

BANNER

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³⁶ A Day in the Life
of a Child with Autism

³⁴ Church Ministry Funerals

²¹ Being a
Christian
Employee

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in the CRC



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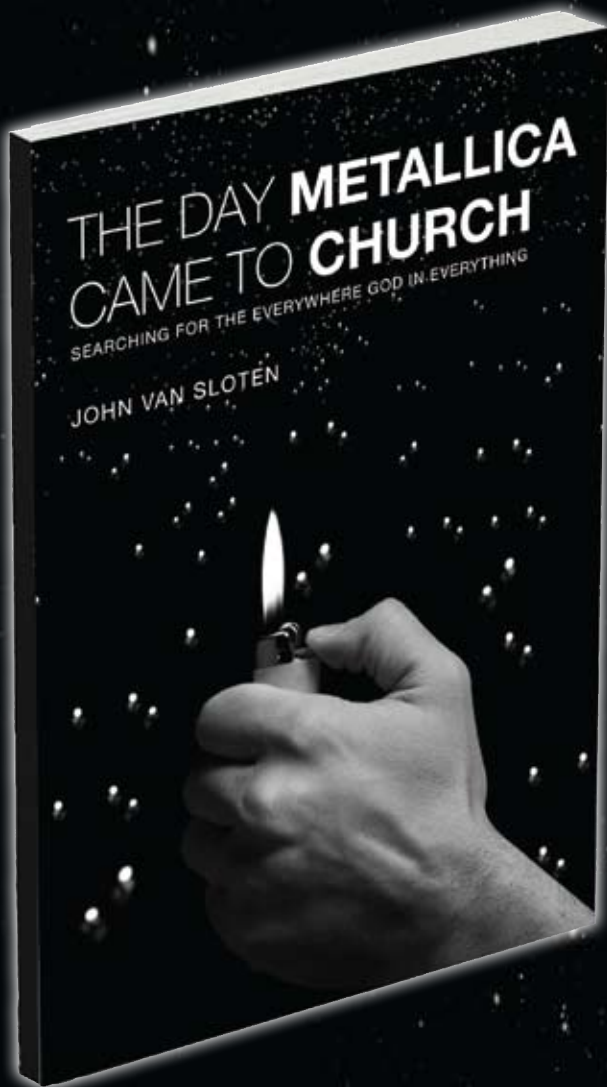
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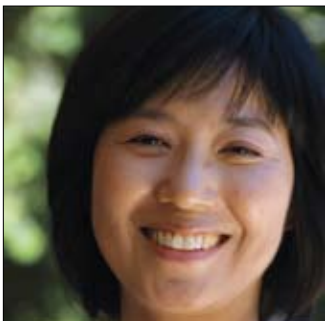
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Cover: Soon Park has attended SeattleDreamChurch, a Christian Reformed congregation, when she’s been in the United States to visit her daughter. She represents one of several diverse groups within the CRC’s Korean community. See page 18.

PHOTO BY BOMSU KIM

Hail, September

SEPTEMBERS HAVE SCARED ME ever since Ma, back in the old country, marched me off to “Kleuterschool” (kindergarten). I was terrified. I kicked up such a fuss that she walked me straight back home again until grade 1 began (unavoidably) the next September.

In September newbies everywhere nervously find their way down eerily alien school halls. And so do rookie teachers and principals. And then there’s a whole new church season with all its twists and turns.

There are people who relish new beginnings. I wish I were one of them. Are you? Many of us need to shake off that “summer’s already over” angst before we catch our stride in the routine of a busy church season with new expectations, new responsibilities, and, sometimes, brand-new challenges that we find more than a bit daunting. Whatever it is that you’ll be doing this September, thanks SO much for your willingness to step up to the plate!

A colleague and I once tried to count the number of volunteer hours invested by the sisters and brothers in our respective churches. We finally had to stop after we embarrassed ourselves by tripping over more and more forms of ministry we’d just plain overlooked.

It’s not that in church we get everything done we’re supposed to do, of course. We could always do more. And, possibly, we should do more—though definitely not always.

But it would be the height of ingratitude if we didn’t say thanks up front for all those who willingly wade in and give of their time and talents to make our church ministries hum. Even when your work goes unrecognized by the rest of us ungrateful (albeit saved) wretches, you

are a blessing, and we pray that in your ministry you will receive blessings in return. And never fear: the One you’re ultimately doing this for certainly takes full notice.

A bit of spiritual tonic I rely on to get me past the Labor Day blues is the inspiration I received many years ago in a service designed specifically for worshipers with cognitive

disabilities from the local Friendship group. The theme of the service was thanking God for the gifts we can share with others. I’ll never forget one young lady, whom I’ll call Mary. Mary lived in a nearby group home. She hit the nail on the head for me in a way that slid right past my jaded know-it-all, seen-it-all brain and punched directly into my heart. She walked to the front, picked up an iron from an ironing board she had set up earlier, and said, “My name is Mary. I do the ironing for the people at my lodge. I do it because I love Jesus.”

If you’re a rookie GEMS counselor, church school teacher, or elder, always, always keep your eye on the One/ones you love. You’ll still need to pony up the energy and the effort, but when your heart is in it, it’s amazing how joyfully a church season zips by with our Savior’s love in your heart and the wind of the Spirit at your back.

Go ahead, make our year. Bring on September! ■

“I do it because I love Jesus.”



Rev. Bob De Moor is editor of *The Banner* and pastor of preaching and administration for West End CRC, Edmonton, Alberta.

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The World of Bees

MY HUSBAND and I have recently taken up a hobby that has most of our friends and family thinking we're crazy.

Because we had wanted to keep honeybees for many years, we took a nine-week class in bee management from our local extension agency. We ordered the frames and the feeders and the protein patties and the veils—and the two 3-pound packages of bees. (You'd be amazed how quickly you'll get a phone call from the United States Postal Service when they've got your bees—12,000 or so per package—buzzing angrily in their cargo room.)

The thought of all that honey was an enticing one, but it wasn't the reason we decided to do this. Ever since my Grandpa Beyer hauled us grandkids out to the back of a field to see a hive ensconced in a dead tree, I've wanted to delve into the world of bees. I thought it sounded interesting, and my husband has long known that my "interesting diversions" usually drag him in, too.

It didn't take us long to marvel at the life of the hive. The queen bee knows which kind of eggs to lay depending on the size and number of the cells her workers provide. Smaller cells provide worker bees, which are all female; larger (and fewer) cells provide the drones, whose useful lives are pretty much over after they mate with the queen. Ever after, they hang around the hive like lazy houseguests who won't leave.

Within hours after emerging from their cells, the worker bees know what to do and in what order. They clean cells in preparation for more egg laying; they feed the queen bee; they go out looking for pollen; they protect the hive; they tend to the "brood," or nursery. Once the honey

starts to be placed in the extra cells, they flutter their wings like high-efficiency industrial fans until the honey is between 12 and 16 percent moisture, at which point they cap it with a thick wax layer. Any higher percentage and it will begin to ferment; any lower and it will be too thick to easily leave the comb.

Our instructor told us that you can set your calendar by the bees' work. As the days get shorter, less and less activity will take place until the bees become almost dormant. However, on December 22—the day after the winter solstice—somehow sensing that the days are getting longer, the bees will once again begin their work of cleaning the hive, preparing it for another spring, hauling out the dead bees (it's not unusual to see piles out on the snow), readying the hive for the coming spring's nectar flow.

One cannot look at the work of honeybees without seeing the hand of the Creator. Like Job, I hear God's voice resonating through the ages: "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand" (Job 38:4).

I fear that too often we get embroiled in trivial questions about the process of creation and evolution and what's right and what's not and miss the wonder of what's right in front of us.

Our God is truly a remarkable and inventive Creator. I can do nothing but rejoice in the work of God's hands and marvel in the glimpses God gives me of himself. ■



Valerie Van Kooten is a freelance writer and a technical writing instructor for Central College, Pella, Iowa. She is a member of

First Christian Reformed Church, Pella.



*In the generous
light of grace
we can begin
to see glory
everywhere.*

—ELIZABETH J. CANHAM

Is Separation Always a Sin?

We should not hastily conclude that all ethnic separation is sinful.



IN 1963 Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream that racial segregation in the United States would be abolished and that black people and white people would sit around the table of brotherhood together. King's dream has been partly fulfilled, a fact symbolized in the United States by the election of a black president.

In 1986 there was still segregation—or apartheid—in South Africa. The Belhar Confession was a prophetic statement against that unjust situation. This confessional statement by some Reformed churches led to the collapse of apartheid and the election of a black president in South Africa.

The Belhar rightly condemns a “forced separation on the grounds of race and color.” But the Belhar also rejects “the establishment of a separate church formation” based on race or ethnicity; it also claims “that separation . . . between peoples and groups is sin.”

The Belhar's statements are fully understandable in the context of the South African struggle for racial justice and equality. Apartheid was an evil system

that needed to be abolished. The concerns of the Belhar are similar to those of Martin Luther King's in 1963. Both statements were prophetic.

But in the 21st century, the dynamics have changed. Today ethnic groups often choose to meet or worship together to celebrate the beauty of their own culture and to support one another. Newer immigrants find security within their own ethnic group. Is this separation sin?

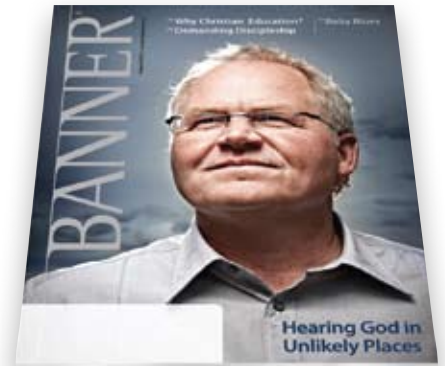
Is it sinful for Hispanics to worship with their own people? Are black AME churches by definition racist? Is it wrong for our Korean brothers and sisters to have their own classis and churches? Are the Tiv people in Nigeria sinful when they worship God in their own language? Were some people in Toronto wrong when they established a school just for black students?

It is beautiful when Christians from different ethnic groups worship together. We experience this in Nigeria frequently. But we should not hastily conclude that all ethnic separation is sinful.

It is risky to import a confession from a different political and cultural context. It would be better to make confessions relevant for our own North American setting. ■



Rev. Timothy P. Palmer, sent by Christian Reformed World Missions, teaches at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria.



Youth Conventions

I was disappointed to see that the traditional Youth Unlimited conventions (still “YCF” to me) are coming to an end (“YU Conventions Discontinued, Live It to Launch in 2011,” August 2010). I was privileged and tremendously blessed to direct eight of those international conventions between 1979 and 1987, and my memories are invaluable. I expect some 30,000 CRC members from across the U.S. and Canada share some of those happy memories. But I understand times are a-changin’!

—Robert S. Hough
Beaver Falls, Pa.

Mountain Lion

I was disappointed to see a photo of a dead mountain lion displayed as a “trophy” in *The Banner* (“Idaho Woman Bags Huge Mountain Lion,” August 2010). While I understand killing an animal for food, to kill an animal for sport is sad and wasteful—and makes one question, Is this really what God had in mind for his glorious creation?

—Ruth Vander Ark
Holland, Mich.

How to Be Catholic

Thank you, Richard Mouw, for your insight in “How to Be Catholic” (July 2010). I strongly believe that if the church of God is to fulfill its mission on earth,

LETTERS

its members need to be renewed and become “one true, holy catholic church.” Unfortunately, we tend to forget the words of the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians about divisions in the church (1 Cor. 1:10-13). It is the indivisible Jesus Christ to whom we belong. As Paul puts it in verse 31, let those who boast, boast in the Lord—not in a denomination.

—Kiese Mindana
Saint Albert, Alberta

Synod 2010

From “It Was a Quiet Week . . .” and “troll humor” and “Mischief at Synod” to the agenda issues of youth advisers, ecumenical relations, ministry to victims of abuse, and pastoral response to undocumented workers—I want to express my appreciation for the work of the *Banner* staff in covering Synod 2010 (July issue). Thank you for holding up areas of ministry that need to be further developed and encouraged, and thank you for giving attention to the personal stories that always serve to put a face on this otherwise faceless summer gathering. And thank you for being gentle with the officers of synod, who suddenly found ourselves faced with an unexpected responsibility and privilege.

—Rev. Aldon Kuiper
Rock Valley, Iowa

Regarding “Creation and Science Teaching Restriction Lifted,” Declaration F states, “The clear teaching of Scripture . . . on the uniqueness of human beings as imagebearers of God rules out the espousal of all theorizing that posits the reality of evolutionary forebears of the human race.” We need strong biblical leadership in our denomination, and canceling Declaration F is certainly not helpful for the stability of the CRC.

—Hans Visser
Taber, Alberta

If the theory of evolution is being introduced for future generations taught at Calvin Theological Seminary, we are on dangerous ground.

—Anne Taveling
Hudsonville, Mich.

Every year it seems like synod is one disappointment after another. This year there were too many disappointments to mention, but for this letter I will focus on one: the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (“Ecumenical Relations Committee Gets Interfaith Mandate”). It is bad enough that we have had a committee attempting to forge ties with denominations that at their root are opposed to Reformed doctrine, but now we want to build bridges with other religions whose gods are false gods. So desperate are we to engage in this work that we are willing to forgo any witnessing, just so that we can be in their company.

—Julian Ross Hudson
Ponoka, Alberta

Don't Speak for Me

“God has poured out his Spirit on our young people. Let’s pay attention to what they have to say.” Accepting Rev. Bob De Moor’s words in his July editorial, “Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy,” I ask you to hear me out. As one of the “young girls” at Second CRC that elder Sharon Broersma DeVries felt sorry for at Synod 2010 (“Michigan Churches Not Allowed to Join Distant Classis”), I would just like to say that she does not need to hurt for us in any way. While I appreciate her concern, it is truly unnecessary.

I have spent many hours on my own researching the hot topic of women in church office. My conclusion is this: the debate is not a matter of women’s rights, simply of women’s roles. There is a very big difference between male domination and male headship. This is not a matter of opinion; it is a matter of doctrinal

truth. It is because of my right as a woman that I am able to write this letter against the role of women in church office.

I am more than slightly annoyed that *The Banner* has continued to be so overwhelmingly negative toward my perspective.

I can honestly say that I am proud to be both a young woman with a voice and a member of Second CRC, Kalamazoo.

—Madison VanOosten
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Sorry, Guido

Thanks for the article “The Belgic Confession: A Good Teacher” (August 2010). The following sentence, however, is not accurate: “Our newest *Psalter Hymnal* uses [Guido] de Brès’ original Article 36 and includes the altered version from 1566 in a footnote.”

Our newest *Psalter Hymnal* contains three paragraphs in Article 36 on the relationship between church and state that were composed not by de Brès but by the GKN in the 20th century. These lines were translated and provisionally adopted as a footnote by the CRC in 1958 and then moved into the body of the text of our new translation in 1985. The old Dortian text of those replaced paragraphs (some of whose wording went back to the 1566 synod) was then moved into a footnote.

—Rev. Lyle Bierma
Calvin Theological Seminary
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Correction

Regarding “Church Order Revised, Not Rewritten” (July 2010), synod retained the second half of Article 54, adjusting it slightly to include all the confessions, not just the Heidelberg Catechism, and deleting the phrase “following its sequence.” A corrected version of the story has been posted online. *The Banner* apologizes for the error.

NEWS

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Haiti: It Just Takes Time

When a disaster of the magnitude of the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti strikes, rebuilding just takes time.

That is what the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee would tell anyone who wonders if relief efforts are going too slowly.

CRWRC collected more than \$10 million for relief efforts, much of it from Christian Reformed churches and individuals, and it says spending the money well is more important than just spending it.

That means taking a holistic long-term approach and leaving a legacy, said Ron Fuller, one of CRWRC's disaster-relief managers currently in Haiti. That legacy includes shelters that can withstand Haiti's frequent hurricanes, land rights or rental agreements that provide security, treatment of emotional trauma, and investing in long-term livelihoods.

CRWRC is focusing its work in the Leogane region, the earthquake's epicenter 29 kilometers (18 miles) west of Port au Prince. There 85 percent of the population of 90,000 lost their homes.

Initially, CRWRC focused on keeping people fed and sheltered, with 2,000 tarps, two months' worth of food for 3,000 households, and cash for personal hygiene supplies.

As recovery advances, a tool-lending program has begun, rubble has been cleared, and wells and latrines have been dug. The focus now is on helping people move out of tents and camps and back to their own properties.

In many cases, wooden structures called transitional shelters are built on the concrete pads where people's homes formerly stood. That's important, said Fuller. "If we can house people on their same property, then their social network, the community fabric, stays intact. They have the same neighbors, their kids can play with the same kids, and it's a much healthier environment."

But getting supplies to build the shelters is difficult. Everything

available in Haiti is used up. CRWRC has a local Haitian supplier who can import supplies faster than businesses from the U.S. and Europe can. "It is a very complex system and we're fortunate to deal with Haitian suppliers who know how it works," Fuller said.

CRWRC has five crews that employ 20 Haitians, half of whom are graduates of the local technical school and are very skilled. They are paired with workers from the communities where the homes

Fighting Hunger with Empty Bowls in New England

New England Chapel, a Christian Reformed church in Franklin, Mass., uses empty bowls to help fight world hunger.

Jodi Koeman, community development pastor for the church, said this is the second year the congregation has participated in Empty Bowls, a national movement designed to raise awareness and funding to combat hunger.

Church members painted more than 300 ceramic bowls and placed them throughout the church for a worship service that focused on hunger using Scripture, communion, prayers, and visuals. At the end of the service, a simple meal of bread and soup was served using the painted bowls.

The event raised more than \$3,000 for the Franklin Food Pantry.

One participant said, "I learned that hunger affects people around the world, including those in my own community."

Another said, "These bowls are all unique, just like each of us. But when they are all put together, they are a great reminder of how we can all work together to end something like hunger."

—Calvin Hulstein



From left, Heather Sweeney, Jessica Sweeney, and Rhea Beera paint bowls at New England Chapel to raise funds for the Franklin (Mass.) Food Pantry.

