

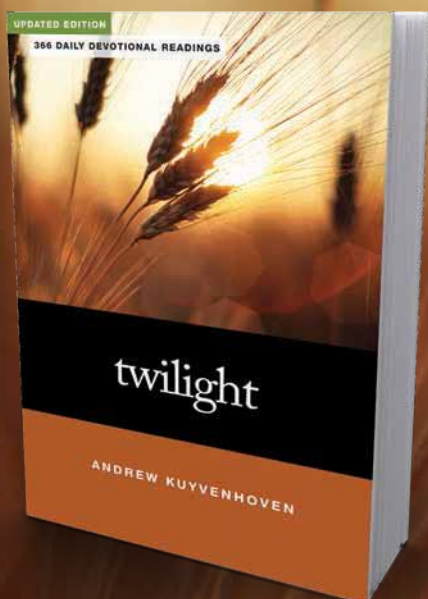
³² **Love Lessons from
the Song of Songs**

⁴⁰ **Trouble in River City**

²² **Living Out
the Mission**

¹⁸ **The Gifts of God for
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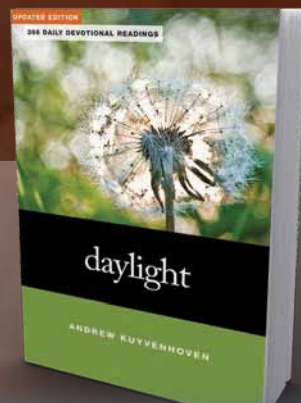


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Synod 2012

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A Political or Apolitical Church?

THE CHURCH SHOULD STAY OUT OF POLITICS. RIGHT?

We can agree that our congregations and denomination should not publicly endorse party candidates or formulate specific legislation. But shouldn't we, the church, sometimes risk muddying our collective boots by addressing political issues that have profound religious and ethical dimensions?

The Christian Reformed Church, on several occasions, has answered that question with a resounding yes.

When the United States and Canadian governments proposed allowing "therapeutic" abortions, we spoke up. We told our legislators that the Judeo-Christian Scriptures clearly affirm the sanctity of human life at every stage of its existence. We spoke up for the unborn.

When our governments kept deploying more atomic bombs, our denomination jumped in with a biblical Word decrying the insanity of nuclear proliferation.

When proposed tightening of immigration laws threatened to dehumanize people and wreck families, we called the state to act in accordance with Scriptural principles of justice and hospitality.

The question isn't *whether* the church should speak on political issues but *when*. Where Scripture speaks, we may not remain silent just because some issues have become politicized. The world should never control our agenda that way.

Abraham Kuyper's view of sphere sovereignty has often been invoked to argue that only individual Christians and their voluntary associations should address political issues. But Kuyper

Where Scripture speaks, we may not remain silent.

also taught sphere universality. With the tightly interwoven and differentiated structures within our world, the institutional church may need to speak to those issues that have a significant *confessional* dimension to them. It is in that realm that churches can illumine issues with the Word of God. So we, as the church, should speak to those when biblical principles are clearly and significantly involved. The church must then assume its prophetic role in the service of Christ,

who commanded us to disciple *the nations*. In those cases we should address our own members first, then society, and possibly also governments.

Synod 2012 is now asked by its study committee to address the issue of creation care in the context of climate change. We should not dodge that issue by branding it a political issue. It is that, but it's much more. I sincerely hope that in its discussion on climate change synod will seriously address such questions as these:

- Is the issue weighty enough for our denomination to address it as institutional church?
- Does it have a confessional dimension that should be addressed prophetically?
- Do we have widespread agreement on the basic biblical principle(s) involved?
- Is there sufficient scientific evidence to conclude that there is a significant and credible *risk* that we as humans are violating our creation mandate? And are the possible consequences of that risk sufficiently weighty to require significant preventative measures, even if those cause their own hardships?
- Will whatever synod decides significantly help us to witness to and live out our confession that our world belongs to God?

Hopefully on this issue we'll witness (to) more biblical light than political heat. ■



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

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Missing Maggie

WE FIRST MET MAGGIE on a post-Thanksgiving dinner walk around the lake. Painfully thin, the knobs of her spine and each rib showing, she was with a man who introduced her as “Miss Bones” when he noticed me eying her. The man was a vet, and the dog had been dropped off at his office by a kind soul who’d found her wandering around the east side of the state.

As I knelt to greet her, she wagged her tail and looked up at me. “I’m looking for a good home for her,” the man said. “Interested?” He scribbled his phone number on a scrap of paper and we continued our walk.

As parents of four kids, juggling child-rearing with demanding jobs, our lives felt full already. We weren’t “dog people.” But I couldn’t get those liquid brown eyes or those velvety ears out of my mind. A few days later we called the number.

That’s how Maggie came to be ours.

She accompanied us on countless walks to the park. Slept on our youngest daughter’s bed every single night, even after she’d left for college. Barked at the mail carrier every single day. Ecstatically

welcomed each family member home from school or work. Improved our moods.

Fast-forward 12 years. Christmas time. All our kids were coming home.

By this time Maggie’s muzzle was more gray than reddish-brown. Her slushy heart valves sometimes made it hard for her to catch her breath. A couple of times on walks, her legs gave way. She couldn’t always make it outside to do her business.

We called the kids. The youngest, who was in town, said, “You know it’s time.” The others, due home the day before Christmas Eve, said, “Wait until we come home.”

On Christmas Eve morning we went to the park one last time. A light dusting of snow covered the ground as we all stood around, hands jammed deep into our pockets, watching Maggie sniff the familiar territory.

Then we headed to the vet’s. All of us—our kids, their spouses, and the dog—piled into cars and trooped into the office for her last appointment.

The vet indicated a small room. “Who wants to come in?” she said kindly. We all did.

We crowded into the space. One son lifted Maggie onto the table. Our oldest daughter removed her collar. I hugged Maggie tightly as the vet administered the syringe. Tears flowed all around as we surrounded our good old dog with love, awaiting the final heartbeat, final breath.

Maggie was an unexpected gift to our family for 12 years. Even in death she showed us how to love each other—as grown-up kids stood shoulder to shoulder with their parents, unwilling to let them do this hard thing by themselves.

Afterward I couldn’t help but think that little room at the vet had been a sacred space. A place of grace, even in our sadness.

I still miss Maggie. But I’m grateful for her presence in our family for all those years. And who knows what other unexpected gifts may lie ahead? I, for one, am keeping my eyes peeled. ■



Judy Hardy is associate editor of *The Banner*.



Every happening,
great and small,
is a parable
whereby God speaks to us,
and the art of life is
to get the message.

— MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

Let's Break the Mold

We want the opportunity to get involved, make a difference, and change the world.



Editor's note: This column was originally written in 2006. It has aged well, we believe—even better than the Banner editor!

MY NAME IS NICKI, and I was a member of a small church plant. Because our church was not growing at the rate classis leaders felt was necessary, our funding was withdrawn.

I have been a member of five churches in my 21 years—all of them Christian Reformed, including the campus ministry at Grand Valley State University. My generation is the future of the church. But so many of my friends who grew up in the CRC no longer attend church.

I am not saying that it is anyone's fault—but it should certainly be a concern of the church. People of my generation want the opportunity to get involved, make a difference, and change the world. We long for community and fellowship and family.

These things are next to impossible to do in a large church. Small churches give everyone the opportunity to get involved and “be the change” they wish to see. But there seems to be a mold every CRC church needs to fit into, and if it doesn't fit, it may have to close.

Why not support small churches that are meeting the needs of so many people instead of expecting them to conform to the mold?

Some members of my community have no desire to continue the search for a church to call home. On the other hand, some who found a home in our small church plant are genuinely thrilled to be there every Sunday.

Knowing that some of them now think the church has once again thrown them aside makes me sad. It breaks my heart to see the faces of the people who finally gave church another shot—but who may never do so again.

A few weeks ago I attended a meeting about what college students are looking for in a church. When I described my church, people started asking questions. They were so excited that this “dream church” already existed. A place where people's needs are known and met. A place where they are part of a family. A place where no one—not even the pastor—has all the answers, but together they can search.

I worry that I may not be heard because most church leaders are older men and I am a college student. But I am passionate about my faith and have a deep love for others.

Some small church plants, including my own, may never become self-sustaining. But when they close, so many people lose the only place they ever felt they fit in. Including me. ■



Nicole Launiere Bode, a graduate of Grand Valley State University, lives in Dallas, Tex., with her husband and son. She and her family are now members of Lake Highlands Presbyterian Church.



Affirmative Action

The most damaging effect of affirmative action (“Is Affirmative Action Biblical?” April 2012) is that it assigns value to things an individual cannot control. We do not choose to be born black or white, or of Native American or Dutch descent. We should never wonder if our skin color, gender, lineage, or disability was the cause of or barrier to an opportunity. Unfortunately, as long as affirmative action exists, we must all wonder.

To bring true justice to all, it is imperative we absolutely reject any value derived from things we do not choose. For these reasons, and having no biblical sanction, affirmative action will hinder the church's efforts to engage those around us, and will deteriorate the bonds between its members.

—Christy Olsen
Colorado Springs, Col.

Faith Formation

Regarding Syd Hielema's reply to the question about high school-age adult immersion baptisms (“FAQs,” April 2012): John baptized by immersion persons who had earlier been circumcised (Matt. 3:6). Now they were repenting of sins in their lives.

I suggest that our churches consider giving a “John the Baptist” immersion baptism of repentance to teens and young

TTERS

adults of our congregations who come to a major point of repentance or of recommitment to Jesus or to their Christian walk. This immersion would be memorable.

—Vern Vander Zee
Miami, Fla.

Stewardship and the Economy

Regarding “Can Good Stewards Grow the Economy?” (Editorial, March 2012): from a biblical point of view, man is not just a social/economic being but, above all, a spiritual being. Our past and present economic policies [have] led to self-interest and indulgence. We need a new vision confronting global crisis, and would do well to reintroduce Bob Goudzwaard’s book *Hope in Troubled Times*.

—G. Lieuwen
Langley, British Columbia

Music and Memory

In response to “Music and Memory” (March 2012): I am a nurse who worked with dementia patients. One of my patients with dementia would repeatedly sing the first five words of a familiar hymn. I often thought that if I ever were in her situation and could sing just five words, I hope I would sing the same five words that she sang: “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.”

—Joyce T. Steen
Suttons Bay, Mich.

Calling

My own experience as a church musician (organist, pianist, choir director, music director) has been neither simple nor obvious (Vander Weit, “FAQs,” March 2012).

I began my vocation as a church musician as a volunteer in my local CRC, and then as paid staff at our local United Church (Canada). Both experiences were rich and beneficial to me, but I felt pulled in two directions: use [my] gifts for the church as a volunteer, or use [my] gifts

as a professional for the church. Could I do both?

The CRC valued me as a musician, with the expectation of donations of time and talent; churches of other denominations valued me as musician and treated me as a professional.

I value the CRC, the upbringing I received, and I continue to keep a membership in my local church, where I volunteer my musical gifts as I am able, but I know I will continue to have employment elsewhere.

—Monica Admiral,
Brantford, Ontario

Binational Church

Like a breath of fresh air! That is how the article “Why Being a Binational Church Is So Important” (March 2012) struck me. I was glad, deeply saddened, but also hopeful because of this article. If any of you, Canadians and Americans, have not read this, you better do so immediately.

—Ralph Koops
St. George, Ontario

Thank you, news editor Postma, for your comprehensive and timely coverage of the church I love and serve.

With some humility and considerable pride, I celebrate how our biblical input continues to strengthen our engagement with historic Canadian churches, with First Nations people, and with policy makers in Canada’s government.

It is time for synod to affirm regional and national initiatives, encourage the prophetic imagination of gifted young adults who are eager for Christ’s universal rule, and expect that the blessing of God through his church will be evident to all.

CRC leaders need not fear the empowerment of the denomination in Canada. My 21 years of representative service are part of the testimony of our common life and witness for the King. A strong

CRC in Canada will bless many dimensions of gospel ministry within our national context.

—Rev. Arie G. Van Eek
Waterdown, Ontario

The Canadian CRC concern is not an “adolescent rebellion”; it is about ministering the gospel good news in the Canadian context and [doing] so effectively. Faithful ministry that addresses principalities and powers shaping national culture is not first of all about acting independently. It is about giving witness that meets the cultural challenge and context and having the encouragement/freedom to do so.

[This] may require that we change the catchphrase “one church in two countries” to “two nations, one church.” If our focus is our mission to our unique communities rather than primarily being one church, we could change the course of our declining conversation. What we need to figure out is not “how we can be the best partners and do the most effective ministry in both national contexts” but how can we each do the most effective ministry in each national context and be the best partners.

—Pastor Jim Poelman
Sarnia, Ontario

[MORE ONLINE](#)

Corrections



In Brian J. Walsh’s article “Urban Ministry: Looking for a Place to Call Home” (May 2012), the word “Urban” was dropped from the print version. Here’s what page 36 should have looked like!

Also, some folks had trouble with the link for the online “Driver’s Training” Manual (Together Doing More, May 2012). The resource is available at crcna.org/safechurch.

NEWS

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Pipe Organ and Indie Rock in Indiana

Rock music and pipe organs don't generally go hand in hand. But at South Bend (Ind.) Christian Reformed Church they do. The church has served as a part-time indie rock concert venue known as Subkirke.

Bands including the Bower-Birds, Chris Bathgate, and Frontier Ruckus jam in the sanctuary. Musicians love the space for its acoustics, lack of typical venue distractions like televisions, and the built-in instrument.

"The musicians almost always spend a lot of time playing our 130-year-old pipe organ," said David Banga, worship and arts director for the church, as well as



DAVID BANGA

artistic director of Subkirke. "Many of them even include it in their shows."

Frontier Ruckus in concert at Subkirke.

Seminary Offers Online Degree Program

For Cari Fydirchuk, uprooting her family to attend Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich., is simply not feasible.

But come fall 2012, the Calgary, Alberta, resident will join 10 to 15 other students as the first cohort to participate in a five-year distance learning Master of Divinity program offered through CTS, the official seminary of the Christian Reformed Church.

"We are blessed to be a part of an authentic church community where both my husband and I are involved in a local street ministry, as well as leadership positions within the church," Fydirchuk said. "To uproot my family at this time in our lives just isn't feasible. . . . I feel very blessed to have this online opportunity at CTS."

The five-year program will consist of about three courses per semester. Between a third and a half of classroom instruction time will be in person, as students are required to attend two eight-day intensives on campus in the span of one academic year.

"When we talk about distance learning, a lot of the attention seems to focus on how it helps people overcome the inconvenience of moving—and I think that's very much a valid point," said Peter Choi, director of distance learning, "but I think there is also a much more positive aspect to this, in that a program like the distance learning M.Div. really empowers and enables people to stay where they are called to ministry." [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Melissa Holtrop

In a town with five colleges, the ministry provides a way for South Bend CRC to build friendly relationships with college students and others in the community. The concerts serve as a "side door" entry to those who have lost touch with the church.

Through word of mouth, Subkirke is becoming an increasingly popular place for bands to visit between tour performances in bigger cities.

"[An] exciting side of this is that we're really ministering in many ways to the musicians themselves, not just the audience. The majority of the musicians who come through have some church background, but have stopped attending," Banga said. "We're showing them that there are churches that are interested in what they do, and we're happy to host them."

—Susan Vanden Berg

Selles Nominated as Director of Back to God Ministries



Kurt Selles

Kurt Selles is on track to become the next director of Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI), the media ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.

Selles was nominated by the board of BTGMI; his appointment will have to be ratified by Synod 2012, the annual leadership meeting of the CRC.

A former missionary with Christian Reformed World Missions, Selles served in Taiwan and China. "I'm humbled and honored to have the opportunity to work with the BTGMI team to proclaim the gospel," Selles said. "I look forward to building on the collaboration that is already there."

Selles fills the vacancy left by Rev. Robert Heerspink, BTGMI's director for several years, who died in 2011 of pancreatic cancer.

—Gayla R. Postma

Colorado Church Turns 100

This year, Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Fort Collins, Colo., celebrates its 100th birthday. However, it hasn't always been a Christian Reformed congregation.

"It's a great story of how this church survived three different countries, three different denominations, a language change, yet somehow there's still a thriving ministry," said John Terpstra, the church's pastor.

In 1912, 30 Volga Germans established Evangelische Immanuels-Gemeinde. The church faced many changes over the years, almost closing its doors in 1962.

Then a Colorado State University student, whose home church was Second CRC in Denver, suggested that the church speak to his home pastor about pulpit supply.

"It just so happened that he came to church that day and they (Immanuel) joined the CRC," stated Terpstra.

