

# BANNER

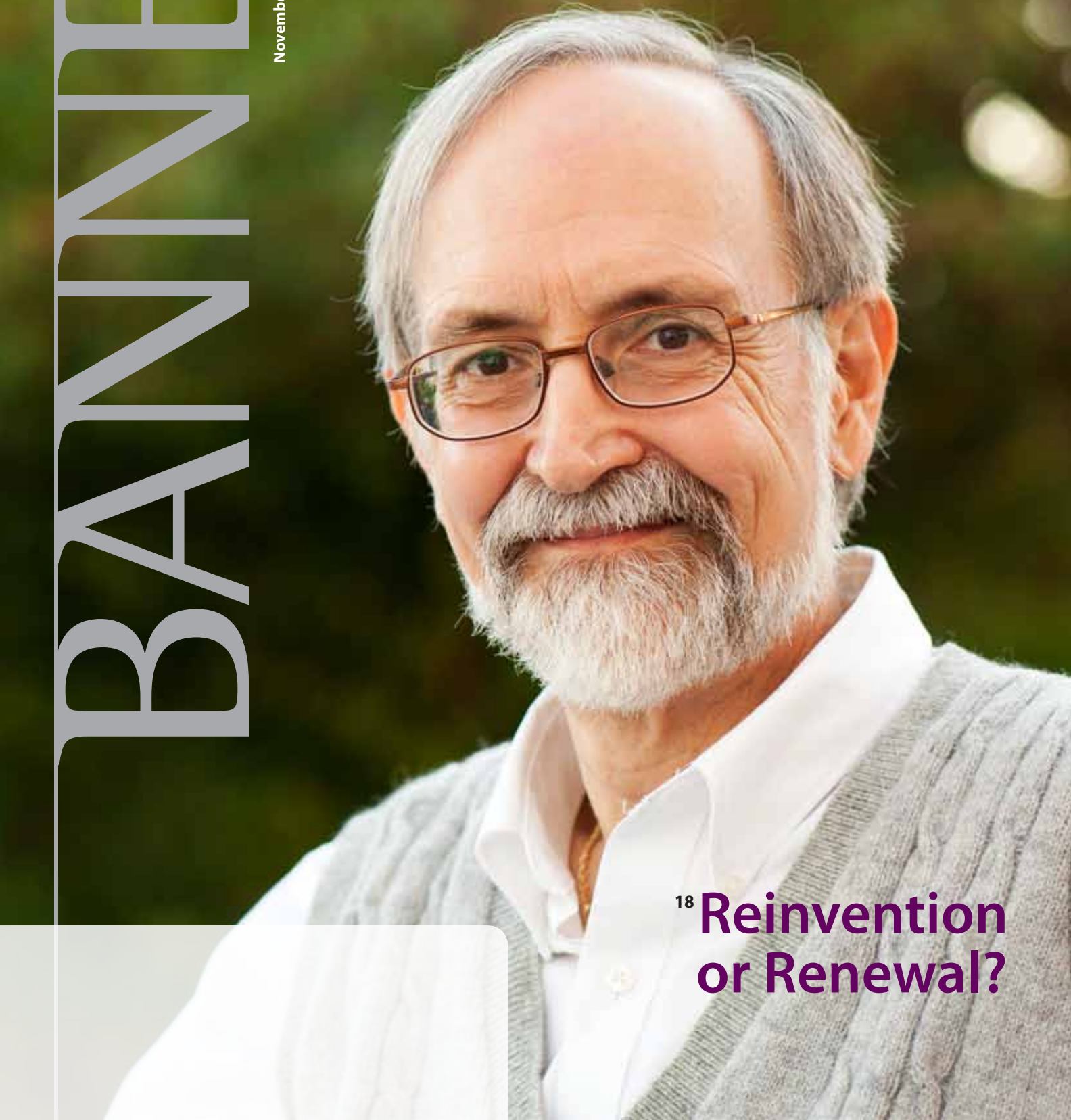
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**Cover:** Robert J. Ritzema interrupted his career as a professor and psychologist in order to move back to his home town and care for his parents. "I tried to hold on to the life I had," he says. But in the end he heard his parents' request for help as God's call. Read Ritzema's story of renewal on page 18.

PHOTOGRAPH BY J PHOTOGRAPHY

## Where Your Treasure Is . . .

**RECENTLY A COLLEAGUE ALERTED ME** to an article posted on the *Christianity Today* website that made my head swell and my heart sing. Written by Abby Stocker, the article is entitled “The Secrets of a Giving Church.” In it she reports on research done by the Center for Social Research at Calvin College indicating that, on average, Christian Reformed folks donate at least twice as much money to their churches as most other church folks give to theirs. Not only that, but the rate of giving (6.1 percent of income) has remained steady even through the challenging economic times that followed the 2007 financial market meltdown. Of course, those who give generously to their church do so elsewhere as well.

This stuff matters because we should take seriously the seemingly scandalous words of the Teacher: “. . . money is the answer for everything” (Eccl. 10:19). If that weren’t so, Jesus wouldn’t have talked about money so much: “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:21).

I take our Lord’s words to mean that generous giving is a key indicator of spiritual health. Our confessions, our church polity, even our worship and faith nurture are just empty words if they don’t lead, among other things, to a positive bottom line. It’s so encouraging to see that they do. Unlike some other indicators, this one is measurable and palpable.

**Generous giving  
is a key indicator  
of spiritual health.**

As CRC folk, we certainly have our differences. But as long as those differences do not affect the way we hit the offering plate, we can be reassured that they have not degraded into divisions. They are not fatal. I find that immensely comforting and energizing.

The study went on to hypothesize a reason for this strong financial commitment to church. It concluded that CRC churches dare to set clear expectations without being legalistic. We are not shy about “making the ask”—unabashedly applying biblical norms on the pulpit and off. At the same time, we rely on God’s Spirit to do the convicting and growing that leads to open hearts and open wallets. We don’t get out the score sheets to shame and blame each other. After all, it’s the cheerful giver, not the surly or embarrassed one, that God loves (2 Cor. 9:6).

Roger Rice, who led this study, concludes: “Generosity is just a natural outcome of spiritual health.” The study backs that up too: those who engage in daily personal devotions give more than those who let spiritual disciplines slide. The closer our heart beats with God’s, the easier it is for us to translate self-sacrificing love into cold, hard currency.

Jesus’ parable of the talents in Matthew 25 may have been about many different spiritual matters. But I think it is first of all about money. God cares a lot about how and where we invest his capital.

This Thanksgiving (whether you’re celebrating in October or November), I am truly grateful for the sustained generosity shown by my brothers and sisters in the CRC. May it be ever so. ■



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# Memorizing Mercy

**I** **N ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** I loved the rhythms of “memory work”—from reading the Scripture passage in class to taking it home to be written out again or pasted on the fridge or recited aloud with my hands covering the verses. And I was glad to have new words and mysterious phrases in my mind.

Sadly this communal grade school activity did not work its way into a personal adult devotional practice. In recent years I have memorized mostly academic formulas and facts, along with a few poems and favorite sentences. But I have not engaged with Scripture this way.

I’m sure I am missing out on an enriching experience, though. I think of friends who recalled passages in times of deep sorrow or overwhelming joy. I also think of the testimonies of those imprisoned for their faith who clung to memorized verses in the solitary darkness.

A *New Yorker* piece I read on the virtues of memorizing poetry pointed out that “if we do not learn [poetry] by heart, the heart does not feel the rhythms of poetry as echoes or variations of its own

insistent beat.” I am sure it is the same with Scripture.

So I am attempting to get back into the practice of memory work.

I have started, as perhaps most do, with a psalm—Psalm 103. It happened to be a recent “verse of the day” on my smartphone. Sometimes I read a digital version of Scripture or listen to an audio recording; other times I read verses I have copied out or use a Bible.

But whichever way I read Scripture, I read it as a work about memory: a startling revelation of God’s character that reminds me of all he has done—in the past and in the present, for me and for all. “Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me,” says David. I too long for that faithful recollection.

The version I have settled on is the New Living Translation. To me, the “let” language this translation employs speaks of invitation and reliance on God. I remember that I am listening here—letting God’s truth go through me as I continue to develop my memory for his unfailing mercy. As I memorize this passage, I hope I will also personalize it as a

kind of prayer, recalling particular instances of God’s goodness and offering up my struggles to a Father who “knows how weak we are; he remembers that we are only dust.”

I have only been with this psalm for a short while. My memory still trails off and ultimately fails to hold it in its entirety. Some days I neglect to look at it—or any Scripture—at all.

But I am determined to return again and again to the Word—to attune myself to the insistent heart of God and let myself fall into the beat of its persistent mercy. ■



Adele Konyndyk is a communications writer for World Renew, a creative writer, and a member of First Hamilton Christian Reformed Church in Ontario.



**Attention is  
the beginning  
of devotion.**

—MARY OLIVER

# Their Blood Cries Out

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THE BANNER



People pay with their lives  
for their faith in Christ.

**THEIR BLOOD CRIES OUT** is the title of a book written by Reformed scholar Paul Marshall back in 1997. The cover says it all: “The worldwide tragedy of modern Christians who are dying for their faith: Why is it being ignored? Why the silence? What can we do?”

Tragically, 15 years later all of the above is still true. If anything, the situation may be worse. A recent *Wall Street Journal* article entitled “The Christian Exodus from Egypt” suggests, “The only option is to leave, putting an end to 2,000 years of Christianity in Egypt.”

Think Libya and Syria as well as Iraq, where between 2003 and today the number of Christians has shrunk from over 1 million to about 500,000.

The persecuted include our fellow believers Kazim, Nadia, Sajid, and others in Pakistan who have been beaten, tortured, and maimed for their faith. And Bibi, a young mother who has been in jail since 2009 under sentence of death on charges of blasphemy against Muhammad for witnessing that Christ is the only true God, her Savior.

In Pakistan and elsewhere, people pay with their lives for their faith in Christ.

Here’s the big picture: according to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, one-third of the world’s population is facing increased religious restrictions.

Consider these facts:

1. Christians are the largest single group persecuted.
2. Seventy-five percent of those persecuted for their religious beliefs are Christians.
3. Ninety percent of those killed for their religious beliefs are Christians.

As someone wrote to me recently: “In many of the countries we are working in, we find that persecution is a result of church growth. . . . The gospel is advancing in the world today in a way unprecedented in history in areas of the world where the cost of discipleship is not only accepted as normal but embraced as a mark of what it truly means to be a Christian.”

So as we continue to be involved in the Christian church in myriad God-honoring ways, I humbly suggest that we in North America move our persecuted sisters and brothers a lot higher up on our list of concerns.

Let’s include them in our daily and congregational prayers. And let’s include an update on some specific instance of persecution in every issue of *The Banner* in order to “remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering” (Heb. 13:3). ■



**Hank Kuntz**, a member of Rehoboth Fellowship CRC in Etobicoke, Ontario, retired from the Christian Labour

Association of Canada in 1997. Since then he has been involved in the work of the CRC’s Disability Concerns ministry.



## Organized Sports

I get all the arguments for participating in sports, even on Sunday (“Organized Sports: Counting the Cost,” Aug. 2013).

But as we pass swarms of kids playing on the hockey fields on the way to church, I am saddened by the fact that those most influential in the lives of children—their parents, coaches, and peers—are sending the message that “the gathering of the saints” is at best optional and at worst irrelevant.

—Ed Gabrielse  
St. Charles, Ill.

No doubt God can use us wherever we are to further his kingdom, but there are so many other ways for kids to learn important life skills and lessons and for families to reach out to those around them than organized sports (“Organized Sports”). A guide that I learned from my wise grandmother is “moderation in all things.” I believe we have long ago lost that sense of balance in the role that organized sports plays in our culture.

—Brenda Sloterbeek  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

One element missed in this article is the emotional pain, isolation, and hurt of children who, although they desire to, cannot keep up with their peers when engaged in sporting or recreational pursuits (“Organized Sports”). They are



# TTERS

quickly ostracized by peers because of their weak motor skills. That sends them down a road of frustration, anxiety, sense of low self-worth, depression, and much darker situations.

These children do not need to learn to deal with disappointments, as they feel this every day. This is a cost to the human soul that was not listed.

—*Paulene Kamps*  
*Calgary, Alberta*

## Congregational Leadership

Thank you for Rev. Geleynse's article on denominational bureaucracy ("Congregational Leadership," Aug. 2013). Expensive and excessive bureaucracy is one reason why missionaries will be asked to raise 90 percent of their support.

—*Timothy Palmer*  
*Bukuru, Nigeria*

## Being Christian and Gay

I agree we are to welcome all sinners into the church and love them but still teach what the Bible teaches about the practice of homosexuality ("Being Christian and Gay," Aug. 2013). However, I cannot accept that the courts are redefining marriage from only one man and one woman to uniting two people of the same sex. I hope that the church does not begin to accept the meaning of marriage to include anything other than the lifelong commitment of one man to one woman.

—*Gerald Anderson*  
*Mason City, Iowa*

I want to thank Merrill Nosler for her courage in writing about the painful, sometimes lonely road she and other gay Christians walk without spouses and children ("Being Christian and Gay"). I appreciate her obedience to Christ and her honesty, integrity, and openness.

Years ago I was deceived by a gay Christian man who married me without informing me of his sexual orientation.

May individual Christian assemblies and the church as a whole provide "open spaces" so that people who are homosexual do not feel the need to hide, either in mixed-orientation marriages or elsewhere.

—*Name withheld*  
*Hamilton, Ontario*

As the parents of an adult gay son, we found "Being Christian and Gay" to be a breath of fresh air.

Frequently when we talk to fellow Christians about our son, we are told [being gay] is against God's will, and we find that somewhat offensive. We have always understood that all sin is against the will of God, such as bigotry, gossip, schisms within the church, or harming others or ourselves.

So why is it that the things we choose to do wrong are deemed not as important as the one thing that is not a choice? Our son knew from an early age that he was different, and most people who are gay will say the same thing.

