy Spirit appearing like unto a dove descending as Jesus comes out of the waters of the Jordan—again, a shining revelation from God.

The gospel writer John uses poetry to proclaim the amazing reality of God becoming like us saying that in the Word become flesh was the light of the world, that the light shines in the darkness, and that the darkness does not overcome it. "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." The Epiphany—the light of God's glory shining forth in the life and the ministry of Jesus the Christ, teaching people to walk to a different beat. In his ministry, Jesus teaches his disciples that the light that shines in him also shines through his followers—us!

So again, Merry Christmas! And Happy Epiphany! May the light of God shine not only upon you but also through you. May God's glory radiate through your life and all that you do. And may we all be enlivened by the heartbeat of God transforming our lives and creating a new world.

In Christ's Grace & Peace,
Pastor Tom

Pastor Mini-Sabbatical

Starting this Wednesday, January 11th Pastor Tom will be on a three week intercultural immersion mini-sabbatical traveling with RCA mission partners JP and Katy Sundararajan in south India. During his time away, the church office will remain open under its normal operating hours with administrative responsibilities handled deftly by Office Extraordinaire Liz Burzynski. For pastoral concerns you may contact the office and you will be directed to an Elder of the Consistory: Kurt Andreas, Ludwig Hauser, or Leonard Schiefer. In case of a pastoral emergency, please call Lenny Schiefer. In cases where a Minister is needed, Rev. Justin Meyers from Church on the Hill (Flushing) is available. Pastor Tom will be back in the country on Wednesday, February 1. A spectacular recent seminary graduate will be leading worship while pastor is away and you do not want to miss those Sundays.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday February 5, 2012 immediately following the regular worship service. The congregational meeting provides you with an opportunity to hear from Pastor and members of the consistory about what is going on in the life of Trinity and also for you to ask questions. New elders and deacons of Consistory will also be elected. Please make every effort to attend.

Sunday School Christmas Program



For the first time in several years, the Trinity Church family experienced an almost good old-fashioned Sunday School Christmas Pageant! The children and teens of the Junior Church joined together following the worship service on Sunday, Dec. 18th to share the Christmas story in word and puppet form. Each of our young adults—Alexander, Anthony, and Matthais—narrated portions of the Gospel lessons while the Junior Church participants—Andrew, Daniel, Jacob, Joey, Marcus, Nikolas, Theodora, and Timothy—used cardboard puppets—shepherds, angels, sheep, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus—to act out the scenes in front of our eyes. Along with a special song presentation (including computer graphic display) and saxophone solo of Silent Night, the kids shared the good news of the Word becoming flesh. A huge thank you goes out to all our Junior Church teachers—Brigette Brady, Diana Albanese, Jenny Burger, and Lenny Schiefer, with special thanks to Carmen Blanco and Linda Schiefer for their leadership. Thank you also to Victoria Wtorkowski for her help. After the program, the Sunday School sponsored an all-Church holiday luncheon for all in attendance. A grand time was had by all!

Thank you!

A special thank you to everyone who assisted in beautifying the sanctuary for the holidays, whether by decorating, donating a poinsettia or by filling the pews with your joyful presence.



Classis Assessment

Trinity Reformed Church is part of a church that is larger than merely our congregation. As such, we are covenantal partners to sisters and brothers locally, regionally, and nationally; and as part of the Reformed Church in America we have a denominational financial responsibility working with the church beyond our walls and community. We call this denominational financial responsibility “assessment,” that we pay to the Classis of Queens, which we—along with the almost thirty other RCA congregations in Queens—make up. This assessment is used to pay for the denominational programs and expenses locally, regionally, and nationally. For 2012 the annual Classes assessment is \$96.00 for each active confessing member. If you use offering envelopes you will find four envelopes marked “Assessment” spaced quarterly throughout the year of your offering envelope box. Your attention to the assessment envelopes—either in one offering, or spaced out in four quarterly donations—assists our congregation in meeting our denominational financial responsibilities as we join the wider Reformed Church in serving Christ in ministry and mission. Thank you!

Das Lieblingsgebet von Pater Rupert Mayer (1876 - 1945)

HErr, wie Du willst, soll es geschehen,
und wie Du willst, so will ich gehen,
hilf Deinen Willen recht verstehen!
HErr, was Du willst, das nehm' ich hin,
und was Du willst ist mir Gewinn;
genug, dass ich Dein eigen bin.
HErr, weil Du's willst, drum ist es gut;
und weil Du's willst, drum hab' ich Mut.
Mein Herz in Deinen Haenden ruht!
HErr, wann Du willst, dann ist es Zeit;
und wann Du willst, bin ich bereit,
heut' und in alle Ewigkeit!

A good prayer for the start of the New Year from one totally dedicated to the Lord and His Will.

May it be as You will, Lord, and I will obey , just help me to understand Your Will correctly.
I shall accept whatever Your Will is, knowing it is all for my good; it is enough to know that I am Yours completely.
Because You wish it, Lord, I know it's good and because you wish it I have the courage to obey.
My heart rests in Your Hands.
Lord, whenever you wish, it is the right time and when you wish it, I'll be ready
not only today but in all eternity.

New Sexton

As of January 1, Don Gorham is our new sexton at Trinity Reformed Church. Don is a member who has a construction background and he has been involved in several projects at church including building the new office two years ago, helping with the painting of the fellowship hall, and putting up the ceiling in the Consistory Room. We hope that with his expertise, Don will not only take care of the normal sexton's duties but also be able to take on some maintenance projects and thereby help Trinity in the wise stewardship of our resources. If you feel there are maintenance issues which should be addressed, please do not talk with Don but rather speak with Bob Bambach, chairperson of the property and maintenance committee, or Pastor.