—Sarah Boonstra

IN MEMORIAM



Rev. Wendell M. Gebben

1935–2012

Wendell M. Gebben, compassionate listener, effective church leader, and gifted musician and singer, was translated to glory on April 1.

Pastor Wen, as he was affectionately known, entered the gospel ministry in the Christian Reformed Church in 1962.

Gebben served churches in Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin. In 1997, Gebben became Classical Interim Pastor for churches without pastors in Classis Central California (a regional group of churches), serving six churches in five years.

Gebben is remembered as a sympathetic, thoughtful, and able pastor with a warm smile. Parishioners comment on his thoughtful, beautiful prayers. Colleagues testify that his sermons were carefully prepared and attuned to people's needs. He loved young people. He cared for "the least." He loved to sing and play the piano, guitar, and baritone horn—mostly by ear. And he was a fine golfer.

Gebben is survived by his wife, Dawn, three children and their spouses, and nine grandchildren.

[MORE ONLINE](#)

—Louis M. Tamminga

Further information on recently deceased ministers is available each year in the front pages of the Christian Reformed Church's annual Yearbook.



Ann Arbor Garden Produces Food and Faith

Cathy Green has done her share of gardening over the past several decades, but she hasn't seen a plot of land as productive or as meaningful as the one in front of Ann Arbor (Mich.) Christian Reformed Church.

Last year's harvest sent 12,291 pounds (5,575 kilos) of produce to Food Gatherers, an agency that provides food to people in need from around the community.

"The rewarding part is knowing that you're helping people, and you're part of something bigger," Green said. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Jeff Arnold

[Volunteers from Ann Arbor CRC construct fencing to keep deer and other animals out of the church's Food and Faith Garden.](#)

NEWS

Prayer Summit: A Taste of All Nations

The Christian Reformed Church's first-ever Prayer Summit drew more than 450 daytime registrants, with as many as 1,000 people gathering for prayer in the evenings.

The Korean Council of Churches organized the event, which was hosted by All Nations CRC in Los Angeles, the CRC's largest congregation, with more than 3,000 members.

Attendees came from across the United States, Canada, and Mexico,

displaying some of the diversity in the CRC.

John Witvliet, director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Wor-

ship, told those gathered that it is essential to pray to "the one God who is good and great, our God who is the fountain of all goodness."

During one of the evening sessions, 1,000 prayer intercessors were challenged by Rev. Jin So Yoo, All Nations' senior pastor. He reminded people of the urgency of Jesus' Gethsemane prayer.

On the finale evening, Rev. Pildo Joung, founding pastor of Sooyoungro Presbyterian Church in Busan, Korea, spoke, with Rev. Moses Chung providing simultaneous translation. Joung focused on dynamic and innovative prayer and evangelism ministries and how they have sparked, with God's grace, a city-wide gospel movement.

In addition to those large group sessions, attendees prayed in smaller groups—including the opportunity to participate in "Dawn Prayer" at 5:30 a.m.

Irene Fennema traveled from Christ Community CRC in Victoria,



British Columbia. "I'm so happy I came because I met new friends and prayer intercessors, learned even more than what I already knew, and felt closer to my God."

Euisup Song, an elder from East Bay Korean CRC, El Cerrito, Calif., said, "This summit helped me be a stronger Christian. The presence of God is revealed by Christians' united prayers. Praying in union is so effective and powerful."

The Prayer Summit was not limited to the event in Los Angeles. On April 17 at 3 p.m. EDT, 40 congregations around the continent prayed with those in Los Angeles.



There were 3,000 downloads of the hour-long "Watch and Pray" video from the summit website.

"Our God is an awesome God. We hope that this prayer and repentance movement continues in the CRC and abroad," said Rev. Tong Park, Korean ministry director. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Jonathan Kim



JONATHAN KIM

Campus Ministry Raises Awareness about Self-injury

In an effort to create honest conversation about issues including self-injury and depression, Guelph (Ontario) Campus Ministry hosted a campus-wide event.

This Christian Reformed ministry located at the University of Guelph brought in Jamie Tworowski, director of To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA), an interfaith organization.

Guelph Campus Ministry worked with other campus groups as well.

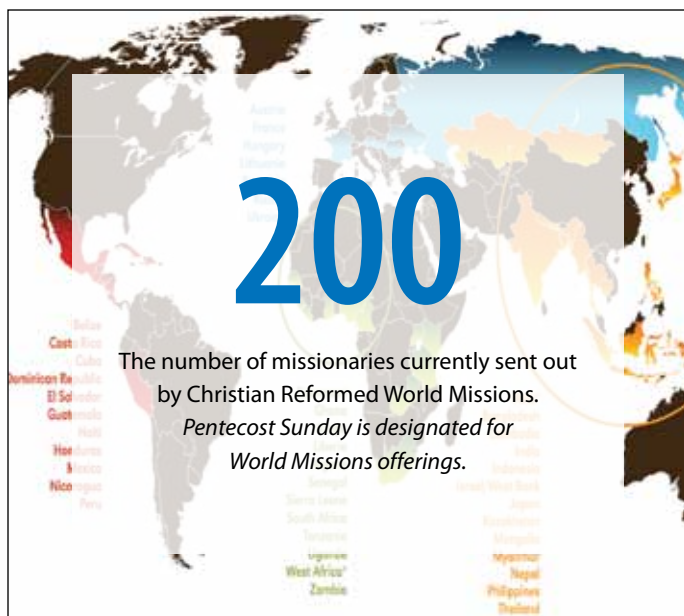
James VanderBerg, director of the ministry, said, "The opportunity to work alongside other groups on campus is a significant way to develop relationships, build respect, and share the light that Christ has to offer."

The event was well received, nearly filling the campus's War Memorial Hall. "There was lots of conversation afterward, and there's now a push to run a student focus group to explore new ways to support students working through depression and other matters like self-injury," said VanderBerg. "As we see it, this whole project is an opportunity to bring hope to a hurting world."

—Anita Brinkman



Musical artist Noah Gundersen sings.



Bringing the Garden to the Neighbors

Members of Heritage Christian Reformed Church in Byron Center, Mich., brought their community garden to a nearby mobile home park where the neighbors are. "It's not just about growing vegetables. We're doing things together," said Robert Bolt, pastor at the church.

Park residents can choose to tend a row of their own or work



Members of Heritage CRC in Byron Center volunteer in the garden.

in a communal spot with church members.

While the garden flourishes, so do relationships.

"It builds friendships with the church and the (mobile home)

community," said Scott White, who managed the park during garden launching. "It's also a stepping stone for children who have no idea how to garden."

"It's a good place to bring kids to give them something to do," Bolt said.

—Carolyn Koster Yost

IN MEMORIAM



Rev. James Hoogeveen

1950–2012

James LeRoy Hoogeveen, 61, a pastor with a disciple's heart, zealous for sharing Christ, encourager of ministry colleagues, and gifted leader in the church, died of mesothelioma cancer on March 2 in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Hoogeveen entered the gospel ministry in the Christian Reformed Church in 1976. He served churches in Iowa, Colorado, Michigan, and South Dakota.

A man of deep inner peace and integrity, Hoogeveen never placed himself in the foreground. Those who worked with him soon became aware of his sincere love for Christ, whom he intimately knew as his Savior and Sender.

Hoogeveen set up a Leadership Development Network, sharing Christ's love with people from various cultural and spiritual backgrounds; served as a mentor to several pastors; counseled alcoholics; did hospital and prison chaplaincy; was involved in civic matters; and was instrumental in establishing two new churches.

He is survived by his wife, Lois, three children and their spouses, and seven grandchildren.

[MORE ONLINE](#)

—Louis M. Tamminga

The Banner, Reformed Worship Win Top Awards

The Banner and *Reformed Worship* took home top honors from the Associated Church Press at its recent convention in Chicago. The two publications garnered eight awards, including "Best in Class" for *Reformed Worship* in the Special Interest Magazine category.

Award of Excellence:

- *The Banner*, "What All Nations Looks Like in the CRC" by Gayla Postma, news editor, in the News Story, Magazine category
- *Reformed Worship* by Joyce Borger, editor; Dean Heetderks, art director, in the Graphics: Publication Redesign category

Award of Merit:

- *Reformed Worship*, Dean Heetderks, art director, in the Graphics: Magazine Design, Entire Issue category

Honorable Mentions for *The Banner*

- "The Hunger Games" by Kristy Quist, writer and editor, in the Critical Review category
- *The Banner*, Dean Heetderks, art director; Bob De Moor, editor, in the Graphics: Website Redesign category
- "How Should We Read the Bible" by Rev. Clarence Vos, writer, in the Theological: Bible resource category
- "Separated" by Name Withheld in the Personal Experience, Short Format category [MORE ONLINE](#)



Zea, 12, gets some pointers on her golf swing from PGA pro Matt Koets at Hillside's golf clinic.

PGA Pros Lead Church Golf Clinic

Hillside Community Christian Reformed Church recently helped 75 golfers from both the church and the neighborhood to improve their game.

Six members of the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) led a free four-day clinic at the Cutlerville, Mich., church.

Each night, the church lowered large nets from the rafters of the sanctuary, creating an indoor driving range for 10 golfers at a time, explained Mike Boogaard, a PGA member since 1987. Out in the foyer was a short game area with chipping and putting.

"It was a unique opportunity to invite our neighbors and friends to have some fun, get ready for the upcoming golf season, and to see the church as a partner in the community," said Daniel Bud, pastor of outreach and pastoral care. "We wanted to open up and show them that . . . we love to have fun and love to mix with people in the community."

—Ryan Struyk

NEWS



(L-r) Gail Anderson, Lavonne Smith, Lesha Twork, Kim Cavanaugh, and Linda Hittle

West Michigan Clothing Ministry Fills Need

Enter Grace Christian Reformed Church in Muskegon, Mich., and you might think you'd entered a clothing store with rooms full of men's, women's, and children's clothing instead of a small church. That's because you have, in fact, entered both.

Every Friday morning, church members Doris Stearns and Margo DeHaan open the clothing store ministry for community members, run out of Grace CRC.

Clients are able to shop every four weeks, free of charge, for a certain number of clothing items. All items are donated by the congregation, friends, family, and others who hear of it.

The store is set up so clients can choose their own clothes. "I think people love to shop. I've seen mothers come in and sit on the floor and go through all the clothes for their kids while the kids play with a toy or two from our toy box," said Stearns. "We have people come who have never been out of work before in their lives, and now they have to come and ask for help."

Since 2009 when the store opened, a total of 3,899 people have come through the doors.

—Daina Kraai

Washington Pastor Spends a Week on the Church Roof

Most pastors spend long days cooped up in their offices. But Dan Wolters, pastor of Family of Faith Christian Reformed Church in Kennewick, Wash., spent a week living in the open air on the roof of his church.

Wolters had challenged the Sunday school children to raise at least \$1,000 to purchase goats for families in need through Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. He agreed to live on the roof for a week if they met the goal, which they did.

Wolters slept in a tent held down by steel plates. His living quarters included a mini fridge and a patio table with five chairs.

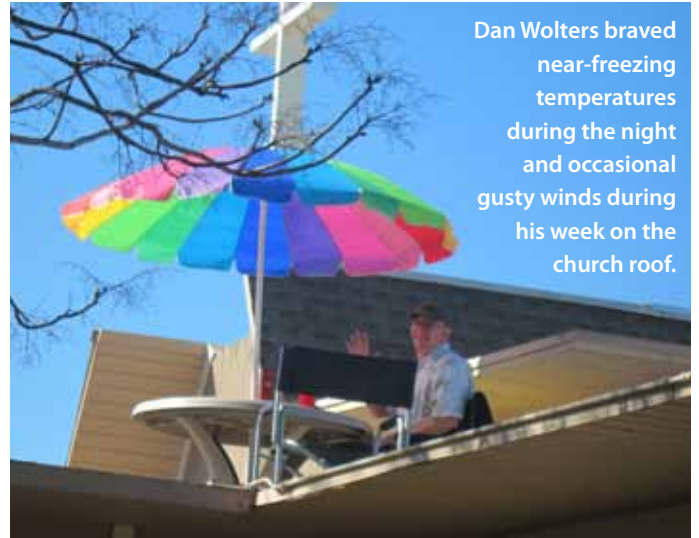
Wolters worked, visited with church members, and led the Sunday morning worship ser-

vice—all from the roof. "It never rained more than a couple sprinkles—for that I'm very grateful!" Wolters said.

"I may spend 24 hours or so in the future on the roof, but I really

don't think I'll ever go for a week again—just too much time away from my family," he said at the end of his week.

—Amy Toornstra



Dan Wolters braved near-freezing temperatures during the night and occasional gusty winds during his week on the church roof.

New Mexico River Run Benefits Children

Children, adults, and entire families showed up in Berg Park in Farmington, N.M., for the annual River Run for Orphans.

After children dashed through the one-mile portion, adults followed in the 5K event, raising more than \$5,000 for programs and agencies that serve children who are orphaned.

Members of Maranatha Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Farmington raised \$2,100 for Navajo Ministries, which supports three homes for Navajo children who are orphaned or in transition.

Susan LaClear, pastor of the church and coordinator of the Farmington run, said the River Run was a unifying and community-building event. "I've been involved in ecumenical efforts to bring churches together for worship,



Participants in this year's River Run for Orphans raised more than \$5,000.

we might unify more easily around a common cause."

LaClear said it is also an effort that many non-Christians in the community want to support.

—Shashi DeHaan

but there are many barriers caused by different styles and liturgies," she said. "It occurred to me that

Colorado Men Enjoy Annual Wilderness Retreat

The men return to camp weary, worn, exhausted. Grinning from ear to ear, they come on foot, by bike, or by Jeep. Each year they come from Colorado to experience community in Moab, Utah.

Hosted by Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Fort Collins,



Colorado men retreat in Moab, Utah.

Colorado, the group also includes men from Crestview CRC in Boulder, and Cragmor CRC in Colorado Springs. They have been retreating together for 14 years.

During the day, the men hike, bike, fish, or four-wheel. Each morning and evening they gather together to cook a meal,

share their faith, and enjoy fellowship.

Doyle Baker, of Cragmor, enjoyed the weekend. "It's a good weekend in a really spectacular setting, and it's a lot of fun."

—Sarah Boonstra

New Jersey Teens Land Jobs

"It's really amazing to see an entire room full of teens dressed professionally at 9 a.m. Saturday with résumé in hand."

That was the reaction of Josh Dornbos after a teen job fair at New City Christian Reformed Church in Jersey City, N.J. Dornbos is director of Teen Employment, a program to help teens find jobs.

Every June, the church offers a free three-day job fair. At the end, teens are interviewed one-on-one by the adult staff at the church.

Based on these interviews, some students are offered paid summer internships or year-round employment at the church. In 2011, 168 high school students attended the job fair; 60 of them landed paid positions.



Erik Hoekstra

Dordt College Appoints New President

Erik Hoekstra has been named as the next president of Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa. Hoekstra has been provost for the last four years.

"[God] has been deepening my motivation to be of service in Christian higher education, and also allowing me the great joy of leading a team of people who are excited about Dordt College," Hoekstra said. "Overall, the feeling is eager anticipation of what God will do through the team here."

—Kate Padilla

For Destiny Brewer, hired as a tutor, the job fair revealed skills she didn't know she had. "It's an opportunity to better yourself and take on a leadership role," she said.

—Calvin Hulstein



The Village sanctuary

Emerging Tucson Congregation Celebrates Creativity

Some worshipers dance on the dance floor. Others create masterpieces using a variety of media. Some worshipers join via the church's website.

It's all part of the broad spectrum of worship at The Village in Tucson, Ariz., an emerging congregation of the Christian Reformed Church.

Villagers, as they are known, create their own eclectic order of worship based on Scripture, creeds, and confessions. "(In one Sunday), we might sing in a Gregorian chant, Seattle grunge style, followed by a hymn sung *a capella*. Our worship is a celebration of creativity," said Rod Hugen, one of the pastors of The Village.

Approximately 100 people worship at The Village weekly. About a third of those are children under the age of 10.

Villagers also worship online through the church's website. "Probably seven out of the last 10 visitors came here after browsing the website. Some have worshiped online for months before attending Sunday evening worship. They know us before they get here," Hugen said.

—Shashi DeHaan



ANDREA DUNN

Teens participate in the job fair at New City Church.

Board Approves Leadership Council Change

Although the group comprised mainly of ministry agency directors and other senior executives of the Christian Reformed Church has a new name, it looks more like a former version of itself.

Now called the Ministries Leadership Council, the group balances the authority vested in the office of the executive director.

