

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

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TWO THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EASTER

There is the story about an older couple who had trouble remembering common, day-to-day things. They both decided that they would write down requests the other had, and so try to avoid forgetting. One evening the wife asked if the husband would like anything. He replied, "Yes. I'd like a large ice-cream sundae with chocolate ice cream, whipped cream and a cherry on top." The wife started off for the kitchen and the husband shouted after her, "Aren't you going to write it down?" "Don't be silly;" she hollered back, "I'm going to fix it right now. I won't forget."

She was gone for quite some time. When she finally returned, she set down a large plate in front of him with hash browns, eggs, bacon, and a glass of orange juice. He took a look and said, "I knew you should have written it down! You forgot the toast!"

I think most of us can relate to memory problems when it comes to everyday tasks or people's names, or phone numbers etc. But it's also easy to fall into the trap of forgetting what Easter is really about. We live in a world where the Easter bunny has replaced the cross, where the empty tomb has been turned into an Easter egg. The emphasis is now on the celebration of just another secular holiday, filled with anything but the true meaning of the cross and the wonder of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. So in this month's article, I want to remind us briefly about two very important aspects, when it comes to the real meaning of Easter.

To carry the news of the Battle of Waterloo to England, they had a sailing ship that signaled to



a man on shore, who then relayed the word to another on a hill, and so on across Britain. The first word they signaled was Wellington. The next word was defeated. Then a fog closed in on the area, and the message stopped. The result was

that people all across England wept over the message, "Wellington defeated." Then the fog lifted and the communication continued with two additional words: "the enemy." All of a sudden their anguish and fears turned into jubilation and the whole of England celebrated the fact that "Wellington defeated the enemy."

There was great sorrow when the body of Jesus was carried from the cross to the tomb. The signal seemed to say, "Jesus Christ defeated." But three days later the fog lifted and the angel announced, "Jesus Christ defeated the enemy." That is the real meaning of Easter. The angel at the tomb told the women, "*He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead.*" Matthew 28:6 (NLT), and the Apostle Paul mentions the hundreds of eyewitnesses than were able to confirm this. This means that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that he has authority over life, death and salvation. It was the empty tomb that convinced Jesus' disciples of his lordship, for "*his unique identity as Son of God was shown by the Spirit when Jesus was raised from the dead, setting him apart as the Messiah, our Master.*" Romans 1:4 (Msg). So we need to remember that Jesus is alive! He has risen from the dead and he is our living Lord. And because he is our living Lord, he has the power to also resurrect our lives and move us from death to life (John 5:24).

So remember when you struggle with your health, or with loneliness, or with financial difficulties, or with your marriage, or with raising your children, or with doubts about your faith, or with whatever it is you are struggling with, Jesus is alive and he has the power to bring new life where there seems to be only death. He can give you the strength to cope and wants to be alive in your life.

At the end of the First World War, the French Army had hundreds of soldiers who suffered from amnesia because of shell shock. They couldn't remember anything. And then a defective record system lost the identity of these war victims. So to help them find their families and return them to their homes, an "Identification Rally" was scheduled in Paris. Thousands of

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Easter Envelope



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

relatives of the missing gathered in a great plaza. One by one, the men were led to a central platform to speak these words: "Is there anyone here who can tell me who I am?"

There are undoubtedly many things in this world that can cause you to doubt your own identity. Easter is a very powerful reminder that Jesus Christ died and rose again to tell us who we really are. We are children of God! John 1:12 says, "*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*" That's the meaning of Easter - that any person can become a child of God through the resurrection power of Christ. Remember that once you have accepted his lordship in your life and put your trust in him for salvation, then you are God's child. And when you are God's child, then the one who came back to life at Easter is also alive in you. Alive in you to guide you and strengthen you and comfort you and encourage you and protect you and accompany you.

Come celebrate with us this year as we remember the fact that Jesus is alive and that he has made it possible for us to be God's children through faith. Remember to have a blessed Easter!