ROBERT CROWWELL



Madame Edner's daughters help with the final stages of their transitional shelter in Masson.

CALLS ACCEPTED

From Community Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener, Ontario, to [Rev. Carel Geleynse](#) of Cornerstone CRC, Chilliwack, British Columbia. Geleynse will serve as director of pastoral care.

From Corsica (S.D.) CRC and Grace Reformed Church, Corsica, to candidate [Joshua Benton](#).

Writer Needed

The *Banner* is seeking a news correspondent for northern Michigan (including classis Muskegon) to write about Christian Reformed people and activities of interest to our readers. If you live in the northern half of Michigan and you like to write, we'd like to hear from you.

All expressions of interest should be addressed via email to Gayla Postma, News Editor, at gpostma@crcna.org. Please include a resume of your writing experience and some recent samples of news writing.



Left: Madame Edner's transitional shelter. Right: Clearing rubble with tools from CRWRC.

are being built. The goal is to build 1,200 shelters by January.

Another issue important to resolve is land ownership, which is complicated by the fact that records were lost in the earthquake.

"We want to give people as much security as possible so no one can take their house away in the future," Fuller said. For owners, that means proving ownership with witnesses. For renters, that means establishing that they own the home being built and arranging land rental agreements with the property owner.

In the meantime, back in Port au Prince, the employees of Sous Espwa have returned to their regular development work. They were the ones who provided the initial response after the quake struck (see *Banner*, March 2010).

Sous Espwa, which means "Source of Hope" in Haitian Creole,

is a combined ministry of CRWRC, Christian Reformed World Missions, and Back to God Ministries International.

CRWRC's Ad DeBlaij said that even Sous Espwa's normal activities now involve relief because the ministry partners they work with were affected by the earthquake.

One ministry partner is CRECH, a Haitian organization that supports Christian education for Haitian children. With schools that are damaged or destroyed, children who are traumatized, and parents who can no longer pay tuition, CRECH has needed much support.

"It is very important for kids to go back to school," said DeBlaij, "not only so they don't lose their year, but also to get back into a normal routine."

Another ministry partner that trains deacons has a deacon who has ended up being in charge of one of the displaced-persons camps. Sous Espwa is helping that camp by building latrines, providing tools to clean drains, and more.

Less visible, but crucial to moving forward, is helping Haitians deal with emotional trauma. In Leogane, trained social workers convene community groups to encourage people to talk about what happened to them. In Port au Prince, Sous Espwa helps ministry partners train teachers and pastors to help their students and parishioners. Support is provided to Haitian Christian Reformed churches all over the country.

By July 2011, CRWRC hopes to have helped 2,000 households, or

5 percent of the population of Leogane.

Fuller said the staff feels the pressure every day. "We drive 25 miles through devastated communities. You can get overwhelmed by mile after mile of need," he said.

They know they can't help everyone. But they know that for the people they *can* help, the work accomplished now will leave a legacy for a more secure future.

For more on the CRC's work in Haiti, including video footage, please visit www.crwrc.org.

—Gayla R. Postma

NEWS

Some of the people involved with Sprout work in the community garden.

Trains Draw Visitors to Washington Church

Alger Community Christian Reformed Church in Bellingham, Wash., has a unique outreach through miniature trains and 900 feet of track.

One neighbor leery of attending any church sent her husband and young son to check out the trains. "The railroad was fun, and we liked the people," her husband said.

One onlooker couldn't resist the fun and fellowship the church's railroad enthusiasts were having. He said he'd "been fighting with God for over 25 years." But what he saw in these men "wasn't religion; it was their joy!"

He told Bearden, "I've given my heart to Jesus. What do I do now?" The two spent the next hour in the Bible. Bearden noted of the outreach, "It's about taking time to be with people and give an ear."

—*Evangeline Magee DeMaster*

Grant Coe enjoys the train with his mother, Genie, and Dale Bearden.

Church member Dale Bearden loves trains. Any sunny day he and other railroad enthusiasts give rides to kids—and their parents—on a track that winds through the wooded area beside the church.

EVANGELINE MAGEE DEMASTER



Montana's Church in the Dirt

Would a church still be a church if there were no regular Sunday service?

Take Sprout, for instance. Sprout is a garden worked by anyone willing to get involved. Sprout operates on the idea that belonging leads to believing.

"Do these people know who Jesus is? No," said Rev. Randy Van Osdol. "It's about developing a relationship. There's something about belonging that God is using to transform them."

Sprout is part of Imagine, a series of missional communities intentionally formed in the Bozeman, Mont., area, led by Van Osdol.

"We are going to have to reimagine what a congregation should look like," Van Osdol said, "[to] rediscover church as something more than a building, a one-special-day-a-week religious event, and a gathering largely dependent on professional clergy."

Van Osdol and his team came up with Imagine after studying Scripture to build a new kind of church.

Van Osdol sees the need to do more than just spend time in the dirt. Imagine has formed a "huddle," a smaller group of people who meet to disciple one another.

"That's where you're really focusing on looking at your life . . . being honest and open about those things, and being willing to be accountable to other people to become like Jesus."

Each huddle is designed to meet for a little more than a year and then disperse and form a new huddle with new people.

Supported by Christian Reformed Home Missions, Bozeman Christian Reformed Church, and Classis Yellowstone (a regional group of churches), Imagine has broken the mold of traditional church, Van Osdol said.

Van Osdol recognizes the tension between traditional church and this new idea. He believes that both will continue, each serving different types of people.

"Some people are built and inherently wired to want to gather. God made them that way," he said. But not everyone is built that way, which is why he has created Imagine.

"There's a growing uneasiness and a desire for something more than what they're getting. I think that desire is being met in this missional, incarnational way of doing church."

—*Sarah Boonstra*



Nearly 50 Korean CRC leaders attended a Healthy Churches seminar in San Bernadino, Calif. For more, visit www.thebanner.org.

—*Jonathan Kim*

California Church Bears Literal Fruit

Gateway Christian Reformed Church in Merced, Calif., is planting seeds by planting trees. Forty of them, actually, all on the church's property.

Within a couple of years, the fruit from the trees will be given to families of the church and community who need food aid.

Some of the fruit can also be sold to help the youth group raise funds for summer camps and other activities.

Money for irrigation supplies and the trees came from a memorial fund for Marine Cpl. Joshua Daniel Pickard, a young man from



Members of Gateway CRC look forward to their labor bearing fruit in the years to come.

the church who was killed in Iraq. "His mother agreed to use some of the funds for this to help those in need and to help more youth get to camps," said Rev. Al Schaap, pastor of Gateway Church.

"The Lord used many people in so many great ways to complete this project," said Patrick McGowan, a Gateway member who helped make the project a reality. "It was an honor to be involved, and I look forward to the day our trees bear the Lord's fruit!"

—Heidi Wicker

IN MEMORIAM



Rev. W. Thomas De Vries
1930-2010

Rev. William Thomas De Vries, a missionary, preacher, teacher, family man, and joyful believer, passed away April 7.

De Vries graduated from Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich., and entered the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in 1954.

He served a congregation in Iowa before accepting a call with Christian Reformed World Missions to serve in Argentina for 20 years. He also served in Puerto Rico and for several years with World Missions stateside, involved with ministries in Cuba and Eastern Europe.

De Vries will be remembered for his winsome ways, his pastoral and linguistic skills, his deep love and concern for young people, his passion for church planting, and his adaptability to constantly changing situations.

De Vries is survived by his wife, Evelyn, seven children and their spouses, 12 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

—Louis M. Tamminga

Wisconsin Teens Experience Hunger and Homelessness

Fifteen teens from Living Hope Community Christian Reformed Church in Fox Lake, Wis., spent a cold night sleeping in cardboard boxes and going without food for 30 hours.

The students stopped eating at noon on a Friday and met after school at the church to construct cardboard shelters in which to sleep.

During the night, students spent quiet time studying Bible passages related to caring for the poor, while temperatures dropped to as low as 38 degrees F (3° C). Noah Van Ee, age 18, remarked that feeling the biting weather was essential to understanding something of what homeless people endure. "My feet were cold the entire night," he said.

On Saturday the students traveled to Milwaukee, where they worked to clean up a park in the inner city.

Living Hope's youth pastor, Justin Douglas, organized the event for his youth group to participate in World Vision's "30 Hour Famine" program.

In addition to serving and experiencing hunger, the students raised \$400 for hunger relief.

The group made a video about their experience, which can be viewed at vimeo.com/11175838.

—Doug Evenhouse



Wisconsin teens construct a cardboard shelter to sleep in on a cold night.

NEWS

Gardening as Spiritual Discipline



Trent and Jenny Veltkamp plant corn with their children, Aidan, Alina, and Ariel.

"We believe our church should be an active force for the seeking of shalom in our city," he said. "Opportunities flourish when you have a bag of produce in your hands, and the gardens help us connect to the 'least of these' in our

Despite it being gardening season, a group of West Coast gardeners chose to attend a conference rather than get out in their gardens.

The conference, on gardening and spirituality, was hosted by Third Christian Reformed Church in Lynden, Wash., and led by Christine Sine, an organic gardener and blogger who connects faith and spiritual disciplines to everyday life and the passing of the seasons through gardening.

"I came away with a new awareness of how much Scripture says about gardens, how much gardening can teach us about becoming more Christlike. When I am in my garden, I have a renewed sense of God's presence there," said Andrea Hofing, a member of Third CRC and a self-professed novice gardener.

Dave Timmer, also from Third CRC, is passionate about his church's garden project. This is the third season for Five Loaves Farm, which began on Third CRC's property and has since expanded to include four other properties.

community."

Attendees at the conference represented six churches from a number of denominations.

—Jenny de Groot

Ladies' Tea for Inmates

Awomen's prison isn't the most likely setting for a ladies' tea, but that's where the women of CrossPoint Christian Reformed Church in Chino, Calif., host a tea every year.

The annual event is part of the one-to-one mentoring program that the women participate in year-round.

"The tea is attended by both the mentor and the mentee as well as prison officials," said

Danell Czarnecki, the church's director of ministries. "A planning team from CrossPoint decorates, plans, prepares, and serves the food, and the inmates provide the entertainment."

The idea came about when the women's ministry of CrossPoint was feeling challenged to bless others as they had been blessed. "Though God had been good to our events, the women felt that they wanted to take those gifts of event planning and hospitality out of the walls of the church and to women who would not otherwise have someone or something to make them

feel loved and special," said Czarnecki.

Each year about 250 people attend the themed event, and many are inspired to get involved in mentoring. Dianne Van Diest, a member of CrossPoint and a mentor, said of her mentee, "We have formed a close relationship, and I am so blessed to have met her. She has actually helped me with difficult situations in my life more than I believe I have mentored her! She has given me great insight into how I can reach the troubled students I work with, because she was one of them years ago."

—Heidi Wicker



This year's ladies' tea in a California prison had a '50s theme.



Members of New Hope CRC in Bangor, Maine, spruced up the property of a local school.

Maine Church Labors for the Neighbors

Twelve members from New Hope Christian Reformed Church in Bangor, Maine, helped to spruce up the Downeast Elementary School in town.

Steve Brakey, community development leader for the church, said "Labor for your Neighbor" was a one-day collaboration of five Bangor churches to help the community in these tight economic times.

When the work was done, overgrown flower beds were weed free, lilacs were pruned, flowers bloomed brightly around the flagpole, and mulch protected the playground equipment area.

Church member Mike Foley said, "This will help our community and make people aware that Jesus is everywhere around them."

—Calvin Hulstein

STEVE BRAKEY

Michigan Church Puts Love in Action

Bolstered by a back brace and leg braces, Mary Pensyl testified at a July outdoor worship service about her gratefulness to members of Moline (Mich.) Christian Reformed Church for gardening help that saved her flower business.

"When you're disabled and all these people show up on your doorstep, it makes you overjoyed," she said.

Church volunteers fanned out through local neighborhoods in



Moline CRC members built a wheelchair ramp for a neighbor during Love in Action.

their West Michigan community, getting hot, dirty, and rain-soaked as part of a three-day Love in Action project. They did home repairs, yard work, cleaning, auto maintenance, and built a wheelchair ramp.

Maria Parra received a new roof, living room paint, and yard improvements. "It makes me feel like there are some nice people and there's a Lord," she said. "It relieved my stress about how I was going to get the money for this."

Volunteer Denny Dykstra said everyone tried to make friends

with those they helped. Another volunteer, Randy Ellens, explained, "Some were needy, and some were not, but [they] needed to experience God's love."

For more, please see www.thebanner.org.

—Carolyn Koster Yost

Moline CRC member Gina Door spruces up a flower bed.



LUANNE ELLENS

Custodian Honored for Literacy Efforts

Gordy VanHaitsma, a member of Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church, was recently voted one of *People* magazine's All-Stars Among Us for his Read to Ride literacy program.

Over the past five years VanHaitsma has matched more than 100 bikes with students in his Grand Rapids, Mich., neighborhood.

Mr. Gordy, as he is known by local children, acquires and restores secondhand bicycles, which he offers to students who read 15 books. He requires that students' teachers approve the books and verify that they have been read.

VanHaitsma, who works as a custodian for Grand Rapids Christian Schools, said every child should have a bike to ride—but that it's more important for children to learn to read and write.

"They can go a little way on a bike," he says, "but they can't go very far in life if they can't read. I'll do almost anything to get kids to read."

Rev. Beth Guikema-Bode of Fuller Avenue CRC says Van-



HENRY HUISJEN

Gordy VanHaitsma presents 10-year-old Taronza Johnson with the bike she earned by reading 15 books.

Haitsma models the passion and love for Jesus that the church seeks to bring to the neighborhood.

"We are so proud of him," she says, "and delighted that he can be an inspiration for others."

VanHaitsma was honored along with the other 29 nationwide recipients of the award at this year's Major League Baseball All-Star Game in Anaheim, Calif.

For more, please see www.thebanner.org.

—Henry Huisjen

British Columbia VBS Goes Green

Vacation Bible school at The Tapestry Christian Reformed Church in Richmond, British Columbia, went green this year.

Sixty children gathered each day to share in God's calling to plant seeds of love, with the parable of the sower and the seed as the backdrop for their discussions and activities.

The children studied seed planting in plots around the church, ideas for growing food for lunches, reminders of how and why things can be recycled and reused, and other ways in which children and families can make wise choices for more sustainable living.



VBS children visited the University of British Columbia Demonstration Farm, where they learned about harvesting and composting.

The children also took field trips to the Stanley Park Ecological Centre and the University of British Columbia Demonstration Farm for exploratory outdoor experiences.

Tapestry pastor Rev. Albert Chu said he hopes "lasting seeds of love were planted during the week for a calling of responsibility to others and this world through caring for God's creation."

—Jenny deGroot



Steven Brennan biked 22 kilometers to raise money for Chilean earthquake survivors.

Calgary Boy Raises \$4,000 for Chile

Steven Brennan, a 5-year-old from Calgary, Alberta, biked 22 kilometers (13.6 miles) to raise money for earthquake survivors in Chile.

"I have seen lots of people raise money for people in Haiti, and I got the idea that I can raise money by biking," he said. "I want to give it to people in Chile, though, because they also had an earthquake and they also need our help."

After speaking in his church and school, and sending information to family and friends, word spread, even reaching the Chilean embassy in British Columbia. As a result, Steven easily surpassed his original \$500 goal, raising \$4,000 for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee's work in Chile.

On June 22, Steven's best friend, Maya Taylor, joined him, and the pair biked successfully from their school to where Steven's dad works in downtown Calgary.

"I felt kind of tired," said Steven upon completing the trip, "but I was really excited that I made it."

For more on Steven's ride and information on CRWRC's response in Chile, visit www.crwrc.org/stevenbrennan.

—Kristen Vanderberg

Michigan Hip Hop Festival Draws 500

It's not the same old song and dance for Step of Faith Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., whose recent Hip Hop Festival drew 500 guests.

This was the fifth year the congregation hosted the event. Step of Faith is a church plant supported by Sherman Street Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, along with inSpirit (Christian Reformed) Church in Byron Center, Mich., and South Grandville (Mich.) CRC.

Step of Faith's pastor, ministry associate Stedford Sims, explained, "The whole purpose is to target teens with the gospel and also to equip young leaders in this generation."



Beacon Light performs at the Grand Rapids, Mich., Hip Hop Festival.

The festival featured 14 local artists, free food, face painting, and more.

Most of the attendees, like Phyllis Graham, came from the community. "There is always very good entertain-

ment," Graham said. "I talk to people in the community and socialize."

Sims isn't changing his tune any time soon. He said his church plans to host the Hip Hop Festival for years to come.

For more, please see www.thebanner.org.

—Ryan Struyk

Pastor in Guam Says Farewell After 27 Years

When Rev. Neil Culbertson left Faith Presbyterian Christian Reformed Church on the island of Guam, he was honored by the governor of Guam.

Governor Felix P. Camacho bestowed on him the Ancient Order of the Chamorro Award, which is the highest civilian honor that can be bestowed on a non-Chamorro person. "We were honored to receive that from the governor," said Culbertson.

Culbertson spent 27 years on Guam, serving the CRC's farthest-flung congregation. During that time, the church experienced many changes, including moving from a storefront facility to its present million-dollar complex, transitioning from a mission project to a locally supported church to the Faith Presbyterian Christian Reformed Church of today.

On an island just 30 miles long, cultivating relationships with other pastors was important, Culbertson said. "The Pacific Islander culture is generous and warmhearted," he said.

A multicultural society with folks from all over Micronesia, Asia, China, and the Philippines, Culbertson said the island has all the same problems of addiction, broken homes, and gangs as any place in North America, but it is also a society that embraces people warmly.

"This is a place where a pastor can really make a difference through and well beyond the setting of the congregation," he said.

Culbertson is now serving Tacoma (Wash.) CRC.

—Heidi Wicker



Rev. Neil Culbertson accepts an award from Felix P. Camacho, governor of Guam.