In 2008, the former executive director, with approval from the Board of Trustees, made the group smaller. It was no longer convened by the executive director but rather by the director of denominational ministries.

Earlier this year, the Board of Trustees undid that 2008 decision, restoring much of what had been in place before. The executive director once again convenes the council, providing a direct link between that group and the Board of Trustees.

Synod 2012 will be informed of this move.

—Gayla R. Postma



Rev. Grant Vander Hoek enjoys delivering the morning message from a new pulpit.

From Music Stand to Pulpit

Pastor Grant Vander Hoek and his congregation were intrigued when a large item covered in a painter's blanket was carried to the front of the sanctuary one Sunday morning at Mission Hills Community Christian Reformed Church in Mission, British Columbia.

As Vander Hoek prepared to deliver his message from behind his usual music stand, he was interrupted for a timely unveiling of a new pulpit for the sanctuary.

The donor, who prefers not to be named, had found acceptance, love, and care at Mission Hills during a difficult time in his life. But he was bothered by the fact that Vander Hoek stood behind a music stand. The pulpit was his gift to the church.

The man said, "I have been coming here for the better part of eight months, and never have I felt so welcome in all my life."

The pulpit is made from reclaimed wood and features a cross and a compartment for storage. Vander Hoek said, "It suits our church perfectly and is the perfect height for me."

"If only I could have videotaped the reaction of the people in church," says Vander Hoek with a smile. "It was amazing. Clapping, cheering, crying, the whole nine yards."

—Jenny deGroot

Old Banner Photo Reunites World War II Vets

More than 65 years had passed since Alfred Elders and Jay Bartels last saw each other on the island of Guam during World War II.

A picture from a 1945 issue of *The Banner* helped bring the two West Michigan men together recently. Elders and Bartels, who both served in the U.S. Navy, were in the photo of a group of 30 men with ties to Christian Reformed churches back home.

Elders, 88, who attends Hope CRC in Grandville, Mich., recalled the day that the photo was taken. "On a Sunday, they had someone from the mission board ask for the CRC people to congregate (for the picture)," he said.

The photo featured troops from eight states, although most



GREG CHANDLER

1945 Banner photograph taken on Guam



WW II Photo from Guam

of them were from West Michigan. Elders was a Navy Seabee who drove a bulldozer to help build the airfield on Guam. Bartels, 86, was an aviation mechanic.

—Greg Chandler



Alfred Elders



Rex Newell of Rex's Antiques holds up an antique.

Trash or Treasure?

"Is my antique valuable?" That is what people wanted to know. And they got answers at First Christian Reformed Church in Highland, Ind.

Residents were invited to bring their treasures to the church basement for a free appraisal by an antiques expert in a format similar to Public Broadcasting Service's "Antiques Roadshow."

"Our ladies' Bible study wanted to do a fun community outreach to get people into the door of a church," said organizer Carol Oostman. About 50 people attended the event.

There were no million-dollar finds. The most valuable item was a violin, though further research was needed to discover just how valuable. A few antique toys also proved modestly valuable.

Several community members attended the event. Church members spent time getting to know the visitors, and if they didn't have a church home, the hosts encouraged visitors to attend a service, Oostman said.

—Roxanne Van Farowe

Synod 2012: What to Watch For

With several major decisions on its agenda, this year's synod could be historic. Of all the important items to be discussed, the three likely to engender the most debate are whether to adopt the Belhar Confession as the CRC's fourth confessional standard, whether to adopt the new Covenant for Officebearers, and whether to adopt the recommendations from the Creation Stewardship Task Force (see *Banner*, May 2012).

The Christian Reformed Church's existing three confessions were written around 400 years ago. If adopted, the proposed Covenant for Officebearers would replace the current Form of Subscription, also more than four centuries old. That is the statement officebearers sign to declare adherence to the church's doctrines and teachings.

The Creation Stewardship Task Force report is not centuries old, but it is certainly controversial.

This year's synod will deal with more than 60 overtures (requests). The last time synods received this many overtures was in the mid-1990s, when successive synods discussed whether women could serve as elders or ministers.

More than half of this year's overtures are related to the Belhar Confession, with most of them opposing its adoption as a confessional standard.

Another significant issue will be the request of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) to change its name to World Renew. CRWRC is the development and relief agency of the CRC (see *Banner*, April 2012).

A highlight of this year's synod will be the interviews of Michael Le Roy and Kurt Selles.

Le Roy is recommended by the board of Calvin College to become the college's next president. Calvin College is owned by the CRC (see *Banner*, April 2012).

Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI) will present Kurt Selles as its nominee to be its

next director, following the untimely death of its former director, Robert Heerspink. BTGMI is the media arm of the CRC (see p. 11).

Another report for Synod 2012 comes from the Task Force Reviewing Structure and Culture. This task force was created by Synod 2011, following the resignations of the denomination's top executives a year ago (see *Banner*, July 2011).

Two overtures request the denomination to better define which topics the church's leaders and

agencies should be publicly addressing. The authors of the overtures express concern that church leaders are speaking out and promoting views on issues that are political in nature, rather than restricting themselves to ecclesiastical issues.

Other overtures range from asking synod to make statements regarding racism and pornography to a request for a review of the Ministers' Pension Fund.

Synod 2012 will be preceded by the first-ever Young Adult Summit, called reKindle. Young adults from across the denomination will gather prior to synod. The summit will overlap with the beginning of synod.

Synod is the annual leadership meeting of the Christian Reformed Church. Forty-seven classes (regional groups of churches) send approximately 188 delegates to deliberate matters that affect the whole church.

Synod 2012 will be held in Ancaster, Ontario, on the campus of Redeemer University College, from June 8-14. The *Agenda for Synod 2012* is sent to every Christian Reformed church and is also posted online at crcna.org/pages/synodical.cfm.

News stories will be posted throughout the week on *The Banner's* website (thebanner.org). News will also be updated on Twitter (@crcbanner) and on Facebook (The Banner magazine). Full coverage of Synod 2012 will appear in the July print edition of *The Banner*. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Gayla R. Postma



BY JOHN D. WITVLIET



THE GIFTS OF GOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD:

Deepening Table Practice for People of All Ages

The Lord's Supper is about "Jesus Loves Me" and it is about "I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together."

PUBLIC PROFESSION of faith is a vital and important faith milestone. But Synod 2011, the annual leadership meeting of the Christian Reformed Church, concluded that there is no biblical requirement of this formal, public profession of faith for participation at the Lord's table. It approved changes to the Church Order that welcome all baptized persons to participate in the Lord's Supper in age- and ability-appropriate ways.

Since then, congregations and classes (regional groups of churches) have been exploring how to implement this decision faithfully. No single approach works in every setting. But several common themes are emerging in discussions throughout the Christian Reformed Church. These themes can be phrased as questions—constructive, generative questions for each council and congregation to pray about and discuss together.

How can we invite people of all ages to deeper participation at the table?

To be sure, synod's decisions have often been described in terms of "children at the table." But synod's call was to deepen the participation of *all* persons in ways appropriate to their age and ability. Maybe your church will respond to this by hosting an intergenerational supper each year

at which participants could explain how the Lord's Supper has strengthened their faith. Perhaps you will use Facebook or other social media during the week prior to Lord's Supper celebrations to prompt worshipers to reflect on the gift of "discerning the body of Christ." The test will be, in part, whether both brand-new and lifelong communicants are joyfully challenged to grow.

How can we celebrate multiple faith milestones in the life of each believer?

Some congregations have developed intentional ways to celebrate moments in people's lifelong journey of faith, such as "graduation" from children's worship, first participation at the Lord's Supper, profession of faith, participation in a service project, ordination as officebearer, and so on. This broad approach helps counter the impression that we "graduate" from God's school of spiritual growth. Coming to the table for the first time is not an ending—it's one of many new beginnings that are a part of the faithful Christian life.

How can we avoid both an overly legalistic and an overly casual approach to the table?

A generation or two ago, many churches struggled with an overly scrupulous and legalistic approach to the Lord's Supper. Today, many churches struggle with an

opposite problem—the tendency to treat the Lord's Supper as an optional appendix to a service or a casual symbol. Synod's action regarding children at the table was framed to resist both tendencies.

How can we meditate and study Scripture together as we explore table practices?

Scriptural study is an indispensable aspect of deepening our participation at the Lord's Supper. This is true not just for pastors and theologians but for everyone. For example, what would it mean to obey the command to "all eat together" at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:33)? What would it mean for us if our prayers at the Lord's table were, like Jesus' prayer, prayers of *thanksgiving*? (For more, see Bible study materials available at crcna.org/faithformation).

How can we better equip parents and guardians to be "worship participation coaches"?

The most important influence on how kids participate in any act of worship, including the Lord's Supper, is their parent(s) or guardian(s). So some churches offer adult education sessions on "how to guide your children at the Lord's Supper." Others stock their church library with books for families to use as they prepare for the Lord's Supper. When parents are equipped to guide and mentor their children more faithfully, their own »

participation can be renewed at the same time.

How can we emphasize both that the Lord's Supper is a gift and that coming to the table is an act of obedience and professing faith?

Part of the challenge is recognizing that the Bible's commands are themselves a gift. It's a gift of grace to be able to receive the bread and cup, and it is a gift to be challenged to "discern the body." Part of this lesson can be "caught" by the language we use in worship: "What a gift: we come to the table because God loves us first!" "What a gift: we come to the table saying 'Jesus loves us, and we love Jesus.'" "What a gift: we come to the table discerning the body, learning to resist sin, and discovering again the breadth of the church." Part of it also needs to be explicitly taught and preached.

How can we teach and guide children as they come to the table?

My own pastor, Jack Roeda, challenges children who come to the table to

- look around—at the people of God who promise to love each other and serve the world,
- look back—over the long history of God's faithfulness, especially in the life of Jesus,
- look forward—to the feast we will share in the kingdom of heaven,
- look "up"—to think about how the ascended Jesus in heaven prays for us and how we trust in him,
- look within—to see both our own sin and need for a Savior and to remember that we are loved by God and are a member of God's own family.

These five points are memorable. We can easily rehearse them with our children on the way to church on Sunday.

Another way to reinforce these themes would be to find a set of children's songs that explore each aspect of table participation. The Lord's Supper is about "Jesus Loves Me" *and* it is about "I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together"; it is about "This Little Light of Mine" *and* "Bind Us Together." Consider studying a songbook such as *Sing With Me* or *Songs for LiFE* (faithalivresources.org) to identify a set of five children's songs appropriate for your church. The next time you gather at the table, use them either before or after to help children connect their participation at the table with their daily life.

Who among us is gifted to shape a culture of encouragement and spiritual growth as we participate in the Lord's Supper? How can we encourage and support them in their work among us?

Congregations who ask these questions in broad ways may discover that God has gifted not only pastors or worship leaders in this way, but also youth workers or those who minister to older members, those with gifts for evangelism or concern for social justice, musicians and artists—both older and younger members. Renewed Lord's Supper practice can begin in nearly any corner of church life. But it often emerges when God gifts and calls individuals to spur deeper discussions and prayers.

Asking questions like these opens up space for faithful creativity, grounded innovation, and biblical imagination. Congregations who prayerfully wrestle with them may find that this process can be one of the best ways of shaping a culture of gratitude, obedience, and spiritual growth in congregational life. ■

STUDY QUESTIONS ONLINE

More Faith Formation Resources

We know that many congregations are eager not just for questions, but also for answers. The Faith Formation Committee of the Christian Reformed Church is working to gather answers from across the denomination. For more resources please visit crcna.org/faithformation.

Faith Alive Christian Resources, the denomination's resource provider, is also developing materials to help congregations and families.



A Place at the Table: Welcoming Children to the Lord's Supper will be available in September. This three-session video-based study will help parents and church mem-

bers sort through the biblical and practical issues involved as they take steps toward welcoming children to the Lord's Supper. Includes leader guide, study guide, and DVD with introductory video segments.

Also available will be a family devotional to help children and parents or caregivers discover the meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper together.

Call Faith Alive at 1-800-333-8300 or visit FaithAliveResources.org.



John D. Witvliet is chair of the Christian Reformed Church's Faith Formation Committee and a father of four.

Sunday Morning

“**OAKLAND 10**, see car North 8.” I acknowledge the call from police dispatch: “Oakland 10 is 10-4.” I check the mobile dispatch terminal in my squad car for the address and call history: “North 8 on scene of possible SIDS, medical examiner notified.”

Sudden infant death syndrome, commonly known as “crib death,” strikes without warning. Parents are left with the anguish of why it happened, and public safety first responders have no answers.

It is a cool Sunday morning in October. The few cars on the road appear to be driven with little urgency: families on the way to church, people heading out for coffee and a bagel or returning from a night of employment.

Arriving at the address, I am met by an officer. He briefly states that the child is dead, appears very young, and is in the bedroom adjacent to the kitchen. The officer is as objective as I hope to be. But he is new, a rookie, and I know this is tough on him.

I climb the steps to the upstairs apartment and enter the living room. I am struck by how empty yet clean the apartment is. There’s no carpet, no sofa, no television—just a kitchen table, two unmatched chairs, and a floor lamp. Standing next to each other are the parents. Both stare at the floor. They are young, maybe 20 years of age.

As I walk to the bedroom I notice a difference. The walls are painted light pink, and the room is decorated with matching white baby furniture. I steel myself and look into the crib. The baby is beautiful. Her dark skin and curly black hair are accented by the white blanket that covers her. I ask God why.

The young mother’s eyes swell with tears that she fights to hold in.

“Would you like to hold your baby?” I ask. She carefully lifts her baby girl from the crib and holds her to her own face. We sit on the floor—mother with child, father, and me. The room is quiet.

Silently I ask God to allow me to help these parents. Surely this is the type of situation where God plays out his purpose. I look to the mother and ask, “Are you a Christian?” She responds, “No.” I turn to the father. He answers, “I don’t know, but I do believe in God.”

Our conversation is stalled and uncomfortable. I was hoping for something more. But then, with no forethought, I say, “You have a beautiful baby, and I know that Jesus is holding her right now.

We sit on the floor—mother with child, father, and me. The room is quiet.

He loves her very much.” The mother looks at me and quietly thanks me.

We continue to sit on the floor in God’s peaceful silence. Finally the medical examiner arrives, and I am relieved to see who it is. He quietly assumes his role with love and reassurance for the grieving parents.

I am about to leave this home. I have ascertained that the officer has handled the call properly. But before I drive away, I pray that God will send his Holy Spirit to give these parents peace and that they will know Jesus. I ask Jesus to take good care of their baby.

The prayer doesn’t sound ecclesiastical. I cannot help but wonder how this situ-



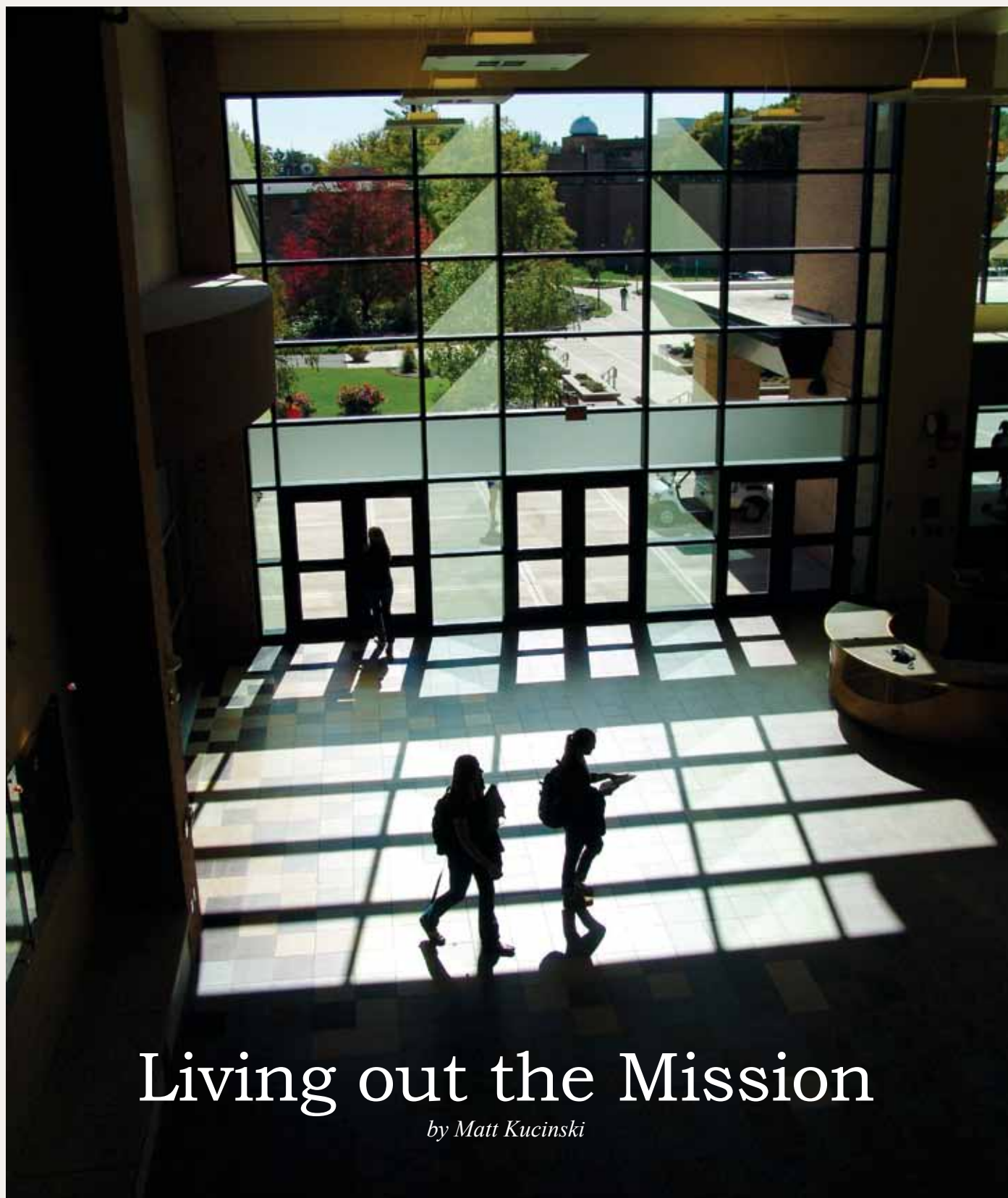
ation fits into the doctrine of predestination. I just don’t know. I don’t know about God’s mysteries. I don’t need to know. But I do know that God’s grace is beyond words or comprehension.