Gossip can kill, but no one is hurt by our son's sexual orientation unless they choose to feel hurt.

—*Gerard and Hester Bondt*  
*Cardinal, Ontario*

## Drawing the Line

I and my 20- and 30-something peers look to the church for guidance on how to be distinctive in our lives and witness in a society increasingly hostile to Christianity. In "Where Do We Draw the Line?" (July 2013) Van Belle argues that the church needs to keep up with the culture on issues of relationships, cohabitation, and sexual activity, implying that young people are put off by a church that advocates a different lifestyle

than the culture. On the contrary: saying that the church must catch up to the culture communicates that the church has nothing distinctive to offer, and it is this attitude which will tell my generation that the church is irrelevant.

—*Elizabeth Knighton*  
*Seattle, Wash.*

In response to Van Belle's question ("Where Do We Draw the Line?") I would like to suggest that we do well to look at how marriage is defined and perceived by our youth.

If we demand that marriage consists of a church wedding with a pastor involved, a reception, banquet, etc., it's time that we come clean and admit that none of these are necessary but are only traditional ways of doing things.

If a couple is mature and committed enough, let them say this to each other and announce it to their immediate community. That, I think, is all that is required. The Bible doesn't ask for more, so why should we?

—*Evert Vroon*  
*Edmonton, Alberta*

We need to be aware and educated on what the Bible tells us, not only about this issue but others that we face every day ("Where Do We Draw the Line?"). "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). There is little to no Scripture backing up Van Belle's article, but plenty that says otherwise. We need to take the time to remember what we are basing our beliefs on. God gave us the Bible as a guideline for living, and we need to use it to the best of our ability.

—*Samantha Luteyn*  
*Chilliwack, British Columbia*

[MORE ONLINE](#)

# NEWS

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## Board of Trustees Expresses Disappointment, Keeps De Moor as Editor of *The Banner*

**T**he Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church expressed its disappointment with the situation that resulted from the recent publication of two controversial articles in *The Banner*, the official publication of the CRC.

However, it accepted the apology of editor Rev. Bob De Moor for what he acknowledged was an error in his editorial judgment for not more clearly indicating that the articles were intended to promote conversation, not be presented as official positions of the church.

The board declined to remove De Moor from the editor's chair, despite requests from some church leaders. The decision came after several hours of discussion behind closed doors at the board's September meeting.

In recent months, *The Banner* printed two controversial articles: one on human origins by Edwin Walhout ("Tomorrow's Theology Today," June 2013) and another about Christians cohabiting by Harry Van Belle ("Sex, Intimacy, and the Single Person," July 2013). The articles caused anger and disappointment among many church members. Many called or wrote to De Moor.

In addition, more than 120 communications were received by executive director Joel Boot, including 24 from church councils. Two classes (regional groups of churches) requested that De Moor immediately be dismissed from his role as editor.

In a conversation with the board, De Moor explained the steps that take place before an article gets printed in *The Banner*. He also pointed out that Synod 1998 mandated *The Banner* to "permit people of the church to voice their views and reactions even though some of them may be unacceptable to others in the church."

But, De Moor said, he erred on the part of the mandate that says that *Banner* material should edify and educate the readers. "I think I should have gone back to [Walhout] and said, 'We think what you are doing is



**Banner editor Rev. Bob De Moor**

worth considering, but what you do need to do is set a better tone in this article, raise the issue in a more pastoral way." De Moor also expressed regret for the timing, running the two articles in two consecutive issues of *The Banner*.

De Moor posted an apology on *The Banner's* website and included it in the August print edition.

Some trustees were not convinced, with one suggesting that De Moor should resign.

De Moor noted that synod has said that *The Banner* has a role in addressing challenging issues. "There are two ways [to deal with issues]: simply hide your head in the sand, [or] raise issues, get people's attention, and then get people to answer in ways that are helpful."

That said, the process for approving sensitive articles has been broadened, with a push toward more opportunities for review of articles, something De Moor agrees with. "It preserves the integrity of *The Banner's* editorial freedom and responsibility as outlined by synod," said De Moor, "[and] it recognizes that denominational leadership has a stake in what is published in *The Banner*, given the fact that many readers do not distinguish between the one and the

other." He also noted that a process like this would have helped him to make wiser editorial decisions "that would have prevented much of the backlash we received and would have served our readers much better."

In declining to dismiss De Moor as had been requested by Classes Illiana and Minnkota, the board noted that "history has proven that [De Moor] is a capable editor, and this mistake is not a reflection of a pattern."

The board also appointed a subcommittee to review and recommend measures to strengthen the mandate of *The Banner's* editorial council, a group made up of three members of the Board of Trustees and three at-large members. That council is mandated to provide advice and support for *Banner* staff and, if necessary, to resolve any differences regarding content that arise between the denominational leadership and *The Banner* staff. To date, the editorial council has never had to adjudicate such a difference.

That subcommittee will report to the board in February 2014.

"I am grateful for the [board's] careful work in coming to a response that is both fair and helpful," De Moor said in response to the board's decision. "I have certainly learned from this painful experience. I pray that the Lord will use it for good: to allow us to have more edifying conversations as we 'speak the truth in love.'"

—Gayla R. Postma

## Church Members Take Prayer to the Streets in Colorado

In July, members of Eastern Hills Community Church took their prayers to the streets in Aurora, Colo.

"We asked people to head out after the services. We didn't serve coffee in the lobby or any of our normal stuff, just stripped off the lobby so they had nothing to do but leave and pray," said Kendal Hommes, senior high pastor of Eastern Hills.

Hundreds of church members went to different parts of the city and sent in pictures or videos of where they were praying.

"One group said they were really uncomfortable going into it," Hommes said. "They felt challenged to do it, and after they did it, they felt like it was an amazing thing for their family and really brought them closer together."

[MORE ONLINE](#)

—Estafania deLeon

Keaton O., age 4, prays for the city in Aurora, Colo.



## Not Your Dad's Pinewood Derby Car

Cadets typically have opportunities to build many things, including at least one pinewood derby car and sometimes a table and chairs.

The Cadet club at Hollandale (Minn.) Christian Reformed Church took the experience to a new level by building an entire wooden replica train, complete with engine, two cars, and a caboose.

Boys in all grades participated. "It was a team effort," said Elvin Steensma, head counselor. "They learned to respect power tools and the usefulness of each tool. They learned how to read a blueprint, measure, copy the print, drill holes, and screw boards in the right place."

The train is installed at the local Christian grade school. Steensma

hopes that even when these Cadets are grown, "this train will remind the builders of their Cadet years and what they learned and shared with others." [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Kyle Hoogendoorn

[Boys from the Cadet club at Hollandale CRC sit on the wooden train they built.](#)



BRANDI HAGEN

# NEWS

## New Budget Process Proposed

**W**hen the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church met in September, the minutes of its finance committee noted a proposed new budget process for fiscal year 2014/15 (which begins next July).

All the ministry agencies, institutions, and specialized ministries will be asked to create their initial budgets based on the assumption that their ministry share income will be 90 percent of what was received in fiscal 2013. Ministry

shares are the monies collected by churches on a per-member basis to support the denomination's shared ministries.

The remaining 10 percent will go into a "Strategic Response Fund," which will be allocated during the budget process. The finance committee is encouraging the agencies to pursue more funding outside what they get from ministry shares.

"As we go through our evaluation process, how that other 10 percent will be used is more in

flux," said director of finance and administration John Bolt. "Otherwise it is difficult to make sure our work aligns with strategic initiatives."

Currently ministry share gifts bring in about \$25 million annually, which Bolt noted is \$14 million less than the amount requested from churches. "We're trying to get the agencies' advancement teams to help capture more of that." Approximately \$2.5 million would go into the Strategic Response Fund.

Trustee Rev. William Veenstra commented that it seemed like a change in budgeting philosophy.

Trustee Kathy Vandergrift said she appreciated the concern for

more strategic budgeting. "I think we do need to discuss this," she said, but also noted that this is a big change in approach to budgeting.

"We're not saying [to the agencies] to cut their budget," Bolt said. "This is a nine-month process that is starting with a 'what if' and is expected to progress to a final, well-reasoned strategic budget for our denomination. We're asking them to put together budgets as if [they] have 10 percent less ministry shares, and then together we make recommendations of where that 10 percent will go."

—Gayla R. Postma

### More Stories at *thebanner.org*

For more news, please visit our website at *thebanner.org*. There you'll find many more stories, including these:

- **Forty Days of Prayer for Students:** Rev. Ken Vander Wall organized communal prayer for incoming college students in the New Jersey/New York area.
- **California Woman's Cookies Bring Encouragement to Firefighters:** College student Jesse Boonstra's sweet surprise turned into a media sensation.
- **Vancouver Church Gets Neighborly:** First CRC blocked city streets, with the city's blessing, to host a party for the neighbors.
- **'Church Crawl' Connects Students to Local Churches:** CRC campus pastor Sid Ypma organized the event in Ottawa, Ontario, for incoming university students interested in an alternative to traditional pub crawls.
- **Texas Church Sponsors \$25 Mission Trips:** For 40 members of Sunrise Community CRC, cost was not a barrier to serving.
- **Church Expansion Helps Expand the Church:** First CRC in Sioux Falls, S.D., tithed its own building fund to help a congregation in the Dominican Republic build a church.
- **IMPACT Clubs Help Curb Youth Violence in Honduras:** North American churches learn how youths become problem-solvers instead of problem-creators.
- **Just Add Water to Evangelism:** A Michigan church expanded evangelism efforts by handing out 5,000 bottles of water at a local parade.
- **Mission Trip Is a Return Home for Minnesota Pastor:** For pastor Raidel Leon, a mission trip to Cuba with his Chandler, Minn., congregation was a return home.

## British Columbia Mechanics Win Volvo Award



Mechanics from Babine Truck & Equipment, owned by Ed Adema, took home top honors recently from the Volvo Trucks North American VISTA World Championships semifinals. Adema and one of the mechanics, Clarence Oosterhoff, are members of Prince George (British Columbia) Christian Reformed Church. [MORE ONLINE](#)

[Clarence Oosterhoff \(second from right\) and his teammates at the Volvo competition.](#)

—Tracey Yan

## Colorado Church Helps After Colorado Flooding

Torrential floods in Colorado displaced many people from their homes and affected a number of members of The Journey Christian Reformed Church in Longmont, Colo.

The pastor of The Journey, Richard Ebbers, and his family were under the mandatory evacuation.

"It was a mess," Ebbers said. "It was unbelievable."

Members of The Journey helped out at the evacuation center that was set up for the residents of Longmont.

"The initial evacuation center had to be evacuated; they had to set up another center," Ebbers said. "We fanned out in groups to clog out people's basements—anywhere from one-and-a-half to four-and-a-half feet of water." [MORE ONLINE](#)



Members of The Journey CRC help clean up neighbors' homes.

—Estefania de Leon

## What Is Your Only Comfort?

On Sunday, September 15, congregations across North America from the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America recited Question and Answer 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the doctrinal statement.

For John Greydanus, pastor of Bethel Christian Reformed Church of Shiprock, N.M., the anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism brought back memories of a trip he took to the city of Heidelberg.

"The middle of the city is dominated by the Holy Ghost Church where Caspar Olevianus, one of the two authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, preached," said Greydanus.

Greydanus, whose congregation includes many Navajo people, noted that the Navajo were introduced to the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism more than 100 years ago and are still learning and living it today.



Mr. Song Suk of Oaks Righteousness Korean CRC in Los Angeles, with a Korean translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

At South Grandville CRC in Grandville, Mich., the Heidelberg Catechism is the theme of a new sermon series tied to the book *Body and Soul: Reclaiming the Heidelberg Catechism*. The book was written by Craig Barnes and published by Faith Alive Christian Resources.

In addition, new banners featuring DNA molecules in the

background were created for the anniversary and hung in the sanctuary. "DNA symbolizes the fabric of our bodies and life, just as the Heidelberg Catechism is part of the fabric of our faith," said senior pastor Daniel Mouw of South Grandville.

"We go through the Catechism quite regularly," said Chad Steenwyk, senior pastor of Central Avenue CRC in Holland, Mich. Students in 6th grade begin memorizing the first Q&A at Central Ave. Steenwyk tries to impress upon his high school catechism students why. "I always say, 'I want you to know this, so that when you're on your death bed, and no matter what you're going through in life, I want you to remember that you are not your own. You are his.'"

—Shashi DeHaan, Susan Vandenberg, Greg Chandler

### IN MEMORIAM



#### Rev. Jacob Hekman

1920 – 2013

Jacob Hekman, a humble servant of Christ, U.S. Army veteran, faithful husband, and loving father, died on August 13 at the age of 92.

Hekman graduated from Calvin College and Seminary after serving in the U.S. Army during World War II.

He served Christian Reformed congregations in Michigan, Washington, California, and Arizona, retiring in 1986.

Hekman's amiable, humble personality and his personal concern for the well-being of others made him a widely loved and appreciated pastor. His sense of humor and disarming wit also served him in good stead.

At Calvin College he was the center on the basketball team. Throughout his life, he continued to enjoy playing sports, including golf. He found personal replenishment in meeting God in nature. Psalm 46 was one of his favorites.

Hekman was preceded in death by his wife, Kathryn, in 2011. He is survived by one daughter and her spouse, and by two grandsons. [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.

# NEWS

## New Lessons from Timothy

If the Christian Reformed Church wants to know what its annual synod should look like, it should have a look at the playground of Timothy Christian School in Elmhurst, Ill.

That is the advice of Dan Van Prooyen, long-time teacher and then superintendent of Timothy until he retired in 2010.

As I walked around the school, peeking into classrooms from preschool to grade 12, it was obvious that in this student body of more than 1,100 students, racial diversity is a given. Nearly 25 percent of the students are from ethnic minorities.

It is a far cry from the school that has been held up by the CRC as the antithesis of racial reconciliation for 45 years. In the 1960s, under bomb threats from the local community in Cicero, the school board refused to admit

## Getting to know each other breaks down the barriers of old assumptions.

for the church to stop citing that sad time in the school's history and instead see what can be learned from Timothy today.

