

# TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

JANUARY 2009

## From the Pastor's Desk

**“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation”**

### 2 Corinthians 5:17

As a child growing up in northeast Ohio my family always ate roast pork and sauerkraut on New Year's Day. Not really sure why, it's just what we did. So did my grandparents. It was the custom, the tradition that we had. Apparently, I learned later, it's a Pennsylvania Dutch thing, to bring good luck in the new year. To tell the truth, as a little kid I wasn't a huge fan of sauerkraut. It was something that I had to learn to enjoy as I got older. When I was in high school I spent many a New Year's Eve hanging out with a group of friends and there too, found my friend's family also ate pork and sauerkraut on New Year's. (Although they ate the pork in the form of ribs and ate it as one of the many noshes during the New Year Eve's celebration.) Even our grocery stores back home have sales special for pork and sauerkraut for the New Year holiday.

When I moved away from home I found that in other parts of the country people didn't eat pork and sauerkraut for New Year's. They never even heard of that custom. For instance, in western Michigan, I found there wasn't any discernable New Year's food custom. While living in Oklahoma, I learned that folks would eat black-eyed peas and collard greens or “peas and greens” for short to bring good luck in the New Year. The peas stood for pennies and the greens for paper money.

Living upstate, I was never able to find any particular New Year food custom there either, at least not in the Hudson Valley. A few years ago however, while busy at some church meeting I mentioned to one of my elders how I had to run to the market and get a pork roast for New Year's Day and her eyes lit up. She asked, “do you make it with sauerkraut?” My eyes lit up. I said, “I do!” She had grown up

and still had family in central PA and they too enjoyed the custom of eating pork and sauerkraut on New Year's Day.

There are few things in life that provide such comfort, that gives us a kind of meaning and understanding in life to help us on our way as food does. Along with language and religion, food supplies us with the structural framework of being, gives us our moorings. Oh, sure, there may certainly be much nostalgia interspersed within it as well. But at its most basic, in its most literal sense, food, language, and religion nourish and sustain us.

It should come as no surprise then that one of the central aspects of our Christian life and community is to gather together around table fellowship. “The Word became flesh and lived among us.” (John 1:14) And this same Word gave of his own self to feed us. As followers of Jesus, those who have taken the name of Christ, we gather weekly to be nourished and sustained by Word and Sacrament.

Now, stay with me here.

**“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”**  
**Isaiah 43:19a**

I've been thinking a lot about “new” lately. I have a new church. You have a new pastor. Got a new place to live, a new neighborhood, a new church family, a new system to learn and a new way of doing things. That probably goes for both you and me. A lot of *new* going on. And now, shortly into this new relationship between you and me, a New Year. This got me to thinking. I was going to wax poetic (and theological) about how our God is a God of new things. God is a God of surprises and a God of new life.

All very much true.

And yet in the midst of this newness I was thinking very much about the old, or let's say, former things. In this new pastorate, I think often of my former pastorate. In this new place I think often of my former place. In this approaching new year I've been thinking much

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

about former years. I'm not talking about necessarily good or bad, just thinking.

I've been thinking about how God takes all that we are—the good and the not so good, our experiences, our challenges, our gifts—and puts us together into a community of faith and uses it to bring about a new thing in the world. God took Abraham and Sarah and gave them a new place to call home. God took Esther and gave her a new position from which to save the lives of her people. God took Joseph and gave him a new responsibility, again to help in saving the lives of both the Egyptians and the Hebrews. God took a ragtag group of fishermen, tax collector, and sundry others and gave them a new calling to become agents of change in the world—preachers of the Good News and healers of the sick.

What are the new things God is doing in your life? What are the new ways God is active and at work in and around you? What are the new things God has in store for all of us at Trinity this new year? And what are the ways God will take the former things and use them and nourish them by Word and Sacrament and bring about something new!

I don't know. I can only begin to imagine! But in the midst of all the newness I can't help but to look back at this past year and years and to where each of us have come from and be thankful; to what has happened at Trinity, to where God has brought us thus far, and to be expectant and hopeful about the future. And know as we enter into the New Year together as a church family we will again gather around Word and Sacrament and be nourished and sustained by the Lord.