I’ve come to realize that Jesus shows up where we least anticipate him. Like the Samaritan woman at the Sychar well (John 4:26), Jesus will surprise us with his presence. I have seen Jesus in a child who is abused, in a veteran who is homeless, in a drug addict, in a grieving parent. Jesus is unassuming, but present.

Jesus commands us to love, not to judge. It is in the application of his love that we find Jesus as he waits for us to love him. ■



Calvin Buquet is a retired police officer and a caseworker for Kent County 18th District Court, Grand Rapids, Mich. He attends Covenant Christian Reformed Church in Cutlerville, Mich.



Living out the Mission

by Matt Kucinski

You add.
God multiplies.

This past month, Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., sent more than 900 graduates out into the world. Some of those alumni are heading to grad school; others are beginning careers in everything from business to international relations, from media studies to sociology.

Calvin graduates are studying and working on all seven continents, in big cities and small towns. And these graduates join thousands of alumni who are carrying forward what they learned at Calvin, taking their vigorous liberal arts education and applying it to their careers and lives.

We asked 10 recent graduates of Calvin College how their education has prepared them for life after college and how they are exemplifying the mission of their alma mater.



Andrew Steiner, 22
English, 2011
Holland,
Michigan

Andrew Steiner works as a fund development specialist for Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank.

“At Calvin you learn that your Christianity should apply to everything you encounter. You can’t compartmentalize your life. You can’t say, ‘My finances are my own, and my faith doesn’t have anything to do with that.’ You can’t say, ‘I’m

just going to watch this movie and pretend my faith doesn’t apply to it.’

“Going into the last year or two at Calvin, I really felt like I wanted to go into nonprofit work. But I didn’t know what that would look like. When I found out about the Feeding America opening, it felt like a good nexus for the things I really started to care about.

“Being a student at Calvin really reinforced the biblical idea that we are not out to get rich or make a name for ourselves, but we are out to serve other people.”



Kobby Appiah-Berko, 25
Electrical
Engineering,
2012
Accra, Ghana

Kobby Appiah-Berko is beginning his career as an analyst for Goldman Sachs, an American multinational investment banking and securities firm.

“I think the understanding that my relevance as a child of God is not just through what I do or the work I do, but it’s through how I live my life: to realize that my gifts and what God has blessed me with is not just for me but the people who come in touch with me.

“I would say I’ll live out the mission in the kind of choices I make and the ethical values I stand for and how I make that clear in my work—keeping integrity at the forefront, being honest and open and caring through my interactions with the people I work with, giving it 100 percent, showing stewardship for any

responsibilities I’m given. These are values that have been embedded in me during my studying at Calvin.”



Phanelle Duchatelier, 22
Interdisciplinary
and Spanish,
2012
Port-au-Prince,
Haiti

Phanelle Duchatelier spent her final semester at Calvin in an internship with the Center for Public Justice in Washington, D.C. She is contemplating whether to pursue post-graduate education or enter the workforce.

“I went to Honduras for my junior year, and it was really a life-changing experience, and for part of the trip I did an internship at ASJ—Association for a Just Society. I became more interested in their development work and what they were doing there. It pushed me to think about what decisions I am making that are affecting the rest of the world.

“At Calvin they focused on that. The idea of sphere sovereignty: that Christ’s lordship expands in every area of your life. Whether in school, at your job, or in politics, every sphere is connected to this big sphere. . . .

“It has pushed me to view my whole life as a Christian. When I’m voting I need to think of myself as a Christian. When I’m thinking of how I pay my tithe or what organizations I decide to support or the amount of time I spend in the shower, I need to think of that from a Christian point of view.” »

Calvin graduates are studying and working on all seven continents.



Alison Rasmussen, 22
Business and Marketing, 2011
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Alison Rasmussen works in the marketing department at Steelcase, Inc., in Grand Rapids, Mich.

“Our world is desperate, and it’s attracted to the things that Calvin’s mission is all about. It’s a winsome story to be in the world but not of the world, acting as an agent of renewal, and I think people are thirsting to see what that means.

“Laura Smit (a Calvin religion professor) gave a talk at Calvin and said something like, ‘Tend your little plot of land,’ and being a kingdom builder isn’t about pursuing goals with selfish ambition or trying to ‘take over the farm.’ It’s about humbly coming before God and asking him, ‘What would you have me do today, Lord?’

“At work, I have my little plot of land, and I’ll do the best I can with it. I’ll do the very best with what God gives me each day.”

“... careers in everything from business to international relations, from media studies to sociology.”



Liz Steele, 22
Secondary Education, English focus, 2012
Lookout Mountain, Georgia

Liz Steele is seeking a secondary-education teaching position.

“I think I can live as an example, regardless of what kind of school I’m in, public or Christian. I can be an example for the people in my community—just by trying to live as Christ did and loving the people around me.

“Teaching is all about serving students, and one of the best parts is when you see a student make a connection and just light up because they understand and enjoy something new that they might have been struggling with before.”



Matt Bushouse, 24
Information Systems, 2011
Silver Spring, Maryland

Matt Bushouse provides Tier-1 IT support for *The Washington Post* in Washington, D.C. He walks past the White House each morning on his way to work.

“The topics that we get into, whether it’s politics or current events, economy, world—I’m just so much more into it, active in it, and I’m able to have so much more of a discussion now after going to Calvin.”



Andrea Lima, 22
Nursing, 2012
Plymouth, Minnesota

Beginning next month, Andrea Lima will be a Staff RN in the rehabilitation unit at the MAYO Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

“Calvin has given me the knowledge to be able to perform my job, but they have given me more than that—they’ve given me the mindset to be able to really provide holistic care for patients and families. . . . My patients are more than just a chart, vitals; they’re people with a story.

“It’s also shown me that you don’t really have to be on a mission field to be a witness or kind of like a missionary.”



Emma Slager, 23
History and Geography, 2011
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Emma Slager is a geography master’s student and graduate teaching fellow at the University of Oregon.

“It gave me a solid foundation of knowledge, empirically and theoretically, that’s been vital to my graduate studies. . . .

“It taught me integrity, regard for all people. There’s something really unique about such a small institution that gave me a certain boldness to believe that I could talk to a vice president or the president, and change might actually come out of it.

“Calvin taught me that everything in this world is shot through with both sin and grace, and that we are all involved in this project of restoration. So, in my research and in my engagement with my city, that means I’m not going to shy away from difficult topics, and I want to treat everyone with whom I interact with the dignity they possess as God’s people. I try to acknowledge the darkness in our lives, but also to insist on hope for redemption and to take seriously my role in that process.”



Nehemiah Chu, 24
Communications/Media Studies, 2011
Hong Kong, China

Nehemiah Chu is an ambassador and employee #2 at Bloomfire, a dot com that started in Kalamazoo two years ago with three people. The company was acquired in November 2011, attracted a \$10 million investment, and now has 22 employees in four locations.

“You meet entrepreneurs who build businesses to make money and entrepreneurs who build businesses to serve. For the latter, money sustains the service—service is the end goal, not money. I’m with the latter. It’s so much more meaningful. Knowing that I’m here to serve helps me wake up with a smile on my face. It keeps me going.

“My destiny is set, so why live in fear? Let’s live a life that has no regrets. For me, that means building businesses. I think I’m good at that. I want my teammates to have a blast 40 hours a week—and to create a service/product that will change the world and create opportunities for others.

“Calvin has given me a lot. I try to pay it forward and respect the Calvin mission by building meaningful companies.”



Kelly Larsen, 22
International Relations, 2012
Decorah, Iowa

Kelly Larsen is working at the CRC’s Office of Social Justice for the next six months, and then she’ll be heading to Lupeni, Romania, to work for New Horizons Foundation, a nonprofit that approaches social capital and capabilities development through experiential education.

“My education has taught me how to desire the kingdom in a way I didn’t know that people could do. It has not only shaped my intellect, but it has shaped my love.

“The Prince of Peace has already come and he is trampling the swords and the plowshares (Isa. 9). And there’s something so awesome that your work is part of that story, and it doesn’t depend on you.

“I think Calvin has it right to say that we are to be agents of renewal, but it doesn’t mean that we are the ones doing the work. We are agents and ambassadors for a kingdom that is already coming. That makes it really exciting to see how the kingdom of God can come into places that are broken.



Matt Kucinski is media relations manager at Calvin College

More to the Story

Calvin College is a distinctively Christian, academically excellent liberal arts college that shapes minds for intentional participation in the renewal of all things.

Throughout the years, Calvin has trained its students to work for renewal wherever God leads them. Today, Calvin graduates live on every continent and they do transformative work in many fields.

Here’s a sampling of some of the places 2011 Calvin College grads are living out their alma mater’s mission:

- Appalachian Mountain Club—Gorham, N.H.
- Apple Store—Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Americorps—Pittsburgh, Pa.
- Carrickmacross Baptist Church—Monaghan, Ireland
- Children’s Memorial Hospital—Chicago, Ill.
- Christian Reformed World Relief Committee—Managua, Nicaragua
- Groupon—Chicago, Ill.
- Herman Miller—Zeeland, Mich.
- Korea Poly School—South Korea
- New City Kids—Jersey City, N.J.
- Partners Worldwide—Tegucigalpa, Honduras
- National Alliance on Mental Illness—Englewood Cliffs, N.J.
- New York Police Department—New York, N.Y.
- Raytheon Missile Systems—Tucson, Ariz.
- Spain Ministry of Education—Madrid, Spain
- Spirit AeroSystems—Wichita, Kan.
- Surrey Christian School—Surrey, British Columbia.
- Texas Instruments—Dallas, Texas
- The American School in Japan—Tokyo, Japan
- The Institute for Global Engagement—Washington, D.C.
- United Ministries—Baltimore, Md.
- Van Andel Research Institute—Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Wycliffe Bible Translators—Orlando, Fla.

—Matt Kucinski

On the Way

“**T**rain a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it” (Prov. 22:6). That’s a proverb most of us have known most of our lives. Just teach youngsters God’s way and, when they are older, God’s way will be their way.

It sounds good—unless there is a child who *does* “turn from it.” Then it is not very consoling to a faithful parent whose child rejects God’s way. What then? Does the promise still hold?

Here’s my own translation of this familiar text, a rendition I came up with years ago after studying the Hebrew text carefully and thoroughly:

Attention everyone!

Rub chewed dates on a child’s palate so he can swallow.

Then feed him in pieces he can chew, so that even when he has a beard or becomes like a she-camel whose lower lip hangs down,

he’ll not forget what he ate or stop eating it.

You have to admit that version gets your attention—and it’s really quite accurate.

The responsibility the text refers to is not that of teachers or parents alone—it’s the community’s responsibility. It’s like an Old Testament version of the baptismal question asked of the congregation: “Do you promise to love this child, pray for this child, instruct this child in the faith, and encourage this child in the fellowship of believers?” The subject of the verb in the sentence is each one who reads it. It is you. It is me. It is all of us. “Attention *everyone!*”

“*Train.*” That’s the task. The original includes the Hebrew word for “mouth” or “palate.” It came from the Hebrew mid-

wives’ habit of taking a bit of chewed date and rubbing it inside a newborn’s mouth to prepare the child to suck and swallow. This training is not programming but preparing, enabling the child to accept what is good for him or her.

And do that “*in the way he should go.*” A more accurate translation would be “after the manner of a child.” The word “child,” by the way, is used in Scripture to refer to almost anyone from an unweaned child to an adult of marriageable age. The idea is to train a child, whether 3 or 23, to swallow, and then to offer the kind of food that is appropriate for his or her age—so I suggest “in pieces he can chew.”

“*And when he is old he will not turn from it.*” The literal reading is “*so that even when he is bearded . . .*” Using the Arabic root behind the Hebrew word, the picture becomes feminine—though perhaps not complimentary: “*like a she-camel whose lower lip hangs down.*”

Behind this is the idea of maturity. The task of the entire community, beginning as soon as possible and continuing as long as possible, is to enable each person to reach a mature faith. The goal is not so much that she will not depart from it, but that this faith will not depart from her. It is not a guarantee but a guideline.

That is the task, the privilege, of each parent and of us all. It is also the task and the privilege of Calvin College. As we reflect on the gifts God has given us in the college and the opportunities God affords us there, let’s pray that the faculty and staff, along with and in addition to us all, will further prepare the next generation to swallow God’s truth and its implications in such a way that, when they’re old enough to shave or even begin to sag, their appetite for God’s truth will only increase. ■



“The goal is not so much that she will not depart from it, but that this faith will not depart from her.”



Rev. Joel Boot is executive director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

God Answers Prayers in India

Manga was working in a kiosk in a marketplace in the Jammu region of India when he overheard what sounded like a familiar voice talking with a nearby group of men.

Manga rushed over and said to the man, “Sir, it seems I have met you somewhere. Your voice is very familiar.”

“I do not know,” replied the man, whose name is Sadiq. “Maybe you heard me on the radio, since I speak on a program every evening.”

Sadiq is a program producer with Back to God Ministries International’s media partner in India.

Manga immediately connected Sadiq’s voice with the Hindi radio program he had heard.

Sadiq asked Manga if he understood what he had heard on the program. “Yes,” Manga responded, “but I am a Sikh. I do not believe in Christianity.”

As they spoke, Manga felt compelled to say, “My father is quite old and is suffering from cancer. The doctor has said he will survive for only a few more days.”

Sadiq expressed his sadness over this.

Then Manga, thinking of the words on the radio spoken by this man, went on, “You preach that Jesus can heal. If he heals my father, I will accept the Christian faith.”

Sadiq felt convicted to instruct Manga to pray to Jesus for healing for his father. Manga went home and prayed as he was told.

That was five years ago. Recently, Manga contacted Sadiq to report that his father had just passed away. He also said that although his father continued to have cancer, he lived five years longer than the doctors had predicted.

Through this experience, Manga became a strong believer in Jesus Christ. His father also became a believer before his death.

Hearing of Manga’s experience, BTGMI’s Hindi ministry leaders were encouraged in their work. It was a reminder that “God’s ways are mysterious, and the Holy Spirit works in hearts in a way nobody knows.” ■

—Nancy VanderMeer,
Back to God Ministries International



Manga

Building Homes and Hope in the Mountains of Haiti



Daniel Joseph and his family lived in an improvised tent for nearly two years.

The massive earthquake that hit the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince and the surrounding area in January 2010 wiped out the home in which Daniel Joseph was living with his wife and five children.

About 250,000 deaths have been attributed to the quake.

Like many of the more than one million people displaced by the disaster, Daniel, 27, and his family had to find another home.

With nothing to keep him in Port-au-Prince, Daniel moved his family back to the rural mountain community of Cablen in Leogane. They lived in a small, leaky tent constructed from tarpaulins—a tent made even more crowded when a new baby arrived.

