

TRINITY CHIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRINITY REFORMED CHURCH

SUMMER 2008

WHAT IT IS I AM THANKFUL FOR!

With the boxes starting to pile up in almost every room of our house, the reality is setting in that we will be leaving Trinity and Ridgewood shortly. My twelve and a half years of ministry at Trinity has been a good experience. There were a few bumps in the road, but every time I hear the horror stories of what some other pastors experience in some of our churches, I again realize that God has been good to us, and that the people of Trinity have been good to us too. Like every person, every church has its own flaws and challenges, but in spite of that, it has been a blessing to be pastor here and serve God together with you in this church family. We are leaving with hearts full of gratitude. So in my last article for the Trinity Chimes, I want to share with you some of the things I am thankful for as I look back on all these years.

I am thankful for the grace God has shown us.

Every day we live by God's grace. Every act of ministry is by God's grace. Every changed life is by God's grace alone. In Psalm 103, there's a laundry list of just some of the things God does in our lives by grace. The Psalmist says, *"I will not forget the glorious things God does for me. He forgives all my sins. He heals me. He ransoms me from hell. He surrounds me with love. He fills my life with good things. He is merciful and tender to those who don't deserve it. He is slow to get angry. He never bears a grudge. He has not punished us as we deserve for our sins."*

Just like the Psalmist I will not forget the glorious things God has done here at Trinity. I will not forget how he has surrounded us with love. I will not forget how he filled our lives with



good things. It is by his grace that some of you who were searching for love and acceptance have found a loving and caring church family. It is by his grace that we were able to impact children and parents in our community through Wowship and some amazing Vacation Bible Camps. Those times together in ministry, having a blast in using the different gifts God has given us for his glory, will remain with me forever. It is by his grace that our worship services have become more of a celebration of his love. It is by his grace that members of our church have grown in their knowledge and faith through Classes and Bible Studies. It is by his grace that loving relationships have grown deeper through Small Groups, and that people have come together in prayer every Sunday, and that people are using their gifts in ministry. The lives that were changed by his Word, the worship, the service, the fellowship, the discipleship, the reaching out to others in his love, is all because of his grace. And it is with gratitude that I look back and see the grace he has shown us in our time together.

And I am also grateful for the grace you as a congregation have shown me. I am sure you have found out a long time ago already that I am just another human being, with flaws, and a unique personality, and many shortcomings, and a peculiar sense of humor. I am sure you have noticed the mistakes I have made in my years as your pastor. I want to thank you for loving me and supporting me and accepting me regardless. You have shown God's grace to me and my family and my prayer is that you will do the same to my successor.

I am thankful for the plan God has for us.

God says this in Jeremiah 29:11, *'I have good plans for you', says the Lord, 'I don't plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future.'* At the moment there are many things that are in flux and it is a time of uncertainty for Trinity as you say good bye to us, and as we say goodbye to you. Maybe you are wondering what will happen next. My family and I have similar feelings as we are about to embrace the uncertainty of a new town and church and school. Change is never easy and it always brings uncertainty. That's why I am thankful

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

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that God has a plan for all of us. I have sensed that he is calling me to a new ministry and that is why we are leaving. Not because we are unhappy, but because I believe the timing is right. I trust that he has a plan and a good future for me and my family. And I know that he has a plan and a good future for Trinity. In time his plan will unfold and he will send the right person to lead you to the next level of faithfulness and service. In the meantime he has blessed you with good leaders and wonderfully gifted people who will help Trinity to thrive during the interim, as you follow his plan for your lives and this church.

I am thankful for the changes God is making in us.

