

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

NOVEMBER 2007

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

The following story is from Max Lucado's Book, "God Came Near - Chronicles of the Christ" that was published in 1987.

A few nights ago a peculiar thing happened. An electrical storm caused a blackout in our neighborhood. When the lights went out, I felt my way through the darkness into the storage closet where we keep the candles for nights like this. Through the glow of a lit match I looked up on the shelf where the candles were stored. There they were, already positioned in their stands, melted to various degrees by previous missions. I took my match and lit four of them. How they illuminated the storage room! What had been a veil of blackness suddenly radiated with soft, golden light! I could see the freezer I had just bumped with my knee. And I could see my tools that needed to be straightened.

"How great it is to have light," I said out loud, and then spoke to the candles. "If you do such a good job here in the storage closet, just wait till I get you out of where you're really needed! I'll put one of you on my table so we can eat. I'll put one of you on my desk so I can read. I'll give one of you to Denalyn so she can cross-stitch. And I'll set you", I took down the largest one, "in the living room where you can light up the whole area," (I felt a bit foolish talking to candles - but what do you do when the lights go out?)

I was turning to leave with the large candle in my hand when I heard a voice, "Now, hold it right there." I stopped. Somebody's in here! I thought. Then I relaxed. It's just Denalyn, teasing me for talking to the candles. "OK, honey, cut the kidding," I said in the semi-darkness.

No answer. Hmm, maybe it was the wind. I took another step. "Hold it, I said!" There was that voice again. My hands began to sweat. "Who said that?" "I did." The voice was near my hand. "Who are you? What are you?" "I'm a candle." I looked at the candle I was holding. It



was burning a strong, golden flame. It was red and sat on a heavy wooden candle holder that had a firm handle.

I looked around once more to see if the voice could be coming from another source. "There's no one here but you, me and the rest of the candles," the voice informed me. I lifted up the candle to take a closer look. You won't believe what I saw. There was a tiny face in the wax. (I told you wouldn't believe me.) Not just a wax face that someone had carved, but a moving, functioning, flesh like face full of expression and life. "Don't take me out of here!" "What?" "I said; don't take me out of this room." "What do you mean? I have to take you out. You're a candle. Your job is to give light. It's dark out there. People are stubbing their toes and walking into walls. You have to come out and light up the place!"

"But you can't take me out. I'm not ready, the candle explained with pleading eyes. "I need more preparation." I couldn't believe my ears. "More preparation?" "Yeah, I've decided I need to research this job of light-giving so I won't go out and make a bunch of mistakes. You'd be surprised how distorted the glow of an untrained candle can be. So I'm doing some studying. I just finished a book on wind resistance. I'm in the middle of a great series of tapes on wick build-up and conservation - I'm reading the new best seller on flame display. Have you heard of it? "No," I answered. "You might like it. It's called Waxing Eloquently".

"That really sounds inter--" I caught myself. What am I doing? I'm in here conversing with a candle while my wife and daughters are out there in the darkness! "All right then," I said. "You're not the only candle on the shelf. I'll blow you out and take the others!" But just as I got my cheeks full of air, I heard other voices. "We're not going either!" It was a conspiracy. I turned around and looked at the three other candles; each with flames dancing above a miniature face. I was beyond feeling awkward about talking to candles. I was getting miffed. "You are candles and your job is to light dark places!" "Well, that may be what you think,"

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

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said the candle on the far left - a long thin fellow with a goatee and British accent. "You may think we have to go, but I'm busy." "Busy?" "Yes, I'm meditating." "What, a candle that meditates?" "Yes. I'm meditating on the importance of light. It's really enlightening."