Two years later, the family was still housed in this temporary shelter. Living so far from where the relief efforts were centered, Daniel wondered whether he and his loved ones would ever sleep under a real roof again.

Then he and others in the same situation came into contact with Christian Reformed World Relief Committee workers who were in the area providing training, seeds, livestock, and other supplies to Haitian farmers as part of the Life Restoration Program.

When CRWRC discovered that Daniel and other families were in need of housing, they began partnerships with local community leaders, carpenters, and masons.

As they went to work, CRWRC and its partners faced several challenges. Transporting materials on the narrow, steep, rough terrain was difficult. And putting up homes on the slope of a mountain was not easy.

But they kept at it, helped by Daniel and others. When the work was done, Daniel’s family had a new home.

—Adele Konyndyk,
CRWRC Communications

Mentoring Enlivens Filipino Pastors and Churches

Nine years ago, Pastor James Ramos was about to give up being a minister.

His church in Binmaley, Pangasinan, the Philippines, had only 15 to 20 members and seemed to be stagnant.

Meanwhile, he was experiencing personal struggles and felt buried by regret, denial, bitterness, and depression.

Then, Ramos says, he found new life through One Degree Ministries, a biblical worldview mentorship program begun several years ago by Bob Harris, a Christian Reformed World Missions missionary in the Philippines.



One Degree Ministry leaders

Harris started the program because he noticed that many Filipino pastors had an underdeveloped biblical view of themselves and of the world.

“Filipino pastors have been taught or inherited a gospel that is primarily understood as a series of doctrines or spiritual beliefs,” says Bob.

“One is judged to be a good Christian or pastor if he or she knows and can systematically line up certain theological ducks in a row.”

Many Filipino pastors have understood the focus of Christianity as a mandate to act morally while waiting for the return of Christ.

The challenge comes when church leaders make mistakes. Pastors know they’ve sinned, but they won’t admit it, believing that they are beyond help. Fearing gossip and condemnation, they try to keep up appearances, but cracks emerge, hinting at what lies beneath. »

Plantinga Delivers Princeton Lecture Series

Rev. Cornelius “Neal” Plantinga Jr., retired president and professor emeritus of theology at Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS), presented the prestigious Warfield Lecture Series in late March at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Titled “Reading for Preaching: The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists,” Plantinga’s lectures drew from the wide range of “imaginative reading” he has done for more than 40 years, ever since he pastored his first church.

Plantinga also spoke about the importance of being a keen observer of everyday interactions and a curious, lifelong learner.



Neal Plantinga

The lecture series is named in honor of Annie Kinkead Warfield, wife of Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, a professor of theology at the seminary from 1887 to 1921.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of people, Plantinga says, he has always turned first to reading the Bible.

But he has also tried to expand his capacity for compassion by reading novels of all kinds, as well as nonfiction books and articles on myriad topics and on hundreds of people and their experiences.

Writers and other artists help preachers see and feel the complexity of life and help them speak to people in their congregations about the Bible in ways that can touch, comfort, and encourage them, Plantinga said.

In his lectures, Plantinga said that reading forms his sermons. But he uses the reading as background information, referring sparingly to novels and other books, since his focus is always on the Bible and on God’s mercy, righteousness, and grace.

Reading both the Bible and other materials with an intuitive and discerning eye, he said, can awaken a preacher both to ambiguity and to enduring truths in the world, and the need to keep those in mind when standing in the pulpit.

“One of the reasons for reading is to discover [that] life is way more complicated, merciful, horrible, messed-up, decent, and full of grace than you had imagined,” he said in an interview before the lecture.

“You also are able to see how God’s grace keeps showing up in the most unpredictable people in the most unappealing circumstances.” ■

—Chris Meehan,
CRC Communications

You add.
God multiplies.

“Because God’s nourishing sap of life isn’t able to freely flow into us, we begin to dry up and wither. And thus, our ministry becomes void of God’s enabling power,” says Harris.

One Degree Ministries brings small groups of church leaders together to dig deep into the Bible. Leaders also pray for each other, confess their sins to one another, and discuss how to apply the Scriptures to their lives.

In the process, they draw nearer to God, recognizing that they have already been saved by grace and forgiven for whatever they have done, and their faith compels them into further service for God.

As pastors have allowed God to work in every part of their lives, they have found renewed joy in ministry—and their churches have started to grow.

One Degree Ministries, begun by Harris with one group, now has 13 leaders working with pastors from over 100 churches.

Pastor Ramos says One Degree Ministries helped him to discover his value and forgiveness in Christ. It has given him a new outlook on life.

Ramos’s faith has moved him into action in his community. He now works with over 250 government officials in his city on values transformation trainings.

Among other things, the group has started a scholarship fund for deserving students to attend the university of their choice.

“When a pastor and his leaders start to understand God’s biblical worldview, then amazing things start to occur in their lives, ministries, and local communities,” says Harris.

“We take no credit for making these things happen. We are not the ones doing them. They are occurring because God is honoring their commitment, their faith, their prayers.” ■

—Sarah Van Stempvoort,
Christian Reformed World Missions

Called to Serve, Called to Lead

Ryan Wallace, a Calvin Theological Seminary student and aspiring church planter, says his journey really started with a man named Bruce, a client at the software company Ryan used to own.

Bruce didn’t seem to care very much about business success, but his life was one of godly character and integrity. He discussed tirelessly his love for people and bringing glory to God in everything he did.

As it turns out, Bruce was one of several people, including pastors, businesspeople, and professors, who have in one way or another mentored Ryan and spoken “truth into my life,” he says.

“Bruce’s example was compelling,” says Ryan.

“I wanted God to work in my life the way he was working in Bruce’s life.”

A passionate follower of Christ, Ryan says he had felt God tugging him for a long time, yet wasn’t sure in what direction.

Meeting Bruce, a man who tried to bring the glory of God into everything he did, helped Ryan to finally realize what God wanted of him—to use his entrepreneurial and training gifts to equip followers of Christ.

To do this, though, he would need to sell his software company and go to seminary. Unsure of what to do, he trusted God’s call, sold the company, and entered seminary. He also began volunteering at his church, Evergreen Ministries in Hudsonville, Mich.

After a year, Ryan became director of discipleship at Evergreen and found opportunities to teach, preach, train, and walk alongside people facing challenges.

As he nears the end of his seminary training, Ryan has decided to take what he has learned, along with his experiences, and share them with others, training and developing church leaders through church planting.

Ryan is currently president of the Seminary’s Church Planting Club. This summer he will start a Christian Reformed Home Missions-supported summer internship at Grace Reformed Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan, a two-year-old church with 300 members.

During the internship, he plans on preaching, leading adult education, and developing leaders.

After his internship and completion of seminary, Ryan plans on planting a church. He eventually hopes to help to train, develop, and send leaders wherever God wants them go. Over time, he hopes to plant other churches as well.

Ryan and his wife, Rebekah, have been married for almost seven years, and they have a new daughter, Hannah. Together they are listening to God’s leading as they try to walk faithfully each day.

As he looks to his future in ministry, Ryan says he has come to see that everyone’s story belongs to God.

He has also realized how grateful he is that he can be an ambassador of God through retelling his story “and how it is a part of God’s grander story.” ■

—Laura Posthumus, Christian Reformed Home Missions



Ryan Wallace

Something Fishy



Can you solve this riddle?

*I live in the water.
I swim with much skill.
My skin is scaly.
I breathe through my gills.
Sometimes I am a delicious dish.
If you've guessed correctly,
you know I'm a _____!*

Did you guess *fish*? If so, you're right! Did you know that there are more miraculous stories in the Bible that involve fish than any other animal? It's true! Read on to find out!

One Big Fish

In the Bible, a man named Jonah found out what fish look like from the inside! To protect him from drowning in a stormy sea, God sent a big fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah stayed inside the belly of the fish for three days and nights! You can read all about it in the book of Jonah.



ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY

Go Fishing!

Peter and his brother, Andrew, were fishermen. One day Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people." That meant that Jesus wanted them to help tell other people about him.

When we become followers of Jesus, it's our job to help other people learn more about Jesus. So the next time you talk to a neighbor, a friend, or a relative about the wonderful love of God, remember that you are going fishing!



Money Miracles

One day some temple tax collectors asked the disciple Peter if Jesus had paid a tax to the local temple. Later that day, Jesus told Peter to throw out a line and pull in the first fish he caught. In the fish's mouth was a four-drachma coin to pay for the temple tax!



FuN Facts

Have you ever wondered why so many miracles from the Bible involve fish? These little swimmers are a lot cooler than you may think. Let's take a look at some interesting fishy facts!

Scientists estimate that there are **20,000 to 30,000 different types** of fish. That's more than mammals, reptiles, and amphibians combined!

The world's largest fish (not including whales, which are mammals) is a **whale shark**. These enormous fish can grow up to 65 feet (20 m) long and weigh over 50,000 pounds (23,000 kg)!

The world's smallest fish has a very long name—**Paedocypris progenetica**. These tiny creatures swim in Indonesian swamps, and are only one-third of an inch (7.9 mm) long!

Some of the most common fish in the **Sea of Galilee** (where the disciples did a lot of fishing) are sardines, carp, and musht (also called "tilapia").

Female **musht fish** lay eggs and then hold those eggs in their mouths until the baby fish hatch. Musht are also known to swallow pebbles, bottle caps, and coins. Some people believe that when Peter found the coin in a fish's mouth, that fish could have been a musht.



A Boatload of Fish

One day after Jesus had been teaching people on the lakeshore, he asked Simon Peter and his friends to catch some fish. They had fished all night the night before, but they hadn't caught a single fish. But they tried again. When they pulled in the net, it was bursting with squirming fish! They caught so many fish that the boat even began to sink. That's a boatload of fish!

A Fishy Treat

Try this delicious fishy treat! (Ask for an adult's help with using the stove.)



What you'll need:

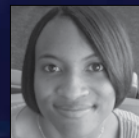
- 1 package of "Berry Blue" Jell-O
- 1 ¼ cups boiling water
- a glass baking pan (rectangle shape)
- 1 package of colorful gummy fish

What you do:

- Boil the water in a small pan. Add the Jell-O and stir until it dissolves. Remove the pan from the heat, and pour the mixture into a glass baking pan.
- Cover the pan with plastic wrap and refrigerate for half an hour. Then remove the plastic wrap and poke the gummy fish down into the Jell-O so they look like they're swimming.
- Refrigerate until the Jell-O is firm (three hours or overnight). Then enjoy this tasty treat with a friend!

One Big Picnic

Can you imagine feeding a huge stadium full of 5,000 people with just ONE peanut butter-and-jelly sandwich? Jesus fed more than 5,000 people with one boy's small lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish. That was a miracle! All the people ate until they were full, and afterward the disciples collected twelve baskets of leftover food.



Christin Baker is a full-time stay-at-home mom who also writes for Faith Alive. She is a member of Resurrection Fellowship Church in Grand Rapids, Mich.



Love Lessons

FROM THE SONG OF SONGS

SCRIPTURE has much to say about God's purpose for marriage. But one book reveals more of the joy, beauty, and sacredness of marriage than any other: the Song of Songs. One of the oldest books in the Bible, the Song vividly and brightly unfolds how the bridegroom and the bride delight in each other.

In the Song of Songs, God has given us a divine manual on romantic relationships, taking us from the initial attraction between a couple through courtship, deepening intimacy, and marriage. What is God's desire and plan for husbands and wives? What are God's love lessons from the Song of Songs? Here are four lessons from this book that reveal God's heart for marriage.

1. Love Is Mutual

The two-way conversation in this book is between a man and a woman who are deeply in love. Each contributes to the relationship. Each desires the other. Their love is reciprocal.

Playfully, delightedly, the man and woman describe each other and respond to these descriptions. They invite each other to enjoy and partake in their love; nothing can stand in the way of its fulfillment. And behind their words is a deep desire to build each other up.

The woman initiates the conversation in this book and expresses her eagerness first: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth . . . take me away with you—let us hurry!" (1:1, 4). We may think of women in the Middle East as being prudish, silently

hiding behind veils. But this woman has a level of desire and passion every bit as powerful as the man's. He is the focus of all her desire and passionate longing.

The man addresses her with a tender compliment, looking past her own perceived flaws to praise her beauty. Then he urges her to follow the tracks of his sheep as she brings her young goats to a place where they can be together, pointing to a place of common ground in the tending of their flocks. It may be that opposites attract, but mutual enjoyment of shared interests creates stability in a relationship.

The joyous repartee of the couple's mutual admiration in 1:15-2:3 signals their growing intimacy. She calls him "beloved"; he reciprocates with "darling." She describes herself as a "rose of Sharon"

and a “lily of the valley.” In those days, both were common, everyday blossoms not especially noted for their beauty. She is modestly saying, “I’m not so pretty—really kind of average.” After which the man lifts her up: to him she is like a lily among thorns; her beauty far outclasses that of all others. She then repays his compliment with one of her own: compared to all of the young men, he is like a refreshing apple tree that is far more desirable than all the trees of the forest.

can only go to its rightful owner. Sex without marriage cannot compare with the joy of giving yourself completely to the beloved.

This language of exclusivity is expressed in something like a marriage vow: “My beloved is mine and I am his.” This phrase, often used by Jewish brides at weddings, is a statement of possession. It represents an exclusive covenant between a man and a woman who are saying to each other, “There is not much you can count on in

foundation on which husbands and wives build intimacy.

4. Love Is Beautiful

Song of Songs is a celebration of the beauty of the marriage relationship. “My beloved spoke and said to me, ‘Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me’” (2:10). The beauty of their relationship does not consist in physical outward beauty, but rather in the inward beauty of character and in the spiritual dimen-

LIKE FINE WINE, BEAUTY INCREASES WITH AGE AS GOD CONFORMS US MORE AND MORE INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.

This scene highlights an important part of a healthy marriage: constructive conversation between a husband and a wife. Compliments cultivate love, but criticism inhibits growth.

2. Love Is Exclusive

Sexual intimacy between a husband and wife is a beautiful experience that expresses their oneness and the love they have for one another.

The Song of Songs teaches that love within marriage produces genuine sexual liberation—not liberation *from* marriage, but liberation *in* marriage. The most explicitly erotic passage in the entire book, chapters 7:1-8:4, depicts the vibrant sexual intimacy of the man and the woman as a married couple. Here they enjoy the fruit of their love: “I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me. Come, my beloved . . . let us go early to the vineyards . . . there I will give you my love” (7:10-12).

Continuing the verbal and physical foreplay, the man uses the images of a locked garden and a sealed fountain to celebrate his beloved’s virginity. “You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain” (4:12). The garden suggests privacy, separation, sacredness, and security. A “sealed fountain” is protected; its water

this world—health, money, career, looks—but you can count on me. I will not give my heart and body to anyone else in the way I give it to you.”

3. Love Is Total

Love is not just physical. Love is a commitment of heart, mind, soul, and body. The Song reminds us that the man and woman become one in every way, not just in the most obvious physical way. The woman says, “This is my beloved, this is my friend” (5:16). The two share erotic love, but they also share hopes, dreams, and aspirations as companions in life.

Friendship is the foundation of biblical love. In one study, couples were asked to rank a list of possible goals for their marriage. The single most important goal listed was to have a friend in one’s partner. This should not be surprising. God himself said, “It is not good for the man to be alone—I will make a helper suitable for him” (Gen. 2:18). A spouse who is a real friend is a loyal companion who “loves at all times” (Prov. 17:17).

This companionship is expressed by the man, who calls his lover “my sister, my bride” (4:9). She is not just a lover, she is also a friend. This friendship, together with the worship of God, is the

sion of their relationship expressed in their commitment to God and his design for marriage. Each sees the other person as a beautiful gift of God. Like fine wine, beauty increases with age as God conforms us more and more into the image of Christ and makes us beautiful.

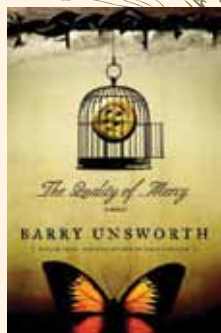
Ultimately, though, the Song of Songs makes us yearn for Christ. When Christ comes again, he will gather his bride, the church, from around the world to make ready for the wedding. “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9). This important New Testament passage, together with the Song of Songs, makes us yearn for the day when all of our relationships—married or single—will be governed by perfect love.

