

# TRINITY NEWS

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October 2014

Trinity Reformed Church  
North Plainfield, N.J. 07063

Rev. Scott R. Harris, Pastor  
Ginger Smellie, Editor

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Members & Friends,

As I look over my RCA planning calendar, I see only one U.S. holiday noted. It is the 31<sup>st</sup> of October and it is noted as *Reformation Day* as opposed to *Halloween*. Halloween is, of course, an English hybrid of a word that was originally "All Hallows Evening" sometimes pronounced "All Hallows E'en". It was the night before All Saints Day on November 1<sup>st</sup>. All Saints Day (or, if you prefer, "All Hallows Day") was founded in the Seventh Century to replace a Pagan festival that honored "The Lord of the Dead".

The same day, October 31<sup>st</sup>, could also properly be called "Reformation Day" because it was on October 31, 1517 that a German Monk named Martin Luther nailed a list of 95 Theses or debating points disputing "The Power and Efficacy of Indulgences". Indulgences were favors of forgiven sin either for oneself or a deceased loved on "earned" by giving money to the church. Instead of a debate with other members of academia, the list resulted in Luther receiving ex-communication by the Pope. (Of course, it doesn't help matters much when Thesis # 86 asks, in a very embarrassing and public way; "Why does the pope, whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build the basilica of St. Peter with the money of poor believers rather than with his own money?") What followed Luther's ex-communication and criticism of the Catholic Church was a "re-forming" of the church in accordance with the Word of God, rather than the traditions of humans.

I attended a private, Christian High School that was, to put things mildly, very conservative. Kids being kids, we wanted to dress up in costumes for Halloween just like every other kid in our neighborhoods. We were not allowed to do that because it was considered support of a pagan holiday and as such was forbidden for Christians to celebrate.

Not surprisingly, my position on the whole matter of whether or not it is OK for Christians to celebrate "Halloween" is much more progressive. In the early church a debate arose about something similar; is it OK for Christians (particularly those who converted from Judaism) to celebrate Jewish holidays? In speaking to that subject, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome; "Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God." (Romans 14:5&6 NRSV) In other words, this is a trivial matter, some people are bound to feel differently than others about it, but there is room in the church for both of them! I think that the same applies for Halloween.

Isn't it comforting to think that no matter what might make us different from each other, that which unites us; God's grace in Jesus Christ, is greater than anything that might divide us?

Grace & Peace,  
- Pastor Scott

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In the month of August we have had sermons on the following topics;

*8/3/14 – Miracle On A Hill Side (Genesis 32:22-31, Matthew 14:13-21)*

Some have argued that Jesus did not really miraculously multiply the loaves and fishes, but rather that the generosity of the small boy in giving up his meager meal so moved the multitude that they began sharing their own bag lunches that they had hidden under their robes. Without taking sides in this debate, we ask an intriguing question: which would be the greater miracle—the miracle of supernatural food intervention or the miracle of loving and generous human sharing?

*8/10/14 – Faith Is Both Private and Public (Romans 10:5-15, Matthew 14:22-33)*

Faith, according to Paul, is both public and private. It begins privately, by a personal decision to believe. If faith does not begin there, it doesn't begin. That is something that happens by the working of the Holy Spirit. Faith is more than knowledge, more than theology; it is a miracle that begins in the deep recesses of the soul. But true faith cannot remain there; it yearns to become public; it strives to be confessed with the lips; it wishes to be shared with others. One cannot remain silent about something that good.

*8/17/14 – Faith and Inclusivity (Romans 11:1-2, 29-32, Matthew 15:21-28)*

When Paul emphasized the inclusivity of the Gospel by calling himself “an apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13), he was merely implementing a policy established several years before by Christ himself. By publicly acknowledging the faith of the Canaanite woman as powerful and genuine, Jesus was proclaiming that 1) Gentiles as well as Jews have access to God, and 2) access to God is not through ethnicity or good works, but through faith. The implication for Christians is a call to be inclusive and accepting of those we might consider to be the “other” in our churches.