FAQs

Relationships

Q My husband and I spent our entire careers devoted to Christian day school education, and our son has been in Christian schools from kindergarten through college. Now he and his wife are thinking about homeschooling instead of sending their children to a Christian school. Obviously that is their decision, but are we supposed to pretend this is OK with us?

A It's always somewhat difficult when members of one family have different ideological viewpoints about such an important part of life as, in your case, the education of children.

It sounds like your experiences with Christian schools have been valuable and now you feel that your son is rejecting that system. However, do remember that (1) his experience within the Christian educational system may not have been as positive as yours, or (2) his wife has grown up with a different ideology of what is valuable in education, which he has since adopted as his own.

It's best to keep an open mind with respect to ideological differences. Usually a good case can be made for all three educational options (Christian education, public education, or homeschooling). The best approach to these options is to accept that one size does not fit all.

The best approach to educational options is to accept that one size does not fit all.

By all means, explore with your son and daughter-in-law their reasons for preferring homeschooling, and listen carefully. Do not judge that homeschooling, by definition, is inferior to a Christian school education, but rather keep an open mind to the different values inherent in each approach.

Is their reason for homeschooling financial? If that's the case, by all means offer to help pay for your grandchildren's Christian school education if you are able.

Having explored the issue with your son and his wife, resolve to let go of it, even if you still disagree with their choice. After all, cultivating a good relationship with your children and grandchildren is of far more value.

—Judy Cook

Judy Cook is a family therapist living in Hamilton, Ontario. She is a member of Meadowlands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Ancaster, Ontario. You may e-mail her at judycook.thebannerqanda@gmail.com. All responses will be held in the strictest confidence.

Christian Morality

Q My mother witnessed a serious crime and failed to report it because she was afraid of getting involved. I told her this was a sin of omission, and she agreed. Doesn't this make her a type of accomplice, and couldn't she be arrested and imprisoned, like the characters in the famous last episode of *Seinfeld*, for breaking Good Samaritan laws?

A First, what happened in that television episode grossly misrepresents legal systems in the United States. The same is true in Canada, as Toronto attorney Wietse Posthumus

assures me, with the possible exception of situations in which child abuse is observed.

So-called Good Samaritan laws have essentially nothing to do with reporting crimes (they are usually designed to protect those who come to the assistance of others from being sued).

You are correct, however, that the failure to report a crime can qualify as a sin of omission. Reporting crimes to the appropriate authorities is something that Christians are morally expected and, in some cases, morally required to do. Moreover, you are correct that silence in the face of another's wrongdoing can sometimes render one complicit in the wrongdoing.

Thomas Aquinas distinguishes nine ways in which a person can be complicit in another's wrongdoing: Commanding, consenting, counseling, assisting, encouraging, covering for, failing to denounce, failing to prevent, and silence. The last of these, silence, is mild in comparison to some of the others. But in certain situations silence regarding another's wrongdoing can be significant and hence morally problematic. That might well be true of the situation you describe, even if it turns out that your mother's failure to report the crime did not make her liable for prosecution.

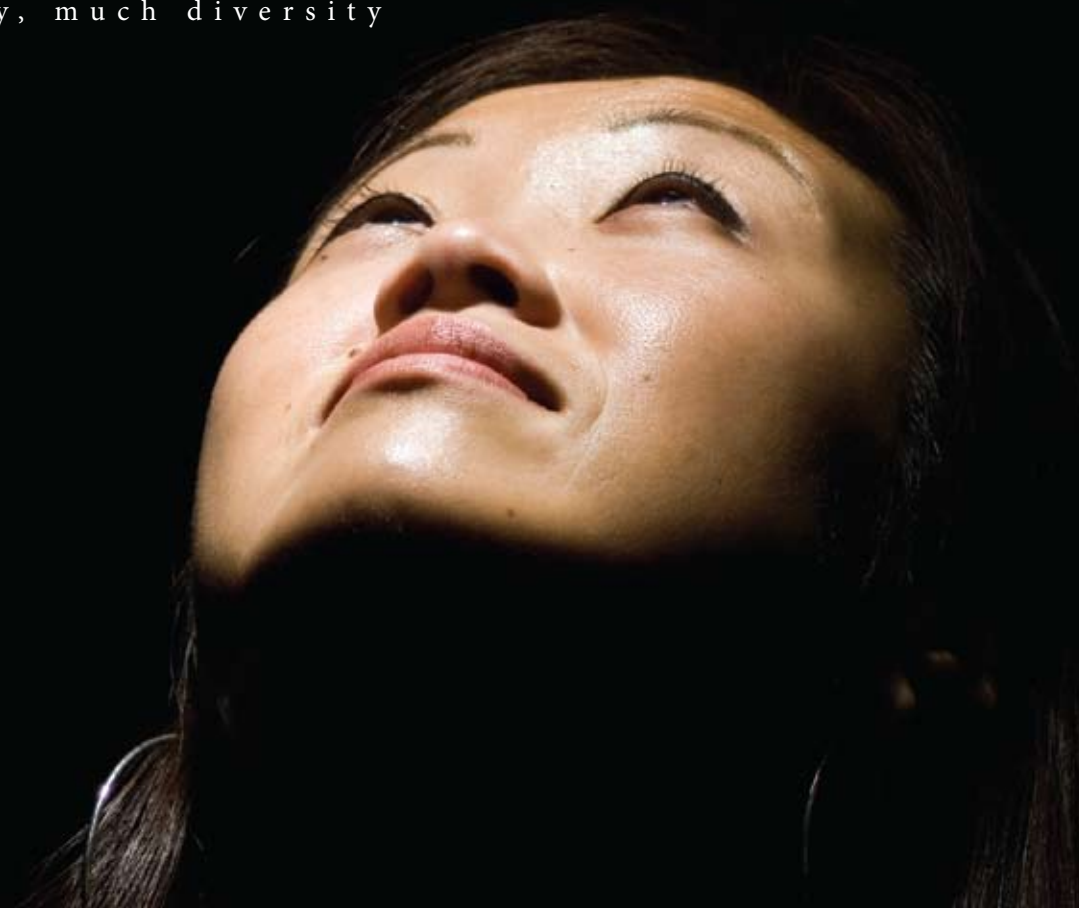
Finally, there are exceptional instances in which reporting crimes is actually wrong—for example, reporting to Nazi authorities during World War II that your parents were protecting Jews.

—Gregory Mellema

Dr. Gregory Mellema is a philosophy professor at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich. ■

Koreans in the CRC

One ethnicity, much diversity



KOREAN IMMIGRANTS have established more than 3,500 churches in North America; as of 2009, 105 of those congregations were part of the Christian Reformed Church. That's about 10 percent of the CRC's 1,100 member churches—a significant number. And with the ongoing immigration of Koreans to North America, that number continues to grow.

Korean Christianity in North America is known for its unique brand of passion and spirituality. However, especially because Korean churches now consist of several generations of immigrants, it's not always easy even for Koreans to understand the particular culture of this community.

After ministering for more than 10 years in the Korean community in Los Angeles; Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Seattle; I've

found one useful principle to help understand the changing dynamics of North American Korean churches: we need to stop thinking that Koreans in North America are all the same.

Yes, Koreans have maintained a strong, ethnically homogeneous society for 5,000 years. But the situation of the Korean community in North America is somewhat different. We are one people but include many groups. I prefer to describe these groups as “tribes.”

There are roughly four major tribes in the Korean North American community, in addition to the many Korean children who have been adopted by North Americans. We can identify these groups by two categories: their immigration status and their degree of adaptation to American culture and/or fluency in the English language (see chart).

	Visitor	Immigrant
Fluent in Korean	Short-term Visitors	1st Generation
Fluent in English	Foreign Students	1.5 and Second Generation

First-generation Immigrants

First-generation immigrants generally arrive in North America after college graduation or marriage. Their first language is Korean and, though they seek to spend the rest of their lives here, their cultural lifestyle remains Korean. Their primary felt needs are survival, English-language skills, a home mortgage, the education of their children, a thriving business, and a strong faith.

They have many reasons for moving to North America. But whatever their reasons, like first-generation immigrants of many other ethnicities they feel a huge responsibility to provide for their families and educate their children. This makes them hard workers, willing to lead wearying lives for the benefit of their children. Without their sacrifice, the Korean Christian Reformed churches of today would not exist.

All these immigrants desire as the outcome of their dedication is to see good results in the lives of their children—an expectation that can become burdensome to their offspring.

First-generation immigrants know they should hang out in the English-language community to be considered “real Americans.” However, they tend to keep to themselves because that provides a safe and comfortable place for them. By the grace of God, the church especially has become that place. There they can pray and praise God in their mother language and trust that God will answer them in his way and in his time.

Yusin Cho: First Generation



I came to America three years ago, scared and uncertain, but now I realize that life is just about the same wherever you go. My family usually eats Korean food, but we have adjusted to eating simpler for breakfast and lunch and pick Thai or Vietnamese restaurants when we go out.

Sometimes English can still be confusing, such as grasping cultural nuances, but most of the time it isn't so difficult. Also, some personal interests that Americans seem to enjoy seem to be enviable. But most are still difficult for me to understand because I seem to worry more about preparing for the future rather than enjoying hobbies and interests of the moment.

I do, however, enjoy the American custom of living a more carefree personal lifestyle; however, I still prefer and long for the close relationship bonds that are a core aspect to Korean culture. Fortunately, the Internet keeps me connected to Korea.

If possible, I would like to help other future immigrants adjust to their new life in America.

Sarah Lee: Second Generation



As a second-generation Korean American, I grew up ignorant about many aspects of Korea's culture. Although my mother insisted that I learn how to speak, read, and write the language, my exposure to the culture was very limited. It wasn't until the end of high school that I really started to

mature and realize for myself the importance of my heritage. Korean history has always fascinated me, but now I actively enjoy reading more on the subject as well as enjoy watching Korean historical dramas (as well as modern ones). Sure, there are some aspects of the culture that I still do not understand nor appreciate, but overall I believe that I have grown to respect and value my heritage. I tend to root for both Korea and the U.S. during worldwide athletic events, such as this year's World Cup. I am also a thorough advocate of Korean cuisine, especially *kalbi* and *kimchi*!

1.5 and Second Generation

This generation, too, is made up of immigrants. Most of them arrived in North America with their parents when they were preschool-age children. As they quickly adapted to their new home, English became their primary language, though they still speak some Korean at home.

Just as they adapted to a new language, they also quickly picked up Western lifestyle and culture. Unlike their parents, who paved the way for them, they are free to focus on more than just survival. Understandably, their felt needs are identity, family relationships, college, and careers—not unlike their Korean peers who were adopted as young children by North Americans.

What makes these youths either 1.5 generation or second generation? It is said that if they attended kindergarten in North America they are considered second generation. The 1.5-generation immigrants are those who came to America during or after elementary school.

Although this rough categorization generally holds true, factors such as personality or where these young people grow up in North America (for example, California or Nebraska) can make a difference in their outlook. Some people try to divide them further into subcategories such as 1.7 or 1.9 generations, though that is not yet common terminology.

Both 1.5- and second-generation Koreans who have grown up in the education systems of North America are well educated, responsible citizens. They speak and act like other Westerners, but they run into identity problems when others do not know how to distinguish them from young visitors from Korea. It seems that nobody escapes stereotypes based on appearances.

These immigrants' weaker Korean-language skills can also prove troublesome. Many North Americans expect Korean Americans to speak and write both English and Korean fluently. While that may be desirable, the reality is that Korean Americans who grew up in North America may understand only the casual conversation of other Koreans. They cannot read »

Korean newspapers, and special Korean terminology might as well be Latin to them.

In addition, they've not been exposed to the deeper philosophies of their heritage, which can be difficult to learn in the North American context. They've had to navigate between two very different cultures—not an easy task.

These immigrants are their own unique type of North Americans. When they see their special status as not simply burdensome but God-given, they can celebrate their unique position.

Foreign Students

These Koreans are visitors, most often traveling to North America to attend college or graduate school. Unlike the immigrants I've already described, these students expect to spend their adult lives in Korea. They retain their Korean language and culture, while learning some English-language skills. Once they earn their degrees, many will return home to serve a mandatory two-year stint in the Korean army.

The needs of this group include English communication skills, education, cross-cultural experiences, and friendship.

U.S. government records indicate that the majority of foreign Asian students in the U.S. come not from China or India, but from South Korea. That means that many colleges and universities in the U.S. have a fairly sizeable Korean student population. However, even these Korean students are not all the same and can be divided into three different subgroups:

1. *0.8 Generation (Graduate Students)*. Most foreign Korean graduate students want to get a doctoral degree as soon as possible and return to a career in Korea, often to teach at the college level. Some would like to stay in America, but the door for them is not open wide enough. Only a few who have degrees in science might be able to get a job in the U.S. and apply for a green card. If that happens, the graduate then joins the tribe of first-generation immigrants.

Even though most students in this group return to Korea, their worldview is no longer the same as before their experience in North America. This distinguishes them from their fellow Korean citizens—therefore, we could call them the 0.8 generation.

Sungil Hong: Foreign Student



I think that it is easier to study in America than Korea. There seems to be a more carefree and open sense of freedom here as well. Also, I really like the fact that we don't have to attend tutoring centers after school like we do in Korea. However, I feel that it's impossible to form deep friendships with my American peers. In Korea, I feel that a good friendship lasts forever, with many shared moments and memories. Maybe people here live too self-centered lives, making it impossible to form such lasting relationships. When I dwell on this thought, I really miss and long for Korea, where people live and die for friendship.

Soon Park: Visitor



Whenever I go on vacation I go overseas. I have visited the U.S. six times. I visit often because my daughter attends high school there. I have traveled all over the country, and so far I have not had any problems when it comes to the food. Although I appreciate this culture, where

individuals respect each other's private lives, I am ever aware of our cultural differences: waving a hand to say hello instead of bowing one's head as a form of greeting, indoor carpeting, and different traffic/driving rules are a few examples of America that still remain awkward for me. I do not have a single American friend yet.

2. *1.2 Generation (College Students)*. These Korean college students might confuse you. Because they look like 1.5- or second-generation Korean immigrant students, some people overestimate their English-language ability. Indeed, many do pick up North American slang, speaking with their original Korean accent. However, at some point they will or must return to Korea, often because of the army-service requirement. That tough army stint can easily undo their years of gain in English fluency, so they seek to equip themselves for business success as much as possible during their years abroad.
3. *1.4 Generation (Younger Students)*. Like you, I cannot imagine a month-long separation from my seventh-grade son or third-grade daughter. But in the recent blizzard of globalization, many Koreans view the pressure to master the English language as stronger than the need to be together as a family.

Short-term Residents

Koreans in this group, too, are visitors to North America, though they often arrive already settled into a career or marriage. They come not to study but to work. Their primary language remains Korean, as does their cultural lifestyle and identity.

This group is eager to sightsee and curious for new cultural experiences; at the same time they care about earning a decent living and educating their children while they stay in North America. We may consider them 0.5 generation Koreans.

Getting to Know Us

How can we enjoy the diversity within the Korean North American community? How do we minister with and to each different "tribe"? What kind of church structure can best meet the pastoral needs of each group? The answers have yet to be revealed. However, understanding the diversity and diverse needs within this community offers us a place to start. ■



Rev. Bomsu Kim is pastor of Seattle Dream Church, a Christian Reformed congregation in Mill Creek, Wash. He is former editor of *Voice of the Reformed*, a Korean-language version of *The Banner*.

How to Be a Christian Employee

MOST OF US spend the majority of our waking hours working, whether at home, at school, or in the workplace. As Christians we recognize work as a gift, a calling God first entrusted to people in the Garden of Eden. We understand that God involves each of us in redeeming, transforming, and caring for his world, no matter what our occupation. So of course we want to do our work well and with integrity.

But what, exactly, might that look like? How do we practically apply biblical wisdom in the world of work to become both a great employee and a positive Christian witness? I'd like to suggest three scriptural principles for consideration.

1. Serve your employer as you would serve Christ (Col. 3:23).

Ultimately we work to glorify God, not simply to earn a paycheck. So honor God by working hard to provide value both to your employer and to your customers. Do your best with the resources under your care. Arrive early at work and at meetings, be organized, listen attentively. Offer help, take initiative, make suggestions. Have a servant's heart. Make your word good—be reliable and dependable. Do what you say you will do, and do it well in a timely, cost-effective way.

2. Love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:39).

Take a sincere interest in your coworkers; have concern for their lives outside of work. Be considerate. Honor others. Look for the good in them and encourage them. Provide St. Benedict's antidote to grumbling by cultivating a courageous cheerfulness—"modeling, even in difficult

situations, an infectious and exemplary *élan* . . . an orientation which sees a situation with different eyes" (*St. Benedict: A Rule for Beginners*, New City Press, 1993). Avoid gossip and negative speech. Instead, with a view toward problem solving, offer "dignified good humor" and an "upbeat word." Look for opportunities to speak positively and to share Christ.

Remember that "your coworkers [will] quickly realize whether that smile of yours is rooted in real cheerfulness or only something you picked up at a seminar on management tools. Real fruit always grows quietly as it ripens."

God intended work to be a blessing to others and ourselves.

3. We are Christ's ambassadors, so our daily lives must win the respect of others (2 Cor. 5:20; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12).

Ambassadors are, above all, diplomatic. Be the first to acknowledge your mistakes, apologize, ask for forgiveness, make amends. Represent Christ by coming to work with enthusiasm, energy, joy, and a sense of God's calling and blessing. Stand up for what's right. Demonstrate honesty and other core values.

When It's Time to Make a Change

God intended work to be meaningful, productive, and a blessing to others and ourselves. If you feel discouraged or caught

in seemingly dead-end work, or if your work lacks meaning or doesn't provide products or services that make the world a better place—it they're damaging rather than blessing—it may be time to look for a job that more fully uses your God-given gifts, talents, and passions.

If you feel that you have no other alternatives (especially in this economy) or that God has placed you where you are for a reason, you may want to ask God to show you how to be a great employee and how to love the people you work with.

