

TRINITY NEWS

March 2018

Trinity Reformed Church
North Plainfield, N.J. 07063

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

Members & Friends,

"¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. . . . ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect. . . God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another." (1 Corinthians 12:12-25 NRSV)

What a wonderful weekend it has been! We, together with Agape House, hosted our first annual (hopefully) Stigma-Free Summit! Together we examined the problem of the stigmatization of persons with Mental, Emotional, Physical and Developmental Challenges (I don't want to call them "disabilities" and further stigmatize those people). We also spent some time exploring what it means to be stigmatized. It was an event where everyone from Trinity and Agape worked together to reach out to and help our community. Members from both congregations reported feeling a spirit of true collaboration: we were in this together as equal partners!

Our "tour guide", if you will, on this subject was Rev. Dr. Joanne Van Sant, pastor of "Friends to Friends" the new name taken by the Reformed Church of Ridgewood, NJ. Rev. Van Sant defined what it means to be stigmatized as any time someone has made you feel like you, your culture, your way of acting, behaving and expressing yourself in the world is unacceptable and must be hidden and exchanged for something more acceptable to the existing dominant culture. She and her church know firsthand about this and how much it costs in terms of what they had to give up and change. They were, like so many RCA congregations in our area, a well-established congregation with a long and distinguished history. They had shrunk and were very small in size and wondering about their future in a very up-scale white suburban neighborhood that just so happened to have a school system that was very good at handling special education. As a result, several people with special needs were within their "sphere of influence". In order to reach these people that God had placed in their neighborhood and minister to and with them, the church had to completely change the way it did worship; inviting people that scream out during worship to stay and participate, having people who couldn't read, couldn't read well, couldn't stand, etc., to read parts of the liturgy each week (sometimes with a lot of help). They even had to change their sanctuary, removing pews to accommodate wheelchairs! Now, these church members might only be able to put a dollar in the offering plate each week so the church relies on rental income from the pre-school it rents to during the week to pay the bills, but the church is alive and vital!

This year we've been thinking about our future in a disciplined and intentional way through the Focus Church Development Process. I wonder if God is going to point out to us ways that we might have to change in order to embrace those who are different, those we might even view as "wrong" in the way they do things? And I wonder, will Jesus find us up to the challenge of 1 Corinthians 12:22-25?

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Scott

In the month of January Pastor Scott gave the following sermons:

On January 7th our sermon title was "Whose Baptism?" based on Acts 19:1-7 and Mark 1:4-11. From the stories of Jesus' baptism and Paul's strange encounter with Jesus followers who were baptized with John the Baptist's baptism and who hadn't received the Holy Spirit we learned that one crucial aspect of baptism is not what happens when we are baptized but what happens *after* we are baptized! It is hoped that as a result of this sermon we will live our lives aware of, open to, filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit.

On January 14th our texts were 2 Samuel 3:1-26 and John 1:43-51 and the sermon was "Do You Know Me?" In this sermon it was shown that we who know Jesus are called to introduce Him to others – to live our lives in such a way that they see Jesus in us and know from our integrity that He is Lord. The end result being that we will introduce others to Jesus the way that Philip did.

On January 21st our sermon was "Drop Everything and Follow!" Our scripture lessons for this sermon were 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 and Mark 1:14-20. From these passages it was shown that Jesus' early followers were so dedicated that they left behind whatever other priorities competed for their time and attention to focus on being disciples of Jesus who make new disciples of Jesus. We are called to do the same; to drop everything and follow!

On January 28th our scripture lessons were Deuteronomy 18:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 8:1-13. In a sermon titled "Whaddya Know?" we learned that being "right" matters less than being loving. What if someone sees us exercising our freedom and knowledge in Christ and thinks that it is OK to worship Jesus AND something (or someone) else? And keep in mind that there are only two kingdoms; the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Evil One – there is no good third option! This was highlighted to the end that those who heard this sermon might willingly set aside their "rights" to act in love.



BROEK CIRCLE – will meet on Wednesday, March 14th at 12:00 p.m. at the home of Joanne Nuber, Hostess

* * * * *

BROEK COOKS will have Chicken Gumbo and Creamy Potato Soups available on March 18th. An order form is on the hall bulletin board.