Coffee Hour Fellowship

Everyone who attends the coffee hour fellowship after the worship service seems to enjoy the experience. Helpers are needed so that we can rotate the people who serve and clean up. In addition, any homemade cakes are always appreciated. When cakes are not donated, the church has to purchase baked goods. In order to help defray the cost, we have included a “Coffee Hour Fellowship” envelope in the offering boxes this year. Any money collected in these envelopes will be used to help pay for the coffee and cake served. We appreciate your support.

January Birthdays

Jenny Burger Jan 2	Albert Bauer Jan 17
Liesl Neumeier Jan 21	Joey Burger-Morelli Jan 24
Carmen Blanco Jan 26	Irmgard Mains Jan 26

Prayer List

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; Eleanor Rizzo; Donna Dowd; Steven Chin; Doris Church; Chloe Holland-Anderson; Andrew Stoneman; United Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood and Pastor Henry Fury; Juergen Schroder; Joyce Silver; Fritz Reif; Maritza Garia Castro; Xiomara & Jason; Family of Ken DeNoble; Gideon Abbas; Family of Susanna Fetzer; Reformed Church in America, Queens Classis, and Regional Synod of New York; Dave & Char Alexander, RCA missionaries in Taiwan; Doug Leonard, RCA missionary in Oman; Peter Mark Trautmann, The Navigators at NYU; Leonard & Linda Schiefer, Gideons International; Pastor Tom and the Consistory.

Stewardship Statements and Offering Envelopes

Following Christ in mission and ministry calls for significant contribution of self and resources and we at Trinity are thankful for every person who participates in God's redemptive and transformative work. You are a blessing as you bless God and God's creation! One of the services to help our members and friends in their stewardship giving that we utilize here at Trinity are personal offering envelopes. These envelopes help both you and the church office keep an orderly record of your tithes and offering and any other financial gift or contributions that you may make. Oftentimes, persons find these orderly records in the form of personal stewardship statements to be helpful for their own income tax preparation. The church office can only provide stewardship statements if you are using personal offering envelopes. Anyone in need of your own offering envelopes should speak with our Office Administrator, Liz Burzynski, who can provide you them. She can also provide you annual personal stewardship statements. But for accurate recording purposes, stewardship statements can only be made when used in conjunction with personal offering envelopes. Any questions, please speak with Liz or Stewardship and Finance Committee Chair, Bill Voges.

Stewardship and Finance Report

<u>Expenditures for Month of:</u>	<u>November 2011</u>
Personnel Expenses	\$ 6880.00
Utilities	\$ 712.00
Ministry/Supplies	\$ 391.00
Maintenance	\$ 75.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	\$ 70.00
Other Disbursements	\$ 166.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 8294.00

<u>Receipts for Month of:</u>	<u>November 2011</u>
Weekly Envelopes	\$ 5139.00
Weekly Plate	\$ 153.00
Benevolences	\$ 356.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 1000.00
Special Offerings	\$ 379.00
Other Receipts	\$ 270.00
Total Receipts	\$ 7297.00

Worship Schedule for January

January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 – Regular Worship Schedule
10:00 a.m.

- Communion will be celebrated on January 1 and 15
- Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
- Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

A Child's View of Thunderstorms



A little girl walked to and from school daily. Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with lightning. The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school. She also feared the electrical storm might harm her child. Full of concern, the mother got into her car and quickly drove along the route to her child's school. As she did, she saw her little girl walking along. At each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up, and smile. More lightning followed quickly and with each, the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile. When the mother drew up beside the child, she lowered the window and called, "What are you doing?" The child answered, "I am trying to look pretty because God keeps taking my picture." May God bless you today and every day as you face the storms that come your way.

Humor Corner

A kindergarten teacher was walking around observing her classroom of children while they were drawing pictures. As she got to one girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute!"

At Sunday School, students were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and asked, "Johnny, what is the matter?" Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Two boys were walking home from church after hearing a strong preaching on the devil. One said to the other, "What do you think about all this Satan stuff?" The other boy replied, "Well, you know how Santa Claus turned out. It's probably just your dad."

<http://www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor/Religious.htm>

January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am	2 N/A Mtg. 7pm	3 Al-Anon 7:30 pm	4	5 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm N/A Mtg. 7pm	6 UPC Soup Kitchen 4:00 pm	7 N/A Mtg. 7pm
8 Worship Service 10:00 am <i>Second Sunday Symposium</i>	9 Consistory Meeting 7:30 pm N/A Mtg. 7pm	10 Al-Anon 7:30pm	11	12 N/A Mtg. 7pm	13	14 N/A Mtg. 7pm
15 Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am	16 N/A Mtg. 7pm	17 Al-Anon 7:30pm	18 Frauen- Verein/ Ladies Aid 1:00 pm	19 N/A Mtg. 7pm	20	21 Couples & Friends 6:00 pm N/A Mtg. 7pm
22 Worship Service 10:00 am	23 N/A Mtg. 7pm	24 Al-Anon 7:30pm	25	26 N/A Mtg. 7pm	27	28 N/A Mtg. 7pm
29 Worship Service 10:00 am	30 N/A Mtg. 7pm	31 Al-Anon 7:30pm			Prayer Meeting Sundays 9am Junior Church Sundays 10am <i>Their Daily Bread Collection 1st Sunday of each month</i>	