Revelation 19 points us to the day when no desire will be left unsatisfied, and we will finally fulfill the purpose for which we were made—to be with God in unbroken fellowship. The joy we celebrate at wedding feasts today will be surpassed when the church feasts with Christ face to face. ■



Dan Kroeze is a professor of biblical studies at Kuyper College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Soak up a Story This Summer

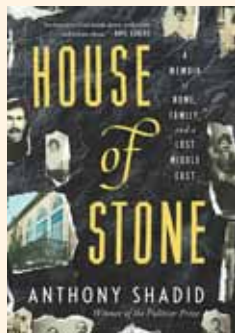


The Quality of Mercy

by Barry Unsworth

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

This deeply moving novel explores the role mercy and justice play in the historical dynamics shaping England in 1767. Erasmus Kemp, the son of a slave ship owner who committed suicide, fights a legal battle against abolitionists who defy the predominant “worship of property” that allows the sale of slaves, human beings made in God’s image. At the same time, Kemp is drawn into the lives of miners in northern England’s coal mines as they face imprisonment of another kind. Each of Unsworth’s characters, drawn with compassion and complexity, faces a choice to offer mercy or to refrain from doing so. (Doubleday)

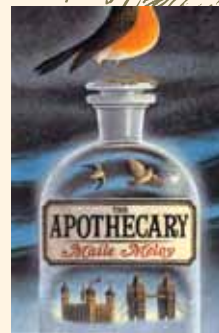


House of Stone

by Anthony Shadid

reviewed by Jim Romahn

Reporter Anthony Shadid rebuilt his family home more as a search for roots than a reconstruction project. This home is a symbol of generations of hope and tenacity that defy the destructive violence of civil war and grinding poverty in a crossroads community in Lebanon near borders with Syria and Israel. “Did I tell you our house in Marjayoun is older than America? Four hundred years. It might sound silly, but I’m proud of it. Get help and give help. Human values, not money values, technological values, machine values. This culture matters to us.” (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

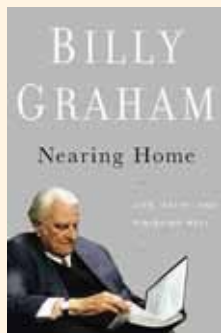


The Apothecary

by Maile Meloy

reviewed by Kathryn Hoffman

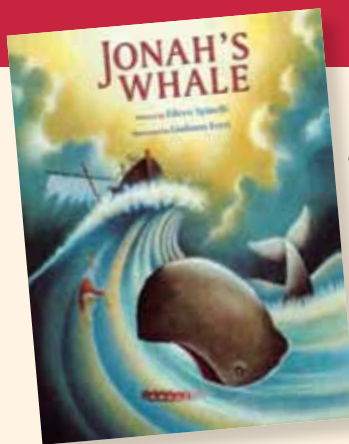
In England during the 1950s, teens Janie and Benjamin must use ancient natural recipes to concoct brews that will help them save the world from the threat of nuclear disaster. Using an international cast of characters, this young adult novel touches on post-WWII politics, but not enough to bog down younger readers. Despite the looming threat of nuclear war, many humorous interactions and situations keep the book light and fun to read. Ages 10 and up. (Putnam)



Nearing Home: Life, Faith, and Finishing Well

by **Billy Graham**
reviewed by **Sonya VanderVeen Feddema**

Billy Graham, world-renowned preacher and evangelist, notes that as a Christian he was taught how to die, but not how to grow old. Because of health issues, Graham never expected to live into his 90s. But now that he has, he wants to encourage both young and old to explore biblical guidelines for walking with God and examples of elderly people whom God blessed and used to further the coming of his kingdom. Graham's realistic portrayal of the negative challenges of old age is balanced by a hopeful, faith-filled picture of God's purpose for each person, no matter what age. (Thomas Nelson)



Jonah's Whale

by **Eileen Spinelli**
reviewed by **Sandy Swartzentruber**

Have you ever thought about Jonah's story from the fish's perspective? Eileen Spinelli has. With poetic text and luminous deep-sea illustrations beautifully rendered in watercolor and colored pencil by Giuliano Ferri, *Jonah's Whale* is a refreshing new take on a story many know by heart. While it understandably minimizes the terror Jonah must have felt, this book provides food for thought. Ages 3 and up. (Eerdmans)



Flame of Resistance

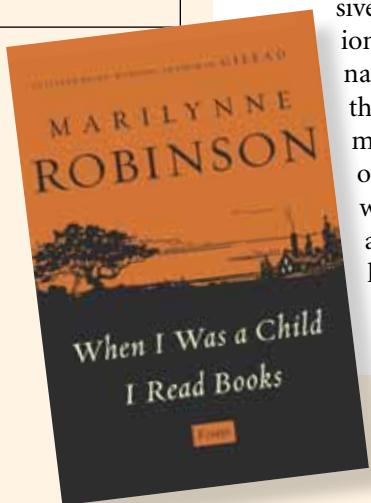
by **Tracy Groot**
reviewed by **Lorilee Craker**

Rahab was a great hero of the faith, yet she often gets glossed over because of her scandalous profession. In Tracy Groot's "impressionistic retelling," the artful novelist renames her Brigitte and sets her in World War II France as a spy for the French Resistance. Scrupulously researched and lovingly written, *Flame of Resistance* plunges the reader into an exhilarating story of courage, grace, and one endearing woman's leap of faith. (Tyndale House)

When I Was a Child I Read Books

by **Marilynne Robinson**
reviewed by **Phil Christman Jr.**

The country's best novelist reminds us once again why she's also the country's best essayist in this impassioned defense of public education, the Hebrew Bible, progressive income taxes, thinking, and other unfashionable causes. Ranging across topics from the national debt to the Idaho public schools to the craters on Mercury—not to mention her mainstay, John Calvin—Robinson both insists on and, in her rich, clear style, demonstrates what readers of Thoreau and Twain have always known to be true: that pressing public issues deserve to be discussed in a language that aims for poetry and rarely misses. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)



Catch Me When I Fall

by **Patricia Westerhof**
reviewed by **Joanne Booy**

Enter into the fictional Dutch immigrant community of Poplar Grove. Westerhof includes details in these short stories that are typical of this subculture, like meatball soup with Maggi and eating peppermints in church. But she also portrays how cultures and generations can collide. In tackling various social issues, she gives a poignant insight into the consequences of "ungrace" in relationships. People are broken and fallen and need to be caught by God's grace and redemption, if not by one another. (Brindle & Glass)



The Ex-Nun Poems

by **Jeanine Hathaway**
reviewed by **Adele Konyndyk**

Jeanine Hathaway's latest poetry collection attends to everyday enflishments of the Trinity with playful reverence. This ex-nun senses God in the serenity of the desert monastery, where "monks file outside / in the fullness of their insular habits." She sees Christ in a comic book creator's "roar of blood and water." Tucked into her nun's headgear are "small feathers, from / the Holy Spirit." Through peculiar, precise imagery and spare, vibrant language, Hathaway proves that our whole world—from the pool to the zoo to the prison—is bustling with holy mystery. (Finishing Line Press)





Just a Second

by Steve Jenkins
reviewed by Gwen Marra

Steve Jenkins has done it again! In *Just a Second*, Jenkins combines the abstract concept of time with interesting scientific facts to make time tangible for kids. Moving from seconds to hours, weeks, years, and longer, Jenkins explores time through animal appetites, migration, and lifespans. The torn- and cut-paper illustrations paired with engaging text draw the reader in. The book briefly addresses the history of the universe from an evolutionary point of view, but this may be an opportunity to address personal beliefs regarding creation and reading critically. Check it out—you will be glad you did! Ages 4 and up. (Houghton Mifflin)



The One and Only Ivan

by Katherine Applegate
reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Ivan the gorilla has lived at the Exit 8 Big Top Mall and Video Arcade for 27 years. His owner tells him that he has lost his magic. Disheartened, Ivan depends on his friends: Stella the elephant, Bob the dog, and Ruby, a kidnapped baby elephant. When tragedy strikes Stella, Ivan makes a brave promise to her, though he's not sure how he'll keep it. But love and fortitude spur him on. This juvenile novel was inspired by a real gorilla named Ivan who was captured in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and now lives at Zoo Atlanta. Ages 8 and up. (HarperCollins)



The Barbarian Nurseries

by Héctor Tobar
reviewed by Kristy Quist

Tight finances force Scott and Maureen Torres-Thompson to make some cuts, and their maid, Araceli, is left to take up the slack. One day she wakes up to find that Scott and Maureen have disappeared, leaving her alone with their sons. This fascinating novel is not just about one household, but the entire city of Los Angeles. Author and journalist Héctor Tobar gives readers a layered view of undocumented immigration, examining the complexities of the problem and shedding light on the way that individual experience influences the way we interpret circumstances. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life

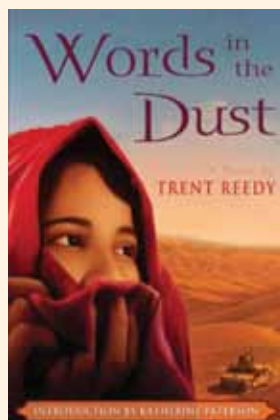
by James Martin
reviewed by Adele Konyndyk

Have you even been scolded for treating the spiritual life too . . . lightly? In *Between Heaven and Mirth*, James Martin observes that Christians often diminish—and even condemn—joy, humor, and laughter. But, says this Jesuit priest, these “are spiritual gifts that we ignore at our peril.” Through personal anecdotes, stories of biblical characters, insights from famous spiritual leaders, and actual jokes, Martin celebrates “holy humor” as a means of humbling ourselves, welcoming others, and glorifying a joyful God. (HarperOne)



Words in the Dust

by Trent Reedy
reviewed by Jenny deGroot



“Trent Reedy has given me an Afghan friend,” writes Katherine Paterson in the foreword of this book. Every reader will find a new friend in Zulaikha. Her name means “brilliant beauty,” but Zulaikha finds no beauty in herself. Only when lost in an ancient world of poetry is Zulaikha able to imagine that she does not have a cleft palate hidden beneath her chador. When the newly-arrived American military offers a promise of surgery for Zulaikha, her spirits soar. Reedy was stationed in Afghanistan with the U.S. Army from 2004 to 2010. Because the subject matter is raw and painful, this book is best suited for mature adolescent readers. Ages 10 and up. (Arthur A. Levine)



[MORE REVIEWS ONLINE](#)

FAQs

Justice

Q My son wants a job that promotes social justice, but we wonder whether he will be able to support family, church, and Christian school. Any thoughts?

A In addition to looking for a good job with good pay, many young people are searching for employers who take social and environmental responsibilities seriously. That is a good thing. Students in business administration, for example, now study ethics and the environment as well as how to run a business.

In Reformed terms, the expanding focus on corporate social responsibility is the gospel penetrating into the world of business and employment. Along with a growing demand for products that are produced responsibly, there are more tools to help consumers and investors make responsible choices. These are moving from fringe alternatives to significant economic forces—and that is where Christians who care about justice can be effective agents of economic change.

Biblical justice calls us to be as concerned about how we create wealth as about how we use that wealth to support good causes. A more just economic system will mean significant changes in our ways of living and our current models of church and school. My children and grandchildren will live a very different life, but it can be a good life—perhaps better. My generation integrated faith questions into home, church, and school, but less in economic and political life. I pray that the next generation will be creative in facing the challenges that biblical teachings about justice and care for the environment put before us, and that lifestyle expectations do not hold them back.

—Kathy Vandergrift

Kathy Vandergrift teaches public ethics to university students and advocates for the rights of children.

My children and grandchildren will live a very different life, but it can be a good life—perhaps better.

Faith Formation

Q I'm a high school youth group leader. I've noticed that Sunday school and catechism teachers as well as Cadet and GEMS counselors receive significant support, while we receive none. Sometimes our (all-volunteer) team feels quite lost. Where do we go for support?

A Funny you should ask: I'm a youth group volunteer, and our team frequently asks the same question. Answering your question requires looking back, looking around, and looking ahead.

Thirty years ago the situation was simpler: Faith Alive Christian Resources (then CRC Publications) provided Sunday school and catechism curriculum, GEMS and Cadets provided detailed program support, and churches ran discussion-based youth groups enhanced by Youth Unlimited's convention and monthly magazine *Insight*. Youth pastors didn't exist.

Today GEMS and Cadets still provide strong program support, and YU continues to run special events. Faith Alive's excellent resources are competing with an explosion of materials on the web.

A great deal of wonderful youth ministry is happening around the CRC, but I see the lack of centralized support as a denominational embarrassment.

Looking ahead: six years ago the RCA formed a new position called "Coordinator for Discipleship" to provide the type of support your team and mine would be blessed by. I'm not sure exactly what we need in our context. Maybe it's time to begin brainstorming.

—Syd Hielema

Syd Hielema is a professor of religion and theology at Redeemer University College in Ancaster,

Ontario, and a member of the CRC's Synodical Faith Formation Study Committee.

Outreach

Q A close friend of mine who grew up in the church says she is no longer a believer. Some see it as my job to "bring her back," but I always believed "once saved, always saved." What should I do?

A The best thing you can do is pray for your friend and allow your own faith to shine in the way you continue to care for and love her. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to have a conversation that reconciles her difficulty with faith. Perhaps not.

One of the worst things such former believers face is our attempts to "pull them back in." This approach communicates that they are now no longer one of "us" and that they need to return to where we are. That attitude only confirms to them that they have made the right choice.

More helpful is trying to understand from your friend's perspective how she came to see faith in God as a hindrance to moving forward. It may be an emotionally-based reaction (God wasn't there when X happened), an intellectually-based decision (I can't believe in God when science says X), or some combination of these and other reasons.

As for whether or not such a person is "always saved," well, that's up to God. God desires an active, living connection with each one of us, including your friend. That's reason enough to keep your own relationship with her strong.

—Bryan Berghoef

Bryan Berghoef is pastor of Watershed Church, a Christian Reformed church plant in Traverse City, Mich. ■

Ten Years In: Lessons and Challenges

THIS SUMMER my husband, Chris, celebrates 10 years in the ministry. Back in July 2002, Chris stood in front of synod to be approved as a minister of the Word. I stood in the audience holding our daughter Arwen, proud that after five years of study and near-poverty, we were about to start something new. Chris would be the one called by a congregation, but we would be answering that call as a family, and all our lives would change. Here are some of the lessons and challenges we've encountered in our ministry since then.

Lesson 1: Your family and friends will not always understand the choices you make to follow God's call.

After spending the summer looking over church profiles, reading between the lines of mission statements, and visiting congregations, we packed up or sold nearly all we owned and moved to a small town in Alberta. My mother was horrified. She'd never dreamed that Chris's call would take us so very far from her. Our Grand Rapids friends wondered why, with dozens of Christian Reformed churches in town, we were going so far away.

Challenge 1: You might find yourself doing things you never expected to do.

When our first church told us that they were calling Chris, we were surprised. They hadn't met us or even set up a phone interview. While we were in awe of their confidence, we told them we would have to visit before making our decision. Chris had just turned down a call from another church because, while the church seemed like a good fit on paper, when we visited we realized that the church was deeply divided. It was not the right church for us to start off in ministry.

This church, on the other hand, was far from everyone and everything that was familiar to us. But after meeting the



congregation, we realized that God really *was* calling us all the way out there. The church leadership was supportive and united. They carefully built Chris up as a leader and gave me room to figure out how I might be involved in ministry. Being away from our friends and family also made us depend on each other in ways we'd never had to before. It gave us room to create our own family traditions and identity.

Challenge 2: It can be very easy to be alone in a crowd.

When a pastor's family moves into a new community, there are plenty of people

interested in making them feel welcome and at home. It's not hard to meet other families with children or to get recommendations for a good babysitter. People extend invitations for coffee or dinner and generally make the effort to include the pastor's family in their lives.

But it's easy to end up feeling alone. I was part of a weekly women's Bible study. I had lots of people to talk to and spend time with. I learned to sew, can, knit, and garden from all these lovely ladies. But while they were mentors and companions, they were not friends in the deepest sense of the word. Even five years in, I hadn't known the difference—not until the day

After five years of study and near-poverty, we were about to start something new.

Linda, the Coffee Break leader, asked God to bring me friends during our intercessory prayer time. I hadn't realized how lonely I had been in the crowd, but she had.

Lesson 2: A pastor support team can make all the difference.

At our second church, the very first thing we asked for was a pastor support team. We meet regularly; they listen and pray with Chris and me and serve as sounding boards and intercessors. They hold our pains and hurts in confidence, and they know us well enough to laugh and pray with us when we need them to. They see us for who we are beyond the roles we inhabit.

Lesson 3: Confidentiality is crucial, and it will affect your home life.

One of the hardest things about being married to a pastor is dealing with situations of a confidential nature. We've learned how to work around the issue by addressing the stress. It is enough to know that there is something really tough going on without knowing the specifics.