I decided to reason with them. "Listen, I appreciate what you guys are doing. I'm all for meditation time. And everyone needs to study and research; but for goodness' sake, you guys have been here for weeks! Haven't you had enough time to get your wick on straight?" "And you other two," I asked, "are you going to stay in here as well?" A short, fat, purple candle with plump cheeks that reminded me of Santa Claus spoke up. "I'm waiting to get my life together. I'm not stable enough. I lose my temper easily. I guess you could say that I'm a hothead." The last candle had a female voice, very pleasant to the ear. "I'd like to help," she explained, "but lighting the darkness is not my gift." All this was sounding too familiar. "Not your gift?" What do you mean?" "Well, I'm a singer. I sing to other candles to encourage them to burn more brightly." Without asking my permission, she began a rendition of "This Little Light of Mine." (I have to admit, she had a good voice.)

The other three joined in, filling the storage room with singing. "Hey, I shouted above the music, "I don't mind if you sing while you work! In fact, we could use a little music out there!" They didn't hear me. They were singing too loudly. I yelled louder. "Come on, you guys. There's plenty of time for this later. We've got a crisis on our hands." They wouldn't stop. I put the big candle on the shelf and took a step back and considered the absurdity of it all. Four perfectly healthy candles singing to each other about light but refusing to come out of the closet. I had all I could take. One by one I blew them out. They kept singing to the end. The last one to flicker was the female. I snuffed her out right in the "puff" part of "Won't let Satan puff me out."

I stuck my hands in my pockets and walked back out into the darkness. I bumped my knee on the same freezer. Then I bumped into my wife. "Where are the candles?" she asked. "They don't...they won't work. Where did you buy those candles anyway?" "Oh, they're church candles. Remember the church that closed down across the town? I bought them there." I understood.

The story by Max Lucado reminds me of the words of Jesus who said, *"You are the light of the world - like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."* (Matthew 5:14-16 NLT). We are busy with a series called "Disciples". We are learning what it means to be a disciple, to be a Christ-follower. Come join us as we make our lights shine in this often dark world.

Rev. Dr. Albert Potgieter

Dankbarkeit

Der dankbare Mensch ist innerlich reich. Er weiß nicht nur, wie reich er beschenkt ist, sondern erinnert sich stets, dass alles Gute von Gott kommt. Das ist für ihr das Kostbarste und Beglückendste.

In der Nachkriegszeit stieß ich auf drei Flüchtlingsfrauen in fortgeschrittenem Alter. Sie waren eine Verkörperung der „verschämten“ Armen. Da ich selbst momentan über keine Mittel verfügte, wandte ich mich an einen frommen reichen Mann: „Helfen Sie hochherzig!“ Seine prompte Antwort: „Warum gerade ich? Mir hat auch noch niemand etwas geschenkt.“ Mit entsetztem Schrecken sagte ich ihm: „Sie sind sicher der aller ärmste Mann. Offenbar haben Sie noch nie entdeckt, dass alles, was sie besitzen, Gabe Gottes ist. Ist Gott für sie der Niemand?“ – Er atmete tief durch und half.

Bernhard Häring, Wege zum Sinn, Eine zeitgemäße Tugendlehre, Styria-Verlag, Graz-Wien, 1997, 54.

The Helping Hands

The time has come for the Helping Hands to end its ministry here at Trinity. Since its inception hundreds of hand made quilts, lap robes and baby items have been sent out to many needy causes. Local hospitals, nursing homes, homeless shelters and children's charities have also received our goods. Some of our handiwork has been sent as far the Indian reservations out west and to our service men and women overseas.

The ladies have decided to donate their remaining funds to the Building Repair Fund Drive in memory of Dorothy Dell'Amore, who first started the Helping Hands. We thank every one who has supported us over the years and feel blessed to have been a part of this wonderful ministry.

Jean Kunzinger

CROP Walk Update

Thirty-four people from five area churches including four people from Trinity Reformed participated in the CROP Walk sponsored by the Ridgewood Glendale Sunday School Association on October 6. Our church raised a total of \$ 730.00 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 an organization that they belong to.