2 Corinthians 3:18, *And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him.* Every day we are called to grow in becoming more Christ-like. The Holy Spirit is working in us and wants to control our lives so we can bear his fruit as we continually change and become more like him. I am thankful to God for the way he has changed me through my ministry here at Trinity. I have been able to grow as a person and as a pastor and so many of you have helped to shape me and form me. I want to thank you for the opportunities I have had to express some of the creative gifts God has blessed me with. The contemporary music and multi-media have given me the opportunity to live out my faith and serve God in new and exciting ways. I am thankful for the changes that have happened in my wife and children and for the opportunities they have had at Trinity to grow and express their gifts in worship and ministry. You have been very encouraging! And I am thankful for the changes God has made in this congregation and in your lives. I want to encourage you to be open for the changes that he will continue to make in the future.

Finally, I am thankful for the love God has given us.

Love means doing what God has commanded us, and he has commanded us to love one another, just as you heard from the beginning. 2 John 1:6. I want to thank you for your love over all these years. It is in love that you called me to be your pastor. It is in love that we were able to minister together for more than twelve years. It is in love that we were able to reconcile differences of opinion. It is in love that you have accepted me for who I am, in spite of my shortcomings and blunders. It is in love that you have cared and provided for us as a family. It is in love that you have encouraged my wife and children. It is in love that you have become a family for us here in America. It is in God's love that you have done so much more than I could ever describe here. I am thankful for that and want you to know that we love you and will miss you!

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 that no matter what we say, what we believe, and what we do, we are bankrupt without love. In the end, it's all about love. It's all about God's love for us, and our love for him and others. That's what it's all about. It's all about love. And that will be the title of my final message here at Trinity on Sunday, June 29 at 10:00 am. I pray that you will join me and my family as we say good bye and celebrate God's love for us with hearts full of gratitude.

Rev. Dr. Albert Potgieter

Gebet

Vater, ich will an dich glauben und dir meine Vertrauen schenken. Ich will deine Zusage annehmen und neu anfangen zu hoffen, dass du mir weiterhilfst. Ich bitte dich, hilf mir, eine gute Lösung für mein Leben zu finden, damit ich deine Idee und Gedanken in die Tat umsetzen kann. Nimm mir die Angst, Unmögliches zu versuchen und Neues in Angriff zu nehmen, damit ich nicht stehen bleibe und den Zeitpunkt herauskomme und innerlich lebendig bleibe. Ermutige mich, meine Kraft vorbehaltlos für das Evangelium einzusetzen, damit ich meine Fähigkeiten nicht am falschen Platz vergeude. Hab Geduld mit meiner Unvollkommenheit und meiner Unentschlossenheit, damit ich unverkrampft und frei bei Fehlern neu beginnen kann. Ordne meine Pläne und meine Wünsche, damit ich meinen Weg und meine Aufgaben erkennen und mit allen Möglichkeiten meiner Person in deinem Namen vertrete. Denn das Leben, das du mir gegeben hast, ist für mich wichtig. Ich will es immer neue von dir annehmen. Weil du selbst das Leben bist. Amen.

Jürgen Kuhn in: Lichtzeichen, Verlag Georgs.

Anniversary Day

This year's Anniversary Day Parade will be held on Thursday June 5, and the line of march will be along Catalpa Ave. The theme for this year's parade is "Though Many, We are One in Christ" based on Romans 12:5. Although Trinity will not have an official group in the parade, anyone is welcome to march with one of the other churches that will be there.

The opening ceremony will be held in front of Covenant Lutheran Church, Catalpa Ave., and 60th Lane. If you would like to join in, please be there at 10:15 a.m.

Ladies Aid Bake Sale

The ladies Aid/ Frauenverein again had a very successful cake and white elephant table sale on May 10. The ladies took in \$630.90 to benefit our church and other good things that the ladies do. Thank you to all who participated in our cake sale and white elephant table. It was very much appreciated.

The Fruit Of The Spirit

We are busy with a series of messages on the Fruit of God's Spirit. We have already talked about God's peace and on June 15 and 22 we will focus on patience and self-control. And then on June 29 we will conclude with the fruit of love. Please join us and come discover how the Holy Spirit wants to help you to be more patient, have more self-control and love more like God does.