(And I will again have pork and sauerkraut on New Year's!)

Happy New Year / Guten Rutch!

Pastor Tom

### The Trinity Altar at Christmas

Once again our altar looked beautiful at Christmas.



### Frauenverein Luncheon



On December 17<sup>th</sup> the Ladies Aid/Frauenverein celebrated the Lord's birth with a luncheon, song, and entertainment.

### Annual Congregational Meeting

This year's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday February 8<sup>th</sup> immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Mark your calendar now and plan on attending. At this meeting Pastor, Consistory, and committees and organizations of Trinity Reformed will present reports and it will be an opportunity for members of the congregation to ask questions concerning the life of our church. We hope to see you there.

### The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm

The Lord is my Shepherd = That's Relationship!  
 I shall not want = That's Supply!  
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures = That's Rest!  
 He leadeth me beside the still waters = That's Refreshment!  
 He restoreth my soul = That's Healing!  
 He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness = That's  
 Guidance!

For His name sake = That's Purpose!  
 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death  
 = That's Testing!

I will fear no evil = That's Protection!  
 For Thou art with me = That's Faithfulness!  
 Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me = That's Discipline!  
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine  
 enemies = That's Hope!

Thou anointest my head with oil = That's Consecration!  
 My cup runneth over = That's Abundance!  
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of  
 my life = That's Blessing!

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord = That's Security!  
 Forever = That's Eternity!

Face it, the Lord is crazy about you!

## 2009 Offering Envelopes

In order to help you make your weekly offerings to Trinity, we are again supplying you with a box of offering envelopes for the New Year. These envelopes enable us to give you a statement at the end of the year for tax purposes and they serve as a visual reminder for you to be faithful in supporting God's work. If you have not already received them, your box of offering envelopes is available for pick up on Sundays during our weekly services.

## Classis Assessment

As a part of the Reformed Church in America, we are responsible for paying an annual assessment to the denomination for each active adult member in our congregation. This assessment is used to pay for denominational programs and expenses. For 2009, the annual Classis assessment is \$ 88.00. This means that the first \$ 88.00 you donate in your offering envelopes to Trinity Reformed Church goes to the denomination and not to Trinity. We ask you to remember this when you make your contributions. Thank you for your support.

## For the New Year

Des Lebens Jahre uns entgleiten  
gleich einem Strom nach ew'gem Rat.  
du wendest wieder, Herr der Zeiten,  
im Buch des Lebens nun ein Blatt.

Es steht die Zeit in deinen Händen.  
Lass sie uns füllen still und treu!  
Und wenn du dieses Blatt wirst wenden,  
so gib, dass es kein leeres sei.

Schreibst du darauf mit heil'gen Zügen,  
was unser Herz hier nicht versteht,  
so lass den Glauben in uns siegen,  
der auch im Dunkel mit dir geht.

Wie immer auch dies Jahr mag enden,  
nur du weisst meinen Weg allein.  
Du hältst auch meine Ziet in Händen  
und lässt mich tief geborgen sein.

Käte Walter

## Zum neuen Jahr

Gott segne dich im neuen Jahr  
und sei mit dir an jedem Tag.  
Der eine, der da sein wird, ist und war -  
er, der allein löst unser Zukunft Frage, in  
seinen starken Händen ruhen Heut und Morgen.  
Du kannst dich ganz getrost ihm überlassen,  
er, der bisher dich trug, wird weiter sorgen,  
so darfst du ihn bei seinem Worte fassen!

Marie Luise von Braun

## Bulletin Board Greetings!

Christmas Greetings were sent to the Trinity Church family from various friends and relations including the Alexanders—our Reformed Church Missionary Partners in Taiwan, the Potgieter Family, and others. Please see them on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Also, an update letter from Peter Mark, Amanda, and the Navigators ministry!

## Worship Schedule for January

January 4, 11, 18, 25 —Worship will be at 10:00 am

Communion will be celebrated on January 4