Where the school is today is awesome, according to Tina Jenkins Crawley, an African-American gospel singer whose son Andrew is in grade 10 at Timothy. Her husband, Mark, a secondary school educator in nearby Chicago, is on the school board.

"We were looking for a school with a godly atmosphere," she said. "The diversity was secondary." That said, her son has felt very comfortable in the school. She added, "The community has gone out of its way to warmly welcome us right from day one. Our son is flourishing in an environment where he is happy, safe, and lifted up."

Standing on the school parking lot on a muggy late-September day, I marveled at the precision with which 17 buses rolled out of the school parking lot carrying 78 percent of the student body. Forty-five years ago, ethnic minority students were bused *out* of the community. Today, students from 58 different communities, some from as far away as downtown Chicago, are bused *in*.

Many cite those buses as the reason the school is so diverse. The city of Elmhurst, where the school is located, is only 1 percent African American.

All that busing, \$600,000 worth, is included in the school's budget. No parent pays extra, regardless of the distance their child travels to the school.

"The school's buses go past all the white suburbs to make the extra effort, to go beyond the comfort zone," said Crawley.

Everyone I talked to admits there is still work to do. Administrators and board members acknowledge that they have not yet achieved the level of diversity in the faculty and on the board that reflects the student body.

For instance, the teachers' names posted above each classroom door are overwhelmingly Dutch. And board composition is set by the constitution of the school, which states that a certain number of the 20 board seats are to be filled by supporting churches, many of which are predominantly white CRCs. Board president Ken Vos, himself a Timothy alum, said the board continues to address this.

And there can be other bumps in the road. Clyde Rinsema, a former Timothy principal, said there are always kids who feel hard done by—perhaps they didn't get enough playing time in a sport. "That happens with white kids too, but when there is diversity, it can complicate things."

Fran David concurs. She has been at the school for 35 years as a teacher and now as a high school guidance counselor. She was one of those Trinity Christian College students who marched against the school in the 1960s. "There are always kids who are instigators and those who have a chip on their shoulder," she said, "but those can be black kids or white kids."

What can the Christian Reformed Church learn from what is happening today at Timothy?

Matt Davidson, current superintendent of the school, suggested that churches take their cue from young people. "Get their input. Learn from them. Social movements often start with young adults."

I sat down with eight students from the school, ranging from grades 9 to 12. The group included African-American, Caucasian, and Asian students representing a variety of denominations.



African-American students from nearby Lawndale CRC, a primarily African-American congregation. Those students were bused out to attend a Christian school in another community.

The school, meanwhile, relocated out of Cicero to Elmhurst, Ill., a move old-timers said allowed them to escape the racist restraints of Cicero and welcome students from all ethnic backgrounds.

Regardless of anyone's interpretation about what happened back then, perhaps it is time



ALL PHOTOS BY GAYLA R. POSTMA

**Tina Jenkins Crawley with her son Andrew.**

Their best advice? Don't get caught up on the small things. Worry less about details and be open to different people and different ideas.

"When we're in class, that's a working environment," said Adrienne C., a 12th-grader who has been at Timothy since grade 6. At lunch, she said, if kids group with others who look like them, they are reaching for the comfortable rather than reaching out to others.

Vince W., now in grade 12, arrived at Timothy in grade 9. He agreed with Adrienne that it is business in the classroom and everyone works side by side. "When the bell rings, we gravitate toward those of shared interests and race, and sometimes the two things merge."

**(l-r) Back row: Kairra B., Rachelle C., Adrienne C., Juliana S., Vince W.; Front row: Jay L., Charis V., Alexis H.**

Jay L. is an international student in grade 12. "Most of us hang out with friends with the same interests."

Getting to know each other breaks down the barriers of old assumptions, according to Brad Mitchell, principal of the high school and Timothy alum, who also happens to be biracial.

"Combat racism by getting to know people. We're too internally focused," he said. "[You should] go out of your space and meet people where they are. Simply opening your doors doesn't work. It's okay to worship separately, but partner with another church, start learning about them, praying with them. That will change assumptions."

And what about Lawndale CRC, the church at the epicenter of the story 45 years ago? Today it has its own school, West Side Christian, which shares a building with the church. They work in partnership with Timothy. "It was the silver lining to the Timothy/Lawndale story," said principal Mary Post. "Today 177 students from Chicago's West Side have quality Christian education right in their neighborhood." West Side has also become a model for diversity, moving from an almost exclusively African-American student body to one that now includes 13 percent Caucasian students in addition to Korean-American and Latino children.

Most of all, said Rinsema, remember that diversity comes slowly. "It takes a lot of grace."

—Gayla R. Postma, News Editor

**IN MEMORIAM**



**Rev. Seymour Van Dyken**  
1921 – 2013

Seymour Van Dyken, 92, a dedicated scholar, visionary ecumenist, and devoted pastor and preacher, passed away on July 31.

Van Dyken served Christian Reformed congregations in Michigan, New Jersey, and Indiana. He retired in 1986.

Gifted intellectually, he earned a Ph.D. degree, cum laude, from Princeton Seminary. He was a lecturer at Calvin Theological Seminary and taught philosophy at Grand Rapids Community College.

Van Dyken was widely read and was known to have a firm grasp of historic and modern theology. With so much still to explore, he never allowed himself leisure time or the luxury of hobbies. It was his firm conviction that the human sciences had much to offer in bringing the Word effectively to people. Preaching and teaching were the love of his heart.

Van Dyken and his wife, Barbara, wrote *Becoming Like Jesus: Nurturing the Virtues of Christ*, a book dedicated to help readers move toward positive Christian living with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Van Dyken served on many boards, several of which he served as president.

Van Dyken is survived by his wife, Barbara. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Louis M. Tamminga



# NEWS

## News from the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church met in Grand Rapids, Mich., on Sept. 26-28, to tackle a very large agenda. Here is a roundup of some of the conversations at that meeting:

- Executive director Joel Boot told trustees that in February 2014 he and Tom De Vries, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America, will be traveling to various regions of the U.S. and Canada to meet with groups of influential members of the CRC and RCA to hear about and generate support for collaborative efforts of the two denominations. There are currently more than 40 areas in which the two churches collaborate. "This is not about merger, but about mission," said Boot.
- The board spent several hours meeting with two consultants who have been hired to help with what is termed a "fundamental reframing" of the denominational ministries plan.



GAYLA R. POSTMA

Colin Watson (right) and Bing Goei will be working to implement the diversity in leadership goals assigned this summer by Synod 2013.

It is all part of the work of the Strategic Planning and Adaptive Change Team (SPACT). The next step for SPACT is to convene meetings in eight regions in the U.S. and Canada, and then meet with focus groups. The directors of the ministry agencies of the CRC will then begin crafting a new ministry plan.

- The board met with Calvin College president Michael Le Roy and heard that the financial situation at the college is improving. [MORE ONLINE](#)
- The board approved changes to the bylaws of World Renew. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Gayla R. Postma



## Ontario Men Pivotal in Algonquin Rescue

A weekend camping trip in Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park might have turned deadly for a young woman—except for the actions of two young CRC members who went the distance to bring rescuers. Brothers Justin and Seth Adema ran eight kilometers (five miles) over rough trails in the dark to get help for a woman having an asthma attack. A military search and rescue team subsequently air-lifted her to a nearby hospital where she recovered.

Afterward Seth said, "Both of us feel that anyone in our situation would have done the same as we did."

[MORE ONLINE](#)

—Krista Dam-Vandekuyt

(L-r): Justin Adema, Seth Adema, Emily Adema, and Candice Adema camping in Algonquin Park's back country.



Emily Sitser sewed her dress from her grandfather's neckties.

## Nova Scotia Teen Wins for Necktie Dress

When 17-year-old Emily Sitser helped her mother clean up her grandfather's home after he passed away in 2012, she first saw his collection of colorful neckties as a good craft resource for her GEMS girls group at Faith Community Christian Reformed Church in Milford, Nova Scotia.

But then she found the idea of making them into a dress. The dress she sewed using her grandfather's ties won first prize in the 4-H competition in Halifax in the category of recycled materials. "Every part of my necktie dress is recycled material except for the zipper," she said. [MORE ONLINE](#)

—Ron Rupce



# FAQs

## Church

**Q** Our church is blessed with a generous surplus in its general fund, and we're wondering how much we should retain in reserve. Is one month's operating expense sufficient? More? How should a congregation determine such things?

**A** Praise God for the faithful giving of your people! And give thanks for the desire to use money for ministry instead of sitting on it. Typically, financial planners encourage a family to have a three- to six-month operating surplus in case of emergencies. The church, a "family" of many families, probably needs only half of that.

It's wise to plan for future expenses such as parking lot repair, a new roof, the expansion or replacement of the building, and the like. But great care must be taken to avoid amassing money in a world with so many pressing needs.

Money follows ministry, and the challenge of each council is to identify needs that God's people can meet. Often people aren't very excited about giving to the general fund, but they are excited about meeting a "special" need. If your general fund is already well-funded, consider creating some other giving opportunities such as sponsoring missionaries or meeting a particular need in your area. Or create an endowment fund and use the income of this fund for needs outside the congregation.

—George Vander Weit is a retired pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. Although he was declared missing since July 2013, we are running this Q&A, which was submitted earlier this year.

Great care must be taken to avoid amassing money in a world with so many needs.

## Relationships

**Q** When a couple divorces, should both parents remain members of the same church so that their kids can continue in their church family? Or is it better if one parent leaves? If so, what's the best way to decide who should leave?

**A** As with so much in human relationships, there is no "one size fits all" answer to your very good questions.

Ideally, former spouses who both desire to stay within the same church family make that work by coming up with a plan for church attendance that respects each other's needs and the needs of their children. For instance, they could decide that on first and third Sundays the kids sit with Dad on the left side of the sanctuary, and second and fourth with Mom on the right. Or the parents could agree to sit together with their children between them. The keys are *agreement* and *follow-through*. Kids quickly adapt to a new situation as long as it is predictable and consistent over time. Fellow church members, as well, quickly get used to a new pattern that maintains the unity of parenting even though the marriage is fractured or broken by separation or divorce.

However, the reality of brokenness individually, as couples, as families, and as a church family means the ideal is not easily realized.

In a less ideal situation, former spouses might take turns coming to church with their kids while choosing an alternative church family for themselves. Or the kids could go with one parent to the new church every other week. Do what works best in your situation, and keep it as simple as possible.

Kids will adapt, feel safe, and flourish as long as the adults around them (both parents and church family) practice forgiveness,

acceptance, and love in the face of broken relationships. Kids also have a right to love both their parents, and will learn best what that means when all the adults in their lives show them the way.

—Judy Cook is a family therapist and a member of Meadowlands Fellowship CRC in Ancaster, Ontario.

## Ethics

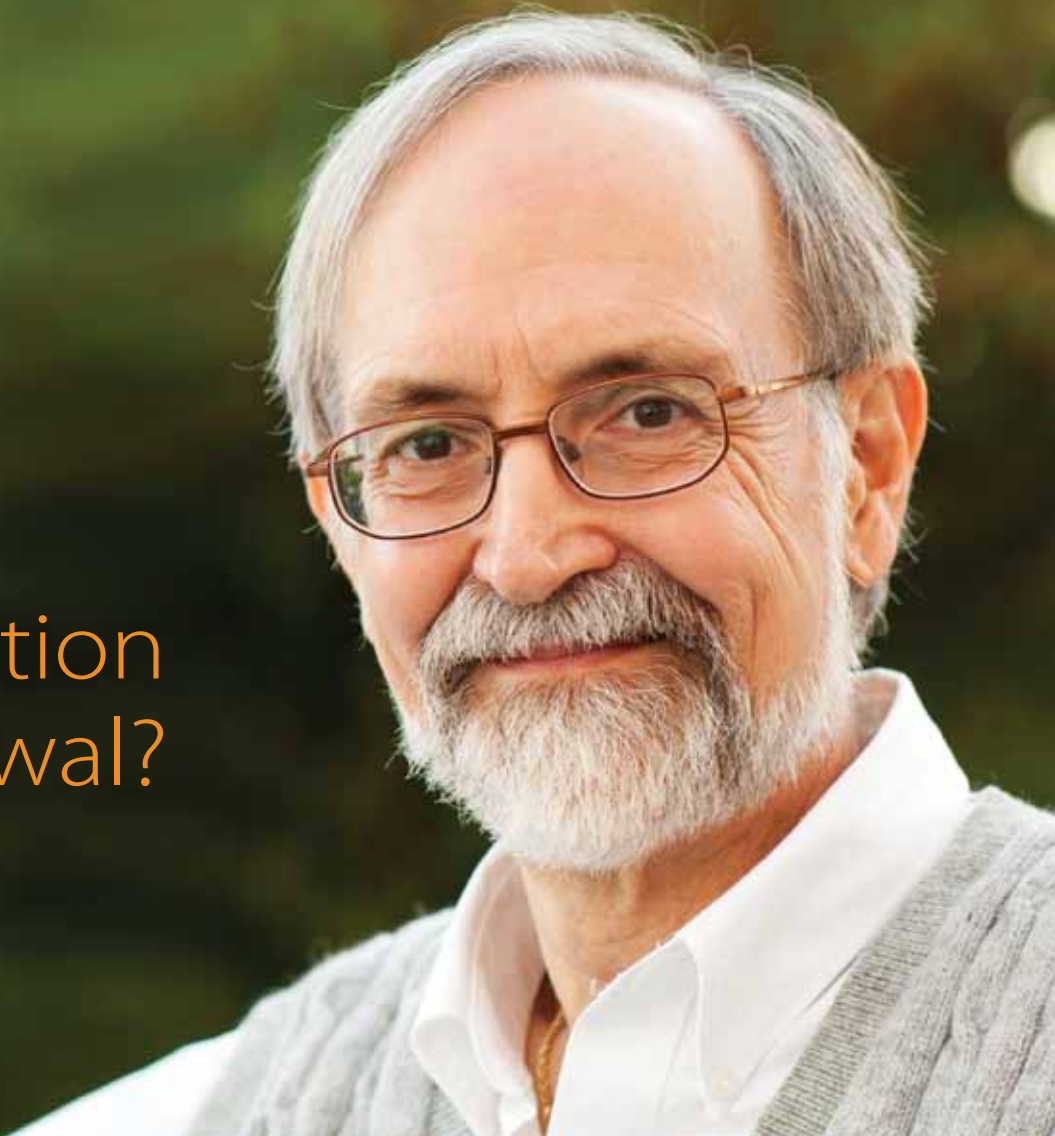
**Q** My husband and I were in a restaurant that served Middle Eastern cuisine and had the "100% halel" stamp on the menu. Inside, we noticed a room with prayer mats. Is it O.K. for Christians to eat food that is specifically prepared to adhere to Muslim laws, including the practice of declaring Allah's name during the butchering process? Any advice would be appreciated.