*8/24/14 – Polling for Truth (Exodus 1:8 – 2:10, Matthew 16:13-20)*

Americans are obsessed with polls. Polls can help swing an election and evict contestants from “reality” shows. Popular opinion can make or break entertainers, writers, and athletes. But popularity doesn't necessarily reflect quality; witness the number of great artists and composers who were not honored until after they died. The question of Jesus, “Who do men say that the Son of Man is?” is a good discussion question, but it has no more value than that. Truth is something revealed to us by God, it is not arrived at by taking a poll.

*8/31/14 – Will the Real Followers of Christ, Please Stand? (Romans 12:9-21, Matthew 16:21-28)*

Unfortunately, many of us tend to equate the Christian faith with a certain political party, or a certain form of government, or a certain ethnic background, or a certain cultural legacy, or a certain denomination, or a certain theological system. We may even question whether those who don't meet our criteria are really followers of Christ. But, to be perfectly honest, do any of us really take up our cross (v. 24)? Do we really deny ourselves (v. 24)? Are we willing to lose our life in order to find it (v. 25)? Do we really place a low value on gaining the world (v. 26)?

Salvation is an act of grace, but discipleship requires a sacrifice on our part!



BROEK CIRCLE - will meet on Tuesday, October 14th at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Betty Jane Tingley.

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JACOBA CIRCLE - meeting to be announced.

JACOBA Circle continues its food collection. Please bring one of the following items:

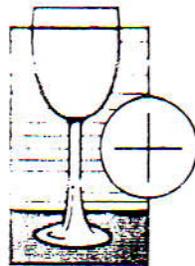
Canned Vegetables and Fruit  
Soup, Pasta, Spaghetti Sauce,  
Tuna fish, Mac and Cheese, Cereal,  
Canned meats (Spam, Stew or Corned Beef).

Boxes are at the entrances for your donations. Thank you!



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NOVEMBER NEWS DEADLINE  
Wednesday, October 15



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Celebrate the Lord's Supper with Christians around the world.

October 5 - 10:00 am in the Sanctuary

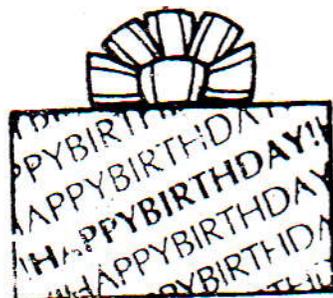
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BIBLE STUDY: PROPHETS AND KINGS

October 1 - Who is God?  
October 8 - The Wages of Sin  
October 15 - NO BIBLE STUDY  
October 22 - The Lord is My Shepherd  
October 29 - God With Us



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OCTOBER, 2014

- 1. Dee Cox
- 10 Linda Raysick
- 30. Joshua Jackson



## HUGS...

It's wondrous  
what a hug can do.

A hug can cheer you  
when you're blue.

A hug can say,  
"I love you so,"

Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."

A hug is, "Welcome back again,"

And, "Great to see you! Where've you been?"

A hug can soothe a small child's pain  
And bring a rainbow after rain.

The hug! There's just no doubt about it—  
We scarcely could survive without it!

A hug delights and warms and charms.  
It must be why God gave us arms.

Hugs are great for fathers and mothers,

Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers.

And chances are your favorite aunts

Love them more than potted plants.

Kittens crave them. Puppies love them.

Heads of state are not above them.

A hug can break the language barrier  
And make your travels so much merrier.

No need to fret about your store of 'em;

The more you give the more there's more of 'em.

So stretch those arms without delay

And GIVE SOMEONE A HUG TODAY!!!

DEAN WALLEY



# OCTOBER

SUN            MON            TUE            WED            THU            FRI            SAT

EVERY SUNDAY  
 WORSHIP - 10:00 a.m.- Sanctuary

			1.  Bible Study 7:30 p.m.	2.  Choir 7:30	3.	4.
5.  	6.  Consistory 7:30 pm	7.	8.  Bible Study 7:30 pm	9.  Choir 7:30	10.	11.
12.  	13.	14.  Broek 1 pm	15. * * * Newsletter Deadline  NO Bible Study	16.  Choir 7:30	17.	18.
19.	20.	21.	22.  Bible Study 7:30 pm	23.  Choir 7:30	24.	25.
26.	27.	28.	29.  Bible Study 7:30 pm	30.  Choir 7:30	31.  	