Along with prayer, seek the godly perspectives of those you respect and who love and know you well to help discern whether God is leading you to change jobs or whether God is shaping you to better reflect Christ in your current workplace.

Next Steps

Expect God to work in and through you. As you live and work with God's Word as your guide, trust God's Spirit to provide the strength you need. Listen for God's voice, and look for opportunities that God gives you every day to reflect the love and grace of Christ. In doing so, you will bear good and visible spiritual fruit that benefits and testifies to the kingdom of God. ■



Cal Jen served several years in management for Domino's Pizza before co-founding AMDG Architects, Grand Rapids, Mich., in

1992. After selling his interest in the firm in 2007, he became an associate professor of business at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, where he received the student-selected "Professor of the Year" award in 2008-09.



Student Bethany Vrieland plays the organ for a CTS chapel service.

Volunteerism at CTS by Kathy Smith

Being a student at Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) means a busy life full of classes and assignments, mentoring groups, preaching services, internships, and other requirements that prepare students for ministry.

On top of all this, most seminarians are busy with other responsibilities involving friends, spouses, children, church activities, and often part-time work as well.

So you might think it impossible for seminarians to spend time volunteering and generating new ministries while they are in seminary. But the truth is that many of them do volunteer regularly. And their volunteerism makes a huge difference in the seminary community.

Food Pantry and Clothes Closet

Some volunteer activities happen right at the seminary, such as in the Idema Food Pantry

and Clothes Closet that provides food, clothing, and household items for seminary families in need.

Dean of Students Rich Sytsma says, “The volunteer work of CTS students and spouses not only saves students thousands of dollars, but builds community as everyone works together to sort and hang clothes, make food pick-up runs, stock and clean the pantry, and take turns serving during the pantry’s open hours. We estimate

that the food pantry and clothes closet together save our students about \$200,000 per year.”

Each spring CTS holds a volunteer-appreciation lunch; in May 2010 more than 100 student and student spouse volunteers were invited to the lunch.

Ministries of Student Senate

Other students serve on the student senate, making recommendations to improve seminary life and overseeing a

🏠 The food pantry and clothes closet together save our students about \$200,000 per year. 🗨️

variety of events and programs. The senate also sponsors fun programs, which this year included a picnic and golf outing, a hockey game between alums and students, and a Ping-Pong tournament.

A more serious but very meaningful event was the first annual candidacy fair, in which graduating students met with representatives of churches seeking new pastors. Student volunteers also serve as proof-readers, helping their international student

friends with writing papers in English.

Student Clubs

Students generate groups advocating for social justice and urban ministry, exploring church planting, and organizing prayer and worship opportunities. Recent student-initiated clubs include those focused on church planting, missions, campus ministry, justice in the Middle East, and Scripture memory.

Scripture Memory Club

A notable example of the effects of student volun-

teers on the community is the Scripture Memory Club. It began three years ago, inspired by seminarian Nick Bierma's experience on a cross-cultural internship in Toronto where he worked with predominantly Muslim Somali refugees.

In Bierma's evangelism efforts, he realized that the refugees were unconcerned with the details of Christianity but wanted to know what the Bible said. "It was a beautiful and explicit message: I needed to memorize Scripture to be a more effective disciple," Bierma reported. "And this message came not from my denomination, not from my peers, professors, or pastors; it came from my experience confronting Islam."

After returning to CTS, Bierma launched the Scripture Memory »

Fast Facts About CTS

Calvin Theological Seminary offers

- a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program that is both classical and practical, focusing on preparing individuals to form communities of disciples.
- a curriculum that prepares students in four areas: biblical, authentic, contextual, and life-changing.
- M.Div. concentrations in Old Testament, New Testament, Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature, History of Christianity, Theological Studies, New Church Development, Contextual Ministry, Evangelism and Teaching, Preaching and Worship, Pastoral Care and Leadership, and Youth and Family Ministries.
- mentoring programs that include small groups, individual mentors, and ministry-site mentors.
- interim and summer travel courses and global ministry internships.
- one-credit skill development courses on topics such as "Leading Congregations in Prayer," "Budgeting and Financial Planning," and "Your Muslim Neighbor."
- advanced standing opportunities to incoming students with Bible and theology degrees.
- Master of Arts (M.A.) degrees in Educational Ministries, Evangelism and Missions, New Church Development, Pastoral Care, Worship, and Youth and Family Ministries.
- a one-year M.A. degree in Bible and Theology for persons with sufficient undergraduate Bible and theology courses.
- certificate programs in Church Planting, Educational Ministries, English Bible, Ministry, Missions and Evangelism, Pastoral Care, Theology, Worship, and Youth Ministry.
- Masters (M.T.S. and Th.M.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) degree programs for those interested in teaching Bible and theology.
- an opportunity to interact with about 300 students, representing more than 40 different denominations from churches around the world.

The annual Ping-Pong tournament begins.



New President Coming to CTS

Rev. Julius Medenblik is slated to become the eighth president of the 134-year-old Calvin Theological Seminary, succeeding Rev. Cornelius Plantinga Jr., who leaves office at the conclusion of the 2010-2011 school year.

The appointment was approved by the Christian Reformed Church Board of Trustees and ratified by Synod 2010 in June.

Medenblik is senior pastor of New Life Christian Reformed Church in New Lenox, Ill., which he helped found. Under his leadership, the church has grown from four members to more than 700. He is also involved in leading denominational church-planting efforts and was recently chair of the seminary's Board of Trustees.

He holds a bachelor's degree from Trinity Christian College, a Juris Doctor with honors from the University of Florida Law School, and a Master of Divinity from Calvin Theological Seminary.



Rev. Julius Medenblik

"I am humbled and energized by this opportunity," said Medenblik. "Calvin Theological Seminary is deeply rooted in and nurtured by the church. We have a great opportunity to use those roots to nourish preachers and church leaders for the ministries and new opportunities that await us in the mission field around each and every one of us."

In an interview, he added: "I have been blessed to serve God and his church in an abundance of settings and positions. . . . I am energized to join the seminary community in connecting theological excellence with pastoral sensitivity and insights as we serve together in the mission that God has before us."

Plantinga said that by selecting Medenblik, "The seminary has made a fresh and bold choice of its next president."

He described Medenblik as "an ecclesiastical entrepreneur—a Christian leader of proven accomplishment in the church and, as chair of Calvin Seminary's trustees, already a leader of the seminary.

"As a trustee, he helped to shape the seminary's new calendar and curriculum, so I'm confident he will steer our ship in the same direction he helped set for it. I look forward to working closely with Jul during the transition from one president to the next, and I will do so with joy."

Medenblik said he wants to continue to promote the atmosphere of cooperation, which is a part of Plantinga's legacy as president. "The health of a denomination is related to the health of its seminary," said Medenblik. "I want the seminary to help define who we are as a church."

—*Calvin Theological Seminary news*



Students enjoy the volunteer-appreciation lunch.

» Club. In the first year, students memorized the Sermon on the Mount together. Bierma used those chapters as his preaching guide for his summer 2008 internship in Austinville, Iowa, with the first sermon of the series being a full recitation of the Sermon on the Mount from memory.

In the second year, the group memorized psalms and strung them together for a chapel service: Call to Worship (Ps. 24, 100, 150); Call to Confession (51); Assurance of Pardon (32); A Time of Lament (13, 42); Thanksgiving (23, 121, 8); God Reveals Himself (29, 46); God's Will for Our Lives (1); and Closing/Benediction (67).

This past year, the club members learned John 14-17, which Bierma describes as "absolutely astounding Scripture to memorize." Bierma reports that "the fact that this Scripture has settled into my mind and percolated down into the depths of my soul is a testimony that the Holy Spirit uses the planting of the Word in our minds and hearts in profound ways."

“The Holy Spirit uses the planting of the Word in our minds and hearts in profound ways.”

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CTS Prayer Cycle

Students also are involved weekly in Prayer Cycle gatherings, organized by Erin Marshalek and Adam



Nick Bierma (left) and members of the Scripture Memory Club lead chapel.

importance in the Christian life. This year students volunteered in schools, missions and ministry centers, and non-profit service organizations throughout the city of Grand Rapids.

All these volunteer opportunities may seem like extra-curricular activities, but they are part and parcel of a seminary curriculum that aims to form students holistically. And because the culture of a seminary is actually more influential than the curriculum, volunteering builds a culture of caring and service—exactly the kind of culture seminarians are learning to nurture in their future ministries. CTS is grateful to God for all these volunteers! ■



Candidacy Fair brings students and churches together.

Stout as a way to serve the seminary community through prayer.

Each year, Marshalek and Stout print out the CTS directory and cut it into individual names. They draw 10 to 15 names every week, trusting that the names are people God would have them pay special attention to that week. They send those folks an e-mail, inviting them to join the Prayer Cycle if they can, or else to send prayer requests to be lifted up.

Marshalek reports, “I have been so blessed to be involved in the Prayer Cycle. It has helped me feel more deeply connected to the community, and I have seen the Spirit move in incredible ways. So many people have said, “Your e-mail came at exactly the right time,’ or have told us how God answered prayers and how God has strengthened the community.”

Prayer is also a key part of weekly worship planning meetings that pull together biweekly chapels at CTS, which involve many volunteers as

readers, musicians, preachers, and prayer leaders.

Service-Learning

In addition to all these volunteer activities, students are involved on an ongoing basis as Service-Learning volunteers.

The annual Service-Learning Day has now become a three-year Service-Learning “course” in which students log a minimum of 100 hours volunteering in a local ministry over their time in seminary, then complete an assignment in which they reflect on the discipline of service and its



Kathy Smith is director of continuing education for Calvin Theological

Seminary and the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

Little Words, Big Impact

There's an ancient proverb that goes like this:

- For want of a nail the shoe was lost.
- For want of a shoe the horse was lost.
- For want of a horse the rider was lost.
- For want of a rider the battle was lost.
- For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

The meaning of this proverb is evident: little things do matter. Things like saying “thank you” and giving a word of encouragement, a compliment, a hug, or a smile *do* make a difference. On the other hand, a broken promise, a cross word, a sharp response, a missed appointment, or an uncompleted task can have a huge long-term impact.

In my experience, the “little” things can make or break a relationship. They can set the future course of events. As I reflect on my own life, I see how often little things, both positive and negative, have had a profound effect.

Recently I noticed the impact of a group of little words called pronouns—in particular, the word *we*. I had just finished a week of synod meetings followed by 10 days at the Uniting General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. After reflecting on all the speeches and conversations, I was struck by how often I heard the word *we*.

As people made speeches and explained their thoughts, they often began by saying *we*. Usually they were referring to the assembly of which they were a part, but sometimes they were referring to some other group. Most of the time it was easy to determine

what they meant, but at other times one couldn't be sure. It was at those times that little words mattered.

The little word *we* is intended to draw people together. It represents wholeness, oneness, unity. For instance, I might say “We are the church,” meaning that together you, I, and others are part of the body of Christ. At other times, unfortunately, the word *we* is used to divide, to set one group apart from another. Used in that way, *we* refers to the group of which I am a part, and the word *they* refers to everyone else.

In the church, such distinctions can be very hurtful. If, in speaking to a congregation, I talk about people in the community as *they* or *them* and talk about the members of the church as *we* or *us*, that creates a separation. Doing so sets up a dynamic of contrast rather than of unity.

Sadly, the *we/they* distinction is so much a part of our human nature. People use the word *we* to distinguish their particular ethnic group or culture from other groups or cultures, or their denomination from other denominations.

Sometimes these distinctions are important. There are things that you and I hold in common that separate us from others. You and I may be part of the same culture, ethnicity, denomination, or organization. It is necessary and good that we understand what makes us “we.” At the same

time, we need to be very careful how we use this little word. When differences overshadow our unity, the word *we* becomes like the missing nail in the horseshoe. It may seem like a small thing, but it can have a significant long-term impact.

Jesus prayed for unity. His desire was that his followers would be one in the same way that he is one with the Father. May “we” continue to strive to make Jesus' prayer a reality in his church and kingdom. ■



“Against unbelievable odds, God is bringing about his kingdom.”



Rev. Jerry Dykstra is executive director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

New Books Bring New Knowledge in West Africa

Despite the afternoon heat, Issa makes his way through his village, stopping at every residence. After the formal greetings, he announces that new books are in and invites everyone to his home to see them.

Issa is the manager of the village library. It contains books from the Box Library, a joint literacy effort of Christian Reformed World Missions and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.

Issa's library currently has more than 40 books, including an alphabet book, books from the Bible, and booklets on topics such as child health, the use of medicine, the legal system, and common cattle diseases. The books are stored in a box made out of recycled



A man reads a booklet from the library of another man in his village.

metal barrels to prevent them from being damaged by blowing sand, termites, or moisture. This box is kept in Issa's home, and he manages the lending process.

In this community of 14 households, about 15 men know how to read. They are enthusiastic readers, devouring library materials. The more advanced readers have read most of the books and eagerly await new reading material.

CRWRC and CRWM staff members have written, translated, printed, or purchased the books since 1993. When a

new book is completed or when materials have been purchased from another organization, a CRC staff member or partner brings the books to the villages they visit. Community library managers, such as Issa, then make their rounds to share the good news. Currently CRWRC monitors and contributes books to 100 such village libraries.

"The goal of the Box Library program is to place box libraries in communities that have newly literate people, so that they have access to a variety of materials about top-

ics of interest that are written in their language at their reading level," explains a CRWRC West Africa team leader.

In a society where power is tied to knowledge, this community-based library is opening doors to everyone who can read.

"Readers are drawn to Issa's home to inspect the new books and borrow them, or to find an older book that interests them," says a CRWRC West Africa team member. "Issa's home is a place where readers are given the space to share and discuss what they are reading."

Note: Due to security risks in the region, the names and locations of CRC personnel in West Africa cannot be published here.

—Kristen deRoo VanderBerg, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Bible Studies Make an Eternal Difference

Just before he died, Alunsyah testified that the Listener Community Bible studies had made an eternal difference in his life.

Alunsyah, a former Muslim, became acquainted with the Bible study course through a Back to God Ministries International Listener Community in Padang Sidempuan, Indonesia. He completed only the first set of lessons before passing away in January 2010. But before he died, he said, "I am thankful and praise the Lord . . . to be a participant in the Bible studies."

The Bible studies were developed for people living in remote areas who are eager to know more about Christianity. To date, almost 550 people have enrolled in one of the programs' four levels of study.

Mrs. Pudji K., a member of another listener community, is thankful for the way the Bible studies are making a difference in her family. Her husband, a Muslim, "wants to know more about the Christian faith," Pudji says. "He is a rational thinker . . . by going through the Bible course he has an opportunity to find the truth of God."

Another participant, Mr. Jance S., who was hospitalized for two months for a serious illness, made good use of his recovery time. "I am very happy," he declares, "because the Bible studies kept me busy while I was getting treatment in the hospital. It helped me know more about the Christian faith."

—Nancy Vander Meer, Back to God Ministries International



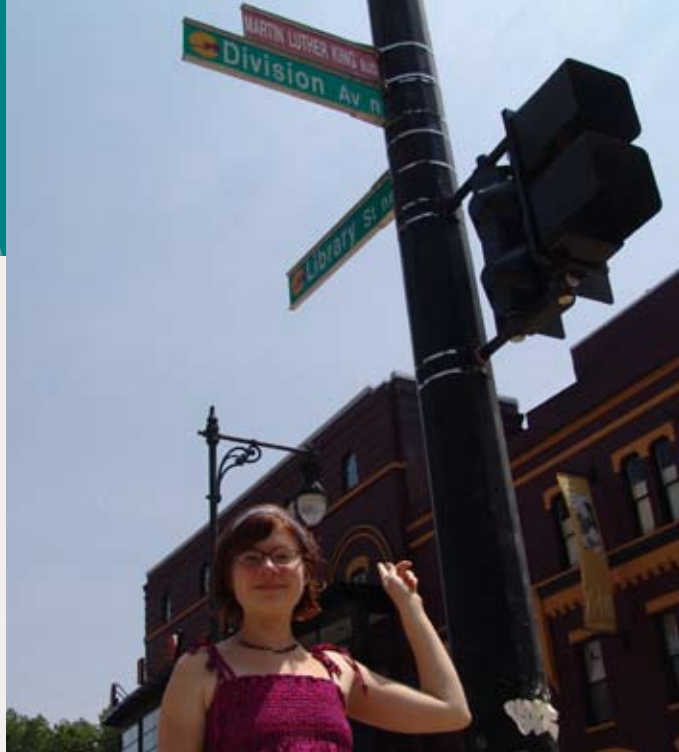
BTGMI disciples people in Indonesia through radio and Bible study ministries.

Researching Race in Grand Rapids

A Caucasian woman entered the pharmacy to get her prescriptions filled. Nia, a young African American pharmacy technician, offered to help.

“I’ll wait,” the woman said. After Nia asked again, the woman reluctantly accepted. But she wouldn’t accept change from Nia’s hand.

Calvin College junior Abby Koning said that Nia’s story was one of the many she heard as a fellow of the McGregor Undergraduate Research Program for the Humanities and Social Sciences. A large part of Koning’s work was transcribing the 150 interviews that



Abby Koning points at a sign showing Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd., a street that caused much debate before it was renamed.

Calvin communication arts and sciences professor Stephanie Sandberg recorded with residents of Grand Rapids, Mich., on the subject of race.

Koning, an English major and international development studies minor, also heard about minorities who make arrangements by phone to see an apartment—only to find it rented when they arrive. She’s heard about the African American college professor who was shadowed by a police cruiser as he was jogging. In addition, Koning conducted some interviews and did research at the local library.

From these stories, Sandberg, Koning, and a team of actors are creating a play called *Lines: The Lived Experience of Race*.

“You pull the material for the script right out of the interviews,” Koning said. “You don’t change anybody’s words. You use the actual words. . . . It is not a play about racism.

It is a play about the experience of ‘race.’”

Students learn many skills through a project like *Lines*, said Sandberg. “It’s vital to teach how they might use scholarship to promote social justice. I want to teach this kind of research methodology to the next generation of artists so that they can carry on with the work.”