**A** It is commendable that you are conscientious about leading lives pleasing to God. My advice is to ask three questions. (1) By eating at this restaurant, am I creating a stumbling block for others who observe what I am doing? (2) By continuing to eat at this restaurant, am I less likely in the future to be discerning about my conduct? (3) By eating at this restaurant will my conscience bother me?

If you can honestly answer these questions in the negative, then, other things being equal, I see nothing wrong with continuing to eat there. In his excellent new book, *The Moral Disciple* (Eerdmans), Kent A. Van Til has a chapter about conscience and about what makes the Christian conscience unique. If you are not sure about your answer to the third question, you will find his discussion immensely helpful.

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

# Reinvention or Renewal?



**W**ILL YOU REINVENT yourself when you reach midlife? How about when you retire? Reinvention is a plant that seems particularly well suited to the soil of North American culture. We are fascinated by new inventions and admire inventors. What better object to apply inventive energies to but the self?

For those who want to have a go at reinvention, plenty of resources are available. Psychologist Vivian Diller writes about the “3 R’s” of inventing yourself at midlife (resilience, reliance, and renewal). *Reinventing You* by branding expert Dorie

Clark explains how to construct a compelling personal brand. Motivational speaker Raymond Chandler, author of *Reinventing Yourself*, teaches how to switch from a “victim mindset” to an “owner mindset.” The title of a blog post by “lifestyle marketing guru” Kathi Sharp Ross asks, “So What Are You Waiting For? Are You Still Dreaming?” She offers tips to reinvention laggards on how to fire up the engines of self-renewal. And if articles and books aren’t sufficient, there are thousands of life coaches who are, as Patricia Marx describes it, “poised to goad you into being the person who you allege you want to be.”

North Americans have long regarded self-invention with favor. Initially, the open frontier of our continent invited the disaffected to come and be whatever they wished. Fascination with self-invention persisted even after the frontier shrank and finally disappeared; witness Horatio Alger, Jr.’s immensely popular “rags to riches” novels and, later, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s morally compromised self-made man, Jay Gatsby.

Now we are in the age of the Boomers. They’re discontented with the selves they originally fabricated and are reinventing themselves with new self-images, changed careers, and active, self-expressive approaches to retirement. When we’re rela-

tively disinterested in the past, we are free to remake ourselves as many times as we want. What an inviting prospect! Or is it?

## Being Renewed

Our society may value reinvention, but it isn't the biblical way of being made new. Invention (and reinvention) results entirely from human ingenuity and effort. In contrast, biblical transformations depend on God's initiative.

Would 75-year-old Abraham have left his country and his family to wander the earth and eventually become the father of many nations had God not told him to? Would Jacob have wrestled with God and suffered a transforming wound if God had not come to him during a dark, fear-filled night? Would fishermen have left their families and occupations to become disciples without Jesus' call to follow him? Would Paul have gone from persecuting to proclaiming Christ if Jesus had not spoken to him on the Damascus road?

Rather than reinvention, the process of personal change that occurs in response to God's initiative can better be thought of as renewal. As Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). To the church at Rome, Paul wrote, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2a).

Renewal carries the connotation of restoring something that was lost. We aren't fabricated into something totally unlike our former selves. Instead, our renewal involves recovery of what might have been had we not been sullied by sin, the flesh, and the devil. Renewal harkens to creation—to the making of the first human beings. It is a *remaking*, a re-creation of humans in the image of God.

God takes the initiative in renewal, and it is God's work, but we are not passive bystanders to that work. Ezekiel delivers to the Israelites God's message about their renewal:

"I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I

will give you back the land of Israel again.' They will return to it and remove all its vile images and detestable idols. I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God" (Ezek. 11:17-20).

God acts, gathering the people from foreign lands. The people respond, removing impediments to their renewal. God

continues the process, giving them new hearts that have been re-formed so that they are responsive to him. Renewal is continual and reciprocal. People don't set out to reinvent themselves; they respond to God's initiative by rejecting all that runs counter to his renewing activity.

## Stories of Renewal

Eleanor describes herself in her blog as "a university-trained behavioral gerontologist with decades of experience supporting people in times of life transition. Her expertise is helping people successfully adapt to change." In her mid-fifties, she was unaware of how much change she herself would soon face. The first blow was the loss of her job. She took whatever part-time work she could find and tapped into her retirement account to support herself. Still, as she later put it, "Bit by bit, over time, I found myself sinking." Finally, her home of 13 years was foreclosed and, as she was about to turn 60, she was evicted. Right before Christmas of 2010, she piled her belongings in her car, not knowing where she would spend the night. Since then, she has been to Australia, Fresno, Vancouver, and back to her

home base of Los Angeles, going wherever she could find temporary employment.

She took to calling this time in her life "my spiritual sabbatical," first in jest but later seriously. She decided that she had received the "Gift of Desperation (G.O.D.)." She elaborates, "In late December I was, in fact, defeated. What I didn't realize at the time was that being defeated was a very good thing. It led me to seek a different way to live. My life has never been more abundant than it is now." Shortly after that fortunate defeat, Eleanor became a Christian.

We need to be burned by God,  
to wrestle with him,  
to lose our sight in his bright light.

Almost exactly two years after she was evicted, an accident destroyed her car, the place where she sometimes slept. The next day she wrote, "Now the surprising thing (to me, at least) was my reaction. When I got home I got on my knees and counted my blessings. . . . I found 20 things to be grateful for about the accident and I concluded my prayer time by thanking God for taking the car! That's not the old me." Eleanor is filled with gratitude for the grace she has received from God and the generosity of those she has encountered on the journey. God sent her on a "spiritual sabbatical" and renewed her along the way.

The process of renewal isn't always as wrenching as it was for Eleanor. Lisa became a Christian at age 10 but for many years afterward had a static spiritual life. She was trained as a counselor and held various positions in the mental health field. She put great emphasis on ethical and professional standards and had a number of conflicts with supervisors and coworkers over her principles.

At the time, she attributed the skirmishes entirely to her colleagues. However, starting around age 40, she sensed »

God giving her a different perspective: “I helped create [these problems] for myself because of my immature attitudes, lack of understanding of relationships, how I handled myself.” She recognized that she could have approached these situations differently. She also saw that God wanted more from her than just her professional diligence; he wanted a relationship with her. She has started to regularly ask God “to reveal to me what I need to know in order to be obedient to him.”

Now nearing 50, Lisa reports that she has grown more in the past 10 years than she did in the previous 30. Six months ago she felt God leading her to take another job, one in which she faces problems with administrators similar to those that occurred earlier in her career. She has come to see these difficulties as part of a “spiral path” on which God is having her revisit the issues that she handled poorly before. Her new job is not an opportunity for reinvention but for continuing the process of renewal that is already well underway.

Then there is me. My career as a professor and psychologist was disrupted two years ago when my dad asked me, “Would you come back home and help us?” I knew that he and my mom had reached the point in their lives when they needed assistance, but it hadn’t occurred to me that I might be the one to help. I tried to hold on to the life I had. But in the end I realized that Dad’s words were God’s call. I resigned from the university where I taught and returned to my hometown. I am not reinventing myself, but I am being remade into the son and servant that God wants me to be.

## Renewal and Loss

In each of the cases above, the process of renewal began with a loss—Eleanor lost her home, Lisa lost the conviction that she had done everything right, and I lost a career. Franciscan priest Richard Rohr, in his book *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for*

## Preparing for Renewal

Renewal is God’s work, but that doesn’t mean that all we can do is passively wait for it to occur. Here are some things that we can do to prepare for or participate in our renewal:

- 1. Take on Christ’s yoke.** According to Dallas Willard in his book *Renovation of the Heart*, all who accept Christ’s forgiveness take on his yoke (Matt. 11:29). Willard suggests that the key thing we learn from his yoke is to abandon outcomes to God, recognizing that we lack “the wherewithal to make *this* come out right, whatever ‘this’ is.” In the case of self-renewal, we abandon the idea that our efforts will by themselves remake us into something pleasing to God.
- 2. Change your thoughts.** Willard also recommends that we “take initiative in progressively retaking the whole of our thought life for God’s kingdom.” The path he gives for accomplishing this is to diligently learn about God and his intent for us, then actively think about the implications of what we’ve learned.
- 3. Pray for self-knowledge.** The process of renewal often begins with an awareness of something about ourselves that affects others negatively or seems contrary to our own flourishing. One way to pursue such self-knowledge is to pray the prayer that Lisa, one of the individuals described in the article, uses every day: she asks that God will show her who she is, giving her insight into her faults.
- 4. Attend to epiphanies of recruitment.** In his book *Forgetting Yourself on Purpose: Vocation and the Ethics of Ambition*, Brian Mahan suggests that, in the course of pursuing our ambitions, we are likely to encounter “epiphanies of recruitment.” These experiences are invitations “to see things differently, to live a different kind of life, to embrace one’s unique vocation.” My conversation with my dad was such an experience. Renewal flows out of accepting such invitations.
- 5. Listen to stories of renewal.** The Puritan writer Thomas Manton wrote, “Good examples have a powerful influence upon us, for we are led more by pattern than by precept.” Christ’s church, past and present, is overflowing with accounts of those whom God has renewed. Hearing their stories shows us the ways in which God plants seeds of renewal in the human heart and prepares us to be remade.

*the Two Halves of Life*, indicates that many of us undergo a late-life spiritual transformation that begins with some sort of loss or disappointment: “Normally a job, fortune, or reputation has to be lost, a death has to be suffered, a house has to be flooded, or a disease has to be endured.”

We suffer not only the loss itself, but also are deprived of the certitudes and consolations that sustained us in the first half of life. We encounter God in a new way, and he seems much different than he did before. As Rohr puts it, “Authentic God experience always ‘burns’ you, yet does not destroy you (Exod. 3:2-3), just as the burning bush did to Moses.” He adds, “Early-stage religion is largely preparing you for the immense gift of this burning, this inner experience of God, as though creating a proper stable into which the Christ can be born.” Of course, this burning is not the

result of self-invention but of God’s passionate, renewing love.

Reinventions of the self are typically superficial—the putting on of a new persona, not a transformation of the inner self. The self-reinventor is still ensconced firmly in the mental set of the first half of life, where ego and success are ascendant. To truly enter into “second half” faith, we need to be burned by God, to wrestle with him, to lose our sight in his bright light. With our sense of who we are thus disturbed, we are ready to be renewed. ■

### STUDY QUESTIONS ONLINE



**Robert J. Ritzema**, a clinical psychologist, practices part-time as a therapist at Psychology Associates of Grand Rapids, Mich. He worships at Square Inch Church, a Christian Reformed church plant in Grand Rapids.

# It Can Happen to Anyone

I

**T CAN HAPPEN** to anyone: a baptized child grows up and appears to reject the faith for reasons you can't explain.

Somewhere along the way—when he or she went off to college, perhaps, or graduated and entered adulthood—your pride and joy discovered that there is no scientific evidence God exists. You, on the other hand, know there's no proof that God *doesn't* exist, and you believe in your heart that he does.

A line in the sand.

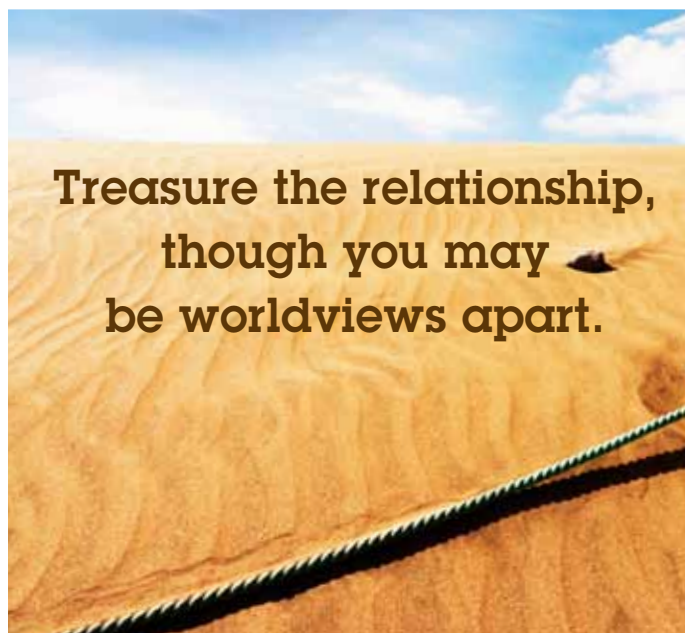
Parents grieve deeply when they have an unbelieving child. I've observed seven stages for processing such grief that can take years to move through.

**1. Shock.** You know you shouldn't panic—after all, this isn't your adult child's last word—but you can't help yourself. This situation would toss any parent into a tailspin. My child doesn't believe? Rejects everything we stand for? All those years in church, all those family devotions, that Christian education . . . for nothing? Feels like someone just hit you over the head with a two-by-four.

You're numb.

**2. Denial.** This can't be happening. He doesn't really mean it. Other families lose their children, not ours. Surely he knows better. Something we taught him must have sunk in. The other kids still believe. This makes no sense.

