

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

October 2013

Swimming Against the Current

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

-Matthew 28:18-10

When Jesus is asked what the greatest commandment is, he replies with “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (This is from Matthew 23; Mark and Luke includes the words “with all your strength”—merely a translating difference, all harkening back to Deuteronomy 6.5: “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.’”) Christianity has a shorthand for this summing it up as the Great Commandment.

Great it might be. But what it most certainly is greatly difficult. Love does not come easily. Love is easy to sing about in love songs. Love is easy to wax poetic about in poetry or pontificate about in philosophy. Love is even easy to sermonize about from the pulpit. But to practice or to do can be challenging and at times nearly impossible. Nearly, but not entirely.

All this may seem quite obvious, but sometimes you just have to state the obvious—one might even say *confess* the obvious—so that we’re not unaware of what we are up against. Love can be challenging, difficult, hard, the list goes on... Still, love is at the core of who God is. And whom we are created and called to be. “God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.” (1 John 4.16b)

I begin with this here because it is where the church begins, in God’s love, and where we continue in our identity and mission. It is THE Great Commandment. It is OUR Great Commandment. As hard as it is, we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. AND love our neighbor as ourselves.

And I know you get the absurdity that that entails. Absurd not as impossible but nearly so. Absurd as in so against the survival instinct we seem hard wired for. Absurd as in going against the grain of our culture. Absurd as in swimming against the flow.

Still, we hear it each week in worship and we try to live it out each day. (Which leads me to be thankful for GRACE, but that’s another pastor’s page.)

Along with the Great Commandment comes the Great Commission. It’s the verses in bold at the beginning of this message. Before Jesus’ ascension he commissions his disciples, “go and make disciples (of Jesus) and I am with you always.” It’s noteworthy that Jesus didn’t say go and make converts or club members or even church members. He said go and make disciples—students and followers of Christ. To make disciples, you have to first be a disciple. And it would seem, discipleship—the act and practices of being a disciple—is pretty central to the message and ministry of God in Christ. To make one, you have to be one. And it is a learning following relationship/attitude/disposition that while maybe is always changing and growing, it never ceases.

The early disciples, themselves followers of Christ were to go forth and share and make more disciples of Christ who in turn would go and share and make disciples and so on and so on and ultimately this would be the church. But even so, the church was not created to simply be the church. Rather, it is the result of a group of disciples together living out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor’s Page	1-2
Anniversary Sunday	2
Crop Walk	2
In Memory	3
October Birthdays	3
Prayer List	3
Poem	3
Stewardship/Finance	3
Worship Schedule	3
October Calendar	4

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



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

And again, I feel the need to state the absurdity of this reality. Because seriously, to be a disciple is to see one's identity first and foremost as a follower of Jesus, to be a learner from him, to be a doer of what he does. And this is not typical of the world we live in! I'm not against the world; I actually think that world is a pretty amazing place. It's just that to live in it in a Jesus kind of way is to, well a lot like love, to be going against the grain, swimming against the current.

To live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, to be a disciple of Jesus, can even be "swimming against" the primary viewpoint (idea, identity, or narrative) that many of us—myself included!—have learned in the church.

You might be particularly unique. But for most of us, we have this notion—and by the way, it's not an entirely bad notion—that we are spiritual creature. The church provides for our various spiritual needs. Thus as individuals and as an organization it seems mutually beneficial. We "support" the church, and it supports us. It provides various services such as baptizing or marrying or burying us. It comes along beside us in our times of need and assists us with spiritual concerns with issues as far-reaching as raising our children and the afterlife. This is a dominant view in the world. We are consumer. The church dispenses various important needs. The pastor serves as a chaplain for our organization, the church, and we become members of it.

I will reiterate, that this is not in and of itself bad. We are spiritual creatures and the church *does* serve with various religious needs. But what happens, and it can set in over time, slowly, is that we become a kind of religious club. Our membership declines and we wonder how we can get new or more members. But we are so much more than that.

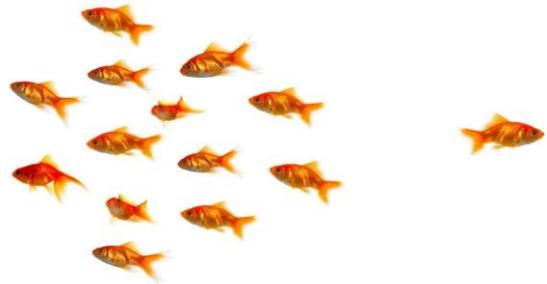
The identity that the Great Commission gives us is one that doesn't allow us to be mere consumers or even "members." It is not the viewpoint from which the Great Commission points. For in the Great Commission, we are so much more than consumers of religious goods. We are disciples following Jesus. We are practitioners of God's reign in the world.

There is much about Trinity that shows we get this. There is also much at Trinity that shows we live in challenging times. And it is hard to be and to make disciples, no doubt about it! But I want to encourage you: be a disciple of Christ. See yourself rooted in that identity first and see Trinity with that commission that we've been given.