—Myrna Anderson, Calvin communications and marketing

New Iowa Church Reaches Out

A new multicultural church in East Waterloo, Iowa, is reaching out to Waterloo’s young people, as well as to poor and chronically unemployed residents of the city.

“I believe in social justice and reconciliation,” says Rev. Reggie Haywood, pastor of the Home Missions-supported New Straightway Church. “Jesus calls us to be ministers of a holistic gospel, and we want to be a bridge of hope for disenfranchised youth.”

People coming on Sunday morning to listen to Pastor Reggie preach testify to the power of the gospel message and Haywood’s ability to connect to this community. “God has gifted Reginald Haywood with excellent gifts in evangelism; he reaches out to young urban blacks and cross-culturally in racial reconciliation to all races,” says Rev. Bob Price, leader of Black Ministries for the Christian Reformed Church.

In addition to the young people in attendance at Straightway, adult leaders serve as dedicated Sunday school teachers, worship leaders, Bible study leaders, prison ministry leaders, social activists, and deacons.

Each Sunday the church provides transportation to and from church, a substantial meal, and plates of food to take home. There is also a radio broadcast, a website, and a social justice conference.

In the words of a friend of New Straightway, “New Straightway is an extraordinary idea in ministry . . . Rev. Haywood is truly seeking to teach those who, for a variety of reasons, have never had the opportunity to learn the story of God’s love for us.”

—Laura Posthumus, Christian Reformed Home Missions



It’s growing!

The first five months of The Network saw over 40,000 visits. And people aren’t just reading, they’re talking about ministry! CRC members have posted over 1,000 comments and discussion items across dozens of ministry topics.

As you gear up for the fall, wouldn’t it be great to find out how other churches do their ministries?

Visit www.crcna.org/Network to ask questions, offer advice, and compare notes with others across the denomination.

Changing Lives— One Brick at a Time

Janela's deep brown eyes tell a forceful, poignant story. She's 8. Her mom is dead. Janela doesn't remember her or how she died. Her dad is a struggling farmer who can't afford to feed his children.

Janela lives in an orphan home in the rural village of Chongwe, Zambia, where education is paramount in preparing children to successfully manage the harsh social and economic circumstances this region of Africa presents.

The local school is just a short walk up the dusty road from Janela's home. With eight classrooms, 19 teachers, and almost 800 students, the school day is broken into three two-hour sessions to accommodate



enrollment. Attending here are the fortunate kids who can afford the required uniform and books in order to get two hours of daily education.

But Janela sees something bigger than this overcrowded school.

Up the road is a 25-acre piece of land that a local chief donated to GEMS Girls' Clubs. Home to The Esther School, the land will one day be the site for a school that trains, equips, and educates orphans and children from poor families in a distinctly Christian worldview, addressing the spiritual, practical, emotional, and finan-

Construction is underway on The Esther School.
Janela lives in an orphan home.



cial needs of the vulnerable girls and boys living there.

Incorporating sustainable practices, The Esther School will aim to become totally self-sufficient and will use solar power, reuse waste water for irrigation, and include gardens, orchards, and house barns for raising livestock.

Students will learn about and become responsible for many of these self-sustaining components, which will generate income for the school and produce food for the children.

Construction is currently underway, but a total of

180,000 bricks are needed to make The Esther School a reality. GEMS Girls' clubs have held fundraisers to help. Girls across North America have declined Christmas and birthday gifts to support the GEMS brick campaign.

"We wanted to give people a tangible way to get involved," explained Jan Boone, executive director of GEMS, "and the response has been so heartwarming."

—Amy White is publications and web coordinator for GEMS Girls' Clubs

Training Today's Teachers of Tomorrow's Leaders

Christian Reformed World Missions has started field-testing its new Educational Care program with schools in Kenya, including St. James Academy in Kiambu, where 40 teachers and support workers recently gathered for the first session titled "Biblical Worldview."

While CRWM paid the facilitators and provided the training materials, the school covered housing, travel, and food costs. "A good confirmation for me that [CRWM] really valued this training is that they put money out for this—and they don't have a lot of extra money," says Albert Hamstra, CRWM's special projects' director.

The idea for a training program developed out of a conversation Hamstra had with Mwaya Wa Kitavi, CRWM's East and South Africa regional director.

"Mwaya mentioned [that] it would be a good idea to have a Timothy Leadership Training (TLT) program for teachers," says Hamstra. Based at Calvin Theological Seminary, TLT works with church leaders in areas where educational opportunities are scarce.

CRWM started talking to the TLT leaders and others and interest grew, says Hamstra.

The Educational Care program is already making an impact. One teacher says, "I have come to realize that everything in the world is God's property. I now see God in every child and each person."

In many underdeveloped countries, Christian school administrators and teachers want to teach from a Christian perspective but have few materials and little training to do so.

To address the need, Hamstra gathered educators to create a biblically based

training curriculum called *Educational Care: Caring for God's Children*.

"The curriculum is made for underserved areas where teachers are under-trained, where there are few opportunities for teacher training, and next to no opportunities for Christian training," says Hamstra.

Educational Care will have six modules: biblical worldview, student learning styles, developing student gifts, discipline, leadership in a Christian school, and the purpose and value of one's school. Each module involves a five-day workshop.

Like TLT, each workshop starts with broad principles and ends with participants making action plans to use what they've learned. CRWM hopes the first *Educational Care* modules will be ready by January 2011.

—Sarah Van Stempvoort,
Christian Reformed World Missions

Who Rakes the Woods?

Fall is on its way. Soon lots of trees will shed lots and lots of leaves. If you have trees in your yard, dead leaves will soon cover your lawn. Someone will have to rake them up. And bag them. And then get rid of them.

That's only one yard. What about the woods or any other natural area?

Already trees there have dropped rotten fruits, dead twigs, and old flowers. Now they'll add leaves. This happens every year.

So why aren't the woods choking in rotten, dead tree stuff? Where does all that stuff go? Who rakes the woods? Read on to find out.

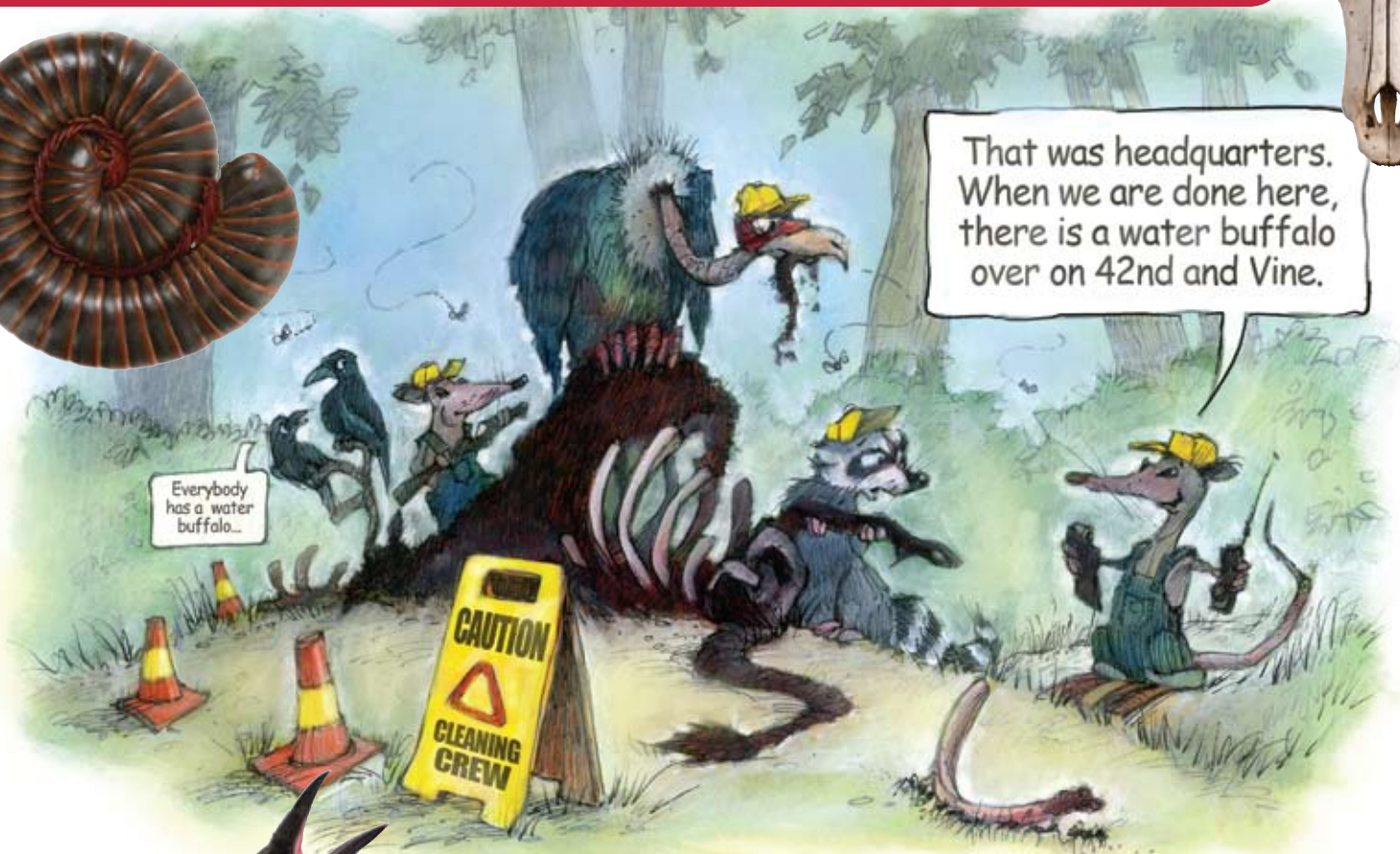


ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY



A Super Supper

Trees aren't the only things that die in the woods. Think about this: What happens to dead birds? Or squirrels and chipmunks? Or bugs, spiders, ants, flies? All these creatures die sometime. But when they do, what happens to their bodies? Who picks them up? Who rakes the woods to clean it up?

No one rakes the woods. Instead, there's a whole cadre of critters out there who love to eat dead things. Any body will do: Dead plants? Yum! Dead animals? A super supper! That may sound downright disgusting to us, but it's

perfect for creation. These little creatures clean up the messes, and they recycle everything. Because fall's their busy season, this is a good time to go out and meet them. Discover who these creatures are, why we need them, and how God made them special.



The Rotten Vegetable Crew

Did you know that plants can starve? They can! To grow well, plants need to take certain vitamins and minerals (called nutrients) from the soil. Without those nutrients, plants can't grow well.

Where do these nutrients come from? They're recycled from dead plants so they can move through the soil into live plants. Who does the recycling? The Rotten Vegetable Crew. They love eating rotten fruit, dead plants, and all those dead leaves that will soon litter the earth.

The first shift is critters that break wood apart. Woodpeckers drill holes; beetles and ants chew tunnels. Termites and cockroaches actually eat wood. Look at a rotten log in the woods to meet some of these critters. Roll the log over to see more of them. Then roll the log back, so they can stay at "home."

Look under leaf piles and rotten vegetable stuff for the second shift: snails, slugs, some beetles, pill bugs, millipedes, harvestmen (daddy longlegs), mites, earthworms, and some grubs. They break dead plants into small pieces. The smaller the critter, the smaller the pieces it leaves behind.

The third and last shift of the Rotten Plant Crew? Fungi (that's the word for more than one fungus). They're the mushroom-like things you find growing in the woods. Their "roots" absorb small bits of nutrients from the soil, break it down more, and feed it directly to the roots of living green plants.

Imagine creation without the Rotten Vegetable Crew: Dead plants stacked up everywhere. All nutrients locked inside them. No nutrients in the soil. No plants can grow. Therefore, no food. Therefore, no life on earth.

So thank the Rotten Vegetable Crew for making your fresh vegetables (and all your food) possible!

The Carrion Crew

Meet the carrion crew. God created them to eat dead animals. Some of them are big guys: vultures, ravens, magpies, crows, raccoons, and possums. They sniff out and eat tasty meat that's not been dead too long. Coyotes, bears, skunks, and foxes also aren't above snacking on the stuff. After the carrion (dead animal) has been shredded, aged, and become downright disgusting, the second shift moves in.

These guys are flies, ants, and beetles looking for some good rotten meat to eat. They love it, fight over it, live in it, and lay eggs in it. Some even feed it to their young grubs or maggots.

Right about now you're probably saying, "Yuck! I feel sick!" But imagine creation without this crew. Dead, slimy, stinky bodies would cover the planet. The smell would be awful, and the germs would be worse. Earth would be one huge garbage dump.

So thank the Carrion Crew for cleaning up the yucky messes. And thank the Creator, who made the Carrion Crew so that we could live on a clean, healthy earth.

How Can They Eat That??

God gave each of the creatures in his cleanup crews exactly what it needs for its job. Here are some examples:

- 1 Vultures have no feathers on their heads. They root around in nasty garbage and come out clean-headed. Their stomachs have acids that kill germs that would make us sick.
- 2 Maggots produce a special fluid that helps them eat dead tissue and deadly germs.
- 3 Termites and some cockroaches have certain bacteria in their stomachs that help them digest wood. No other creature has those bacteria.
- 4 Some fungi release special chemicals that help decompose dead plants.
- 5 Pill bugs breathe through gills rather than lungs. They're created to live under damp leaves.
- 6 Daddy longlegs grow all summer so they're at their biggest in the fall. That's when they eat the most.
- 7 Sexton beetles bury their food (small dead animals) before they tear it apart, lay eggs on it, and feed it to their young.



Joanne De Jonge is a park ranger in northern Michigan.

Wanna Watch a Movie?



FRIDAY NIGHT IS THE HIGHLIGHT of our family's week because Friday is "Family Movie Night." In the last three years, we've missed our weekly filmfest only a handful of times, though sometimes we've rescheduled it. We're in those "golden" years when our kids (mostly) still want to hang out with us and aren't old enough to date. For now, we wouldn't trade this time together for the world.

On Friday nights we've laughed together (*The Princess Bride*), cried together (*A Little Princess*), and learned more about our world (*March of the Penguins*). We've learned that everyone has value (*Radio*), that spelling bees can be cliffhangers (*Akeelah and the Bee*), and that Iowa can look like heaven (*Field of Dreams*). We've learned about Jesus' sacrificial love (*Jesus of Nazareth* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*) and how better to love others (*Because of Winn Dixie*). We've learned that sometimes newspaper editors use really bad language (*All the President's Men*) and that we wish certain mythological creatures were real (*The Water Horse*).

Having a designated movie night makes watching a DVD a family event.

We've also learned how to compromise. Because our ages vary, it can be a challenge to find a film we'll all enjoy, but we've often been pleasantly surprised by a choice we weren't unanimously enthusiastic about. And as the youngest one gets older, we're looking forward to watching more "serious" films together.

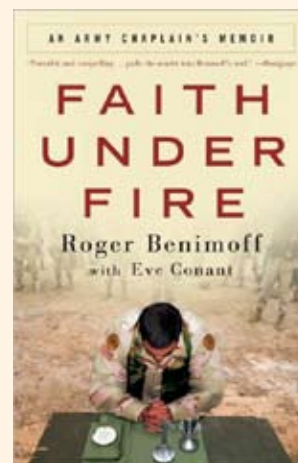
For help in identifying age-appropriateness, we've found the parent advisories at *imdb.com* to be objective and free from hysteria, if not offered from a Christian perspective. Even more helpful is seeking advice from friends whose judgment we trust.

Occasionally we hold Family Movie Night at our favorite theater if there's a new release we've been waiting for or a film we want to see on the big screen (Disney's *Earth*). But when we watch in our own living room, we're free to pause the film and ask questions, rewind to point out something important, or take bathroom breaks without missing a key plot twist. Plus the homemade pizza and huge hand-scooped ice cream cones are fantastic and cheap.

Having a designated movie night makes watching a DVD a family event rather than just a pastime. In a world drowning in inane ways to pass the time, that's a gift. ■



Sandy Swartzentruber works for Faith Alive and is a member of Church of the Servant CRC in Grand Rapids, Mich.

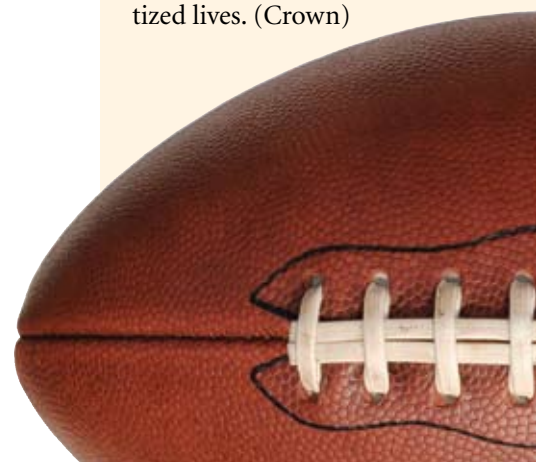


Faith Under Fire: An Army Chaplain's Memoir

by Roger Benimoff with Eve Conant

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

After two deployments to Iraq, army chaplain Roger Benimoff found that "war zones have a way of traveling home with you." Back in the U.S., he counseled soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder until he was diagnosed with the same condition. While struggling to retain his faith in God, Benimoff became depressed as he recalled "the terrible machinery of death" that is war. Based on journals that he and his wife kept, *Faith Under Fire* eloquently relates how God's grace sustained their traumatized lives. (Crown)





The Day Metallica Came to Church

by **John Van Sloten**
reviewed by **Robert Keeley**

In *The Day Metallica Came to Church*, John Van Sloten shares the story of what he has learned by paying attention to God's Word and to the culture around us. Over the past few years as pastor of New Hope Church in Calgary, Alberta, Van Sloten has preached sermons inspired by rock music, films, and even topics like architecture and the Stanley Cup finals. He took John Calvin seriously when Calvin wrote that wherever we cast our gaze we can see signs of God's glory. So Van Sloten started paying attention, seeing in the lyrics of the heavy metal band Metallica, for example, an anger at injustice that matches that of the prophet Jeremiah. He sees that films like *The Dark Knight* allow us to catch a glimpse of God's grace even in dark circumstances. This book is interesting and engaging, inviting us to see God's hand in the world around us, not just in nature, but also in places we may never think of looking. (Square Inch—an imprint of Faith Alive)

Beyond the Ultimate

reviewed by **Ron VandenBurg**

Started by NFL coaches Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith as a way to share their faith, this website presents testimonies of athletes from the NFL, NBA, MLB, NASCAR, and the Olympics. Read the stories of many "ultimate athletes," including quarterback Kurt Warner, Olympic speed skater Cindy Klassen, NASCAR driver Darrell Waltrip, and basketball player Amar'e Stoudemire.