You hope that you'll wake up one morning to find that the nightmare has blown over.



Treasure the relationship,  
though you may  
be worldviews apart.

**3. Blame.** But the nightmare rages on. Someone is to blame. Is it my fault? Did I not spend enough quality time with him growing up? Was my life so inconsistent that he saw me as a fraud? Did he see too many warts on the church? Is there a liberal professor at college who preys upon impressionable kids? Are we dealing with the prodigal of Luke 15 squandering a spiritual inheritance?

Maybe the devil made him do it. Or dare I pin this on God for not granting the gift of faith?

**4. Engagement.** Maybe you can talk sense into him. You're determined not to let him fall through the cracks. But the conversation doesn't go well. Emotions that arise from the parent-child dynamic sink all efforts at reasonable discussion. He feels he knows your talking points and has made up his mind.

Engagement threatens to damage the relationship, something neither of you wants.

**5. Silence.** This is when the parent enters what Saint John of the Cross named "the dark night of the soul." Woulda, coulda, shoulda—all irrelevant now. My God, why have you forsaken me? What was all that covenant talk about? Don't tell me God works everything for good. Are you there, God?

Regardless, it's a moment of decision: write the rebel off or embrace him.

**6. Acceptance.** This doesn't mean endorsement. Your child knows where you stand. Treasure the relationship, though you may be worldviews apart. Respect his position and abandon all schemes to "rescue" the grandkids. Appreciate your child's gifts in new ways. At his house, follow his lead. At your house, he won't expect you to deep-six your Psalm 23 plaque—unless you make an issue of it.

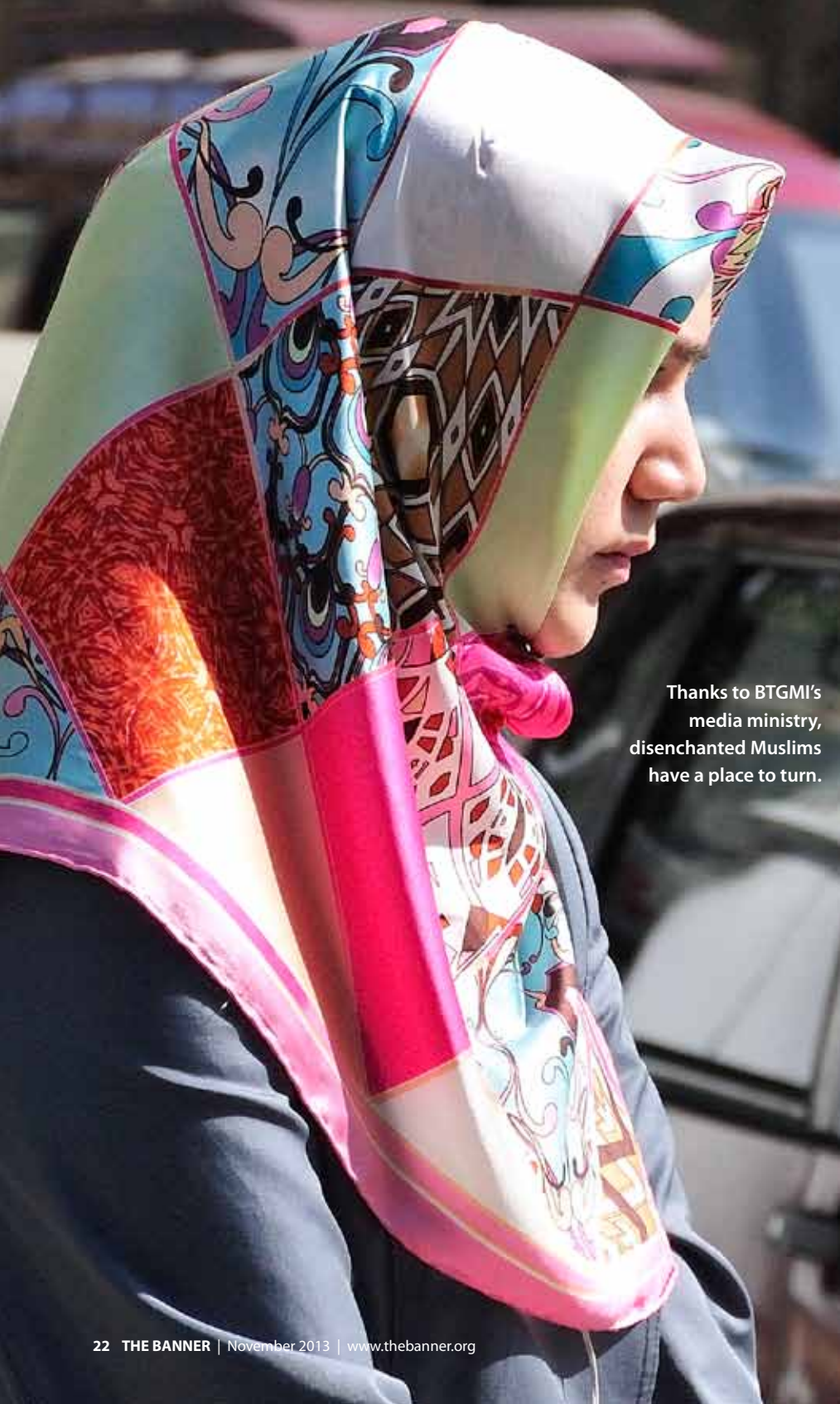
An uneasy truce, to start, but blood is thicker than water and covers a multitude of sins.

**7. Onward.** Never lose hope. In uncharted waters, focus solely on God's covenant promises to mark the course: "I will be God to you and your children" (Gen. 17:7; Acts 2:39). Cling to your child's baptism and to yours. Pray that he finds his way. Keep your bearings straight and walk humbly with your God.

You both may be surprised to discover where this path leads. Our God reigns. ■



H. David Schuringa is a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church and president of Crossroad Bible Institute, Grand Rapids, Mich.



## A Place to Turn

by Brian Clark

**D**iyannah felt trapped. She had a difficult decision to make and needed somewhere to turn.

Some of her family tried to understand, but that was not enough. As thoughts of suicide entered her head, she looked over to her cell phone, remembering a text message conversation she had been having with an anonymous person. She had only recently connected with this person, yet the texts seemed to contain exactly what she needed: a message of love.

Like many young Muslims who contact the Arabic staff of Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI), Diyanah was afraid to question her Muslim faith. She knew the persecution she could face and the reaction many in her family would have.

Still she found herself listening curiously when she came across an Arabic-

Thanks to BTGMI's media ministry, disenchanting Muslims have a place to turn.

### The Beautiful Injeel

Hanif (not his real name) had never read the Bible. Like many Muslims, he was told it was a corrupt book written by Christians and Jews. Still, Hanif wanted to find out for himself.

When Hanif discovered BTGMI's Arabic programs, he thanked the staff for revealing the gospel to him. He said he found truth in the programs and now has a new attitude toward the Christian faith.

"I cannot express how much the beautiful Injeel (gospel) changed my view about religion and about life itself," Hanif testified.

PHOTO BY HANS MULDER

Media ministries enable BTGMI to share the gospel even in countries opposed to the Christian faith.



PHOTO BY HANS MULDER

language shortwave radio program produced by Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) in partnership with BTGMI and Words of Hope.

Diyanah was hearing the gospel for the first time.

“The Bible contains a contrasting message to the Quran,” said the BTGMI Arabic ministry leader. “Jesus teaches us to forgive, to love our enemies, and to do unto others what we want others to do unto us.”

As Diyanah’s curiosity grew, BTGMI connected her with Majidah, a volunteer trained to follow up with Muslim seekers through a text messaging response ministry. In her own setting, Diyanah received encouragement and answers to her questions. BTGMI eventually introduced her to other Christians in her area.

### Careful Discipleship

Many people in the Middle East are becoming disenchanted with Islam, says the Arabic ministry leader. “They long for the freedom of choice in their religion.”

Majidah serves as one of more than 170 volunteers in the Arabic ministry partnership. She is trained to answer the questions of Muslim seekers in a loving way without attacking the Islamic faith.

As Muslims in the Middle East become more educated, they seem to have more questions about their beliefs. The Arabic team receives more than 360 first-time



MAP BY KRISTEN FERGUSON STEE

**BTGMI reaches Arabic-speaking seekers throughout the Middle East and North Africa.**

text message responses each month. That’s where Majidah comes in.

Majidah and other volunteers must respond to followers with caution. Occasionally extremist Muslims will pose as seekers in order to find out the location of Christian groups. This could endanger seekers, believers, and staff.

In some Middle Eastern countries, face-to-face meetings are nearly impossible. In other countries, it often takes more than six months to determine whether the seeker is genuine. To do this, staff members ask leading questions that help determine motives.

Volunteers like Majidah may spend months or even years in patient and

*You add.  
God multiplies.*

### Issa Is Enough

After discipling an older couple with a Muslim background, an Arabic ministry leader prepared them for their baptism. “Issa (Jesus) is enough for me!” the woman declared during one of the final discipleship classes.

consistent teaching before a seeker accepts the Christian faith.

### Preaching with Love

Majidah’s attitude of love serves as the most important part of her training. The BTGMI Arabic ministry leader explained, “To win Muslims for Christ we need to listen patiently, pray for their salvation, and be hospitable and caring. What’s most effective is to spread the message of self-giving love. God so loved the world »

### Prayer Requests

- Pray for Diyanah, Hanif, and all those who are hearing the truth of the gospel through BTGMI’s media ministry in the Middle East. Pray that God will give BTGMI Arabic staff and volunteers wisdom and love as they respond to difficult questions from Muslim seekers.
- Pray that the Lord will increase the level of religious freedom in the Middle East.
- Pray for the safety of staff and their families and for Christian churches in the Middle East.
- Pray for peace in the Middle East, especially in Syria and Egypt. Pray that as people become more and more disenchanted with Islamic extremism they will become more open to the gospel and experience a more intense desire to know Christ and his love.
- Pray for the development of a new media outreach effort: a 24/7 online radio broadcast designed to reach younger Arab listeners.

### Continuing Outreach to Muslims

As the BTGMI Arabic ministry leader considers the importance of outreach to Muslims, he often summarizes his ministry with John 3:14: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up."

He explained, "When Christ is lifted up, he attracts people to himself."

Recently the ministry leader demonstrated how believers can lift up Christ while traveling on a plane by sharing his own experiences when seated next to three imams (leaders in the Islamic community).

He said, "One of the imams spoke, saying that even though he respects Christians he could not agree with their belief about Issa (Jesus). He could not understand how Christians believe God could come to earth in human form. Another imam added emphatically but politely, 'This is impossible.' The three again looked at each other and then gazed at me, wondering how I would react.

"Expressing agreement that God is indeed totally transcendent above all creation, I added that he is also the Almighty and is perfectly holy. They happily agreed, eager to hear more."

At the end of the plane ride, the Arabic leader said, he directed the imams to BTGMI's ministry website where they could find the Arabic Bible. To his surprise, they thanked him for the suggestion and said they would look at the Scriptures.

Patience and kindness characterize how to be a witness and show love to Muslim neighbors. A caring attitude results in further conversation and a positive impression of the Christian faith. This is the first step in witnessing to Muslims, he said.

"We have to be patiently listening," he added. "Self-giving love means being willing to give ears. Be sympathetic. Even if provoked, if Muslims attack doctrines of the Christian faith, people should not be tempted to react with arguments."

"We have more opportunities to share the gospel than ever before," he reported. "We are blessed because God is at work directing events, causing disenchantment with Islam, and providing an opportunity for the alternative."

To read more about outreach to Muslims, visit [BackToGod.net/global-ministries/Arabic](http://BackToGod.net/global-ministries/Arabic).

that he gave Jesus to be our sacrificial Savior. This message resonates with Muslim seekers."

He also cautioned against many of the common practices of reaching Muslims. "I can punch a thousand holes in the Quran or point out many fallacies in the fathers of Islam, but it doesn't help. With that approach Muslims lock up. Islam is not just a religion of individuals but also a religion of family, community, and nation. When you attack their religion, you attack them all."

For this reason, Arabic staff often share Jesus' Sermon on the Mount with seekers like Diyanah. "Jesus' teachings mesmerize thinking Muslims," said the BTGMI Arabic leader. "It's a significant contrast to the more forced Islamic religion."

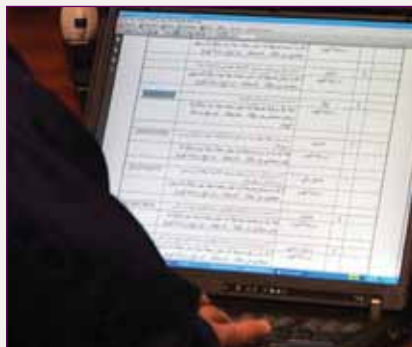


PHOTO BY MIKE ELZINGA

PHOTO BY JOSH LEO

### Words from a Wise Man

BTGMI's Arabic ministry is blessed by the gifts of more than 170 volunteers who assist with program production and follow-up discipleship with seekers. One volunteer serves as a gifted narrator for a radio segment entitled *El'Aam Shaaban* (Words from a Wise Man). He also takes part in weekly prayer meetings for the ministry, staff, and people who contact BTGMI Arabic ministry.

"It never crossed my mind that in my retirement years I would rejoice in being part of such a young team, reaching out to millions of Muslim people. What a blessing!"



### Chat About God's Love

When Diyanah first heard the gospel over the radio, she appreciated the conversational format. In fact, the name of BTGMI's Arabic program is *Dardasha*, which means "Chat."

"Our program features a variety of segments," explained one of the producers. "In our half-hour broadcast we discuss many topics that are related to the situations Muslim people face. What makes our program special is that we are not a preaching program. We have lots of conversations going on."

*Dardasha* broadcasts to Arabic people in more than 22 Middle Eastern countries, many of which are closed to Christian outreach.

"We proclaim biblical truth without compromise," the producer added, "but also without attacking or offending Muslims or being disrespectful."