Couples & Friends Club Picnic

The Couples & Friends Club will hold their annual picnic at Westbury Gardens on June 21 at 10:00 am. In case of rain it will take place at the church.

Churches Don't Take A Vacation

The months of July and August are a time when many people take their vacations. While our church's pace may slow down, although there will be a lot of activity with Vacation Bible Camp, remember that we're still here on Sunday mornings. Also please remember that our expenses don't take a holiday either during the summer. Have a great summer.

Profession Of Faith

Alexander Burzynski made confirmation during our worship celebration on May 25. After meeting with Pastor Albert for 8 weeks, attending Class 101, and being interviewed by the Board of Elders, he finally stood before the congregation and professed his faith. To help him express his faith he made a banner, which explained his salvation in Jesus Christ. This he shared with the congregation, after which he made his vows. The Elders and Pastor then laid hands on him and prayed for God's guidance and blessing as he continues his journey of faith. We want to congratulate him, as well as his parents Andy and Liz Burzynski, his brother Nikolas and his grandmother, Elisabeth Roth.



Pastor Search Committee

Consistory has formed a Pastor Search Committee comprised of fifteen members who will begin the process of finding a new minister for our church. One of the committee's first responsibilities will be to complete a Church Profile Form which helps us evaluate our church up to the present and determine what kind of leadership we will be looking for. After the Church Profile is completed and approved by Consistory it is sent to the denomination. They match potential candidates with our church and send us their resumes. The search committee reads the resumes, decides who to interview, meets with the individuals and listens to them preach at another church.

The committee may determine that none of the candidates is suitable and then will request additional resumes to consider. This process, as you can see, is time consuming and it can take many months or even longer to find the right individual. We ask for your patience and support and also your prayers that God will lead us to find the best person for Trinity.

Marianna Trautmann and Bill Voges are the co chairpersons of the committee, Len Schiefer is the secretary, and Peter Traut-

mann is the treasurer. The other members of the committee are Kurt Andreas, Brigette Brady, Elisabeth Burzynski, Maureen Carvin, Ludwig Hauser, Theo Hessenius, Linda Morton, Annalee Pfisterer, Dennis Popp, Linda Schiefer, and Justine Wittine. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with a member of the committee.

Father's Day

A reminder that Father's Day is on June 15 this year. A form will be made available at worship over the next 2 Sundays for any memorials you would like to submit for our special Father's Day insert in the bulletin. You can also mail your memorials to Trinity. Just remember to specify that it is for the Father's Day insert.

Power Lab VBC Is Coming

Preparations are underway for this year's Vacation Bible Camp called Power Lab. We ask you to pray that all will go well as we get ready to help children discover Jesus' miraculous power. As we have done in the past we are asking for your help. A list of supplies needed will be posted in the Narthex. This is a way for you to support the effort. We are also launching our Lab Loot drive. By donating \$10.00 you can sponsor a child for this year's adventure. Forms are available at church. You can also mail in your donation, but be sure to write a note stating it is for our Power Lab VBC. We are also still looking for more volunteers! Thank you for your support and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Annelise Potgieter.

Summer Worship Schedule

Please note that our regular worship schedule of having both a German and English language service will end on Sunday June the 29th. Our summer worship schedule will start on July the 6th. During the months of July and August we will only have one worship service at 10:00 am.

The Next Issue of The Chimes

Please note that the next issue of the Trinity Chimes will be the September issue. We wish all our readers a refreshing summer and encourage you to remain faithful in your worship attendance over the summer months.

Worship Schedule for June

June 15 & 22—Regular Worship Schedule

German—9:30 am

English—10:45 am

June 1, 8, 29—Combined Worship Celebration at 10:00 am

* Communion will be celebrated on June 1

* Junior Church June 1, 8, 29 at 10:00 am

June 15 & 22 at 10:45 am