* * * * *

JACOBA CIRCLE – will meet on Monday, March 12th at 7:30pm at the home of Deena Zolkiwsky.

* * * * *

JACOBA CIRCLE will host a Pot Luck Luncheon and Word Game on Sunday, March 18th following worship. Check bulletin board for sign-up sheet.



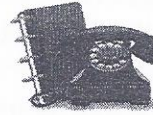
APRIL Newsletter DEADLINE -

Thursday, March 15th.



Maundy Thursday- March 29th

Communion- 8:00 pm in the Chapel.



Please make the following change in your Church directory:

MACAULY, Nora
1040 Moores School Rd.
Lewisburg, PA 17837-1606

and ADD

HONG, Howard
301 Maple Ave. Apt. 222
North Plainfield, NJ 07060

Our Wednesday night Bible Study continues throughout the Winter. We meet on Wednesday evenings beginning at 7:30 p.m. We will finish February and begin March with our study titled The Mission of Jesus: Triumph of God's Kingdom in a World of Chaos.

ENTER THE CHAOS. In John 17:26 Jesus said; "I made known Your name to them, and I will continue to make it known" In this study we will deepen our understanding of this passionate revelation of God's Name to a broken world that God longs to redeem. Discover how Jesus triumphantly made God's presence known on Earth, and how He asks you to do the same – by bringing God's *shalom* to the chaos of others.

We are scheduled to begin a new study on Wednesday March 14th. Rev. Dr. Ursula Cargill will lead us in a study titled A Clash of Kingdoms: Paul Proclaims Jesus as Lord – Part 1.

BE THE MESSAGE. As Christians we're called to proclaim God's name in all the earth; that's our mission! (See 1 Chronicles 16:8.) But how do we do that in the midst of false gospels? In the fifteenth volume of the *That the World May Know* film and Bible study series, we will discover how Paul communicated the Good News of Christ to Philippi, a Roman colony that worshipped false gods. Can you *live* the message as Paul did while he encouraged the church in Philippi to consider itself a colony of heaven, not Rome? Consider your citizenship – and the message you convey to the world – as this study takes us deeper into the culture of ancient Philippi as a way of increasing our faith.

In each session we will focus on passages of the Bible that are explored in a video segment that is filmed on location in Israel and the greater Middle East to illuminate the historical, geographical and culture context of the Bible. Filmed in locations in the Middle East, this study will transform your understanding of God and will challenge you to be a true follower of Jesus. Together we will review sidebars, maps, photos and other Bible study tools and use questions to facilitate our discussions and to inspire personal reflection on the texts.

Wednesday February 21st: Crucifixion: The Coronation of a King (Filmed in Rome, Italy.)

Wednesday February 28th: Ascension: The King Takes His Throne (Filmed in Khirbet Midras/ Mount of Olives, Israel.)

Wednesday March 7th: Pentecost: God Changed His Address (Filmed in Jerusalem, Israel.)

Wednesday March 14th: The Gospel of Caesar (Filmed in Philippi, Greece)

Wednesday March 21st: The Believers (Philippi, Greece)







Wednesday March 28th: The Powers of Darkness (Filmed in Philippi and Delphi in Greece)

Wednesday April 4th: The Philippian Jailer (Philippi, Greece)

Wednesday April 11: Confronting the Empire (Thessaloniki, Greece)

MARCH

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Every Sunday 10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary				1. Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	2.	3.
4.	5. Consistory 7:30pm	6.	7. Bible Study 7:30pm	8. Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	9.	10.  Set clock FORWARD 1 hour
11.	12. Jacoba 7:30pm	13.	14. *Broek 12:00pm *Bible Study 7:30pm	15. *Newsletter Deadline *Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	16.	17.  St. Patrick's Day
18. *Soup Pick-up *Jacoba Pot Luck Luncheon	19.	20. 	21. Bible Study 7:30pm	22. Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	23.	24.
25. 	26.	27.	28. Bible Study 7:30pm	29.  Maundy Thursday SERVICE 8:00pm	30.  GOOD FRIDAY	31.