Ministry links include Motor

Racing Outreach and Athletes in Action. In addition, viewers are encouraged to read *Beyond the Ultimate's* essays to learn about God, Jesus, and our world.

Pages are available in multiple languages covering many sports. (beyondtheultimate.org)



Heart of My Own

by **Basia Bulat**
reviewed by **Elizabeth Gonzalez**

With sweeping songs reflective of the Northwest, Bulat's Yukon-inspired album, *Heart of My Own*, leaves behind the artist's earlier, tamer territory. Teeming with passion in songs like "Gold Rush," the album is inspired by the music of travelers and the deserts of Nevada. The title track is raw, toughened, and road-wearied. Accompanied by common instruments, the fiddle and autoharp are elevated, for "the wind has changed [her] voice." Bulat sings of wandering through terrain that is equally unforgiving and majestic. Restless but hopeful, she crafts a solid second album. (Rough Trade)

Alchemy and Meggy Swann

by **Karen Cushman**
reviewed by **Sonya VanderVeen Feddema**

Young Meggy Swann is raised to believe that her crooked legs are a result of God's judgment on her. Rejected by her mother and sent to live with her alchemist father, Meggy discovers that he attempts to change and purify matter. She wishes that he could use his skill to both "transform himself into a better father" and heal her legs. Though alchemy cannot transform Meggy, the love of new friends does. In this moving juvenile novel, Karen Cushman brings Elizabethan England to life. Ages 10-14. (Clarion)



THE LOWDOWN



Wonder-ful: Michael W. Smith changes direction from his recent string of worship albums to deliver a new pop collection, *Wonder*, due in stores at the end of the month. (Reunion)



Reel Stories: *Never Let Me Go*, the novel by Kazuo Ishiguro (*The Remains of the Day*), makes its big-screen debut this month. Three young people face their futures after boarding-school childhoods that have been preparing them for a more sinister purpose. (Fox Searchlight)



This Is the Life: Looking for some understanding and a good laugh, Mom and Dad? Go to YouTube and check out the videos "Dad Life" and "Mommy Rhapsody," both put out by Church on the Move, a Tulsa, Okla., megachurch that clearly celebrates parents with flair.

Check thebanner.org for links to find out more about these titles.



A Church Ministry Funeral

IF YOUR CHURCH has been around for a while, you're probably familiar with the struggle to keep a particular ministry alive. Perhaps budget realities are forcing your church to re-examine its priorities, or a source of funding support has dried up. Or perhaps it is simply a matter of old age. The ministry's vibrancy is gone; the need that it filled no longer captures the enthusiasm or imagination of its workers or supporters. Perhaps it becomes almost impossible to recruit new staff—whether paid or volunteer.

Changing demographics, a new legal situation, or a shift in culture can also contribute to a particular ministry's failure to thrive. It can become obvious that the need or opportunity that a certain ministry addressed is no longer present.

So how do you know when it's time to say goodbye? When is it right to acknowledge that a certain ministry or program is nearing the end of its life?

Taking Temperatures

Dropping a ministry abruptly can cause pain, ill will, and confusion in a congregation and in the people the ministry serves. To avoid that, an annual or biennial ministry/program evaluation can be helpful. When such an evaluation is part of your congregation's pattern, people come to expect that there will be change periodically.

In this evaluation, the primary question should not be "How can we continue this ministry?" but "*Why* should we continue this ministry?" This honest query will help you take the temperature of every ministry so you can terminate dying ministries in a more timely fashion, rather than keeping them unduly on life support.



The primary question should not be “How can we continue this ministry?” but “Why should we continue this ministry?”

Given our penchant for resisting change we do not need much excuse to forgo an honest examination of our ministries. But other than such essential ministries of the church as worship, preaching, pastoral care, and education, most other ministries should be assessed as to their effectiveness and the need for them to continue. (This also applies to denominational ministries and programs.)

It is not easy to be honest when the cost of honesty may be the end of a ministry—especially of “your” ministry, a ministry in which you’ve invested so much of yourself—your money, time, energy, prayers, emotions, and love. Terminating such a ministry undertaken to serve God may seem all wrong. It may feel like a betrayal.

For this very reason it is important not to equate any one particular form of ministry undertaken by you or your church with *the* ministry given by our Lord to the church. The Great Commission is not synonymous with the great variety of particular ministries or programs that a church might undertake. Realizing that leaves a church free to use its Spirit-led wisdom to end existing ministries or establish new ministries without guilt.

Embracing Change

That said, what are the sacred ministry cows in your church? What are the programs almost no one dares to change or criticize—the programs no one dares challenge for fear of being rebuked, scorned, or dismissed as “O you of little faith” or “O you of little vision.”

Are there programs and ministries in your church where the investment of people and money are more than the benefits warrant? Even though those ministries are noble and right and helpful, are they exhibiting good stewardship?

Ministries (like ministers) can become dated, tired, short on energy, and breathless. We do well to ask of every church ministry whether its “way” and its “what”—its form and its content—are still necessary, meaningful, and productive.

We are made to thrive best when, every now and then, we get involved in something that is new—or at least new to us. Sometimes all the indicators point to the need for fresh blood, fresh ideas, a fresh vision, and a fresh approach to a particular ministry opportunity.

We need to be open to changing, adding to, deleting from, or dropping the ministry. Is this ministry still doing what it was originally meant to do? It is possible to work hard to invent new ways of being busy in a given ministry in order to justify its continued existence.

Parting Ways

More often than not, there are two parties involved in the operation of a particular ministry or program. One party is the founding and/or funding body of a ministry. This could be a denomination, a denominational agency, a classis, or a local church. The other party consists of those doing the ministry: staff, volunteers, and a core of loyal supporters.

The former may decide, for good reasons, to stop their active “ownership” role and perhaps their funding of a certain program or ministry. They may feel the need to re-allocate funds or pursue new ministry initiatives. This does not necessarily spell the end of that ministry. In most cases those doing the ministry are free to pursue other means of support and continue the ministry.

Grace and graciousness should allow sufficient room for the two parties to go

their separate ways amicably when necessary. No feelings of guilt or recrimination should be given or taken.

A Fitting Funeral

If you determine that a ministry is at the end of its life, it seems wise to mark that end with a “funeral.” Funerals allow us not only to grieve a loss but also to celebrate a life.

While a pain-free funeral may be an oxymoron, not every funeral is tragic or equally painful. In the case of a ministry that did not die prematurely, it’s particularly helpful for all who were deeply invested in it to mark its end in an appropriate service. Just as significant new ministries are launched with prayer and celebration, so ministries that have run their course should be concluded with the same.

Announce a ministry “funeral” service well in advance of the event itself. Invite all who desire and are able to attend. The service might include a brief historical overview, testimonies about how the ministry has been a blessing, and prayer giving thanks to God for the ministry and the people who made it happen. But also include prayer for those who grieve the loss of this ministry and for the opening of new doors of opportunity in which they may employ their gifts.

Specific ministries come and go. The church should feel free to let a ministry go when led to do so in response to an honest evaluation and the nudging of the Spirit. ■ **WEB Q'S**



Rev. Gordon Pols is a retired minister in the Christian Reformed Church who is currently working part time at West End Christian

Reformed Church in Edmonton, Alberta.

A Day in the Life of a Child with

AUTISM

ONE CHILD IN 91 FALLS SOMEWHERE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM. BUT MANY CHURCHES DON'T KNOW HOW TO MINISTER TO KIDS WITH AUTISM AND THEIR FAMILIES.

WHEN I STARTED teaching special education in 1984, one child in 10,000 was diagnosed with autism. A study released in 2009 indicates that one child in 91 falls somewhere on the autism spectrum. From one in 10,000 to one in 91 within 25 years—churches, we need to get ready! But the reality is that many churches don't know how to minister to children and families touched by autism.

"Attend church?" said the mother of a child with autism living in Ontario. "Hah! We tried four of them before we finally gave up. Every one of them sent us away."

"We tried taking our granddaughter to church with us," said the grandpa of a child with autism living in Missouri. "They told us the church down the road might have something for us."

These true and typical stories from worship-deprived families need to change. The following is a real-life example of the everyday life of one family touched by autism, along with suggestions for how a church could embrace and include them.

Morning

7:50 a.m. Jenna, age 8, climbs out of bed. She always gets up exactly at 7:50 a.m. Her parents know it's much easier to change Jenna's bedroom clock than it is to change Jenna's schedule.

7:51 a.m. Jenna sits down at the computer. Typing with lightning speed with the index finger of each hand, she easily moves in and out of programs. She writes stories and draws figures of her first-grade classmates at Zeeland (Mich.) Christian School.

8:00 a.m. Jenna's mom greets her warmly. Jenna gives her mom a shy smile, glances at her briefly, and recites a line from one

of her favorite books. Jenna shows love by making her mother into one of the book's characters. Mom then gives Jenna her morning GI medication and prepares her food. Jenna has a feeding tube due to some intense digestion pain she had as a young child. Because she learned that eating food meant pain, she stopped eating. It's been a slow process to get Jenna to trust foods that go in her mouth.

Churches should appoint a coordinator to meet with the families of children with autism. He or she should listen to the families' stories and get to know their children. Together they can make the necessary plans for children with autism to be part of the church in the way that's comfortable for them.

8:30 a.m. The family sits down at the breakfast table. It's Sunday so dad is also there. While Jenna won't put much food in her mouth, her mom and dad know it's

Before her companion dog, Ella, came to church, Jenna found it hard to be part of the worship service.

important that Jenna be part of family activities and that they model eating food by mouth. They talk together. Jenna finds it easier to answer a direct question in writing, but they also encourage her to give spontaneous verbal responses. This continues to be very difficult for Jenna.

9:00 a.m. They all get ready for church. Mom remembers Jenna's screaming fits in younger years. Her body is so sensitive to stimulation that even a hairbrush against her scalp or a toothbrush in her mouth was painful to Jenna. She has finally learned to complete this routine in a more comfortable way as her body has adapted. Her parents know, however, that if they change the order of things, the pain may return.

9:30 a.m. Mom remembers to put a nail clipper in her purse. Jenna sees a dentist tomorrow, which requires her to be sedated. This provides a chance for Mom to cut Jenna's nails. Jenna still cannot handle the pain of that process.

9:45 a.m. Mom, Dad, Jenna, and Ella go to the car. Ella is a specially trained companion dog. Before Ella came to church, Jenna found it hard to be part of the worship service. Now Ella curls up by Jenna's feet in church and Jenna relaxes.

Churches need an individual plan for including each child with a disability. Helpful resources include *Autism and Your Church* (www.FaithAliveResources.org), as well as *Autism and Your Church Training DVD*, *Church Welcome Story*, and *The G.L.U.E. Training Manual* (see resource box).

9:55 a.m. The family arrives at church and sits in their usual seats. No phone calls came this week, so they are hoping that Jenna will sit through the entire service, following along with the Power-Point and Scripture passages. The church usually remembers to alert the family if children will be singing in the service. Jenna's ears can tolerate adult singing, but hearing children's voices singing, reciting, or chanting together causes her

great anxiety and panic, so she'll want to leave the room.

Churches are filled with sensations that are uncomfortable or even painful for some children with autism. Sounds can be too loud; people can be too close. The book *Autism and Your Church* discusses sensory integration.

11:30 a.m. Most of the other children go to Sunday school. Jenna does not. Her mom tried it unsuccessfully a few months ago. Unfortunately Jenna doesn't know the children her age at the church, and they don't know her. Everyone loses out.

Many churches need resources to help peers and volunteers understand more about friends with autism. This is a key to successful inclusion (see resource box).

Afternoon

12:00 p.m. The family heads to Grandpa and Grandma's house for Sunday dinner. Just like most children, Jenna loves this time with them.

2:00 p.m. Time to go home. Being with all those people can be stressful for Jenna. Academics are easy for her, but social settings can be very confusing. It's time to be alone for a while with her books and computer. These items are comforting to her because they're predictable.

4:00 p.m. Jenna goes for a bike ride with Dad. Mom has some time to reflect. Before Jenna was diagnosed with autism, their social circle was large and they often enjoyed time out with friends. That social circle is now very, very limited. People simply don't call anymore, and a suitable babysitter is hard to find. Mom grieves that, but she is thankful for their family of three and a supportive extended family.

Jenna has both Mom and Dad in her life, but divorce rates are high for parents of autistic children. Churches, however, have the chance to support families in very practical ways. Consider a support structure called a G.L.U.E.

Team—a tool found in *The G.L.U.E. Training Manual*.

Evening

6:00 p.m. At suppertime the family gathers again at the table. They talk about the day to come at Zeeland Christian. Jenna recites the names of her friends and assigns them favorite characters in one of her books.

For more information on including children with autism in Christian Schools, see www.clcnetwork.org.

7:00 p.m. Books and story writing. There's even time for a board game.

10:00 p.m. Bedtime routine. Jenna picks five books; then the ritual begins. Brush teeth, read a book. Put on jammies, read a book. Write in her journal the "big girl" things she did today, read a book. Jenna will sleep some, then she will get up tomorrow morning at exactly 7:50 a.m. ■

Resources

Find out more about Autism Spectrum Disorders at www.autism-society.org and www.thegraycenter.org.

Order *Autism and Your Church* and *Helping Kids Include Kids with Disabilities* at www.FaithAliveResources.org or 1-800-333-8300.

Contact the CLC Network (www.clcnetwork.org) for church consulting, congregational and seminary training, and publications and resources in the area of including persons with disabilities, including *Autism and Your Church Training DVD*, *Church Welcome Story*, *The G.L.U.E. Training Manual*, and more.



Barbara J. Newman is a church and school consultant through CLC Network. She is a national speaker and author of several books, including *Autism and Your Church*.

What's All the Fuss About?

HAVE YOU EVER walked into the middle of a heated conversation near its conclusion? Not knowing that the dialogue has been escalating over a number of hours, perhaps even years, all you hear are the dogmatic assertions, lines drawn in the sand, and acidic verbal sparring. Very likely you would think, “What’s all this fuss about?” Similarly, reading the Canons of Dort can feel like walking into the middle of a deeply contested church debate escalating to its conclusion, which might tempt us to grouse, “What’s all this fuss about?”

With the exception of Richard Mouw’s *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport*, almost everything written about the Canons of Dort from a historically Reformed perspective is either dust-covered or written in Dutch—often both. So what are the Canons of Dort and why are they worth dusting off?

From 1618-1619, the “Great Synod” met in Dordrecht, the Netherlands. In the previous 60 years, the Reformation had gathered momentum through the Netherlands, Switzerland, and portions of modern-day France and Germany. As persecution relented, room for academic nuance and fine distinction

the first move toward us. (3) Because we cannot choose God on our own, Jesus Christ’s payment for sin on the cross cannot be conditional upon our acceptance, but neither does Christ universally accept the whole world without their turning to him. Logically, then, Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is for all those whom God has chosen. (4) Again, the grace of God’s movement toward us cannot be thwarted, as though our will to avoid God’s embrace is greater than God’s will to love us. (5) Since salvation does not come by our own power, neither can it be lost by our own power or lack thereof.

Here, then, is a teaching that, by its practical, pastoral, and Christ-centered nature, ought to be dust-proof:

- When we are saved by grace, we are kept by grace, even when we are tempted and even if we struggle against sin all the days of our lives.
- Since salvation is by grace, it is available to us well before we are able to cognitively, emotionally, or volitionally respond to it. Imagine this unspeakable comfort to parents who have lost young children.

Reading **the Canons of Dort** can feel like walking into a deeply contested church debate escalating to its conclusion.

expanded. Jacob Arminius, a doctor of theology at the University of Leiden, proposed (in opposition to the Reformation standard, the Belgic Confession) the following: (1) God chooses us for salvation after discerning that we will choose God. (2) Jesus Christ’s death on the cross covers the sin of the whole world, *conditional upon* our acceptance of it. (3) Even though the Holy Spirit prompts us to faith, we ultimately have the power to refuse God’s grace—even, possibly, after accepting it.

The Synod of Dort haggled and wrangled—as all “Great Synods” must—until they produced the Canons of Dort, a five-point refutation of Arminius’s teaching.

Often the debate between Arminius and the Canons of Dort is framed this way: Is salvation by grace or by faith? The answer is, of course, “yes.” Both Arminians and Canons-of-Dort-ians would say that grace and faith are present in salvation. Perhaps, then, we ought to define the distinction this way: Which comes first, the grace of God or the faith of humans?

The Canons of Dort relentlessly argue that God’s grace is always the primary agent of human salvation. The refutation of Arminius’s claims goes something like this: (1) We are incapable of moving toward God; (2) therefore God has to make

- Even though it appears that someone we love has walked away from the faith they once possessed, we trust in a God who is self-constrained to never walk away from us.
- Because God’s work is well beyond the level of our competence, we may be both rightly wary of the kind of tactical maneuvering that often serves the ego of the preacher (“Look how many people came forward to accept Christ at MY church”) and simultaneously free to share the gospel, trusting God to work out the results.

We hold to confessions that stand up for salvation by grace through faith and which provide an unshakable trust in the God who created, sustains, and loves the world. In the context of the many true confessions before it, the Canons of Dort best serve as the closing argument in a case built throughout history. ■ **WEB Q’S**



Rev. Meg Jenista is minister of community life and witness for Third Christian Reformed Church in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Advertising Information

Deadlines: Oct. issue is 9/6/10; Nov. issue is 10/4/10. Visit www.thebanner.org for complete details.

