

# TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

January 2013

## Growing Up

**Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.**

### -Philippians 4:8

On the first Sunday after Christmas, Luke's Gospel ends with these words: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years..." In other words, he grew up. We are told this when Jesus was about 12 years old and we will not encounter him again until he's about thirty. What happened in the intermean? The bible does not say. But aren't you curious? Imagine what it was like...

What we do know is that the child whom we have celebrated these last few weeks in Advent and Christmas grows up to be a man of incredible depth, courage, and honesty. He becomes a teacher who shares such love and grace both in words and actions that people react, they actually follow him and his way. He changes people. He changes the world. He still is changing people and the world.

After Christmas, Jesus grows up. And in many ways, demands the same of us his followers. As St. Paul says, "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways." This is by no means to insult the young! For certainly, even Jesus instructs us, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." But Jesus is showing us what humility and hospitality are to look like! As to our faith and the depth of our spirituality, we are to grow up and continue to grow in our relationship to God and with one another, in our knowledge of Christ, and expressing the fruit of the Spirit.

The holidays are a joyous time and have a particularly child-like magic about them.

However, our faith can sometimes get stuck at a childish kind of stage of underdevelopment. It takes work to both keep the magic and mystery and imagination of childhood while maturing in a deeper and fuller relationship with God.

Gregory of Nyssa, a fourth century theologian regarded three stages that many believers processed through in their service to God. The first stage is one motivated by fear; the second is motivated by reward. The final stage is motivated by love in which the believer serves God because of love, as a child of God. Perhaps it's counter intuitive that growing up in faith requires an understanding that we are children of God.

Gregory of Nyssa would not be the first saint to observe that folks—even faithful persons within the church—can sometimes get stuck at various points of development.

Even Martin Luther took some time to get it! You may remember the story of how he struggled for the longest time in fully understanding his salvation was not ultimately dependent upon his ability to repent from every single sin he committed but upon him grasping the wideness of God's mercy. It took a new way of seeing a passage in the book of Romans, 1:17, that helped him to mature in his faith that we are "justified by faith." Luther shares that, "I felt that I had been born anew and that the gates of heaven had been opened. The whole of Scripture gained a new meaning. And from that point on the phrase 'the justice of God' no longer filled me with hatred, but rather became unspeakably sweet by virtue of a great love."

This maturing in his faith helped him to speak up about other aspects of the church that needed correction. A few years later, in the autumn of 1517, Luther would write a letter that would later be distributed as the Ninety-five Theses which would ultimately get him disciplined by the church hierarchy.

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



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On this date (January 3<sup>rd</sup> for our digital subscribers) in 1521, the German monk, priest, and theology professor was excommunicated by Pope Leo X. This is a sad commemoration, for it demonstrates not only the brokenness of the world, but the brokenness of the church as well.

Nonetheless, it is also a demonstration of the call to maturity, of how we all must grow up in our faith and relationship with God.

There is good news to this maturing process that I would like to remind you of however. We do not grow up alone by ourselves. We get to be nurtured by the community of faith, our church family, sisters and brothers together on the journey of faith. Even when we go astray and make mistakes, personally or collectively, we can still learn from and grow together.

And perhaps the greatest good news is that we are not alone in this process, for not only do we have one another, we have God who is walking by our sides and the Spirit to lead us.

New year is a time for resolutions and that is all well and good. I hope that you will resolve with me to continue to mature in your faith and spirituality, to grow up at Trinity. But unlike other resolutions, this is not one solely dependent upon your own willpower. For we have a guiding light to lead the way for this is also the season of Epiphany where we remember God's light that shined in and through the Christ child but also the star that showed the way for the magi. God's light still shines! It shines through you and me. May 2013 be filled with the light of God. And may Christ grace, peace, and hope fill our world! And may the Holy Spirit continue to use and inspire each of us to follow in Christ's footsteps as we grow up in him.

In Christ's Grace and Peace,  
Happy New Year/Guten Rutch!

Pastor Tom

### **Annual Congregational Meeting**

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday February 3, 2013 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.

### **Christian Unity Worship Service**

The annual Christian Unity Worship Service will take place on Sunday January 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm at Covenant Lutheran Church.

## **Celebration & Mission**



On December 9, after the Worship Service, the Junior Church hosted our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *All Church Christmas Celebration/Potluck*. The children sang Christmas carols and presented a pageant of the first Christmas. The finale was the children going from table to table collecting donated toys from the congregation while singing the Little Drummer Boy. These toys were later delivered to the Queens Courier newspaper and distributed at a Christmas party at "Russo's On The Bay" to children who were affected by Super Storm Sandy. Thank you to all who contributed and helped in making this endeavor a success.

