

Trinity News

“Don’t be alarmed,” he said.
“You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene,
who was crucified.
He has risen! He is not here.
See the place where they laid him.”

|| April 2017

Mark 16:6

MINISTER’S LETTER

Dear friends

The cross in Jesus’ day was regarded as despicable, a sign of disgrace and degradation, reserved for perverse crimes and treason in Roman law, or those cursed by God in Jewish law. Why then did such a despised sign become the symbol of our faith? Early believers used the insignia *ichtys* i.e. fish, an acronym for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour. But this did not last.

Instead the chosen symbol was a stark simple cross. The crucifix, a cross to which the figure of the crucified Christ is attached, only appeared in the sixth century. We are saved by the ‘finished work’ of Christ. Hence the empty cross. The New Testament writers regarded the cross as the heart of our faith. In a literal sense it is the ‘crux’ of our faith. As important as the birth, life and teaching of Jesus is, it is the death of Jesus which is crucial to our faith. The manger, the carpenter’s bench or even the empty tomb were in themselves not adequate to capture its essence. This was the prerogative of the cross. Not for nothing are the gospels described as ‘passion narratives with an extended introduction.’

The cross is a divine transaction, an exchange, or more precisely a double exchange, if you will. In the words of the apostle Paul, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that we might become in him the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ takes our sin and gives us his righteousness. He was made sin for us so that we are made right with God through faith. This does not happen because we believe or when we believe. This took place on the cross. And therein lies our hope – not what we have done, but what God has done.

There is no better description than the third stanza of Cecil Frances Alexander’s children’s hymn *There is a green hill far away*,

*He died that we might be forgiven
He died to make us good
that we might go at last to heaven
saved by His precious blood.*

Until next time,

Your minister and friend.

Alan



SESSION CLERK'S LETTER

Last week I finished my article off, by asking you to assist the next generation. I shared with you, two aspects from an article by Frank Powel called, *Church: 8 Things The Next Generation Needs From You*.

This month I want to share the next two points in this article with you namely:

ENCOURAGE THEIR WALK

The next generation is finding Jesus. But they are doing it differently than generations past. Please do not develop animosity towards them because their journey towards Jesus looks different. Encourage their walk. Rejoice that people are finding Jesus. Do not force the next generation to conform to a previous way of doing things. Just point them to Jesus. Wherever they are in life. Help them remain grounded in the truth of God's word. But do not make the Christian journey a "one size fits all" approach. God is bigger than that."

EXTEND THEM GRACE

"As the next generation moves along in the journey, they will stumble. They will make mistakes. And when this happens, they need the church to be there. To pick them up. To dust them off. Encourage them to keep moving. Not to tell them, "I told you so.""

There is something truly great happening with Lincon and his ministry. People, who have for ages not been at church, are starting to attend the Bible Study and Evening Services. There is passion and energy building. It's exciting.

To God be all the praise and glory.

Pierre Fourie

Session Clerk



HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

TENEBRAE SERVICE

Thursday 13th April at 19:00

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday 14th April 12:00 til 15:00

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday 16th April at 09:45



NEXT GENERATION LEADER'S LETTER

I'm sure we have all heard of the phrase, "*in the blink of an eye*" or "*overnight*." Obviously these phrases are used as an expression of time. As I'm sure we're all aware, the state of our nation over the past week has left much to be desired. Decisions that were made by government have had a negative impact on many different aspects of our nation. But this begs the question, what do we do about it? Is there anything we can do about it? How do we as a faith community stand up against such injustices?

I think that the first course of action is to recognize that we cannot sit back idly and pretend that this does not affect us all. We cannot sit back and pretend as though this has not happened. I am not a political analyst nor can I claim to understand the inner workings of governmental procedures and decisions. However, I am able to witness the effects this has on each of us. I think I speak on behalf of the Next Generation group in saying that we all take a stand against the ongoing injustices happening in our nation. And I want to urge all who belong to this faith community to stand **boldly** and **prayerfully**, together as we move forward.