### Discipleship Through Social Media

While Diyanah continued learning about Jesus, BTGMI staff also used social media to further her understanding of him. Majidah directed her to the ministry's Arabic Facebook page that shares the sayings of Jesus. The page is popular among Muslims because of the wisdom it offers.

Using social media is one of the most effective ways to reach Muslims. Because the medium is safe, young



You add.  
God multiplies.

### A Gold Mine for the Soul

The BTGMI Arabic daily radio program *Dardasha* (Chat) draws younger listeners to the website with its interactive format. A high school student said, "Thanks for guiding me to your *Dardasha* website. There is a gold mine for meeting the needs of the human soul."



PHOTO BY MIKE ELZINGA

people are using Facebook as a link to one another, sharing ideas faster than ever before.

"Arab citizens in the Middle East are demanding democracy and an end to dictatorial regimes," said BTGMI's Arabic ministry leader. "Much of this is due to the rapid spread of information with social media. God is also using our social media ministry to spread his gospel of peace."

### Setting Diyanah Free

When Diyanah committed her life to Christ and became established in a local group of believers, BTGMI staff left the discipleship process in their capable hands.



PHOTO BY JOSH LEO

**Text messaging is a safe and secure way to carry on conversations with Muslim-background seekers.**

"We want seekers and new believers to be connected with local groups, receiving support from Christian neighbors," explained the ministry leader. "We want them to stay local and be a witness to other seekers."

Diyanah has come a long way from her original distraught messages. She has read the four gospels and the book of Acts. Even though her family continues to practice Islam, she finds hope in her newfound faith.

"I have no doubt that Issa (Jesus) connected me with you to save my life and assure me of God's love and nearness," she testified.

Please pray for Diyanah and other Christians in Arab countries whose lives

are threatened because of their faith. Pray for their safety, but also praise God for the unity among Christians there through the gospel message.



**Brian Clark** is a staff writer with Back to God Ministries International

### A Kingdom of Peace and Love

Christians living in Egypt have experienced political and religious turmoil over the past few years, especially in the last months. But many are finding peace in God's Word through BTGMI's Arabic ministry websites and radio broadcasts. After reading the gospel of Matthew, one Egyptian wrote, "I love hearing about Issa's (Jesus') kingdom of peace and love; he is the truest messenger of God."

### About Arabic Ministry

Now in its 55th year of ministry to Arabic people, BTGMI began a partnership in 1999 with Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) and Words of Hope, the media ministry associated with the Reformed Church in America.

The team shares the gospel through the following media:

- Daily radio broadcasts—*Dardasha* (Chat)
- 24/7 online outreach—*Sarahat* (Frankly Speaking)
- Text messaging response system
- Social media outreach
- Online discipleship resources

The Arabic team receives more than 700 first-time responses to its ministry each month from seekers in the Middle East. Pray for the Spirit to move mightily in their lives.

## Three-Selah Living

**T**hey come early and stay late. They have seats but mostly stand. They raise their arms and wave their hands. They shout until the veins in their necks stand out. They watch eagerly and listen carefully. They encourage enthusiastically. They laugh. They cry. They are watching the game—basketball, football, baseball, soccer. And they are anything but uninvolved.

On Sunday mornings they go to worship. They come late and leave early. They stand only when asked. They fold their arms and lay their hands in their laps. They sing listlessly. They watch occasionally and listen sporadically. They greet each other unenthusiastically. They smile silently and cry internally. They are approaching God. And too often they are anything but involved.

Does this describe you? I know I'm describing myself here. It's not that I check out of worship; I just do not check in. I go through the motions, unconcerned about the outcome.

So now I want to make a plea for what I call "three-selah worship." Psalm 46 begins with this incredible affirmation: "God is our refuge and strength." When the earth gives way, when the foundations shake, when the tsunami approaches, God is our refuge and strength. There may be reason for concern but not for collapse.

*Selah.*

It's right there in the margin at the end of verse 3, that strange word we never quite know what to do with when we are reading a psalm responsively in church. Apparently it means that we're to stop, inhale deeply, and let the wonder of what we've just heard or read wash over us. That will bring us to our feet. That will bring tears to our eyes and elicit shouts of praise from our mouths. That will encourage our enthusiasm and involvement.

Another stanza in this hymn of praise reassures us of the strengthening, settling, faith-building presence of the Almighty, the Creator—the Invincible, Most High God. It culminates in

verse 7 with "The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress."

*Selah.*

There it is again. Think of what this verse means. Do not just imagine it, but believe it. Bask in it. Rise up in a standing ovation of praise. Consider what a difference it ought to make in your life and attitude and outlook and conversation. Soak in this awesome truth!

Verse 8 invites our examination. Look at what God has done and is doing. Revolutionary? Absolutely.

I am regularly in touch with believers in Egypt, which our news media portray as being on the brink of chaos. There, in the midst of what we consider cultural collapse, God is doing great things. Above the noise of the bombs and the bombast is his whisper of peace: "Be still and know that I am God." The psalm concludes with a reminder that the Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

*Selah.*

If that third selah doesn't fill your spirit, I don't know what will.

Let's engage this three-selah perspective not only in our worship but in our living. Gone with dismay! Out with despair! Off with despondency!

"The Lord Almighty is with us."

That affirmation, I suggest, is what prompts us to try to bring this world back to God. It motivates us to invite the nations into the kingdom of our God. It upholds our mission enterprise and empowers our service. And it constitutes our hope. That affirmation invites us to stand and shout and applaud adoringly.

A realization of the presence and power of God is the only thing that will bring our world back to God. And it will bring us there too. So I'm all for three-selah living! ■



⚡ Gone with dismay! Out with despair! Off with despondency! ⚡



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

You add.  
God multiplies.

## Uniting Reformation Hymns and iPads

Five-hundred-year-old hymns meet 21st-century technology in *Hymnary.org*'s first iPad app, launched in late October.

Calvin College computer science students working for *Hymnary.org* and its mother site, the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL), developed the app.

"It is basically a digital version of a hymnal," explained sophomore computer science major Tyler Dougherty.

"[Using the app] you can play music along with hymns,

find information about the hymn's history, and search through the hymns," Dougherty noted. He added, "There's also a tool called 'flexscore' that allows you to make the hymn text bigger, change the size of the music, and change the key of a song for different instruments."

Launched by CCEL in 2007, *Hymnary.org* is a searchable hymn database of more than a million songs.

Last summer, in addition to developing the iPad app, the five student employees at CCEL and *Hymnary.org* worked to make both sites more user-friendly and efficient.

Calvin senior Will Groenendyk modified the



Calvin College students developed an iPad app for *Hymnary.org*.

search process on the CCEL website to make information about authors more accessible.

"What's cool about the new author pages is that if you enter the author's ID, everything about them automatically pops up," he said.

While CCEL and *Hymnary.org* depended on computer science students like Dougherty and Groenendyk for technological help, students from different majors have helped CCEL expand its ministry in other ways.

When CCEL started offering Kindle versions of their books, they needed people who were familiar with the texts to write book descriptions, so they hired philosophy majors. CCEL also used theater majors as voice actors when they added audiobooks to their offerings. ■

—Grace Ruiter, Calvin College student writer

## Practical and Spiritual Relief

In the heart of the densely-packed, multicultural mosaic of Jersey City, New Jersey, a pastor's heart beats for the people he serves.

"Jersey City has so many different nationalities," said Pastor Jose Vazquez, who leads Jersey City Mission Church, a Home Missions partner ministry.

Currently the church reaches out to Spanish speakers from Puerto Rico, Bolivia, Honduras, Peru, and Mexico. The needs of the neighborhood are many, and the issues people face include unemployment and poverty.

Jersey City Mission Church tries to provide some practical relief as well as spiritual encouragement.

"We have 'free markets' in the summer where we give away shoes and used clothes," said Vazquez. "We also sell appliances for a very low price or give them away if needed."

Recently the church was able to assist a young pregnant woman in dire need.

"She was having a baby and had nothing—no crib or stroller or anything. She is a recent immigrant from Mexico with no job, no food, no money, and no papers. With no papers, it's very hard to find a job."

The church took up a collection; Vazquez and other church members



Pastor Jose Vazquez and his wife, Carmen, at work among God's people in Jersey City.

helped round up baby supplies and equipment.

Jersey City Mission also ministers to those who are desperate for emotional healing. Recently they launched a counseling ministry. "The need is spiritual," said Vazquez. "When people are abused, they carry that all their lives and they can't let go."

A young girl recently came to Vazquez for help. "Someone tried to rape her, and she was struggling with nightmares," he said.

Pastor Jose is trying to find qualified counselors to help treat the girl and others who have unseen wounds.

Vazquez emphasizes that emotional healing is a big concern for his church. "We have to take care of [that] first," he said, adding that freedom can only come after emotional healing. ■

—Lorilee Craker, Christian Reformed Home Missions

## Missionary's Past Fuels His Own Calling

**A**s a child, Sosthene Maletoungou knew little about God's love.

He grew up the second of six children in a poor, non-Christian family in the Central African Republic. His parents separated when he was 8 years old.

To survive, he and his siblings stole food from market vendors or searched through the trash.

Then one day Sosthene followed some children to a soccer event at a local church. He so enjoyed the game—and the free post-game treats—that he returned for follow-up games. The youth leaders soon realized his situation, and some families took

**Teachers nurture children's understanding of God and his world.**

him in. Through their care and witness, Sosthene came to know and follow Jesus and became active in church.

As time passed, Sosthene used a 25-cent gift from a foster family to start a business buying and reselling plastic bags. He added items over time, eventually making enough money to rent a place to live, care for his siblings, and finish high school.

Meanwhile he helped lead worship, prayer, and youth ministries at church. Leaders and mentors noticed his gifts. On their recommendations, Sosthene entered Youth With a Mission's discipleship training school, serving in various locations and

eventually meeting his wife, Kara.

By 2011, the Maletoungous sensed God calling them to a new mission opportunity.

"It was like divine confirmation to us when, through CRWM, we received the call for ministry among the Fulani in West Africa," says Sosthene.

After spending several months building a support network, the Maletoungous moved to West Africa this fall. Since then, Sosthene has begun helping schools network and is mentoring teachers on integrating a biblical worldview into their classrooms. ■

—Sarah Lin, *Christian Reformed World Missions*



## Speaking on the Heidelberg in Heidelberg



Lyle Bierma has spoken internationally this year about the Heidelberg Catechism.

**R**ev. Lyle Bierma has traveled to several international conferences speaking about the Heidelberg Catechism, the historic statement of faith that celebrates its 450th anniversary this year.

One of these stops was in Heidelberg, the German city where the catechism was written at the request of the local ruler, who wanted a document to which Reformed Christians could adhere.

Bierma, a professor of systematic theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, said that the audiences to whom he spoke at the various conferences responded with great interest to the themes he presented.

"As one might expect, the scholarly conferences tended to treat the catechism more as a topic of historical and cultural interest than as a document that still lives and breathes in the church today," he said.

"At the more popular conferences, I was struck by the great appreciation people still have for the Heidelberg Catechism 450 years after its birth—but also by their willingness to wrestle with ques-

You add.  
God multiplies.

MINISTRY SHARES  
**TOGETHER**  
DOING MORE

tions about how well the catechism can serve confessional Reformed churches in the 21st century,” he added.

Published in German and Latin in 1563, the Heidelberg was written as a tool for teaching young people the precepts of the church, as a guide for preaching, and as a source of unity for a range of Protestant churches.

In January, Bierma spoke at the Third Annual Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary Lecture Series on the topic “Your Only Comfort: Celebrating 450 Years with the Heidelberg Catechism.”

He spoke in Leuven, Belgium, on “The Heidelberg Catechism in Ecumenical Perspective.”

In May, he spoke in Heidelberg on “Profile and Impact of the Heidelberg Catechism.”

Bierma spoke in June on “The Spirituality of the Heidelberg Catechism” at the Theological University of Apeldoorn.

In July, he addressed the 4th annual Heidelberg Conference on Reformed Theology. “This was a more popular conference, with such speakers as Joel Beeke, Michael Horton, and Jon Payne, and was attended by about 100 lay people, military chaplains, members of a Reformation Heritage tour (all from the U.S. and Canada), and seminary students. I spoke on the historical background of the Heidelberg Catechism,” said Bierma. ■

—Chris Meehan,  
CRC Communications

You can find longer versions of many  
of these stories online at  
[thebanner.org/together](http://thebanner.org/together).

## Helping in High River

**A**lberta experienced the worst flood in the province’s history earlier this year.

In the aftermath, people rallied to provide food, shelter, and other support to some of the 100,000 people forced from their homes.

But the crisis is not over.

People who are elderly, disabled, or without adequate insurance still need help repairing their homes and rebuilding their lives.

In mid-September, some 20 World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS) volunteers traveled to High River, Alberta, to participate in World Renew’s Unmet Needs Assessment program.

Volunteers went out in teams of two, knocking on doors, talking to homeowners, and examining damage. They then reported their findings to the High River Renewal Committee, the group coordinating the flood response.

“The work of World Renew’s Unmet Needs Assessment teams . . . identifies those most in need and also enables various nonprofits to coordinate their efforts to ensure that needs are met,” said Bill Adams, Director of World Renew DRS.

It also gives disaster survivors someone to talk to and to help them process their experience.

Herman and Tina Boks of Hamilton, Ontario, recently volunteered as Unmet Needs Assessment volunteers for World Renew in New Jersey, where Hurricane Sandy caused millions of dollars of damage in 2012.

“So many people just want someone to talk to,” Tina explained. “Yes, their home has been damaged, but they’ve also lost photo albums and other keepsakes. Maybe they lost their job after the disaster, or their health is poor.” ■

—Kristen Vanderberg, World Renew

**In the days immediately following this year’s flooding in southern Alberta, volunteers with World Renew Disaster Response Services helped residents pump water, muck out homes, and clear debris.**



# Our Daily Bread

Bread is one of the most common foods in the world. It can be baked, grilled, fried, or steamed. You can make it with almost any kind of grain in almost any kind of shape—puffy yeast loaves, flat bread, or bread with a pocket inside.