Confidentiality is one of the biggest responsibilities of a pastor and is often a great gift to the congregation. Sometimes church members will assume that I know what is going on in their life because they told Chris about it. But it is better to assume that if you have shared something in confidence with the pastor, the spouse will have no idea about it whatsoever.

Challenge 3: You need to love your church and its members even when they are unlovable.

To protect myself and my ability to remain on good terms with my fellow church members, I choose not to attend congregational meetings. Sometimes people forget that real people fill the roles of pastors and church support staff. Dispassionate conversations about salaries or benefits—without recognition of the number of hours worked, meetings attended, and

family times missed—is not something a pastor's family should have to hear. It isn't that I don't care deeply about our church; it's that I care a *lot*.

Challenge 4: Find your own way to contribute.

Our very first church posting was a summer assignment in Ontario. As a United States citizen in Canada, I couldn't work, so I spent my days reading and exploring the area. Every summer, the youth group participated in a Christian service program, spending four days a week cleaning, painting, and sorting items at ministries and service organizations. One of the organizers asked Chris if I would help drive the kids to the beach on their day off. Chris knew better than to answer for me. Instead, he encouraged the person to ask me directly. I was happy to help, but happier to be asked.

Lesson 4: Learn to say no.

As a pastor's wife, I have encountered people who simply assume my participation in church activities. But I have to remember to be a wife too, and sometimes that means saying no to worthwhile endeavors. That's why I sometimes scoot out of the fellowship hall to take Chris and the kids home and why I insist that our family time be respected.

As a family, we have made several choices to protect ourselves from running ragged. We sometimes say no to delightful invitations because we need to be home to recharge. We insist on a day of rest every week. And we let dinnertime phone calls go to voicemail. Those are small things, but they keep our family together.

Lesson 5: Be kind to yourself and to your spouse.

In ministry, we tend to be our own harshest critics. No one else knows better how much more you could have done or how

you wished it had been done better. No one else is as aware as you of how noisy your children are being. Chris used to have me read his sermons. But we've discovered that there are enough critics out there, and so I no longer sit around grading his efforts. That is not to say that we always agree, or that my opinion isn't valued, but I try to listen with a different ear.

Challenge 5: Notice and appreciate those around you.

The church is filled with people who do simple things every day to keep it running. Elders and deacons serve the church, usually after putting in a full day of work. The custodian and the sound crew work behind the scenes. Often we only notice their contributions when something goes amiss: the wrong song number is listed in the bulletin or someone's name is misspelled.

It's important to take the time to say thank you. Appreciate the work others do on your behalf, visiting the sick, making meals, and planning worship. Harsh words of criticism often stay in people's minds much longer than words of praise. They come back in moments of stress and weakness, diminishing their confidence and their motivation to serve. So next time you see someone serving, remember to thank them and let them know how much you appreciate them!

I am incredibly thankful for the many opportunities to serve we have been given over the last 10 years. The challenge is to remember what a gift it is to serve. ■



Ana Canino-Fluit lives in Penfield, N.Y and is a member at Rochester Christian Reformed Church. She is the librarian at Rochester Christian School, mother of two amazing girls, and somehow ended up married to a pastor after getting engaged to a Calvin theater student.

Trouble in River City

A FEW WEEKS AGO I VISITED ANOTHER CHURCH in our community. In many ways it was very similar to my own church. But something happened during the sermon that made me realize that this was not a church I could feel at home in.

Somewhere in the course of that sermon, the pastor started talking about people who apparently were unhappy about something at that church. He called them “grumblers.” He also included a reference to spiritual warfare, leaving the impression that he saw the presence of grumblers as a form of spiritual attack on the leadership of the church—which may have been the case.

Then again, it could have been an indication that there were people in that church who had different tastes in music and worship style, different ministry priorities, different perspectives—people who felt like their gifts and contributions were not appreciated.

In my church, such differences are readily acknowledged. It is simply assumed, at all levels of church leadership, that people who are at different points in their spiritual journey and who come from different backgrounds with different church experiences will see things differently. Such differences are celebrated as something God can use to expand our spiritual horizon.

It’s a human tendency to seek out and congregate with people with similar points of view. But this can easily lead to endless rehashing of certain issues—from only one perspective. Before long you have cliques of people who talk *about* those with different views but never *with* them.

I appreciate the way the leaders at my church promote and encourage conversation on a wide range of topics between people with different points of view. Rather than stifling conversation by labeling different points of view as evidence of spiritual warfare, they create healthy exchanges in a variety of ways.

Our church hosts regular town hall meetings, discussion groups, and less formal gatherings where people are invited to share their thoughts and opinions about a wide range of subjects. In those settings they are heard and, hopefully, understood.

That is not to say that in my church anything goes, or that the worship team automatically adopts any new idea that comes up, or that programs are changed weekly to accommodate new ministry fads.

The Holy Spirit touches our lives in different ways.

What we do have is an underlying trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in each one of us, and that our walk with Jesus is a constant transformation of our wandering minds, restoration of our broken hearts, and redirecting of our rebellious wills.

Time and again our leaders affirm that we do not all share the same spiritual experiences and that the Holy Spirit touches our lives in different ways as he sends us along different paths. The beauty lies in the mosaic of all these varying experiences and stories as expressed in one body, one community, one congregation.

That cannot happen when there is a fear of different opinions and different priorities, and when open communication about such differences is resisted, resented, and labeled “grumbling.” Such an approach communicates the opposite message: that God reveals his will for us only indirectly, through a religious hierarchy.

So I’m glad to be where I am right now—even though the church I visited allows me to take my coffee into the sanctuary. Come to think of it, I just might suggest that at my church’s next open mike town hall meeting. ■

STUDY QUESTIONS ONLINE



John Van Donk is a former Christian Reformed pastor who, after multiple careers in construction, as a truck driver, software salesman, and dairy farm manager, now happily makes his living repairing pool and spa equipment.

ADS

Deadlines: July issue is 6/4/2012; August issue is 7/2/2012. Details online.

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 or email it to classifieds@thebanner.org or fax it to 616-224-0834. Questions? Call 616-224-0725.

Denominational and Classical

Calls Extended

HEBRON CRC Whitby, ON to Candidate Kyle Kloostera of Dundas, ON to be Pastor of Preaching & Teaching

Calls Accepted

KYLE KLOOSTRA, Candidate to Hebron CRC, Whitby, ON as Pastor of Preaching & Training.

Meetings of Classis

CALL TO SYNOD 2012 The council of Ancaster CRC, Ancaster, Ontario, calls all delegates to Synod 2012, elected by their respective classes, to meet in the Auditorium of Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, on Friday, June 8, at 8:30 a.m. All area CRC members are invited to join the delegates in worship at the synodical Service of Prayer and Praise on Sunday afternoon, June 10, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. at the Ancaster CRC, 70 Garner Road East. Rev. William C. Veenstra will deliver the message. All CRC churches across the continent are requested to remember the deliberations of synod in their intercessory prayers on Sunday, June 3, and on Sunday, June 10.

Council of Ancaster CRC, Ancaster, Ontario

Congregational

Church's 40th Anniversary

PEACE CRC of Cedar Rapids, IA will be celebrating 40 years of God's faithfulness on Aug. 4-5. We invite all friends and former members to join us. For more information visit www.peacechurch-cr.org.

Announcements

HOUSING NEEDED CRC Pastor on Sabbatical seeks Lake Home/Cottage to rent/sit in SW MI 7/1-8/15/12 Several places OK 503-536-5548 loribl@frontier.com

Birthdays

100th Birthday

WILMA (NORDHAM) MEINEMA, 2615 N. Westnedge Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49004, celebrated her 100th birthday on May 28. Congratulations from Grace Church! We thank God for his gift of life.

WILMA NOORDAM MEINEMA celebrated her 100th birthday on May 28 in Kalamazoo, MI. Her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren are thankful for the long life she has been given. Thanks be to God!



REKA SCHUURING will celebrate her 100th birthday on June 25. Friends are invited to join Reka and her family for an open house on Saturday, June 23 from 2-4 PM at Sunset Manor, Town Square Room (725 Baldwin Dr, Jenison, MI 49428) or send greetings to her at the same address.

We, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, praise God for her 100 years. Psalm 121

90th Birthday

NELLIE HERLEIN celebrated her 90th birthday on April 23. Address: 1816 Dairy Lane Grand Haven, Michigan 49417. "Great is Thy faithfulness!" Children Linda (Dan) Shepard and Larry (Carla) Herlein. Six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. We love you!

MARGARET KAMPER, from Rudyard, MI, now residing at Rest Haven Home, 1424 Union Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, will celebrate her 90th birthday on June 21. Margaret very much enjoys hearing from friends. Love and congratulations from children and grandchildren!

JANET DOROTHY KNOL, of Grand Rapids, MI, will celebrate her 90th birthday on June 26, 2012. Her children are grateful for her life and would like to invite friends and family to celebrate with her at an Open House at Alger Park CRC on June 23, 2012 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

CLARICE VANDEKIEFT RIBBENS July 16: Filled with gratitude for God's love shown in her still fruitful life we celebrate our dear mother's birthday. Marjorie & Jim Gray, Nancy & Marv Jager, Bill & Martha Ribbens, Joyce & Dave Campbell, Cal & Kathy Ribbens; 10 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren. 1060 Showalter Dr. Apt. 302 Blacksburg VA 24060 cnribbens@warmheartva.org

ANDREW RODENHOUSE celebrated his 90th birthday on May 26. We give thanks to God for his legacy of loving God and family. We love

you! Dad, Grandpa, and Great-Grandpa. Andy's address: 6080 146th Ave., Holland, MI 49423

EVELYN DYKEMA STEGINK (2585 S. Columbine, Denver, CO 80210) will celebrate her 90th birthday with a family gathering on Sunday, June 10, 2012. She has 7 children, 12 grandchildren, and 21 great-grandchildren. She was married to Aaron Stegink for almost 60 years. Happy Birthday, Mom! To God be the glory.

80th Birthday

NATALIE BOONSTRA BOSSCHER (nee Van Vliet) will celebrate 80 years of God's faithfulness on June 2, 2012. Her husband, children and grandchildren give Glory and Thanks to God for the immeasurable ways she has blessed our lives. Who knows where God will lead when you follow His will?!!

GERTRUDE DEJONGH (Begeman, Vander Werf) 310 N Maple, Edgerton, Mn 56128 will celebrate her 80th birthday June 7, 2012. Happy birthday from your 4 children and spouses, 9 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. We thank God for her many years.

BEATRICE HEDMAN Minnetonka, MN celebrated her 80th birthday on May 29. Her children Randy (Eva), Cheryl (Duane), Roger (Sheri) and grandchildren Kaycia, Keaton, Lauren and Gerrit, praise and thank God for the blessing she is in our lives



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MARGARET (OORDT) TIMMER of 125 Creekview Crest, LYNDEN, WA, 98264, will celebrate her 80th birthday on July 13. Her children, 14 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren wish her a Happy Birthday with much love! We thank God for her in our lives.

Anniversaries

70th Anniversary

KAMPS George B. and Grace (Heys) 6151 Shady Rest St., Manhattan, MT 59741 will celebrate their 70th anniversary on June 9, 2012. Children: Gary and Jean Kamps, and Keith and Loretta Fennema, 6 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren. Thanks be to God.

65th Anniversary

BAKER, Clarence and Alice Baker (Midland Park CRC) will celebrate 65 years of marriage on June 26. "Mom and Dad, thank you for your great example of love, commitment and faithfulness. With love - Dave (Polly), Dick (Cindy), Joan (Gary), Lar (Joan), Gar (Janet), Bob - dec. (Annie), Jane and Alison (Brian), along with 24 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren."

BROUWER Les & Eva, 714 24th St. SE, Willmar MN 56201, with their 6 children & families, rejoice & give thanks for God's faithfulness, health, & blessings (June 24).

EPINGA Stuart & Helene (Batts) on June 4. 2111 Raybrook SE #4004 Grand Rapids, MI. 49546. Children: Baby William (dec) Stuart & Vicki

Eppinga, Bill & Arlene Eppinga, Marla & Scott Huizing. 9 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

VAN NAMEN, JACOB & RITA, 10300 Village Circle Dr., #4312, Palos Park IL 60464, along with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, give thanks to God for 65 years of marriage on June 10.

VEURINK Marion and Anna Mae 138 Dakota Ave N, New Holland, SD 57364 celebrate 65 years of marriage June 16. They with their children praise God for His love and faithfulness.

VIS Marvin & Pearl, 15220 S. 73rd Ct. Orland Park, IL 60462, celebrated 65 years of marriage on May 16, 2012. Congratulations Mom & Dad! We thank you for your constant love, support, and prayers. With love, your children and grandchildren.

60th Anniversary

BOLT Robert & Carolyn (Balfoort) June 5, 1952. 2226 Radcliffe Cir. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Children: James & Elizabeth Bolt, Robert & Carol Bolt, Larry & Lynn Rosendale, Timothy Bolt, Scott & Kristin VanderHoning; 10 grandchildren.

BOTTING, Carl and Betty (Hoolsema) of Ada, Michigan will celebrate 60 years of marriage on June 20. Congratulations and Happy Anniversary from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

BRENTON Rob and Marion (DeVries), joined in Christian marriage June 21, 1952 in 1st CRC of Lansing, IL; charter members of Bethel CRC of Lansing; now members of Delavan, Wisconsin CRC. Children: Bob III (Coleen), Lei Ann (Dean Lund), Mary (Steve Alton), and Ron

(Cheri). Eleven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren; four step grandchildren and ten step great-grandchildren. The family rejoices in the Lord's bountiful blessings.

DE YOUNG, Al & Gerry, June 25, 1952. 6721 Eberle St. Lakewood, CA 90713. Diek & Susan Meyer, Stan & Nancy Winters, Bruce & Michele DeYoung. 9 grandchildren and 1 great-grandson. Philippians 4: 4-7.

LOGTERMAN, Earl and Lyola (Goeman), June 7; 8385 E. Princeton Ave, Denver, CO 80237. Family: Ken and Kim Hengeveld, Susan, Jim. 3 grandchildren. Praise be to God.

PUNT, Rev. Neal and Betty (DeYoung) will celebrate their 60th anniversary on June 6, 2012. Praising God for His many years of blessings are their children: Gary (Sue), Janice (Bill) Buikema, Jim (Gail), Beth (Dave) Huisenga, Gordon (Meg), Laura (Mike) Stoub, and 13 grandchildren. 12194 104th Ave., Grand Haven, MI 49417.

VANDER WEELE, Herbert and Emma of Lansing, IL celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on May 24th. Their family sends their love and best wishes.

55th Anniversary

BOODT Rev. Peter and Janet joyfully celebrated 55 years of marriage on the 22nd day of May, 2012. Peter and Janet have had a very fruitful life together being blessed with 6 children: Marianne Clelland, Casey, Robert (Brenda), Abigail (Fred) Fedosenko, Barbara (Darryll) Johnstone and Jeremy (1975-2005). They have 13 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. Peter and Janet served the Christian Reformed church in various locations for 32 years retiring in South Surrey, B. C.

Church Position Announcements

PASTOR: Covenant CRC is looking for a Reformed and reforming pastor to provide energetic servant leadership in Sioux Center, Iowa, a Christian college community. covenantcnc.net | covenant@mtcnet.net

LEAD PASTOR: Willoughby CRC is searching to grow into its calling of greater service to our community of Langley, British Columbia. We are seeking a lead pastor with strengths in preaching, leadership and relational gifts to help us in that service. The lead pastor would work in a team staffing model. Contact search@willoughbychurch.com for more information. www.willoughbychurch.com

PASTOR: Springdale CRC is a mid-size church thirty minutes north of Toronto, ON, in a rural area surrounded by rapidly growing communities. We are searching for a full-time pastor who follows Christ's leadership to shepherd us into the next phase of our ministry. We seek a man who has vision, diplomacy, leadership qualities, and above all, the ability to preach God's Word in a way that brings Him glory and builds up the church. We are not looking for a miracle worker, but a man who can and will work with others so that our God can work the miracles. Our new pastor will help us reach into the surrounding communities with love and concern, so that together we may proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. Please send your letter of interest or profile in confidence to springdalepst@gmail.com.

HALF-TIME PASTOR Neerlandia CRC in classis Alberta North is currently looking for a half time ordained pastor to work alongside our current pastor and half time youth coordinator. We are a large, active, rural church with a strong youth program. Responsibilities would include mostly visiting, some part time preaching with opportunities for teaching and outreach. A job description is available on request. Contact us at famvn@hotmail.com or call 1 780 674 6450.