Next month we will celebrate 160 years of following Christ in mission and of being disciples of Jesus here at Trinity. For all of us, it will be a grand time of looking back and seeing from whence we came. I will! And I will truly celebrate the saints that have come before us and the legacy that we have inherited. But I will also acknowledge the real challenges that we currently face, the hard work it is. And even more so, I look forward expectantly with hope that the vision to which

God is calling us in the future is even more spectacular than our past.

Swim against the current with me, would you?



In Christ's Grace and Peace,

Pastor Tom

Anniversary Sunday

SAVE THE DATE – On Sunday November 17 we will be celebrating the 160th Anniversary of Trinity Reformed Church. We plan on having a special dinner after the worship service to commemorate these years of service to Christ both here in Queens and also in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The dinner will be held at Christ The King High School which will allow for easy parking and physical accessibility for all to the dining space. More details, including the cost and time, will be available soon. Please save the date and plan on celebrating with us.

Crop Walk Update



Thirteen people from three area churches including nine people from Trinity Reformed Church participated in the CROP Walk sponsored by the Ridgewood Glendale Church Laity Association on October 5. Our church raised a total of \$1,430 for Church World Service and we wish to thank everyone who walked or contributed. Special thanks again this year to Hanna and Theo Hessenius who secured three generous donations from organizations that they belong to.

In Loving Memory

Trinity celebrates the lives and faithful witness of two saints who have gone onto the nearer presence of the Lord. Ms. Anna Pretzer, a long time member of Trinity died on September 15th at the home of her niece Ilona Muller in New Jersey where she has resided for the last two years while dealing with illness. She was 91. Trinity also remembers Sister Kaethe Kimmich who died on Sept. 13th. Sister Kaethe was a longtime neighbor at the Evangelical Chapel and minister of the Gospel who impacted many here in Ridgewood. For these last several years she has resided at the mother house of the Fellowship Deaconry in Liberty Corner, New Jersey. She was 106.

Happy October Birthdays

Eleonora Firneis	3 rd	Karl Kurtz	3 rd
Abigail Mastrocinque	5 th	Peter Mark Trautmann	10 th
Billy Stimpfel	12 th	Marie Russell	14 th
Bill Voges	17 th	Margot Groezinger	18 th
Lizzie Schiefer	21 st	Wilhelmina Meyer	26 th
Valerie Popp	29 th		

Prayer List

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

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; Fritz & Betty Klaar, health & healing; Anibal Segarra, safety & protection; Martin Seidl, health & healing; Barbara Burger, health & healing; Clara Gomez, health & healing; Felder Williams, health & healing; Mildred Schleeauf, health & healing; Church on the Hill, transitions; Amanda Trautmann, health in pregnancy; Isabel, Marcia, and Jade; Andrew Holbrook, health & healing; Reinhard Groezinger, health & healing; Marie Shanelly Alvarez; Mohr Family; Family of Erika Brauer; Family of Anna Pretzer; Family of Sister Kaethe; Family of Justine Kilbreath; Janet Kucinskas; 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.

Wir alle sind beim Wandern

Wir alle sind beim Wandern durch unsere Zeit und Welt,
Es freut sich eins am andern, weil eins das andere haelt.
Wir halten fest zusammen und helfen, troesten viel,
Wir gehen in Gottes Namen die Strasse bis zum Ziel.
Sein Wort wird uns begleiten. Er laesst uns nicht allein,
Er heisst uns alle Zeiten getrost und froehlich sein.

We are all travelers at this time and in our world.
We enjoy being together and supporting one another.
We help and comfort each other.
In God's name we tread the path to our (heavenly) goal
with His Word to guide us and His presence with us.
It is His Will that we be content and joyful.

(author unknown)

Stewardship and Finance Report

<u>Expenditures for Month of</u>	<u>Aug. 2013</u>
Personnel Expenses	\$ 5,545.00
Utilities	\$ 537.00
Ministry/Supplies	\$ 116.00
Maintenance	\$ 73.00
Spiritual Life/Outreach/Advertising	\$ 0.00
Other Disbursements*	\$ 3,010.00

Total Expenditures \$ 9,317.00

<u>Receipts for Month of</u>	<u>Aug. 2013</u>
Weekly Envelopes	\$ 5,631.00
Weekly Plate	\$ 139.00
Benevolences	\$ 367.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 0.00
Special Offerings	\$ 0.00
Other Receipts**	\$ 752.00

Total Receipts \$ 6,889.00

*Insurance, coffee hour expenses, office supplies, alarm system expenses

** NA, Classis Assessment

Worship Schedule for October

October 6, 13, 20, 27 –Worship Schedule 10:00 am

- Communion will be celebrated on Oct. 6th & 20th
- Prayer Meeting each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
- Junior Church each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

October 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Prayer Meeting Sundays 9am Junior Church Sundays 10am		1	2 Consistory Meeting 7 pm	3 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4 pm NA Mtg. 7pm	4 UPC Welcome Kitchen 4 pm	5 NA Mtg. 7pm
6 Worship Service 10:00 am	7 NA Mtg. 7pm	8 Al-Anon 7:30pm	9	10 NA Mtg. 7pm	11	12 Couples and Friends 2pm @ Broad Hollow Theater 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 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	28 NA Mtg. 7pm	29 Al-Anon 7:30pm	30 Consistory Meeting 7pm	31 NA Mtg. 7pm		