Most of us eat bread so often that we don't even think about it. But the story of bread is really interesting. Let's take a look!



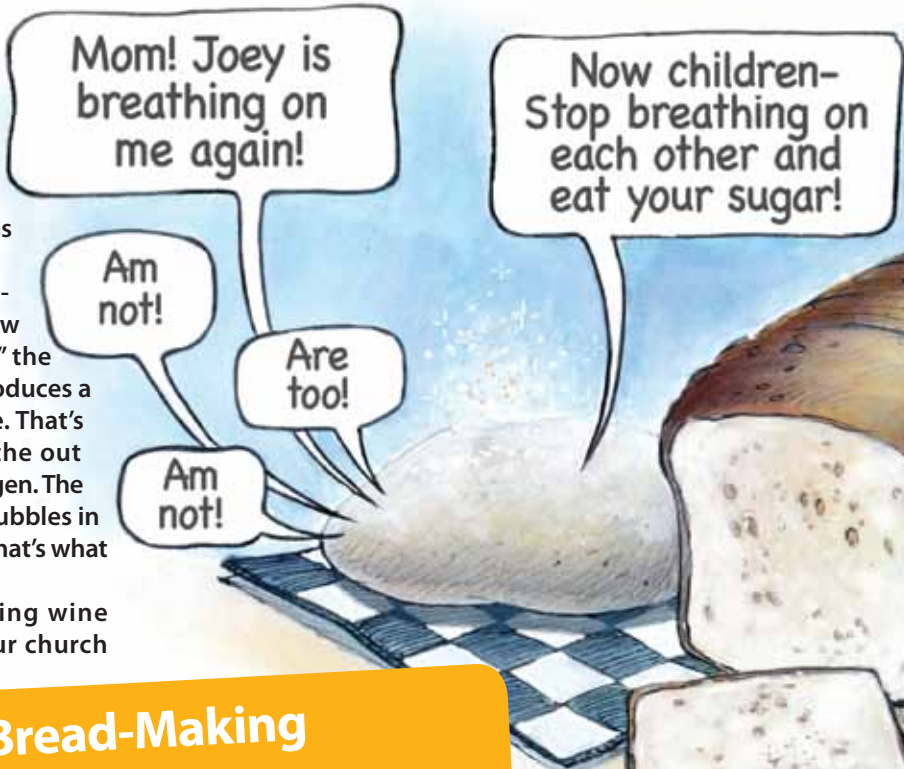
## What Makes Bread Rise?

Yeast is the stuff that makes bread dough rise. Without yeast in the dough, you'd get flat or "unleavened" bread.

But what *is* yeast? Believe it or not, yeast is actually a type of single-celled fungus. Its scientific name is *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*, which means "sugar-eating fungus."

In 1859, French scientist Louis Pasteur discovered a lot about how yeast works. The yeast "eats" the sugar in the dough and produces a gas called carbon dioxide. That's the same gas you breathe out after your body uses oxygen. The carbon dioxide makes bubbles in the bread dough—and that's what makes the dough rise!

Yeast is used in making wine too. So the next time your church celebrates the Lord's Supper, thank God for how yeast helps make the bread and wine that remind us that Jesus died and rose again for us.



## Bread-Making Milestones

Most bread is made from grain that's been ground up to make flour. People have always looked for easier ways to make flour. Try grinding some rice between two rocks, and you'll see why—it's hard work!

- The first bread was probably made by cooking some grain mush on a hot stone—maybe even by accident! Back then, people used stones to grind grain by hand.
- Around 800 B.C., the Mesopotamians made the first "mills" using animals or people to turn two huge flat round stones that crushed the grain between them.
- By 1150, Europeans were using windmills to grind grain into flour.
- In 1786, the first steam-powered mill was built on the Thames River in England. Barges delivered grain to the mill. There it was ground by 20 pairs of huge millstones.

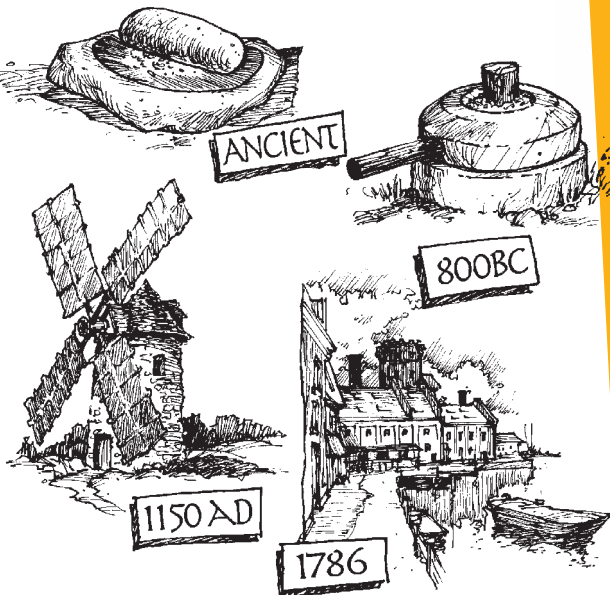


ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY

# Bread Around the World

Here are just a few of the thousands of kinds of bread eaten by people all around the world. How many of these breads have you eaten? Circle the names of the breads in the puzzle below. Stuck? See the answer at the bottom of the page.

S S I B G F M T F J T V Q D Y  
 A O B N B X O J R P V M A I Q  
 G I D Y J R U L Y K K J N E K  
 Z H J A T E A N B O Z I T V R  
 N W K I B V R E R O P L Q X Q  
 J A L Z A R Q A E F H B H X F  
 I L A S O Z E S A F C A T H I  
 A N H N W C S A D U O T P T P  
 T U W E H Q K S D P D I P A L  
 L A T T A B A I C F S P F E M  
 R J L L P X C X K F I S Z W A  
 B R I O C H E L N U G T W O N  
 E N O C S F N I U P E E Y L T  
 R X W P P I G O J R A H L F O  
 L K J W M P Y W P L Y O K Y U

-  **Naan** (India)
-  **Pita** (Middle East)
-  **Soda bread** (Ireland)
-  **Injera** (Ethiopia)
-  **Fry bread** (North America)
-  **Pretzel** (Germany)
-  **Scone** (Great Britain)
-  **Tortilla** (Mexico)
-  **Mantou** (China)
-  **Lavash** (Armenia)
-  **Brioche** (France)
-  **Ciabatta** (Italy)
-  **Puff Puff** (Nigeria)



## The Best Thing Since Sliced Bread

In 1917, an American named Otto Rohwedder invented a machine that sliced bread automatically. Ten years later he made a machine that could slice *and* wrap bread. In 1928, the Chillicothe Baking Company in Chillicothe, Missouri, installed the first slicing machine, and it was a huge success! Ever since, when people want to say something is really great, they might describe it as "the best thing since sliced bread."



**Sandy Swartzentruber** is a freelance writer and editor and a member of Sherman Street Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She has never met a loaf of bread she didn't like.

## A Week of Bread in the Bible

Bread was an important source of food for people in the Bible, and Jesus talks a lot about it. Here are five important "bread" passages. After dinner this week, read one of these passages with your family and talk about it together.

- **Matthew 4:1-4.** Satan tempts Jesus in the wilderness.
- **Matthew 6:9-13.** Jesus teaches us to pray for "our daily bread."
- **Matthew 14:13-21.** Jesus does a miracle with bread.
- **John 6:28-35.** Jesus says, "I am the bread of life."
- **Matthew 26:26-29.** Jesus breaks bread at the Last Supper.

S S I B G F M T F J T V Q D Y  
 A O B N B X O J R P V M A I Q  
 G I D Y J R U L Y K K J N E K  
 Z H J A T E A N B O Z I T V R  
 N W K I B V R E R O P L Q X Q  
 J A L Z A R Q A E F H B H X F  
 I L A S O Z E S A F C A T H I  
 A N H N W C S A D U O T P T P  
 T U W E H Q K S D P D I P A L  
 L A T T A B A I C F S P F E M  
 R J L L P X C X K F I S Z W A  
 B R I O C H E L N U G T W O N  
 E N O C S F N I U P E E Y L T  
 R X W P P I G O J R A H L F O  
 L K J W M P Y W P L Y O K Y U

## Bread Factory in Action

Want to see how store-bought bread is made? Watch an amazing video at [tinyurl.com/breadfactory](http://tinyurl.com/breadfactory) to see huge machines mix, shape, bake, and package the bread people eat every day.



## The Many Faces of **Religious Persecution**



**O**UR SMALL GROUP of travelers arrived at the airport in Cairo, Egypt, with trepidation. Over a year-and-a-half after the start of the Egyptian revolution, there was renewed violence in the streets.

Since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak and the coming to power of the Islamic extremist Muslim Brotherhood, Christians were being increasingly targeted. Churches were being burned. Teenage Christian girls were being kidnapped off the streets and forced to marry Muslim men and convert to Islam. Believers were fleeing the country.

Just before we carried our luggage to a waiting van, we met our Christian contact. His first words were: “You don’t know what it means for you to come (to Egypt) at a time like this.”

Those words struck deep in my heart, especially since I’d almost canceled the trip because of the violence. The underlying meaning was clear: We need to know you care. We need you to pray with us for

our country. We need you to walk in our shoes, if just for a week.

We can’t all visit suffering Christians in North Korea, Iran, Syria, or Saudi Arabia. We can’t all be missionaries in Nigeria, Kenya, or Bangladesh, where Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM) missionaries work alongside persecuted Christians. We can’t all reach out to persecuted believers in Mali, South Sudan, and Myanmar with World Renew. But all of us should know that many people around the world share our faith but not our freedom.

### Persecution and the Bible

Of the many definitions of persecution, I prefer the one used by Ronald Boyd-MacMillan in his book *Faith That Endures*: “Christian persecution is any hostility, experienced from the world, as a result of one’s identification with Christ. This can include hostile feelings, attitudes, words and actions.”

Jesus warned his disciples that they would “be handed over to be persecuted

and put to death, and . . . hated by all nations because of me” (Matt. 24:9). In fact, wrote Timothy, “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12).

So it shouldn’t come as a shock to us that over 100 million Christians in more than 60 countries are being persecuted, according to Open Doors, an international Christian organization that has supported suffering Christians for 58 years. A 2012 Pew Research Center study states that the percentage of the world’s population affected by restrictions on religion increased to 74 percent—more than 5.1 billion people—in 2011.

Many faith groups, including Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Baha’is, face oppression. However, Christians are the single most persecuted religious group worldwide, according to Pew and numerous other sources. An estimated average of 100 Christians are killed each month for their faith. In 2012, Nigeria accounted for 791 of the 1,201 total number of martyrs.



## Persecution Takes High Toll

Persecution has many faces. In Nigeria, where CRWM has approximately two dozen missionaries, Christians are often targets of the Boko Haram—an Islamic terrorist group that wants to bring strict Sharia law to the entire country. Christian churches are often targets of bombings, especially in the Islamic-dominated north. Even innocent children are targets. On July 6, 2013, suspected Boko Haram terrorists set fire to a school that housed 1,200 students. Forty-two children and teachers were either burned to death or shot in the back while trying to flee. Many others disappeared into the bush and were never seen again.

This year, the persecution of Christians is taking a disturbingly high toll as oppression and turmoil force believers from their homes or their countries, including Middle Eastern nations such as Syria and Iraq. Earlier this year, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom stated, “The flight of Christians out of the region is unprece-

persecuted. It is because of a pure faith; *pure* meaning one that has its foundation on the pure gospel, which is always necessarily ‘offensive.’ It is through that kind of persecution that the purity of the faith is refined. Purity of faith and persecution will always come as a matched set. Far too often we have the idea that a pure faith brings popularity rather than persecution. We need regular reminding that this is not the case.”

## Religious Persecution Study Committee Approved

Earlier this year, Synod 2013 approved the appointment of a two-year study committee to advise the denomination on how to respond to religious persecution and religious liberty. The committee’s mandate is “to provide a biblical and theological framework regarding religious persecution and religious liberty” and to direct the church to “walk alongside and intercede on behalf of those who are . . . denied religious liberty” globally and locally.

## Many people around the world share our faith **but not our freedom.**

dedent and it is increasing year by year.” In our lifetime alone, they said, Christians might disappear altogether from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Egypt.

Interestingly, a Barna report released in 2011 stated that 74 percent of American Christians polled were interested in hearing sermons focused on Christian persecution. But only 48 percent of the pastors surveyed were likely to preach on the persecution believers face today. Either some pastors don’t know enough about religious persecution or they intentionally ignore it.

“From my perspective,” says John R. De Vries, pastor of St. Joseph (Mich.) Christian Reformed Church, “it is important for us to focus on the persecution of Christians around the world to be reminded that purity of faith and persecution go hand in hand. It is not because of a poor technique that the church is

In my own journey, I have learned from the humbleness, generosity, faithfulness to God’s Word and, yes, even joy in the midst of suffering of those who are persecuted. These are lessons that can make the church in North America more Christ-like and much closer to what God originally intended.

In February, Francis Maina survived a vicious Boko Haram attack that killed six men in his village in northern Nigeria. From his hospital bed he said, “I know that Jesus will raise me from this hospital bed. I am confident of that because the larger body of Christ is aware of our situation (in Nigeria) and is praying for us. Christ’s power will unite his people from every color, nationality, and denomination.”