A thank you also to everyone for the donations of hats, scarves, socks, toiletries, etc. collected by the Junior Church. The children used these to make gift bags and distributed them to those in need in our community at the United Presbyterian Welcome Kitchen.

### **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 Bill Voges.

## 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 2013 the annual Classis 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!

### Happy January Birthdays🍰

Jenny Burger 2<sup>nd</sup>      Don Gorham 7<sup>th</sup>      Albert Bauer 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Liesl Neumeier 21<sup>st</sup>      Joey Burger-Morelli 24<sup>th</sup>  
 Carmen Blanco 26<sup>th</sup>      Irmgard Mains 26<sup>th</sup>

### 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; Torres Family, prayers for recovery from house fire; Elisabeth Roth, health & healing; Helga Theocharides, healing; Teri Alyse Meyer, health & healing; Joseph Stubbs, health & healing; Anna Jackson, 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 January

January 6, 13, 20, 27 –Worship Schedule 10:00 a.m.

- Communion will be celebrated on January 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>
- Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
- Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

## Die Predigt der Kerze

1. Sie brennt lautlos. Gott wirkt Grosses ohne Lärm. Morgenrot, Abendrot, Wachsen & Riefen, Herbstfärbung, Schneefall usw. Ps. 37, 7, Ps. 62.2
2. Sie brennt aufwärts, auch wenn man sie umlegt. Sind wir solche Wegweiser nach oben? Hebr. 12, 2
3. Sie leuchtet und strahlt, am sichtbarsten in der Dunkelheit. Durch Fürbitte kann unser Licht bis an die Enden der Erde strahlen. Matth. 5, 16
4. Sie wärmt. Wenn uns Gottes Liebe nicht erfüllt, können andere in unser Nähe frösteln. 1. Petr. 1, 22
5. Sie verwandelt sich, aus festem Wachs in weiches, flüssiges, usw. Dazu soll auch unsee Gnadenzeit dienen, dass wir in Jesu Bild verwandelt werden. Röm. 8, 29
6. Sie verzehrt sich. Wenn die Kerze ganz bleiben wollte, könnte sie keine der genannten Aufgaben erfüllen und hätte ihres Zwecks verfehlt. Röm. 12, 2

### The Message of the Candle

It burns silently. The great works of God are accomplished in the silence: sunrise, sunset, growth and maturing, fall foliage, snow, etc.

It burns upward, even when turned on its side. Do we as lights in the world also reflect upwards?

It glows and sheds light, especially in the darkness. In prayer our light can reach even to the ends of the earth.

It warms. If we are not filled with God’s love, others will feel the coldness in us.

It transforms itself from solid wax into liquid form. So also should we become transformed into the image of Christ.

It consumes itself. If the candle were to remain intact it could never fulfill any of the above functions. It would have failed to realize its intended purpose.

### Stewardship and Finance Report

<u>Expenditures for Month of</u>	<u>Nov. 2012</u>
Personnel Expenses	\$ 5,597.00
Utilities	\$ 760.00
Ministry/Supplies	\$ 194.00
Maintenance	\$ 81.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	\$ 0.00
Other Disbursements	\$ 24.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 6,656.00</b>

<u>Receipts for Month of</u>	<u>Nov. 2012</u>
Weekly Envelopes	\$ 3,664.00
Weekly Plate	\$ 131.00
Benevolences	\$ 936.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 500.00
Special Offerings	\$ 671.00
Other Receipts	\$ 1,584.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 7,486.00</b>

# January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4:00 pm  NA Mtg. 7pm	4 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4:00 pm	5  NA Mtg. 7pm
6  Worship Service 10:00 am  <i>Their Daily Bread Collection</i>	7  NA Mtg. 7pm	8  Consistory Meeting 7:00pm  Al-Anon 7:30pm	9	10  NA Mtg. 7pm	11	12  NA Mtg. 7pm
13  Worship Service 10:00 am	14  NA Mtg. 7pm	15  Al-Anon 7:30pm	16  Frauenverein/ Ladies Aid 1:00 pm	17  NA Mtg. 7pm	18	19  Couples & Friends 6:00 pm  NA Mtg. 7pm
20  Worship Service 10:00 am	21  NA Mtg. 7pm	22  Al-Anon 7:30pm	23	24  NA Mtg. 7pm	25	26  NA Mtg. 7pm
27  Worship Service 10:00 am  Christian Unity Worship Service 3:00 pm @ Covenant Lutheran	28  NA Mtg. 7pm	29  Al-Anon 7:30pm	30	31  NA Mtg. 7pm		<b>Prayer Meeting Sundays 9am</b>  <b>Junior Church Sundays 10am</b>