MARANATHA CRC in Lethbridge is looking for a Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. If you have a passion for God and Youth, and the talent and energy to bring them together, we'd love to hear from you. Send us your resume: mrcrleth@telusplanet.net

MUSIC CO-ORDINATOR NEEDED Covenant Christian Reformed Church of St. Catharines, ON, is seeking to fill the position of Music Co-ordinator. In order to enhance the proclamation of God's Word and to enrich the act of worship in an integrated and unified manner the Music Co-ordinator role will provide musical leadership for the congregation in its life and worship services, nurturing musical gifts

and accompanying worship through a variety of musical methodologies. A detailed role description can be provided upon request. A music degree is preferable or equivalent experience. For more details about this position or to submit your resume, please contact the Human Resource Ministry Chair, Janet deVries at janetdevries@cogeco.ca or 905.684.1105.

PASTOR: Faith Community CRC in Wyckoff, NJ is seeking a full-time pastor who loves to preach and is good at it, enjoys the company of people of all ages and will help us walk graciously with God and our fellow human beings. We are a congregation who is gifted at helping people struggling with issues of faith and life and need a pastor who is eager to join us in this ministry. Visit us at www.faithcommunity-crc.com. Please direct inquiries and communications to Kyle Talsma, Transition Team, 96 Oakdale Court, North Haledon NJ 07508 or phone 973-427-9895 or email ktalman@verizon.net.

PASTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE Hebron CRC, Whitby, ON seeks a pastor with the gifts to: guide and support ministry leaders, nurture the church family through pastoral visits, work together with the Deacons, encourage development of Small Groups, and preach the Word occasionally. Hebron is a faithful and active congregation of 350 located in a suburban community 50 km east of Toronto. Our mission is to make passionate disciples of Jesus Christ. A church profile and full job description are available upon request to Andy Buwalda at calling@hebroncrc.ca.

TRANSCONA CRC of Winnipeg, Manitoba is seeking a full time Pastor. Please direct all inquires and communications to Calvin Vaags - calvaags@escape.ca or church office @ 204-222-4336

DISCIPLESHIP PASTOR Living Hope CRC in Abbotsford BC is seeking a discipleship pastor. This new, full-time position brings with it an exciting and challenging opportunity to foster spiritual commitment, maturity and enthusiasm for the Lord and for service within His church and our community. In partnership with our current staff they will help members in our mission to Gather - Prepare - Send. Full job description @ www.livinghopeccr.ca or email LHCRC.search@gmail.com

FULL TIME PASTOR Bethel Church of Sun Valley, CA is seeking a full-time pastor for our growing multicultural church in northeast LA. We are searching for a pastor who is bilingual English/Spanish, passionate about multicultural ministries, with strong preaching and

shepherding skills, and who relates well with all ages. For more info, contact the office at bethelsunvalley@gmail.com, 818-767-4488, or www.bethelsunvalley.com.

YOUTH DIRECTOR 12th Avenue Christian Reformed Church of Jenison, MI, is seeking a part-time Youth Director for our children's and youth ministries. We are looking for a Christ-follower who has a passion for young people and for reaching out to the community. The Youth Director responsibilities require approximately 20 hrs/wk. Please visit our website at www.12thaveccr.org to view the full job description and to apply. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

SHAWNEE PARK CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan has an exciting opportunity for a full-time Ministry Coordinator to work with our pastor and ministry teams. In keeping with SPCRC's focus on inter-generational ministry to and by teens and young adults, this position will recruit, equip, and organize volunteers in worship and music leadership, education and youth ministry, evangelism, service, and fellowship. Preference will be given to candidates with administrative and worship leadership experience. For position description and application, contact Gloria Lubben, Chair of the Personnel Committee, Shawnee Park CRC (616-293-6385 or g.lubben@comcast.net) or Nick Hopkins (616-452-6971 ext. 120 or nicholas.d.hopkins@gmail.com).

DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH Georgetown CRC of Hudsonville, Michigan is seeking applicants for a Director of Outreach and community ministries. This 22 hour per week staff position is responsible for recruitment and empowerment of volunteers, coordinating the church's ministries with the wider community, and growing the church's relationships with other helping organizations. Preference will be shown for applicants with organizational, communication, and people skills. A current position description is available upon request. Potential candidates should submit a letter of interest that includes experience, reasons for application, and current contact information to: "Director of Outreach Search Team" at the church's address. Letters of interest should be received no later than June 11, 2012. Applicants need not be members to apply, but membership at Georgetown will be expected within one year of hire. Questions can be directed to our search team chair, Lori Brower at office@georgetowncncr.org. Georgetown CRC, 6475 40th Ave, Hudsonville, MI. 49464. 616-669-5180.

50th Anniversary

DAVIDS Norm and Char - June 12. Family: Karen and Andy Moore (Sarah and Anna) Tami and Ken Graves (Kayla, Kendra, Kevin) THANKS BE TO GOD!

DELANGE Phillip and Theresa (DeVries) of Hudsonville, MI will celebrate 50 years of marriage on June 7, 2012. We thank God for your love and faithfulness to Him, each other, and us. With love from your family: Christine and Brian Hoeksema, Karl and Patty, Dale and Lisa, Joy and Matt Alferink, Ray and Angie, 18 grandchildren.

HEYBOER James and Shirley (Flietstra) are blessed with 50 years of marriage on June 8, 2012. Children: Boyd and Kim Bruin, Michael and Shelby, Bruce and Leslie, and Dave and Michelle Heyboer. 12 grandchildren.. An open house to celebrate their anniversary is June 9, 2012 from 2 to 4pm at Kelloggsville Christian Reformed Church 610 52nd street. We praise and thank God for his continued blessings and faithfulness.

HOYTEMA Jerry & Winnie (Postma), 507-20 N. Shore Blvd West, Burlington, Ont, Canada L7T-1A1 50 years of marriage, June 1, 1962. Their children: George and (Iris), (Bill) and Judy, Bert and (Jen), (Joel) and Michelle, along with their 14 grand children, give thanks to God for His continued blessings and faithfulness. We love you, Mom and Dad! Psalm 91:4

HUTT Gary & Roberta. 4217 S Tenfel Ln., Spokane WA 99223. Celebrate with us at an Open House Sat. August 4, 1-4 pm at Immanuel CRC, 8302 Normandy Ave, Burbank, IL. To God be the glory!

ILBRINK Marvin & Nelvina (Brinks) will celebrate 50 years of marriage June 21. Children Carl, Cheryl, Mark & Kathy, Brian & Shelley, Kevin & Shari and 12 grandchildren. Great is God's faithfulness to us!

KUIPERS Warren and Ruth (Albers) will celebrate 50 years of marriage June 9, 2012. Family: Todd and Sue, Rick and Tami, Randy and Jen Tomes. 10 grandchildren. 12440 S. Ridgeland Ave., Palos Heights, IL 60463. Thanks be to God for his faithfulness and continued blessings.

Obituaries



DE BRUIN Joan A. (Atema) 80, of North Haledon, NJ on March 20, 2012. She is survived by her husband Donald De Bruin and two children Joseph (Lisa) of Scottsdale, AZ and Donna Hoogerhyde (Kevin) of Wyckoff, NJ and four grandchildren.

DEGROOT Thomas, Feb. 25, 2012; 94 yrs; 1450 E. Fulton, Grand Rapids, MI 49508; Survived by wife of 69 years, Tennie; Children, Sheri (Don) Van Dyk, Tom DeGroot, Tony (Gloria) DeGroot, Andrea DeGroot; 11 grandchildren.

ELENBAAS Jack R. aged 88; April 22, 2012; 2500 Breton Woods Dr. S. E., Grand Rapids, MI 49512; He was preceded in death by his brother, Russell Elenbaas. He is survived by his wife of 67 years; Eleanor; children; Judy (Dan) Johnson, Marv Elenbaas, Doug (Gail) Elenbaas, Steve (Paula) Elenbaas; 11 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.



GUNNINK, Rev. Jerrien, of Holland, Michigan, formerly of Littleton, Colorado, went home to be with his Lord and Savior on April 24, 2012 at the age of 83. He was preceded in death by his first wife Henrietta in 1953, and by sons Daniel (1960) and Paul (2007). He is survived by his wife of

57 years, Ida; children Jerry and Ena, Steven and Nancy, and Judy; 8 grandchildren, 4 great-grandsons; siblings Abraham and Margaret Gunnink, Fannie and Nelson Post, and Ray and Wilma Gunnink; brothers and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews. Rev. Gunnink graduated from Calvin Seminary in 1953, and received his Doctorate in Ministry in 1988 from Westminster Theological Seminary. He faithfully served his Lord as a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church for 59 years; he shepherded 6 churches during his full time ministry and 18 churches as interim pastor. Memorials may be sent to CRC World Missions.

OVERBEEK Lucille (Sytsma), 92, April 16, 2012, of Margate, FL preceded in death by husband Bernard, survived by children Barbara (Bill) Slager And Joseph Overbeek (Diane) 4 grand children and 4 great-grand children.

OZINGA Grace (nee Stob) age 95. Beloved wife of the late Senator Frank M. Ozinga (1987) loving mother of Wilma (Pixie) (Richard) Molenhouse, Martin F. (Sally) Ozinga, Ronald (Sharon) Ozinga, Janice (William) Hoffman, Marcia (Paul) Hite. Cherished grandmother of 13, one deceased. Dearest great-grandmother of 24. Psalm 90

SITTEMA, Jeanette VanderWeele entered into the Glorious presence of the Lord on April 20, 2012 at the age of 93. She "loved the Lord with all of her heart, soul, mind, and strength". She was a beloved mother of 4 sons and their wives; grandmother of 21; great-grandmother of 25. Jeanette touched many with her love and joy-filled spirit and she leaves behind an incredible legacy of faith. The family wishes to thank the staff at Oak Grove Retirement Center in DeMotte, IN for their loving care of our mother.

STREUTKER Irene (nee Jonas), age 66, of Olney, MD, on April 12, 2012. Survived by her husband of 42 years Steven, daughter Jennifer (Charlie) Rowe, son David Streutker, brother Dick Jonas, and three grandchildren. She was dearly loved by her family and friends and will be greatly missed by all

TIMMER Lawrence, D, 85, of Pease, MN went to be with the Lord on Feb 11, 2012. He leaves behind his loving wife Sylvia and 5 children and their spouses: Jackie Van Ginkel, Brad (Sally) Timmer, Curt (Nancy) Timmer, Kevin (Karen) Timmer, Janelle (Mark) Volkens; 19 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

TIMMER Riena age 92 of Grand Rapids went to be with her Lord on April 10, 2012. She was preceded in death by Abe (Jane) Timmer, John (Kriena) Jager, Gettie Timmer, Mary Timmer, parents John & Mary Timmer. Surviving are her brothers & sister Gerrit (Fannie) Timmer, Gertrude Visser, Edward & (Jeanette) Timmer & John (Annie Timmer), many nieces and nephews.

WORKMAN Melvin; age 77, formerly of Western Springs, IL, March 15, 2012. Preceded in death by his wife of 51 yrs Charlotte (Lendrum) and infant son Michael. 5 daughters Debora (Neil) Andersen, Beverly (James) Dowling, Diana (Bruce) Terpstra, Brenda (Peter) Morrison, Michelle (Stewart) Lambert, 14 grandchildren, 5 great-grandsons

Employment

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CHOIR DIRECTOR Ridgewood CRC in Jenison, MI seeks choir director to lead Senior Choir which rehearses weekly and sings three times a month September thru May. For information and job description, contact Dr. David Dethmers at 616-457-3850 or pastordavid@ridgewoodcrc.com.

CNA AND HOME ASSISTANTS NEEDED Helpers of Holland Home located in Grand Rapids MI is seeking candidates who are passionate about providing private duty services for our older adult clients in their homes; assisting in personal care, light housekeeping, errands, meal prep, transportation. These positions offer flexible scheduling, however require a commitment of one weekend per month. Home Assistant position pays \$8.75 per hour for non-certified aides. Certified Nurse Aides pays \$9.75 per hour. A heart for serving older adults along with a valid drivers license with good driving record, current proof of insurance and reliable transportation are required. If you are interested in working with seniors in their homes, fax your information to Danae at 616-235-8697 or email danae.compagner@hollandhome.org. Review all employment opportunities at www.hollandhome.org.

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Volunteers

VOLUNTEERS: URGENTLY NEEDED for Mississippi Christian Family Services - Rolling Fork, MS. Work in the Thrift Store and/or light maintenance. A/C apts provided on campus. Pleasant and rewarding work. Desire minimum of two weeks. More details contact Larry Faber 616-257-4489 or lefaber@att.net.

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Punch Lines

What has made *you* smile lately? Got a joke or funny incident you'd care to share with your wider church family? Please send it to *The Banner* at 2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49560; or email it to editorial@thebanner.org. Thanks!

At a recent fundraising event, the speaker rambled on and on. Finally he paused and asked, "Is there a clock somewhere in this room?"

Someone shot back, "No, but there's a calendar on the wall directly behind you."

—Rich Brandes

A taxi passenger tapped the driver on the shoulder to ask a question.

The startled driver screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, and stopped inches from a shop window. For a second, everything went quiet.

Then the driver said, "Look, mate, don't ever do that again. You scared the daylights out of me!"

The passenger said, "I'm sorry; I didn't realize that a little tap would scare you so much."

The driver replied, "It's not really your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver—for the last 25 years I've been driving a funeral van."

—Cyndi Boss

As I walked out to the church parking lot after a meeting, I realized that my car keys were

not in my pocket. I went back to the meeting room, but they weren't there either. I realized that I must have left them in the car, something I sometimes do when I don't want to carry a ring of keys in my pocket.

My wife objects to this practice and has warned me several times that our car will be stolen.

I came to the terrifying conclusion that she was correct, because the parking lot was empty. Immediately I called the police, gave them my location, and confessed that I had left my keys in the car. Then I made the more difficult call. "Honey," I stammered, "I left the keys in the car again, and it's been stolen."

My wife responded, "The car has not been stolen. I dropped you off at your meeting!"

Embarrassed, I pleaded, "Please come and get me."

My wife retorted, "I will after I convince this policeman that I have not stolen your car!"

—George Vander Weit

Conversing with my four-year-old grandson on the subject of God's omnipresence, he queried, "But how can God see everyone at the same time?"

Before I could come up with an answer, he added, "I know! He can do it through their cell phones."

—Faith Bosserman

Before Christmas, my three-year-old daughter Elena came home from church school

and said that they had learned about the three wise men.

I said, "Oh good, honey. What presents did the three wise men give Jesus?"

She replied, "Gold, frankincense, and moonshine."

I promptly called our pastor to make sure none of the teachers were watching old episodes of *The Dukes of Hazzard* during lunch!

—Mike Aldrink

Recently I was explaining the difference between mamas, grandmas, and great-grandmas to my four-year-old granddaughter. Finally I asked her what she would call me.

Her answer was "Old Lady."

—Frances B. Kok

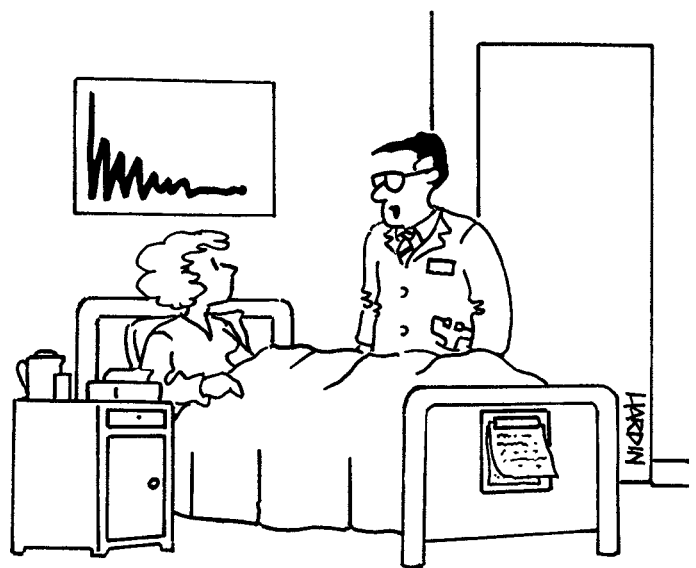
It was the end of the day when I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my K-9 partner, Jake, was barking.

I saw a little boy staring in at me. "Is that a dog you got back there?" he asked.

"It sure is," I replied.

Puzzled, the boy looked at me and then toward the back of the van. Finally he said, "What'd he do?"

—Herm Kelderman



"We don't know what you have or how to cure it—all we can do is bill you."

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