

# TRINITY NEWS

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February 2017

Trinity Reformed Church  
North Plainfield, N.J. 07063

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

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Members & Friends,

Most cultures have some rite of initiation for their members as they enter adulthood. Mothers teach daughters how to be mothers and wives, how to cook, clean, shop and sew. Hopefully in this day and age they teach the boys some of that too. I was lucky; my mother INSISTED that I would know how to do laundry and run a vacuum cleaner! But generally speaking girls learn how to be girls from the world of women. Likewise, boys learn to be men from the world of men. From our fathers or other significant males, men learn how to provide for their families; how to hunt a deer, how to fish, how to change a tire, or the oil in the car. In some African cultures boys must kill a lion to become a man; it isn't until you are sure that you can protect your wife and children that you are considered a man! To learn these skills adults come alongside of young people and lead them in a journey of initiation.

Most of us spend a lot of our lives asking the wrong questions. Those questions usually sound an awful lot like; "Why God? Why?" Why doesn't God make our life on this Earth easier? Why did God let the terrorists attack the World Trade Center and kill over 3,000 people? God, why won't you just help me succeed? God, why won't you just get my kids to straighten out? Or God why won't you just fix my marriage?

But what if we asked some different questions? What if we started seeing the tough things that happen to us in our lives as God seeking to initiate us? Then our questions would start to sound more like; What are You trying to teach me here, God? What issues in my heart are You trying to raise through this experience? What is it that You want me to see? What are You asking me to let go of?

God wants more from us than simple obedience, or (worse yet) obedience given begrudgingly. God wants a relationship with us. God wants to lead us in a journey of initiation where we discover who we are and how strong we are. God wants us to learn to depend on God. God wants us to let God be in charge, and to let God do things in God's way in God's time. God wants us to TRUST God.

Getting to the point where we can truly trust God and have God as our companion on the journey requires that we dive into the deep waters of our spirituality. We need to get to know God, get to know God's Word and spend time with God in prayer if we are to get there. God is ready for the journey to begin. Are you?

Grace & Peace,

- Pastor Scott

In the month December Pastor Scott gave the following sermons:

On December 4<sup>th</sup> our sermon was "Repent!" with scriptures from Isaiah 11:1-10 and Matthew 3:1-12. The sermon for the Second Sunday of Advent highlighted the fact that the word repent means far more than to simply be sorry for one's sins, it is to clearly see the ways one's life is in keeping with the assumptions and behaviors of the "old age", to turn away from such complicity and to turn towards God and the attitudes and actions of the Kingdom of Heaven. When we repent we turn away from the values and practices of the world (that "old age" – idolatry, greed, violence, injustice, exploitation, slavery and scarcity) and turn towards the values and practices of God's Kingdom (love, peace, justice, dignity, freedom and abundance.)

On December 11<sup>th</sup> the title of the sermon for the Third Sunday of Advent (also known as "Gaudete" or "Joy Sunday") was "Rejoice!" That sermon was based on Isaiah 35:1-10 and Matthew 11:2-11. We learned from these scriptures that Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah that God would restore God's people to new life. Because of this we can rejoice that Jesus restores us to life in God and we can now partner with God in restoring the creation.

On December 18<sup>th</sup> our scripture readings were from Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7 and Matthew 1:18-25. The sermon was titled "Receive!" In that sermon for the Fourth Sunday of Advent we learned that God gives us Jesus as a sign that God is with us in the midst of our struggles and pain and we need not fear. We can be confident that, despite any struggles in our lives, God is with us.

On December 24<sup>th</sup> we had our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service. Our scripture lessons came from Isaiah 9:2-7, Titus 2:11-14 and Luke 2:1-14 and the sermon title was "Glory to God in the Highest!" Here we learned that the birth of Jesus Christ and our redemption in Him should result in Glory going to God on Earth the way that it does in heaven. Knowing this we seek to live lives that are devoted to bringing glory to God.

On December 25<sup>th</sup> our scripture lessons were from Isaiah again, this time from chapter 62, verses 6-12, Titus 3:4-7 and Luke 2:8-20. Our lesson was that Jesus' humble birth signaled that He is the Savior of the world, not the protector of those with power and privilege which is Good News of Great Joy for all people. May we all see Jesus as OUR Savior!



BROEK CIRCLE – will meet on Tuesday February 14th at 12:00 p.m. in the Library Lounge.

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BROEK COOKS will have Chicken Gumbo and Creamy Potato Soups available on March 19th. An order form is on the hall bulletin board.

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JACOBA CIRCLE – will meet on Sunday, February 12th in the Library Lounge following worship.

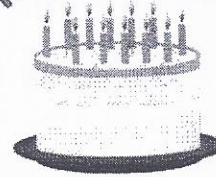
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MARCH Newsletter DEADLINE -

Wednesday, February 15th



Happy Birthday!



February, 2017

14. Steven Zarnowski

15. Joanne Nuber

19. Jim Beil

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A special thank you to everyone who contributed to Jacoba's Christmas Pet Project. In addition to a truck load of food and supplies a total of \$350 was sent to the Plainfield Area Humane Society on Rock Avenue.

D.Z.

## EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW, I LEARNED FROM NOAH'S ARK.

One: Don't miss the boat.

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat.

Three: Plan Ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

Four: Stay fit. When you're 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.

Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.

Six: Build your future on high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

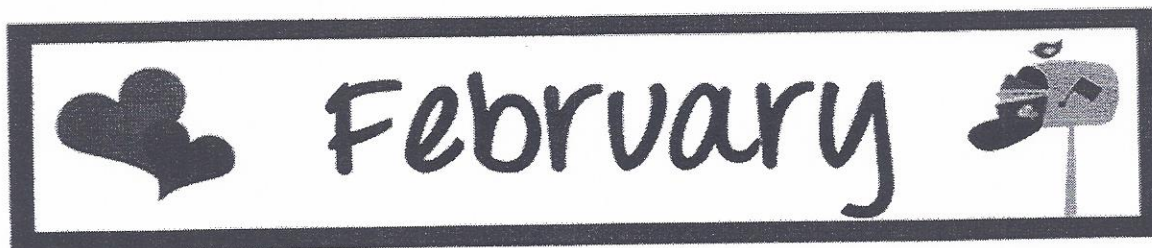
Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you're stressed, float a while.

Ten: Remember, the Ark built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.


Eleven: No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.





# Febrvuary

Sun                      Mon                      Tue                      Wed                      Thu                      Fri                      Sat

Every Sunday 10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary			1.  Bible Study 7:30pm	2.  Choir 7:30pm	3.	4.
5.	6.  Consistory 7:30pm	7.	8.  Bible Study 7:30pm	9.  Choir 7:30pm	10.	11.
12.  Jacoba	13.	14. * Happy Valentine's Day  *Broek 12:00pm	15. Newsletter  Bible Study 7:30pm	16.  Choir 7:30pm	17.	18.
19.	20.	21.	22.  Bible Study 7:30pm	23.  Choir 7:30pm	24.	25.
26.	27.	28.				