Rev. Dr. Albert Potgieter

Portions of this article have been adapted from a sermon by Ed Wood, called "The Meaning of Easter."

Blühende Mandelzweige

Das Wunder der Auferstehung ereignet sich auch heute – in vielen unscheinbaren Taten und Gesten von Menschen, die lieben. In Menschen, die sich selbst und andere, Große und Kleine lieben, die einen Blick haben für die Schönheit einer Blume oder eines einfachen Lächelns. In Menschen, die sich einsetzen für eine gerechtere Welt und eine hellere Zukunft. Wir brauchen diese „blühenden Mandelzweige“; wir brauchen Zeugen der Auferstehung, die auch in schwierigen Zeiten staunend entdecken, wie reich das Leben ist, und die sich jeden Tag aufs Neue der je größeren Hoffnung verschreiben. Wenn wir an den Frühling glauben, der mit Jesu Pascha angebrochen ist, wird auch unser Sprechen mit Gott öfter von einem Lächeln begleitet sein.

Vater der Erde und des Himmels, vergib uns, dass wir so oft jammern und klagen, wenn der Frühling auf sich warten lässt und der ungewissen Sommer nicht auf Zuruf kommt. Deine Jahreszeit komme auf Erden wie im Himmel. Und führe uns nicht in bitteres Protestieren, sondern befreie uns von unseren Launen und unserem lächerlichen Kalkül. Denn dir gehören Zeit, Wetter und Unwetter und die Sprünge ins Unbegreifliche.

(Folke Wiren) Aus: Luigi Pozzoli, Ich sehe einen Mandelzweig, Gedanken für die Fasten und Osterzeit, München: Verlag Neue Stadt 2002.

Easter Celebration

Our Easter worship celebration is one of the most important services on our church calendar. Not only is it a special celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but Easter is a service that many people attend who will normally not bother to go to church. This gives you an ideal opportunity to invite a friend to

this year's service. People are much more open to accept your invitation at Easter than what would normally be the case. And most people who are not church goers are just waiting for someone to extend an invitation to them. Please pray that God will give you the courage to invite that friend or family member who you know is in need of the good news. So make an effort to invite someone this year and join us on March 23 at 10:00 am.

Good Friday Service

We want to invite you and a friend to this year's Good Friday service on March 21 at 7:30 pm. Come celebrate the Lord's Supper in a more intimate way than usual and hear the dramatic story of Jesus being told in a moving and powerful way as we are joined by the Grace Notes Choir. They will be performing a musical called "Beneath the Cross" that will enable us to experience the events of the cross in a whole new way. Don't miss this inspirational and faith strengthening worship service during Holy Week.

We Will Be Fizzing With Fun



The first planning meeting for this year's Vacation Bible Camp took place on Sunday, February 24, and soon our church will be fizzing with fun as we start preparing for this year's adventure. This time we will be looking for Jesus' miraculous power to bubble over at Power Lab. We want to give you the dates early so you can start spreading the word. Power Lab will take place the week of July 21 to 25, with the final Faith Fusion Finale to be held on Sunday, July 27 at 10:00 am during our Worship Celebration.

The children of our community can look forward to another fun-explosion in 2008 with Sonic Sing & Play, Bible Blast, Hyper-speed Games, Test Tube Treats, Cinema Science, Wacky Works Crafts & Missions and the Faith Fusion Finale. More information and how you can become involved and support Power Lab will be posted on our website and in future editions of Trinity Chimes. In the meantime, start praying for this year's Power Lab.

Annelise Potgieter

Worship Schedule for March

March 2, 9, 16, 30—Regular Worship Schedule

German—9:30 am

English—10:45 am

* Communion will be celebrated on March 2

Palm Sunday—March 16

Grün Donnerstag German Service—March 20 at 7:30 pm

Good Friday English Service—March 21 at 7:30 pm

Easter Worship Celebration—March 23 at 10:00 am