Prices: Most ads are \$0.33^{US} per character (min. 150 characters including punctuation and spaces). A discounted rate of \$0.26^{US} per character applies to Anniversaries, Birthdays, Obituaries, Denominational and Classical Announcements, and Congregational Announcements. Photos are \$22^{US} extra.

To Advertise: Place your classified ad online at www.TheBanner.org/classifieds. If you are unable to submit your ad online you may continue to email it to classifieds@TheBanner.org or fax it to 616-224-0834. If you have questions, call 616-224-0725.

Publication of advertisements implies neither endorsement nor approval by *The Banner*, Faith Alive Christian Resources, or the Christian Reformed Church. We reserve the right to refuse or edit any ad for appropriateness.

Denominational and Classical Announcements

Announcement of Candidacy

We are pleased to announce that **Matthew J. Eenigenburg** has now completed his academic requirements and is eligible for call as a candidate for the ministry of the Word.

We are pleased to announce that **Ben E. deRegt** has now completed his academic requirements and is eligible for call as a candidate for the ministry of the Word.

We are pleased to announce that **Elizabeth A. Guilliame-Koene** has now completed her academic requirements and is eligible for call as a candidate for the ministry of the Word.

Rev. Gerard L. Dykstra, executive director

Available for Call

REV. KEVIN VRYHOF is available for call. By August 15, 2010 he will have completed a Clinical Pastoral Education Residency at Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Des Moines, Iowa. He can be reached by email (kjvryhof@yahoo.com) or by phone ((515) 661-2077).

Financial Aid

CLASSIS ILLIANA'S STUDENT FUND is currently accepting applications for financial assistance for the 2010-2011 school year from Illiana students. If you will be a seminary student or college student at least a Junior level with a final goal of full-time ordained ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, we encourage you to request an application from Rev. John Kostelyk at hammondcr@sbccglobal.net

Meetings of Classis

CLASSIS MTG. LOCATION CHANGE Due to local circumstances, Classis Columbia has changed it's Sept. 18 meeting location to the Zillah CRC in Zilla, WA.

Congregational Announcements

Church's 100th Anniversary

HOLLAND CENTER CRC of Lodgepole, SD will be celebrating their 100th anniversary on October 16-17, 2010. All present and past pastors along with their families, past and present parishioners, and friends are invited to a weekend of fellowship and remembrance as we celebrate 100 Years of Glory to God. For more information, call Mary Vliem at 605-564-2173 (Day) or 605-564-4605 (Evening).

Announcements

50th Anniversary

BRADENTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (FL) will be celebrating God's gifts of endurance, encouragement and hope as it looks back on 50 years of Christian education in the Bradenton area. Many events are being planned throughout the 2010-2011 academic year, but two special events will highlight the celebration. On September 7, 2010, a birthday bash will kickoff the year's festivities. On April 15-16, 2011, BCS will host an anniversary weekend concluding with a family-friendly Saturday night program. All are invited to attend these "donation only"

events. For more details visit our website BCSpanthers.org or email BCS50th@bcspanthers.org.

Birthdays

100th Birthday



ULBE SANDTRA - Edmonton, AB - The Sandtra and DeJong children, grand children, great- grand children, and great-great-grand children would like to wish DAD, PAKE, OPA, A Very Happy 100th Birthday, on September 24, 2010. We would like to thank him for his great

Christian example to each and every one of us.

ANN (BOERTIEN) SCHEMPER of 105 Vera Avenue, Ripon, CA 95366 will celebrate her 100th birthday on September 30, 2010. Her husband Leonard Schemper, her children Harold and Judy Groetsema, Bob and Karen Schemper, Ward and Yvonne Schemper, Mike and Annette Weintz and her eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren all rejoice that she has reached this age in good mind with a strong faith and a thankful spirit. Deut. 16:15b KJV

95th Birthday

BUIKEMA Alice (Hoekstra), 9616 Mozart, Evergreen Park, IL 60805, will celebrate her 95th birthday Sept. 2. Daughter: Karen. Thank you God for love, faith, and good health.

MARIAN MULDER (Monsma), 2105 Raybrook S. E. # 326 Grand Rapids, MI 49546 will celebrate her 95th birthday September 6, 2010. Her children and their families thank God for His faithfulness to her, and her Christian example to them. Congratulations and love Mom

(Grandma)! Lowell and Connie, Ellen and Ken, Julie and Ed, Bruce, Bob and Marcia, David.



CORNELIA (KAY) VANDER SLIK formerly of Kalamazoo, MI, now living at 2508 Covenant Dr, Ft. Pierce, FL 34981 will celebrate with her husband Julius and family, Jack and Bonnie, Judy and Bruce Thompson, Jim and Marge, grandchildren and great grandchildren on Sep 20. Mom, we thank God for your Christian example.

90th Birthday

KATHRYN (BOETSMA) GRUPPEN of 247 Interlaken Ct., Zeeland, MI 49464, will celebrate her 90th birthday DV Sept. 7. Her family is thankful for God's faithfulness and many blessings.

MILDRED SCHEMPER will celebrate her 90th birthday on October 2. We thank God for his faithfulness in mom's life. Children: Gail (Lois) schra, Gaylyn (Steve) Proctor, Ken (Barb) Schemper, Rich (Barb) Schemper, Norene (Doug) Van Andel, Karen (Randy) Stephens, 17 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. Her address is: 2479 S. Clermont, #106, Denver, CO 80222.

Anniversaries

65th Anniversary

ROZENBOOM Gerald & Clarissa (Stek) Oskaloosa, Ia. August 14. Children: Allan (deceased), Calvin & Connie, Norm & Lois, Ken & Becky, Carroll & Kathy Hoksbergen, Dave & Tammy. Congratulation Dad and Mom from your children and grandchildren. Your example of faithfulness is a blessing to us all!

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TIMMER, Jay & Marie, 725 Baldwin D13, Jenison, MI 49428, will celebrate 65 years on Sept. 27, 2010. Children: Ken & Phyllis Timmer and Don & Mary Dyksterhouse, 6 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren. Congratulations with love from your family.

60th Anniversary



GELEYNSE Rev. Martin & Ada look forward to celebrating the 60th anniversaries of their wedding on Aug. 31st and of Martin's ordination into the ministry on Sept. 10th, the Lord willing. Please join them at an Open House Sat., Sept. 4 from 1 – 4:30 pm, Stratford CRC, 190 Athlone Cresc. Best

wishes only please. Mailing address: #13 – 300 John St. S., Stratford, ON N5A 7V5. "The Lord has richly blessed us and we praise His holy name!"

HOEKMAN Steven and Jeanne (Tebben), 601 Vera Ave., Ripon, CA 95366, together with their 6 children and spouses, 20 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren, celebrate 60 years of happy marriage on September 1, 2010. Thanks be to God!

HUITSING Jay and Betty (Brands), August 5, 14267 N Buckingham Dr., Oro Valley, AZ 85755. The event was celebrated with family in Prescott, AZ in June. Rejoicing with them and giving thanks for their example are their children: Jay Huitsing, Jayne and Terry Kok, Jim and Paula Huitsing, 7 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

KINGMA, Willard and Mary (Bennett), 2190 Teal Ct. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546, with thanksgiving and praise to God will celebrate 60 years of marriage on Sept. 15, 2010. An open house will be held on Sat., Sept. 18 from 3–6pm at Quail Crest Condominiums Club House, Burton & Spaulding SE. Children: Bob & Kae Kingma, Ken & Mary Kingma, Todd & Betsy Kingma; 10 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren.

MEMMELAAR Bernard & Marion, 2696 Meadow Lake Drive, Toms River, NJ 08755 celebrated their 60th anniversary on Aug 18. Congratulations and love from your children, Bernie (Pam), Ed (Anna), Donna (Phil), Robin (Gary), Todd (Dale) your 17 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

TIMMERMANS Conrad (Bill) & Genevieve Lois, Grandville, MI. will observe 60 years of marriage on September 29. Children: Susan and Daryl Vogel (Stephanie); Steven and Barbara Timmermans (Katherine, Paul, Rebecca, Jessica). We love you and thank God for you.

50th Anniversary

BLIEK With thankfulness to God, Alan & Donna (Joling) Blik of Wisconsin Rapids, WI celebrated their 50th anniversary on August 19, 2010. Their children Steve (Grace) Blik, Tim (Lynn) Blik, Tom (Karri) Blik, Debbie (Tim) Van't Hul, Rick & Joanne Anderson, Mark & Georgia Alvarez and their 12 grandchildren praise God for their Christian example and faithfulness to each other.

COLE Stan & Barbara (Geels), 12202 Meadow Green Rd., Whittier, CA 90604, celebrated 50 yrs. on Aug. 31. With love from: Debbie & Mike Fitzgerald (Candice & Derek Williams, Paige), Carmen & Bill Bandstra (Maxine, Sophie, Geneva, Jude), Melanie & Curtis Grigg (Isabel, Cecily).

KLEINHEKSEL Ken & Mickie (VanLaar) celebrate 50 years of marriage on September 8th, 2010. God has richly blessed them with 3 children, Jim and Carol Boverhof, John and Pam Kleinheksel, David and Sarah Kleinheksel, and 9 grandchildren. Please join us for a celebration open house on September 11th from 2–4pm at Cascade Fellowship CRC. We give all glory to God for his continued faithfulness!

MINNEMA Dr. Theodore and Tena (Vermeulen) of 4461 – 36th Street, Kentwood, MI 49512 realized 50 years of marriage on September, 13th. A celebration took place on August 21st. Their children are Tom and Sondra (Dave, Ben and Anna), Hank and Cindy (Crystal, Shelby and Dalton), Ted and Courtney (Greta), and Rick and Vivian (Breighanna, Payton, Anneke, Delanie, and Tobias). Praise God for His faithfulness.

NORMAN Sidney and Janet (Talsma) Norman celebrated 50 years of marriage on Aug 12 with their children Rob & Sheri Hielkema, Victor & Susan Norman, Chris & Sherry Norman and grandchildren Jon, Joel, Alison, Christine, Erica, Kelsey, James & Amanda.

POTT, George & Elsie/Slendebroek celebrate 50 years on Sept. 23. They celebrated with an open house and a family trip up north. Children: Jim & Robin, Bill & Anita, James & Denise, Greg & Vikki, Rick & Anne. 16 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren

TUBERGEN Roger & Marcia (Zwyghuizen) 4900 E Avondale Cir, Sioux Falls, SD 57110 Celebrate 50 years of marriage on Sept. 1. Children: Roger & Sharla, Rodney & Glenda, Jim & Luanne Wuestewald, Norma Dalen. 12 Grandchildren, 3 Great-Grandchildren. We praise God for His faithfulness from generation to generation.

40th Anniversary

ESSENBURG Rev. Gerald & Janice (Borgman) of 10046 W. Lake Street Loop, Brimley, MI 49715 will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary on September 25. Children: Bob & Laura Postma, Mike & Linda Hoolsema, Mary Essenburg, 4 grandchildren.

Obituaries

BAREMAN, Esther H., age 90, of Holland, died Wednesday, June 23, 2010, at Hospice House of Holland. She was a lifelong member of Central Avenue CRC, Mid Week Fellowship, and the Archives Committee of Central Avenue. Esther was involved with Crossroads Bible Institute and International Aid. She retired from DeLong and Brower Company following 30 years of employment. She is survived by her sister, Carolyn Bareman of Holland, and several cousins.

BRONDSEMA OPPERWALL Helen; age 85, June 27, 2010; Grand Rapids, MI. She was preceded in death by her husband Rev. Raymond Opperwall, sister Grace Wevers, brother John Brondsema, and son-in-law Barry O'Shea. She is survived by her children: Nola (Vincent) Galluch, Kathleen, Theodore, Stephen, Arthur (Barbara), Jonathan (Kristin), and Laurel (Daniel) Medenblik; 12 grandchildren; her sister Ruth (Peter) Van Meurs; and several brothers- and sisters-in-law.

DE BOER William, 90, Sibley, IA, passed away on 7/22/10. Bill was a member of the Christian Reformed Church in Sibley, where he served in the consistory. He served on many boards, including Sibley Christian Grade School, Hull Western Christian High School and assisted in planning and organizing Dordt College. Those left to cherish his memories are his wife of 73 years: Nelva De Boer of Sibley, IA; two sons: Jan (Connie) De Boer of Sibley, IA, Willis (Linda) De Boer of Spirit Lake, IA; one daughter: Glenda (Larry) Reinke of Spirit Lake, IA;

Church Positions Available

ANN ARBOR CRC The Ann Arbor CRC (Michigan) has an exciting ministry opportunity for a full-time pastor. We are looking for a qualified person to join our pastoral team which ministers to the whole congregation. We are looking for a pastor to take on primary responsibility for the needs of family and youth. He/she will partner with our Pastor of Worship Ministries including shared worship leading and some preaching. The job description comes with built-in flexibility to shape the position, based on the selected candidate's gifts and interests. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.aacr.org/about/pastor-position>, e-mail AACRCPastorSearch@aacrc.org, or call Ross at 734-945-0683.

WILLARD CRC located in the quaint village of Celeryville just south of Willard OH is actively seeking a full-time pastor. We are a congregation of about 70 families who are involved with active church life and Christian education. We are looking for a caring leader who will lead us in Bible-based preaching, nurture our multigenerational members and encourage and enable our congregation to continue in spiritual and congregational growth. We are a rural community in the heart of agricultural Ohio. We are not far from Lake Erie and are on the edge of an industrial community. For more information and to obtain our church profile, please send inquiries to Willard Christian Reformed Church, attn: Allison Wiers, Secretary of the Search Committee, 4163 Broadway Rd, Willard, Oh 44890

MINISTER OF ADMINISTRATION Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, invites applications for a new half-time position of Minister of Administration. This person will, in concert with the Senior Pastor and the other ministerial staff, help to coordinate creatively the various ministries of the church and will supervise the church's overall administration. This position assumes strong managerial skills and, while not requiring ordination, requires the biblical, theological, and spiritual sensitivity necessary to grasp and implement the vision and initiatives of the church. For further information, including a full job description, contact Stephen Monsma at svmonsma@sbcglobal.net or consult the church's website (<http://www.churchoftheservantcrrc.org>). Letters of application and resumes should be sent to Monsma by 9/17 at his email address or 2605 Golfridge Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546

SENIOR PASTOR, WHEATON, IL CRC After 22 years of faithful service, our pastor John Schuurman will be retiring in April 2011. We are seeking a dynamic and experienced pastor with strong preaching skills to lead this energetic and active church of 300 members. Located in Chicago's far west suburbs next to Wheaton College, WCRC is committed to sound Biblical teaching, spiritual growth of its members, community outreach and missions. If interested, please contact us at searchcommittee@wheatoncrrc.org.

CAMPUS MINISTRY DIRECTOR Areopagus, a campus ministry in Ames, IA, is seeking a leader to work with Trinity CRC in reaching out to students at Iowa State University. Iowa State is home to 25,000 students including many internationals and is a large part of the Ames community. Is God calling you to join us in bringing the gospel to these future leaders? Send resume and letter of interest to Rev. Tom Niehof at AmesCRC@aol.com.

PASTOR Knollbrook CRC in Corvallis, OR is looking for an ordained pastor or ministry associate with evangelistic and interpersonal skills to lead us in our services and in outreach to grow our congregation. We're praying for you. If you feel the Spirit nudging you, contact us at enikkel@peak.org

FIRST CRC of Artesia, California is seeking a Pastor with strong leadership to guide our congregation and our community. We seek a pastor that is effective at preaching the Word of God, and comfortable with pastoral care. For more information, contact Pastor Search Committee chair-person, Rich Boersma at 562-860-6079 or shyboersma@aol.com

MONTANA CHURCH SEEKS PASTOR Gallatin Gateway Community Church, 14 miles outside of Bozeman, is pursuing interested Pastors to minister to our congregation. For more information e-mail questions or your profile to us at dortmoss@gmail.com

BC CHURCH SEEKS PASTOR The Bridge Community Church (CRC) located in beautiful Langley, British Columbia, has initiated a search for a full-time pastor with strengths in challenging and relevant preaching, mentoring and leadership. Our comprehensive profile will introduce you to this interesting progressive church. Please check us out at www.bridgelangley.org/applicants

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES The CRC of Williamsburg, Ontario, is seeking a full time director to develop and co-ordinate a program for youth and young adults, ages 14-29, focusing on equipping them to be faithful disciples of Christ. For more information or to submit a resume, please e-mail: mtgkids3@gmail.com.

CORNERSTONE CRC of Chilliwack, BC is seeking a Senior Pastor to lead our staff and congregation. Contact office@cornerstonecrrc.ca (www.cornerstonecrrc.ca)

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES 3rd Ref. Church in Grand Rapids, MI is seeking a 20 hr/wk Dir. of Music Ministries. Duties include: Adult Choir, Bells, & Praise Team. Please submit resume to Tammy Schollaart - tschollaart@comcast.net

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES Bethel CRC of Sioux Center, IA is seeking a full time Director of Youth Ministries. A detailed job description is available upon request. Please forward resume/questions to: office@bethelcrrc.org Attn: Youth Elder – Arlin Franken

daughter-in-law: Esther De Boer of Sanborn, IA; 11 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; one sister-in-law: Berdella De Boer of Hills, MN. Online Expressions of Sympathy can be sent to www.andringafuneralhome.com

GRASSMID Robert Sidney; aged 87; July 23, 2010; 161 Laurelwood Ct. SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49548; He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Sue; children, Judson Grassmid, Barbara and Michael Lautenbach, Tom and Jan Grassmid, Scott Grassmid (deceased); 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Bob and his wife Sue were blessed to spend 22 years volunteering for Disaster Response Services of the Christian Reformed Church.

