



SECOND THOUGHTS

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April 2006

FROM THE DESK OF

REV. ANDY RIENSTRA

Encourage One Another



Sometimes preacher's and church staff reflect a cynical attitude about Easter attendance. All kinds of special preparations are made to accommodate the extra people who show up for worship. Many come out Easter morning, and then never reappear until Christmas Eve. Most of you perhaps can understand why church staff might be somewhat disparaging. Walk in their shoes. How would you like to work 15-20 hours a week putting together a sermon, writing a liturgy, or rehearsing a choir and practicing an organ prelude only to have people show up only occasionally to sample your efforts?

Perhaps we preachers are some what to blame. If we were better communicators and more in touch with God's vision for people's lives, they wouldn't be so spasmodic in their worship. Maybe we tend being sarcastic because we don't want to accept responsibility for not doing as good a job as we are able. Perhaps church staffs need to work harder at making every Sunday an Easter celebration, after all it is. .

Would that really make a difference?

Look at it this way. Early Christians gathered together for worship on a weekly basis to encourage one another. They were a targeted minority in a hostile environment. People viewed them as odd, different, even dangerous. They came together regularly to keep up their common courage.

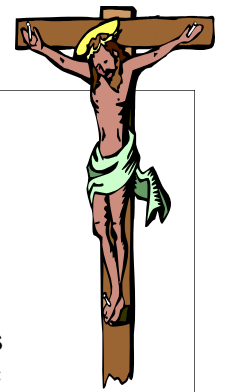
The writer to the Hebrews describes it this way (Hebrews 10:24, 25) "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." People worshipped to help each other hold on to their hope in a God who cared for them as they lived each day in a brutally harsh world.

We need that kind of motivation for worship today. When I look back on many years of pastoral work and leading in worship I am reminded of how many hurting, searching people do come to church regularly. They long to experience the presence of others who share in their journey of faith. They do live in a harsh world where the stresses of life often overwhelm them, and they need a Word from God and the encouragement of others. In his comments on the verses from Hebrews, William Barclay writes:

"One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement. There is a regulation of the Royal Navy which says; 'No officer shall speak discouragingly to another officer in the discharge of his duties.' . . . It is easy to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to put cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another."

If we viewed our times of worship as opportunities to encourage one another with our presence we might be more disciplined and ready to attend regularly. If we saw our absence as a means of discouragement to others we might be more loyal and devoted. What do you think?

Anyway - have a happy Easter. Hope to see you in the crowd! I also hope to see you in church following Easter.. We preachers, teachers and fellow worshippers need your encouragement.



Maundy Thursday Dinner and Communion

All members, children, friends and guests are invited to come to our Maundy Thursday Dinner/Communion Service on **Thursday, April 13, 2006 at 6:30 PM** in the gym.

We will each bring food to share (no desserts please) and enjoy dinner as we sit around one large table in fellowship with one another. After dinner Rev. Rienstra will lead us in a brief service of song, prayer and communion.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Please put down your name and the number of people in your family who will be attending, as we want to be sure to set the right number of places.

If young children will be attending please let Deanna Horr know so that babysitting can be made available to care for them after the dinner.

Please, come and join in fellowship as we prepare ourselves for the coming of Easter Sunday.

Deanna Horr

Easter Flower Plants

Order forms for gifts of Tulips, Lilies or Hyacinth plants for Easter Sunday are available on the tables at each door of the church, or you may use the form included with this newsletter.

This year will be slightly different. We are not offering daffodils. The daffodil crop hasn't been the best over the past few years, therefore, we are replacing them with Hyacinths. The Hyacinth plants are not as large as the other plants. Please keep this in mind when ordering.



Good Friday Service

There will be a service in the church on Good Friday, **April 14th** from 12 to 1 PM. It will feature Scripture readings and times for personal reflection with music during the hour when Jesus was borne up on the cross, to die as a sacrifice for our sin.

Special Easter Offering

Our Easter offering this year will be donated to Reformed Church World Service General Hurricane Recovery Program. The monies collected will be used in the United States to be used as needed. Many areas are still affected by the devastating hurricanes that occurred last Fall.

You can use your Easter envelope for this donation or place it in the offering plate anytime in April and earmark it "Easter Hurricane Offering".

DEADLINE FOR THE May 2005
newsletter: April 24th



HELP WANTED!

The Building and Grounds Committee needs a young, energetic person to venture on a monthly basis up into the clock tower to maintain our clock. If you are a daring person and not afraid of heights, please contact John Winant, Curly Boelhouwer or Kathy Fisher.

Please hurry..... time is ticking away (get it!)

