

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

February 2013

God's Love

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

-Romans 8:31-39

What then are we to say about these things?

I must confess that, as your pastor, this is what I contend with not only on a monthly basis in this *Trinity Chimes* column and weekly in the sermon, but daily as I live my life among you and speak with you and share this thing we call faith. It is a faith that has room for doubt and wrestles with the big questions of existence and meaning as well as trying to make sense of the world we live in while at the same time dealing with the daily issues of aging, health, raising children, jobs, community concerns, etc. What then am I to say about these things?

Well, one thing that could be good to say is what the first letter from the epistle writer, John, in the New Testament says, that, "God is love." Perhaps it's trite or cliché, but it is still profoundly true, paramountly so. And heard in context of how John uses it,

(1 John 4.16), "So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them" we can say not only *is* God love, but this same God *loves* us—you and me—and is *with us*. Now really, I want you to hear that: *God loves you and is with you.*

Sometimes *we* forget that. Even *we* who have been going to church for a long time. Even worse, some of us have never heard that. Even some of us who have been in church have somehow missed hearing that God loves you and is with you. Still, many more have somehow convinced themselves because of something that they did or haven't done, or maybe even that they are going through, that God's love is not for them. So not true!

Which is why I appreciate the Apostle Paul's words shared earlier here, that absolutely nothing can separate us from God's love. Nothing, not a thing, *nada, null!* Not that which you've done or that which you didn't do. God's love is not dependent upon you. It's unconditional. Which brings me to another thing to say about these things: Grace.

Grace is that thing which allows us to experience God's love, of us not being alone in this world. Grace: that is most fully conceived and expressed and shared in the life and the person of Jesus Christ. Grace: more than an emotion, but is an attitude of God. Grace: that which is a movement of God, that is tasted and felt and heard in the actions of the Holy Spirit. Grace that is good news.

What then are we to say about these things? That God loves you and is with you and offers you grace upon grace in your life. That's what I would say. And that is what I hope I say in some form or manner every time I speak, that I might proclaim this good news.

And I hope that you would say it too. That you would speak words of God's love and grace. That you too would share good news.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Page	1-2
In Memorium	2
Christian Unity	2
Ash Wednesday	2
Lenten Bible Study	2
Season of Lent	2
February Birthdays	3
Prayer List	3
Worship Schedule	3
Classis Assessment	3
Stewardship & Finance	3
Poem	3
February Calendar	4

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



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

And most importantly, that you would truly know it.

But still, these are only words.

And if you are like me, you may find yourself bombarded by words, for they are everywhere. They often confront us as soon as we wake. They usually pester us as we try to go to sleep. They can even enter our slumbers. Words are everywhere. And sometimes because of that, they lose some of their meaning.

Therefore, "what are we to say about these things" isn't enough. It's not enough to just say something; you may have to show it. As important as speaking God's good news of love and grace is, showing it and living it out is just as important. Probably, even more important.

Church—and I use this term here most fully attempting to capture the totality of all the various aspects worship and fellowship and discipleship—serves as the location (body of people and not simply place) where the gathered community comes to hear a word of love and grace, peace and hope, and find meaning and purpose in their lives. Church though is not only where we hear and share that word and words, but where we live them and experience them. Church assists us in our relationship with God and with one another as we put into action God's love and grace.

It is my prayer that you would know the fullness of God's love and grace and that we as Trinity Reformed Church might grow in that love and grace as we share it in action.

In Christ's Grace and Peace,

Pastor Tom

✠ In Memorium-Peter Trautmann

It was with great sadness but with confidence and hope in the resurrection that the Trinity family and wider community gathered on January 11th and 12th to celebrate the life and God's promise of eternal life of Peter Trautmann. Peter was a long-time part and vital member of our church family and will be dearly missed. Our prayers for peace and comfort and sustaining grace go out to his wife, Marieanna and their son and daughter-in-law, Peter Mark and Amanda.

Service of Prayer for Christian Unity

On Sunday January 27 the Clergy Association of Ridgewood, Glendale, Maspeth and Middle Village held a service of prayer for Christian unity at Covenant Lutheran Church. Several members of Trinity attended and Pastor Tom participated in the service. Deacon John Sands of St. Matthias gave the sermon. The theme of the afternoon was that we are all bound together by our faith in Jesus Christ which is more important than the doctrinal beliefs that sometimes divide us.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service

The Season of Lent begins a forty-day journey with Christ to the cross of holy week and ultimately, the resurrection of Easter Sunday. How are we to make this journey and how shall we begin? On Wednesday, Feb. 13th at 7:30 pm, you are invited to come and worship and to ponder these questions together with your sisters and brothers here at Trinity. This intimate service includes lessons and music, holy communion and the imposition of ashes. All are encouraged to come and participate.

Lenten Bible Study: Hallelujah, A Musical Study of the Bible

The Lenten Season provides us an opportunity for reflection and study, to deepen our relationship with God and one another, and to become more open to the ways in which God is at work in Christ. During this season, we will open the scriptures and reflect on and explore various biblical passages that have been put to music, specifically connected to Handel's *Messiah*. Being musical or an appreciation of it is not necessary to participate in this study. All levels of bible understanding are welcome. We will gather in the church hall each Wednesday during Lent beginning on Wednesday, February 20th at 7:30 to 8:30 pm. All are welcome!