HARRIS George; age 78; July 3, 2010; 3125 Maple Villa Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508; He is survived by his wife, Ina; children and spouses: Clint and Carol Harris, Greg and Kathleen Harris, Dan and Karla Harris, Ted and Wilma Harris, and Kathleen and Mike Devarenne; 14 grandchildren: Christina, Marcia, Kevin, Diane, Spencer, Joseph, Phillip, Stephanie, Amanda, Brent, Kelly, Mitchell, Sophie, and Anna; and siblings and spouses: Gertrude and Bernard Van Leeuwen, Jack and Francine Harris, and John and Trudy Harris.

OZINGA, Martin Jr. age 89, June 12, 2010. Beloved husband of the late Janet, nee DeMaa. Father of Martin III (Ruth), Kenneth (Judy), and Beverly Ozinga; grandfather of 12 and great grandfather of 15; brother of the late Senator Frank (Grace), the late Anna Grace (the late Henry) Lich, the late Richard (Marilyn), and the late Norman (Hilda) Ozinga; brother-in-law of the late Richard (the late Jennie) DeBoer, and the late Gerald (Ann) Bos. Uncle of many nephews and nieces. Past President of the First National Bank of Evergreen Park and Ozinga Bros. Redi-Mix Concrete. Lifetime resident of Evergreen Park II and member of the CRC. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

PENNING James Michael, Ph. D.; July 13, 2010; 3688 Lake Dr. S. E., Kentwood, MI 49546; He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Marge; father Robert Penning; step mother Helen Penning; sister Judy (Bern) Winkle; brother Bob (Bonnie) Penning; step sisters Sheryl (Simon) Hoogendyk, Meribeth (Bruce) Jelsema, and Kathy (Greg) Klooster; sisters-in-law Jane (Harry) Thomasma, Phyllis Smith and Lorri Scholten. He was preceded in death by his mother Evelyn (Bierema) Penning; father and mother-in-law Matthew and Ann Scholten; brother-in-law Troy Smith; and nephew Jeremy Smith.

VAN BEEK Marie; aged 86; July 7, 2010; Grand Rapids, MI; She was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer G. Van Beek. She is survived by her children and grandchildren: Elizabeth and David Carlson (AnnMarie & Adam Hardin, Sarah & Alex Carlson), Paul and Crystal Van Beek (Kathryn & Joel Verhoef, Jacob & Jessica Van Beek, Stephen Van Beek), Susan and Mark Deckinga (Shabana & John Deckinga); great granddaughter: Eden Verhoef; sister: Alida Kuiper.


VANDER BAAN, Richard, 92, July 8, 2010. 1717 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46805, formerly of Whitinsville, MA. Survived by his wife of nearly 70 years, Wilma D. (Van Gorp); daughters Susan Vander Baan and Barbara Resch; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven!

The children of **John C. & Sandra M. Vander Stelt**, of Grand Rapids, MI, invite you to express congratulations on their 50th Wedding Anniversary on September 16, 2010. Email: johnvs1@comcast.net or 3742 Old Elm De SE Kentwood, MI, 49512.

VAN NOORD, Arlene (Nyenhuis) 84, of 2500 Breton Woods Dr. SE #3001, Grand Rapids, MI 49512 entered her Heavenly home on May 11, 2010. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Gerald; children Char (Dave) Troost, Cal Van Noord, Sandy (Lew) DeKryger, and Sheri (Gregg) Bolt; 11 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren; brother, Chuck (Henrietta) Nyenhuis, brothers-in-law Wes Timmer, Lewis Van Noord, sister-in-laws Evelyn Holwerda, and Gladys Doornbos.

Employment

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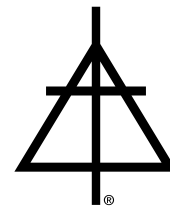
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Visit www.crcna.org/pages/opportunities.cfm for job description; to apply send cover letter and resume to hmsearch@crcna.org by **September 30, 2010**.

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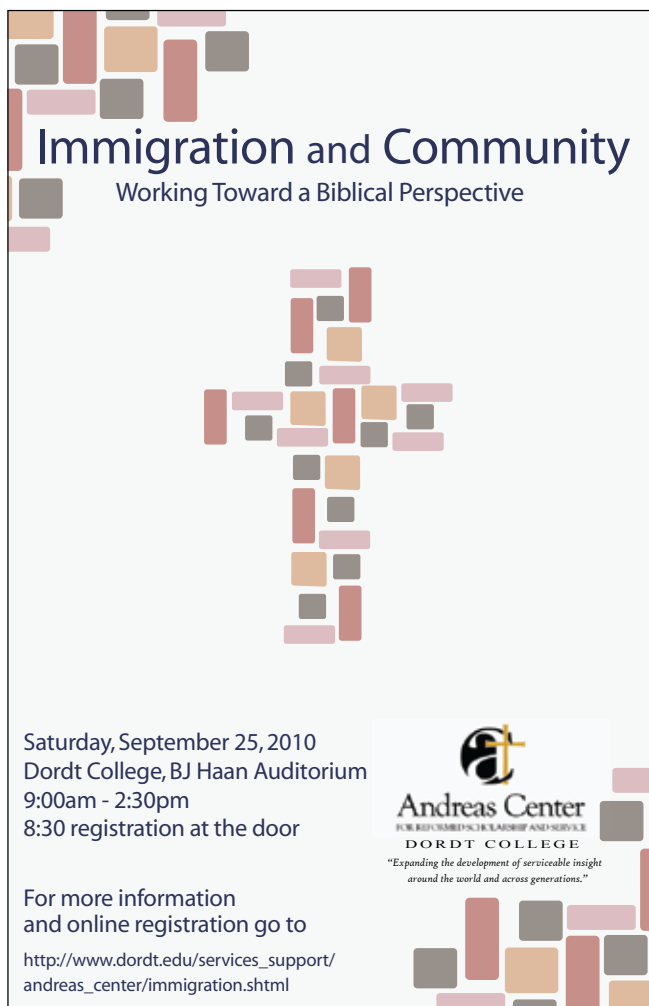
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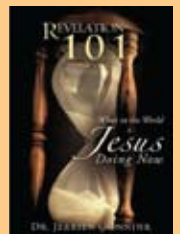
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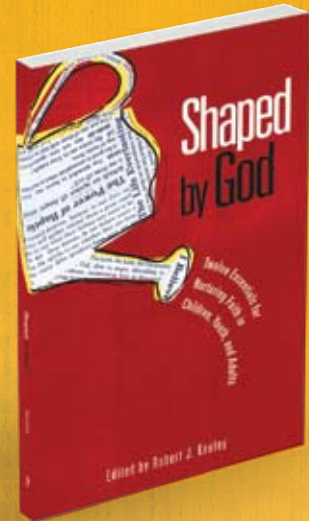


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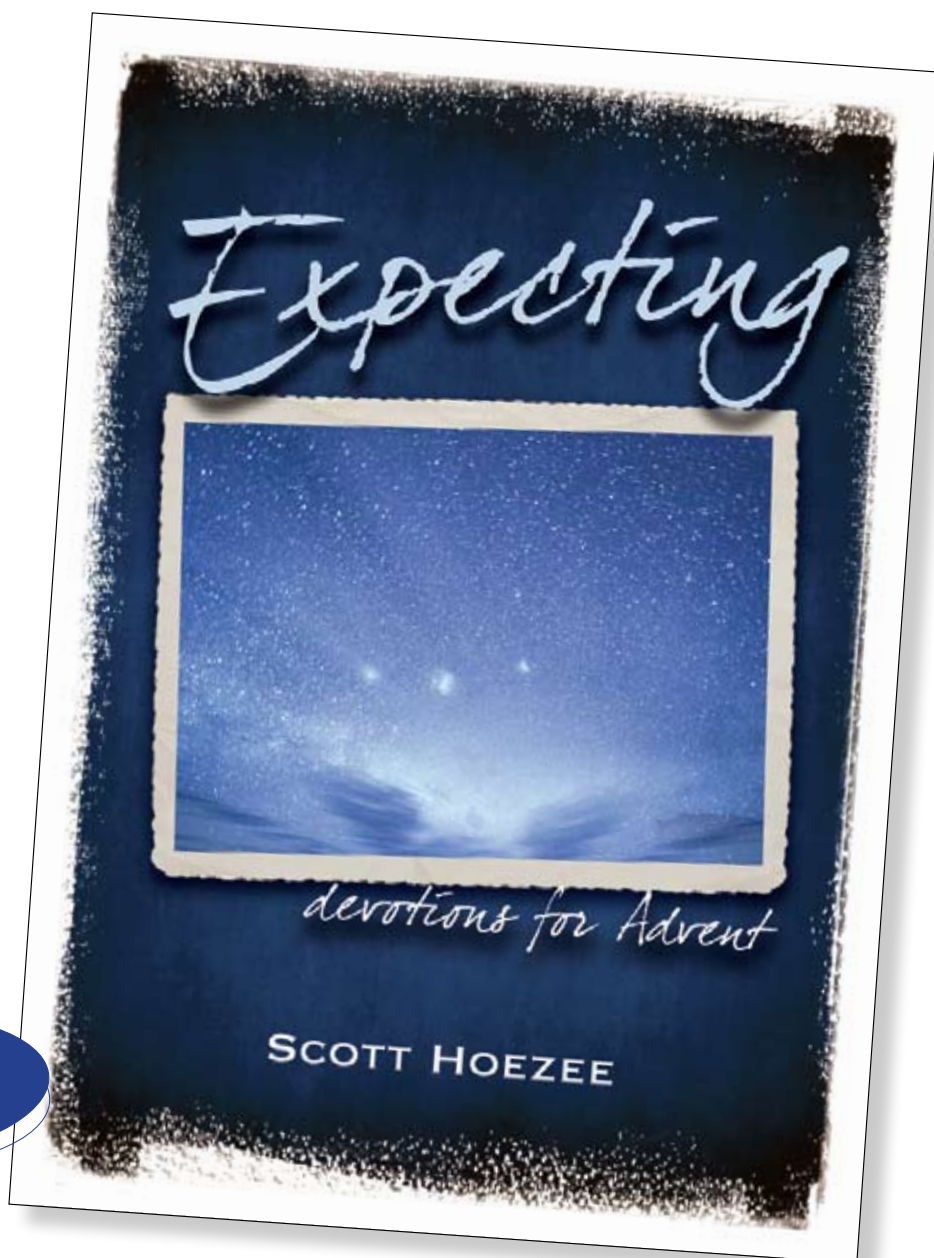
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Punch Lines

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Having witnessed a crime, a young boy was called to testify in court. He was approached by the defense attorney, who asked, "Did anyone tell you what to say in court?"

"Yes, sir," answered the boy.

"I thought so," said the lawyer.

"Who was it?"

"My father, sir."

"And what did he tell you?"

"He said that the lawyers would try to get me all tangled up, but if I told the truth, everything would be all right."

—John Veltkamp

I was invited to speak to my daughter's fourth-grade class about my job as a corrections officer at a state prison. Judging from the loud chorus of groans, my answer to a question about food probably did more than anything else to encourage the kids to stay out of trouble.

When asked what prisoners eat, I replied, "When you break the law and go to prison, you have to eat liver at least once a week."

—Connon Barclay

An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted

her at the door. "Where would you like to sit?" he asked politely.

"The front row, please," she answered.

"You probably don't want to sit there," the usher said. "The pastor is really boring."

"Do you know who I am?" the woman inquired.

"No," he said.

"I'm the pastor's mother!" she replied indignantly.

"Do you know who I am?" the usher asked.

"No," she said.

"Good," he answered.

—John Vanderwal

One of our spring worship services focused on the value of each person in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12). For the children's message, I put a Mr. Potato Head toy together with the kids, but I had hidden the nose. I pulled out a "note left by the nose" that read, "Don't bother looking for me.

I'm not important." But the kids found the nose, and the point was well made. Following the service, however, the entire Mr. Potato Head went missing. Later a toddler approached me with a cryptic note in capital letters: "DEER PASTOR, IF YOU WANT TO SEE MR. PHED AGAIN YOU WILL MENTION PICKLES IN YOUR NEXT SERMON AND DELIVER FRESH COFFEE TO THE NURSERY ATTENDANTS, OR WE WILL FEED 'HASH BROWNS' TO THE KIDS. MU-HA-HA-HA."

—Daryl DeKlerk

Painted above the cribs in a church nursery in Twain Harte, California:

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

—Conn Witt

My wife asked, "What are you doing today?"

"Nothing," I replied.

"You did that yesterday," she said.

"I didn't finish."

—George Vander Weit

For our family the beginning of school is an exciting time. So when my daughter's son Zachary was starting kindergarten, it was a day of excitement, with Mom and Grammy walking him to school. Once the bell rang, off he trotted with his new backpack larger than life. My daughter and I watched him go with tears—ours, not his. We went out for coffee and a little shopping, returning as the kindergarten class was coming out of the building. Zac was the last one out, and we rushed up to him with great expectations to ask how it went.

"Phew!" he said. "I'm glad that's over. I'm never going back in there again!"

—Betty Kinnas



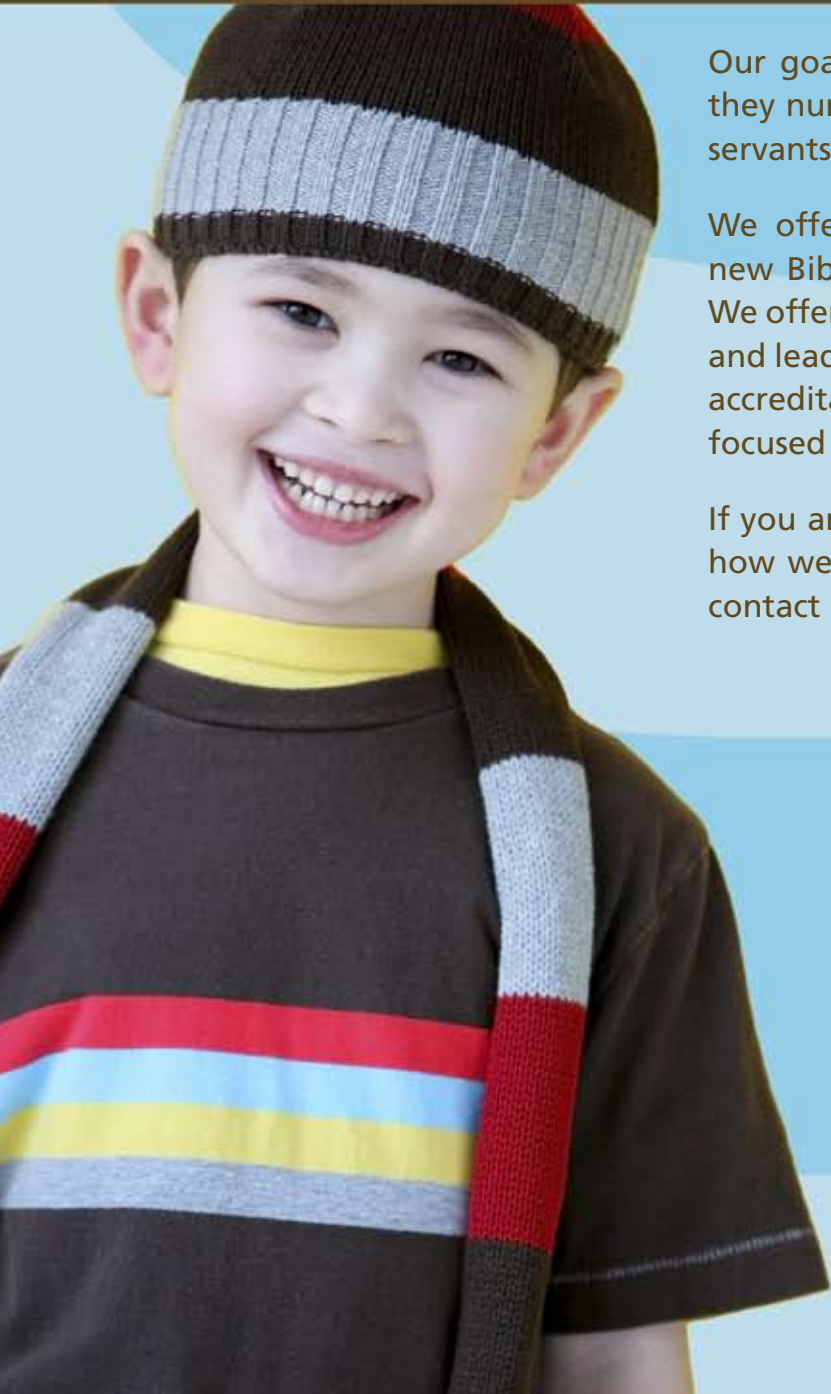


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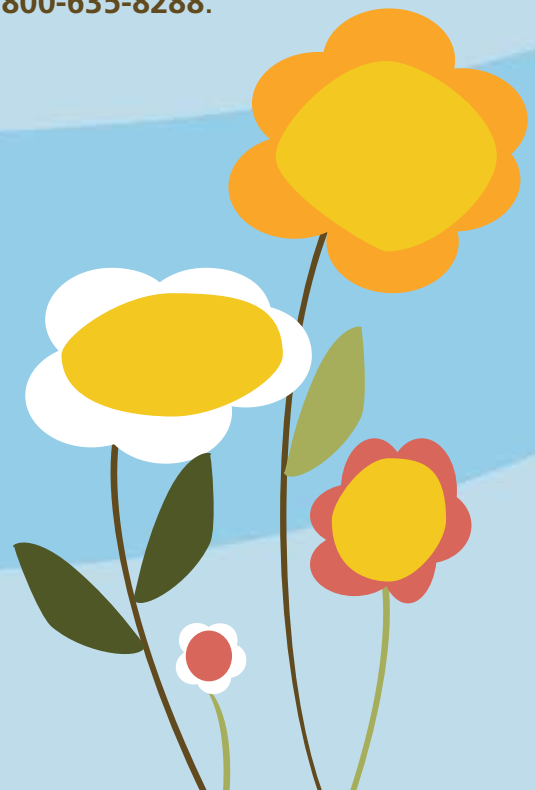
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