

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

JUNE 2009

Happy Birthday!

That's right, happy birthday! Happy birthday to you, the church! You will be receiving this issue of the *Trinity Chimes* on or following the Day of Pentecost, and in the Christian calendar, Pentecost is the birthday of the Church:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem... Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—"in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"...this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy... Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

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The Acts of the Apostles 2:1-5, 9-12, 16-18, 21

Pentecost was originally a Jewish harvest festival, thus "there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem." Following Easter's resurrection and just prior to Christ's bodily ascension into heaven Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Pentecost becomes the day when the disci-

ples are filled with the Holy Spirit and so empowered are able to share the good news with all around them. Pentecost is the day when followers of Jesus become the living body of Christ—and the Church is born!

One of the most fascinating and beautiful aspects of Pentecost is the sheer diversity of the event! It reads like an ancient United Nations assembly—"Parthians, Medes, Elamites". Now to be fair, technically all the nationalities listed off are predominantly ethnic Jews from all over the Mediterranean world along with a few converts to Judaism. Over the previous centuries and decades, various events led to a considerable Jewish diaspora. Yet the devout, no matter how much they had adapted to the local language and customs of where they settled, still returned to Jerusalem to worship on this feast day. And there assembled they witnessed this miraculous demonstration of Christ's disciples filled with the Holy Spirit. Imagine what the experience of it must have been like. I picture a kind of event like the closing ceremony of the Olympic games, when all the athletes come together. Amazing!

This is what Christ had promised, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem" and this is exactly what happens. On that first day of Pentecost, after the disciples witness to the good news of Jesus, "about three thousand persons were added" to the church. (Acts 2:41)

But I must return to the incredible diversity of the Pentecost event, for it continues throughout the book of Acts and there we see just as Christ had promised, the disciples empowered by the Spirit—both old and now new disciples—continue to witness Jesus' message of good news and it spreads "in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" until even, (gasp!) the non-Jewish Gentiles are incorporated into the Church.

The diversity of Pentecost and for that matter, the book of Acts doesn't simply end there. It continues to this very day in 2009 where God is still moving in the presence of the Holy Spirit

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

empowering us disciples to be the very body of Christ in the world and to witness to the good news of Jesus. This amazing good news that across the incredible diversity of creation and makes us the one body of Christ, this multifaceted, multicultural, multilingual, diverse assemblage that makes up the Church: Jew and Gentile, male and female, German and American, Bavarian and Prussian, First-world and Third-world, Anglo and Hispanic, urban and rural, educated and illiterate, rich and poor, straight and gay, Catholic and Protestant, conservative and liberal, all followers of Jesus, empowered with the Holy Spirit, witnessing the good news that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Happy Birthday Church! May the flames of Pentecost never go out and may it continue to blaze brightly here at Trinity.

In Christ's Grace & Peace,
Pastor Tom

Vacation Bible School



July 20—24

Enjoy Your Summer

The next issue of the *Trinity Chimes* will be in September. When you're not away on vacation, remember to continue to worship with us on Sundays. The Church doesn't take a vacation and we look forward to seeing you.

Aus dem Gedankengut von Hildegard von Bingen (1098 - 1179)

"Mitten im Kosmos steht der Mensch, denn er ist bedeutender als alle uebrigen Geschoeepfe, die abhaengig von der Welt bleiben. Obwohl er zwar klein ist von Statur, ist er jedoch gewaltig an Kraft seiner Seele. Sein Kopf ist aufwaerts gerichtet und seine Fuesse stehen auf festem Grund. Er vermag daher sowohl die hoechsten als auch die tiefsten Dinge in Bewegung zu setzen."

"Die Voegel, die sich in der Luft aufhalten, sind ein Sinnbild der Kraft des Menschen. Die Tiere aber, die auf der Erde leben, versinnbildlichen die Gedanken und Ueberlegungen des Menschen, die er in die Tat umsetzt. Der Loewe und die ihm aehnlichen Tiere bezeichnen den Willen des Menschen, unmittelbar, bevor er zur Tat wird. Die zahmen Tiere auf der Erde bezeichnen die Sanftmut des Menschen, die er hat, wenn er auf dem rechten Wege ist."

Cake Sale

On May 9 the Ladies Aid/Frauenverein held another successful cake sale and white elephant table event. A profit of \$ 812.35 was generated for the benefit of our church. Thank you to all who participated.

Finance Update

Since our next issue of the *Trinity Chimes* will not be until September, we thought we would give you a finance update. During the first quarter of this year our total contributions from offering envelopes and church plate was \$ 32,986.49. Our total expenditures for the same period were \$ 39,947.78. This means that we had to rely on the interest payments from our annuity funds to make up the difference in order to meet expenses.

We ask you to keep this in mind when preparing your own budget for the summer. Thank you.

Summer Worship Schedule

During July and August our regular worship services will be at 10:00 a.m.

Communion will be celebrated on July 5 and August 2.