Season Of Lent

The liturgical season of Lent begins with the solemn observance of Ash Wednesday and continues for six weeks, culminating with the church's joyous celebration of Easter. The word Lent is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for springtime, which is a literal translation of the lengthening of the days. In the early church, the Lenten period was used as a time for preparing new converts for Baptism on Easter Sunday. Today it is a time for preparation, reflection, growth, and change. The forty-day period of Lent was established in the middle of the fourth century. (Sundays are not included in the count, since Sundays are considered "little Easters," all of which celebrate the resurrection.) The liturgical color for Lent is purple, a solemn color, a color for royalty and repentance. Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. The biblical witness is found in the opening epic of the human story: "you are dust and to dust you shall return" (Gen 3:19). In the tenth century the use of ashes was employed in visibly reminding worshippers of their mortality as they began their Lenten "watch by the cross." This first day of Lent reminds us (in the words of the Heidelberg Catechism, question and answer #88) that two things are involved in genuine repentance: "the dying of the old self and the coming to life of the new." The way to Easter is the way of the cross. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3). New life with Christ involves a daily surrendering of the old life. The first step of this Lenten journey invites us to acknowledge our mortality and our sinfulness by the imposition of ashes. Traditionally, the ashes for the service are prepared (well ahead of time) by burning the palm branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday. Imposition of ashes can be a deeply moving, though sobering

experience. It is simply a vivid and tangible reminder of our sinfulness and mortality and of our utter dependence upon the grace of God and the power of Christ's resurrection. (rca.org)

Happy February Birthdays

Bobby Murphy	1 st	Kristen Hauser	3 rd
Beatriz Martinez	3 rd	Helga Theocharides	8 th
Deborah Andreas	11 th	Anita Aronowitz	11 th
Max Teodorescu	11 th	Maureen Carvin	18 th
Marieanna Trautmann	18 th	Diane Carvin	26 th
Cindy Park	28 th		

Prayer List

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

Sister Kaethe, health; Janet Roth, health; Martha Bauer, health; Frederick Dalm, healing; Groezinger Family; Philipp & Hildegard Febel, healing; Laura Kurtz, health; Debra Meraglia, health & healing; Eleanor Rizzo, health & healing; Donna Dowd, healing; Doris Church, healing; United Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood and Pastor Henry Fury; Bill Albanese, health & healing; Susan Gebhart, health & healing; Maritza Garcia-Castro, health & healing; Betty Klaar, health & healing; Anibal Segarra, safety & protection; Martin Seidl, health & healing; Elisabeth Roth, health & healing; Teri Alyse Meyer, health & healing; Joseph Stubbs, health & healing; Anna Jackson, health & healing; Barbara Burger, health & healing; Family of Jerry Hertler, peace & comfort; Family of Peter Trautmann, peace & comfort; Family of Elisabeth Schneider' peace & comfort; Clara Gomez, health & healing; Evelyn Meditz Lenny's mom), health & healing; Felder Williams, health & healing; 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.

Worship Schedule for February

February 3, 10, 17, 24 –Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

- Communion will be celebrated on February 3, 13, and 17
- Ash Wednesday – February 13 at 7:30 p.m.
- Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
- Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Classis Assessment

In last month's newsletter it was reported that the Classis Assessment for each active church member for 2013 was \$ 96.00. The actual amount is \$99.75.

Stewardship and Finance Report

<u>Expenditures for Month of</u>	<u>Dec. 2012</u>
Personnel Expenses	\$ 8,208.00
Utilities	\$ 1,077.00
Ministry/Supplies	\$ 160.00
Maintenance	\$ 94.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	\$ 0.00
Other Disbursements*	\$ 629.00

Total Expenditures **\$ 16,068.00**

<u>Receipts for Month of</u>	<u>Dec. 2012</u>
Weekly Envelopes	\$ 9,020.00
Weekly Plate	\$ 393.00
Benevolences	\$ 456.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 1,400.00
Special Offerings	\$ 3,634.00
Other Receipts**	\$ 4,530.00

Total Receipts **\$ 19,433.00**

*Property insurance, assessment paid, music/organ insurance

**Because the offering envelope contributions were insufficient to meet expenses, \$4,000 was transferred from the Benevolent (Mission) Fund to make up the difference.

Guter Rat von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"Willst du gluecklich sein im
Leben?
Trage bei zu anderer Glueck,
denn die Freude, die wir geben,
kehrt ins eigene Herz zurueck."

Good advice from
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

If you wish to be happy in life,
add to the happiness of others
for the joy we freely give to
others comes back to enrich our
own hearts.

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Prayer Meeting Sundays 9am Junior Church Sundays 10am					1	2 NA Mtg. 7pm
3 Worship Service 10:00 am <i>Congregational Meeting following Worship Service</i> <i>Their Daily Bread Collection</i>	4 NA Mtg. 7pm	5 Al-Anon 7:30pm	6 	7 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4:00 pm	8 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4:00 pm	9 NA Mtg. 7pm
10 Worship Service 10:00 am	11 NA Mtg. 7pm	12 Consistory Meeting 7:30 pm	13 Ash Wednesday Worship Service 7:30 pm	14 NA Mtg. 7pm	15 	16 NA Mtg. 7pm
17 Worship Service 10:00 am	18 NA Mtg. 7pm	19 Al-Anon 7:30pm	20 Frauenverein/ Ladies Aid 1:30 pm Lenten Bible Study 7:30 pm	21 NA Mtg. 7pm	22 	23 Couples & Friends 6:00 pm NA Mtg. 7pm
24 Worship Service 10:00 am	25 NA Mtg. 7pm	26 Al-Anon 7:30pm	27 Lenten Bible Study 7:30 pm	28 NA Mtg. 7pm		