Anniversary Sunday

Our "Disciples" spiritual growth adventure will conclude on Sunday, November 18. This is also the day on which we will be celebrating Trinity's 154th Anniversary. This is another important milestone in the life of our church and we invite all of you to come join us as we give God the glory for what he has done and is doing in us and our church. The service will be at 10:00 am and will be followed by a coffee hour with cake.

Danny Shook his Head...

Danny shook his head and here I am. The year was 1967, and I sat at the same lunchroom table at Grover Cleveland High School with Danny Reeverts. I knew his dad was a pastor, but what I will never forget is how Danny would shake his head slowly in amazement and disapproval of the dumb things I would say about God. The reason I remember that the year was 1967 is that was when the movie *The Graduate* came out. It featured a song by Simon & Garfunkel called "Mrs. Robinson" that has the line in it "God bless you please Mrs. Robinson. Jesus loves you more than you will know." We all wanted Danny's take on the song, which he was a bit reluctant to give.

Now you might think that's not much of a story. It's just a fragment, a 40-year-old memory. Before and after I met other Christians and eventually I, too, began a relationship with Jesus Christ. Years later I had the opportunity to meet Pastor Reeverts, at Pastor Albert's installation in 1994, and I told him I knew his son in high school. More years later, and I'm here at Trinity. Yes, my life story is more complex, but I think about this incident from time to time. You never know what effect a little head-shaking in school by the pastor's kid will have.

Lenny Schiefer

Ladies Aid Cake Sale

The Frauenverein Ladies will hold their annual Cake Sale on Saturday, November 17th. The sale will take place from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Refreshment and sale tables will also be available. Over the years we have come to know that these home baked goods are truly delicious - so support the sale and buy the best. Remember, Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Save on time and baking by getting these wonderful treats.

Building Repairs Update

The work on the exterior of our church has begun. Once this is done, there will be a trial period to see if any more water is leaking into the building. If not, the next step would be to the extensive damage done to the interior. We want to thank all who have so far made donations to the Building Repair Fund Drive - your generosity is appreciated. However, please note that we have not reached our target amount and that the Fund Drive is still ongoing. Please pray, especially those of you who have not contributed yet, about giving above and beyond your tithes and offerings for this purpose.



Special Offering Envelope

We have included an envelope this month for any offering you wish to make in celebration of our 154th Anniversary as a church. You can simply mail in your envelope and we will also collect them during our Celebration Sunday. We encourage you to give above and beyond your normal offering this month as we thank God for his blessings.

"Disciples Small Groups

Three Small Groups have formed for the duration of our spiritual growth journey called "Disciples." In addition to digging deeper into God's Word with Bible Study, the groups provide an opportunity for fellowship in a more Biblical sense. Members learn from each other about faith and life and have the opportunity to support and encourage and pray for one another. Real relationships are formed and a true sense of what it means to belong to the body of Christ is developed.

The following groups meet weekly in someone's home: The Trautmann group meets on Tuesdays at 1:30 pm, the Potgieter men's group on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm, and the Brady/Potgieter group for women on Sundays at 11:30 am. If you are still interested in joining one of these groups, please contact Pastor Albert.

To Make You Smile

The visiting preacher was really getting the congregation moving. Near the end of his sermon he said this church has really got to walk - to which someone in the back yelled, "let her walk preacher" The preacher then said if this church is going to go it's got to get up and run to which someone again yelled with gusto, "let her run preacher." Feeling the surge of the church, the preacher then said with even louder gusto, "if this church is going to go it's got to really fly" and once again with ever greater gusto, someone yelled, "let her fly preacher, let her fly." The preacher then seized the moment and stated with even greater gusto, "if this church is really going to fly it's going to need money" to which someone in the back yelled, "let her walk preacher, let her walk."



"Our stewardship campaign is almost over, but we are meeting pockets of resistance..."

Worship Schedule for November

November 4, 11, 18—Combined Service at 10:00 am

November 25—Regular Worship Schedule

German—9:30 am

English—10:45 am

* Communion will be celebrated on November 4