On a less serious note, here are a few updates regarding the Next Generation Ministry. We met on Saturday, 1 April 2017, for a movie night. It was an absolute privilege for me as we watched the movie 'Luther' to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The night was such a blessing for us and we hope to have many more like that in the future. Also, evening services and Bible study are going exceptionally well. It is still small beginnings but we hope and we pray that the Lord will continue to work within this church.

Lincon Hardouin

Next Generation Leader



CELEBRATION IN SONG

On the 24th March we held an interdenominational, intercongregational Celebration in Song Service at Trinity. Singers and musicians from Trinity (Presbyterian and Anglican) Church, Saints Presbyterian, St Columba's and St Francis joined in joyful worship.

Hopefully this is the first of many such celebrations!



“... speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord...”

~ Ephesians 5:19

CALL TO WORSHIP

Every Sunday the Call to Worship forms part of the service and it is good to reflect on the need for the call. This is especially so if you are asked to do the call! Zac Hicks, blogger at zachicks.com, and author of *The Worship Pastor* (Zondervan, 2016) says the following:

WHY WE NEED THE CALL TO WORSHIP¹

CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship is something we offer to God every day of our lives in everything we do. If we are worshipping as we come in the church doors, why do we have a call to worship? Implied is the word “corporate”. When we hear the call to (corporate) Worship, we are called by God as one community to worship together. What is unique about Sunday is not that we worship on that day and not others; it is that we worship together. ...

WHY THE CALL TO WORSHIP IS SO IMPORTANT

First, we live in a society that teaches us to think highly of our own ability. Americans [South Africans?] are a fiercely independent, self-motivated people. The Call to Worship puts us in our place. We come to worship because God has a summons on our lives. We come to worship because God initiates with us, not the other way around. So the call to worship reminds us of God's sovereign reign over us. ...

WHY WE NEED THE CALL TO WORSHIP

All throughout the week, we find ourselves tossed about in the “sub-reality” of sin and brokenness. In a sense, we can forget God. We can forget his promises to us in Christ. We can forget who we are. We can forget that we’re designed for union and communion with our maker. And this forgetfulness allows us to worship lesser things – people, money, possessions, prestige, the “perfect life.” The Call to Worship is a jolt back into reality. It is a bucket of cold water on our world-induced trance. In the Call to Worship, we once again remember, ‘Yes, this is who I am; this is what I’m called to do! I am a son/daughter of God Most High, and in Christ, I am His holy temple, His servant, His worshipper, His friend, His bride, His possession, His Love. ...

Peter Havenga

Elder

1 <http://www.zachicks.com/blog/2012/6/18/why-we-need-the-call-to-worship.html>

B-WOMEN FOR GOD

On 1 April about forty women joined in fellowship. Dr Genevieve James, Deputy-Director: Division Community Engagement, Unisa addressed us on *Cities at the Crossroads, The Via Optima*. Her talk was based on **Jeremiah 6:16** and reminded us to stand, ask, walk (in the good way) so that we can find rest, and not, as the original response to this message was, to refuse to walk in it. Genevieve inspired us to become watchwomen on the wall and not to ignore the factors impacting very negatively on our urban communities, like landlessness, disproportionate access to the economy, unemployment and persistent wasteful expenditure



and corruption. We were reminded to prayerfully consider the meaning of the Good News in the context of the city and to ask ourselves if we will follow God’s way or allow our cities to descend into complete chaos and despair. The ongoing significant role of women in society was highlighted and we were left with the reminder that the Book of Jeremiah knows that at the bottom of the abyss, lingers the Lord of creation (Brueggemann 2007:196).





Genevieve's talk and her very positive energy were particularly inspiring after a week of considerable political significance which could so easily have led to unproductive despondency and negativity.

As always, the Trinity women joined forces to decorate the tables (particular thanks to Denette!) and to provide administrative and kitchen assistance, making everything seem effortless. A heartfelt thank you to the two Louise's and Charlotte for their participation in the programme and to everyone who helped, and also to Gordon and Alan for seeing that we did not run out of water (the pipes having been "nuked" by the fibre-optic cable layers the day before the event).

Michele Havenga

Elder

A SCOTTISH BLESSING

If there is righteousness in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character.

If there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home.

If there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation.

If there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world.

So let it be!



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