Television Commercials

Submitted by Ruthie Pulda

A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in some way to communicate ideas about God. Here are some of the results:

God is like...

A FORD

He's got a better idea.

COKE

He's the real thing.

HALLMARK CARDS

He cares enough to send His very best.

TIDE

He gets the stains out that others leave behind.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

He brings good things to life.

SEARS

He has everything.

ALKA-SELTZER

Try him, you'll like Him

SCOTCH TAPE

You can't see him, but you know He's there.

DELTA

He's ready when you are.

ALLSTATE

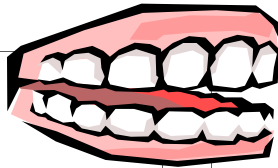
You're in good hands with Him.

VO-5 Hair Spray

He holds through all kinds of weather.

DIAL SOAP

Aren't you glad you have Him? Don't you wish everybody did? (that one is my favorite)



Catholics & Casinos

Submitted by Marie Harris

This may come as a surprise to those of you not living in Las Vegas, but there are more Catholic churches there than casinos. Not surprisingly, some worshippers at Sunday services will give casino chips rather than cash when the basket is passed. Since they get chips from so many different casinos, the churches have devised a method to collect the offerings. The churches send all their collected chips to a nearby Franciscan Monastery for sorting and then the chips are taken to the casinos of origin and cashed in. This is done by the chip monks.

Didn't see it comin' did ya?!!

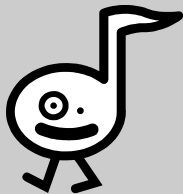
Palms & Prayers

On **April 2** the children and Sunday School teachers will be distributing cut out hand "palms" to members before and after church.

Everyone is invited to write the name of someone who is not yet a Christian, and prayers will be offered for that person that he or she may come to know Jesus Christ. The palms will be planted in the ground around the church on Palm Sunday.

The palms may also be used to identify someone who needs special prayers for healing, mourning, personal problems or for celebration. If there is a person with a prayer concern that you would like us to include in our Palms & Prayers please contact Phyllis Beals at 732-545-2321.

Phyllis Beals



Children of Second Reformed Church Sing Alleluia!

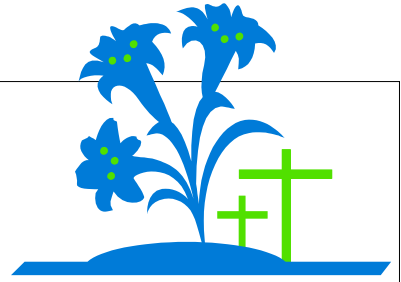
We hope that all the SRC kids will join together to sing during the Easter worship service. The children will be practicing the music **April 2** at 11:30 and again on **April 9** at 11:30. If your child wants to join the youth singers please come to learn and practice the music on these two Sundays before Easter.

Soup & Salad for Trinity House

Many thanks to Judy O'Shea, Judy Chibbarro, Martha Palmer & Phyllis Beals who have provided soup, salad & bread for the lunch time gatherings for college students at Trinity House. If you are able to be a contributor of soup, salad, bread or monetary donations, please speak to Martha Palmer or Phyllis Beals.

Rev. Barbara Heck, Director of Trinity House, welcomes any church members who would be willing to be on hand at times during the week (days) for conversation with college students and to help keep Trinity House open so students may come by for fellowship, conversations about their faith, or just to find a friendly voice in the midst of a big campus community. She can be contacted at 732-745-9985.

APRIL 2006



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

DON'T FORGET.....SPRING AHEAD. TURN YOUR CLOCK FORWARD ON SATURDAY, APRIL 1ST BEFORE YOU GO TO BED!

2 10:00 AM
Communion
11:10 Coffee Hour
11:20 Christian Ed.

5
Soup & Bread
Lenten Program
6:30 pm

1

7

8

9 10:00AM
PALM SUNDAY
WORSHIP
11:10 Coffee Hour
11:20 Christian Ed.
PLANT ORDER DEADLINE

10

11 12:00 pm
Women's
Lunch

7:00 pm
Consistory Meeting

12
Soup & Bread
Lenten Program
6:30 pm

13
Maundy
Thursday
Communion
Dinner
6:30 pm

14
Good
Friday
Service
SRC
12:00 noon

15

16 10:00 AM
Worship

17

18

19

20

21

22



23

10:00 AM
WORSHIP
11:10 Coffee Hour
11:20 Christian Ed.

24

ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR MAY NEWS LETTER!

25

26

27

28

29

30 10:00 AM
WORSHIP
11:10 Coffee Hour
11:20 Christian Ed

CAMP WARWICK SCHOLARSHIP-FUND OFFERING