That should be our hope and prayer too. ■

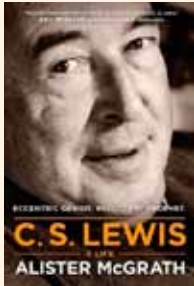
## What You Can Do

- **Pray!** You can download prayer resources from such organizations as Voice of the Martyrs USA, [persecution.com](http://persecution.com); Voice of the Martyrs Canada, [persecution.net](http://persecution.net); Open Doors USA, [opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org); and Open Doors Canada, [opendoorsca.org](http://opendoorsca.org). An excellent resource for distribution in your church or small group is the NavPress pamphlet “Prayers for the Persecuted Church” available at [tinyurl.com/navpressdykstra](http://tinyurl.com/navpressdykstra).
- **Observe the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP)** on the first or second Sunday of November. Information and materials can be found at the CRC Office of Social Justice website [crcna.org/pages/justice.cfm](http://crcna.org/pages/justice.cfm) and at the Open Doors USA and Voice of the Martyrs sites.
- **Stay informed.** Reading the news from around the world offers plenty of opportunities to keep the persecuted church in your mind and in your daily prayers. News about persecuted believers is available at such Christian watchdog sites as World Watch Monitor, [worldwatchmonitor.org](http://worldwatchmonitor.org); and Morning Star News, [morningstarnews.org](http://morningstarnews.org).
- **Read.** Seek out passages from the Bible that address persecution. The book *Persecuted: The Global Assault on Christians* (Thomas Nelson, 2013) is an excellent primer on persecution.
- **Advocate.** Many of the agencies that support persecuted Christians have campaigns to urge governments to protect religious freedom. The Office of Social Justice website includes a page that lists ways you can be a voice for the voiceless.
- **Start a persecuted believer support group in your church or small group to learn about and pray for persecuted believers.**



Jerry L. Dykstra is media relations director at Open Doors USA and is a lifelong member of the Christian Reformed Church.

## A Very Merry Tuned In: Christmas Ideas for Friends and Family

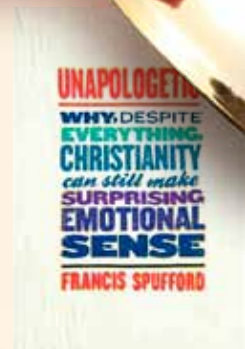


### C. S. Lewis—A Life

by Alister McGrath

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Fifty years after his death, C. S. Lewis remains “a figure of authority and influence,” according to McGrath. Raised in a Christian home, Lewis later embraced atheism. Still, he felt a deep longing for fleeting hints of joy he had experienced. McGrath’s detailed, lengthy biography gives readers a window into the way God pursued Lewis until he could no longer resist. Since then, Lewis’s works have enriched and challenged the lives of millions of people. (Tyndale)



### Unapologetic: Why, Despite Everything, Christianity Can Still Make Surprising Emotional Sense

by Francis Spufford

reviewed by Phil Christman Jr.

In the tradition of G. K. Chesterton’s *Orthodoxy*—but with more swears—comes this brilliant and funny affirmation of the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic satisfactions Christianity offers a thoughtful modern person. British novelist Spufford deals sensibly (if not definitively) with such issues as the problem of evil, the church’s terrible record, and the rationality of belief. He explains the joys and sufferings of the faithful with a novelist’s subtlety. And he does it all while managing a kindly, if sometimes exasperated, tone. If only he had included a bibliography. (HarperOne)



### Psalm 23

by Richard Jesse Watson

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

In this stunningly beautiful rendering of Psalm 23 in the King James Version, children from all over the world experience the care of the Lord. Like a lamb in the arms of a shepherd, they are restored, led, protected, comforted, welcomed to the table, and pursued by goodness and mercy. Especially evocative is the illustration of a noble lion watching over the sleeping figures of a child and a lamb. A book to savor repeatedly, *Psalm 23* could serve as a devotional for mealtimes or bedtime. Ages 4-8. (Zonderkidz)

### The Civil Wars

by The Civil Wars

reviewed by Robert J. Keeley

The Civil Wars—Joy Williams and John Paul White—made a big splash with their first album, *Barton Hollow*, and with their electrifying live performances.

The chemistry between them on stage resulted, in part, from their different working styles, and it became impossible for them to continue working together. Fortunately for us their amazing follow-up album, appropriately called *The Civil Wars*, was mostly complete when they took an indefinite hiatus. The way the two voices intertwine with each other and with White’s guitar makes this one of the year’s best new albums. (Sensibility Recordings)



### Snow Hunters

by Paul Yoon

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

In 1954, 25-year-old Yohan travels from North Korea to Brazil. He leaves behind his family and country, as well as the South Korean camp in which he was interned for two years.

In Brazil he becomes the apprentice of a Japanese tailor; gradually new relationships fill his longing for connection. Yoon’s sharp attention to detail, which evokes nations as diverse as the two Koreas, Japan, and Brazil, reveals commonalities among all people and the longing for community that binds us. (Simon & Schuster)



## Glories Stream from Heaven Afar

by **Sounding Light**; Tom Trenney, conductor

reviewed by **Randall D. Engle**

With its second recording in as many years, Sounding Light offers a lush, introspective Christmas recording that evokes the awe of the incarnation. Without noisy fanfare, many familiar carols are offered in newly-commissioned contemplative settings. Other tracks feature unfamiliar carols from diverse genres and traditions. Weaving all the tracks together is the near-perfect articulation, intonation, and musicianship of this premiere choral group. Glorious and heavenly indeed. (Available at [manyvoicesonesong.org](http://manyvoicesonesong.org).)

## Making Manifest

by **Dave Harrity**

reviewed by **Adele Konyndyk**

Dave Harrity's *Making Manifest* is a 28-day interactive devotional book designed to revitalize writers' artistic routine and "awaken and renew [their] faith in the power of the Incarnation." Encouraging yet tenacious, Harrity invites readers to prayerfully reflect on Scripture, mine their personal experiences, and observe the sensory world around them—all the while using their own words to respond to prompts and exercises. Writers from all disciplines will surely appreciate the chance to "more fully enter the deep world of words" through this dynamic, kingdom-focused journey of contemplation and creativity. (Seedbed)



## AFAR

reviewed by **Kristy Quist**

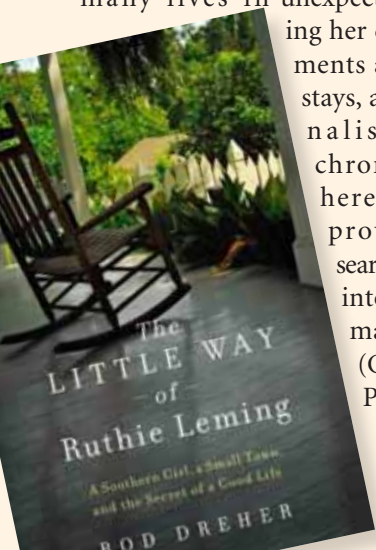
*AFAR* is a magazine about travel, not to be confused with vacations. With its thick paper, lush photography, and well-written articles, the magazine seeks to provide insight into unique experiences of different cultures and places. Like other travel magazines, *AFAR* sometimes spins off into decadent hotels and restaurants, but you'll also find advice on local food and out-of-the-way places. A great gift for travelers, armchair or otherwise. But beware the wanderlust it will inspire!

## The Little Way of Ruthie Leming

by **Rod Dreher**

reviewed by **Barbara Romahn**

When Ruthie Leming's lung cancer is diagnosed at the age of 40, her strong faith and exemplary lifestyle are a witness to almost everyone in the small Louisiana town where she lives. Ruthie touches many lives in unexpected ways during her chemo treatments and hospital stays, and her journalist brother chronicles them here. The book provides soul-searching insights into what really matters in life. (Grand Central Publishing)



## How Mercy Looks from Here

by **Amy Grant**

reviewed by **Paul Delger**



It's risky to anoint *How Mercy Looks from Here* as Amy Grant's best album ever, but the work certainly belongs in the conversation.

She has lots to say about her learned life lessons, including the pain of watching her mother die from dementia complications. The anthem "Deep as It Is Wide" celebrates the gathering of believers in heaven from the nations. Grant provides an impressive lineup of musical friends on this project, including James Taylor, Carole King, Sheryl Crow, and Eric Paslay. Fans and new listeners alike will appreciate this project. (Sparrow)



## And the Mountains Echoed

by **Khaled Hosseini**

reviewed by **Sandy Swartzentruber**

This novel's opening fairy tale of a child-stealing *div* from Afghan folklore sets the stage for the tragedy that befalls young Abdullah and his little sister, Pari. The siblings share a deep bond, and what happens to them sends shock waves through several generations. As their story spirals out from rural Afghanistan to Paris to Greece to America, Hosseini once again proves to be a superior storyteller whose insights into human nature can make the reader both cringe and exult in the space of a single chapter. (Riverhead)

**MORE REVIEWS ONLINE**



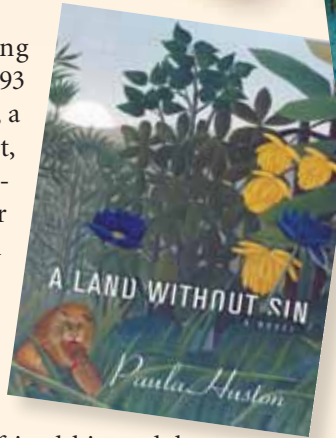
TUNE I

## A Land Without Sin

by Paula Huston

reviewed by Adele Konyndyk

*A Land Without Sin* is a gripping spiritual journey set in Mexico in 1993 amid escalating civil conflict. Eva, a seasoned American photojournalist, treks through jungle caves and guerrilla territories in search of her missing brother. Eva loves Stephen dearly, but she is unsettled by his deep Christian faith and by hints of family secrets he has withheld. This novel is a daring plunge into life's central mysteries, including the nature of evil, the challenge of friendship, and the complex application of mercy in a broken world. (Wipf and Stock)



## Paint Chips

by Susie Finkbeiner

reviewed by Lorilee Craker

What lies beneath the layers of hurt? This is the core question posed by novelist Susie Finkbeiner's debut, *Paint Chips*, a story that scrapes the strata of societal niceties to explore deep depravity and a redemption that goes deeper still. Finkbeiner weaves together the stories of a mother and a daughter trapped in abuse and human trafficking at various stages of their lives. While the novel often makes for harrowing reading, it also points the way to the God who heals and who has love and beauty to show us, despite our suffering. (WhiteFire)

## Otis and the Puppy

by Loren Long

reviewed by Jenny deGroot

Otis the tractor is loyal. Otis is brave. And Otis is a trusted friend to all the animals on the farm. A hide-and-seek adventure leaves the farm's new puppy lost in the forest. Can Otis rise above his own fear to save his frightened new friend? Big on character, Loren Long's endearing new picture book joins three earlier Otis titles as great additions to a young child's library. Ages 1-8. (Philomel)



## All My Noble Dreams and Then What Happens

by Gloria Whelan

reviewed by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Rosalind, a teen living in India, constantly finds herself "at war" with her father, a deputy commissioner in the British Civil Service, because she sees "how unfair it is for England to rule over India."

He disagrees. In 1921 when Edward, Prince of Wales, announces a visit to India, Rosalind is pressured by a friend to give the prince a message pleading for India's independence. Rosalind courageously tries to act with integrity and learns that doing the right thing is often the most difficult thing. Ages 10 and up. (Simon & Schuster)

## Mister Max: The Book of Lost Things

by Cynthia Voigt

reviewed by Kristy Quist

Twelve-year-old Max has a problem: his theatrical parents have accepted a strange invitation and are now missing. While he and his grandmother wait for word of them, Max embarks on a career—he becomes a "solutioneer." Using his parents' characters and costumes, he disguises himself to detect solutions for many problems. But can he solve his own? This first book in a series is a fun early-20th-century story for middle readers. Ages 8-12. (Knopf)



## Don't Be in Such A Hurry!

### WHILE THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS

are not considered Scripture in Christian Reformed orthodoxy, sometimes they can be used to strike home a spiritual point. Such is the case in 2 Esdras 4:34, where the angel tells Ezra, "Don't be in a greater hurry than God Most High!"

Several years ago, God was calling my wife and me to establish a group home for people with developmental disabilities. This calling came at the right time. We are in our 80s, and our developmentally disabled son, Andy, will surely outlive us. We began looking at group homes in our area and felt, for one reason or another, that they were not suitable. Some were outside the area that Peckham Industries serves, and Andy loves working there. Some were operated by wonderful parents, but what if one got sick and the other could not continue?

In short, we wanted our son to live in a home that is as nice as the one where he lives now, close to his work, and close to River Terrace Christian Reformed Church, where he is loved by all who know him. We wanted the home to be large enough to have a cash flow to meet monthly expenses without constantly asking for contributions. And since many people who are developmentally disabled love to interact with others, we wanted this home to have enough residents to establish close friendships, just like folks do who live in senior housing or assisted care.

We set to work diligently to establish this home, which we call Joshua's Place. River Terrace Church helped by forming an interest committee. Then a board of directors was formed. Someone donated money to buy a 4.85-acre plot within a mile of Peckham, and River Terrace took up a generous offering. Another group called "100 Women Who Care" gave us over \$10,000. An architect donated his services for preliminary plans, and many volunteers from church pitched in to



**Couldn't God just say the word and get these folks working a bit faster?**

make the property pleasing to the eye. We were granted 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and received a special land use permit from Delta Township that was good for two years or until October 2013. Things were moving in the right direction. We were on top of the world.

But then our U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) application for construction funds was rejected on a technicality. This was a serious blow. Applying for a HUD grant and receiving a reply had taken a year's time. Now we had less than a year before our permit expired.

Clearly God had to hurry with alternate funding. There was much prayer, even with hints going up to heaven as to how God might supply the necessary funds. In reply came some hints from heaven. We had more work to do. It turned out the land engineer's plans had to be tweaked. The floor plan could use some changes. The system for storm water

disposal had to be rethought and other professional advice obtained.

In working with governmental agencies, private sector professionals, and other nonprofit agencies, there were agonizing times when we simply had to wait. Couldn't God just say the word and get these folks working a bit faster?

He could. But God called us to do this work, and God called us to work with them. He has his timetable. He knows how to work with people who are slow to act. Ultimately, God doesn't worry about HUD turning down a good application. He knows who he wants the donors to be. And what God wishes will come about in a very timely way. ■



**Bob Worgul** is a retired social worker. He and his wife, Shirley, a retired RN, attend River Terrace Christian Reformed Church in East Lansing, Mich.

## Setting the Table for a Good Debate

**SOME RECENT ARTICLES** published in *The Banner* raised all sorts of jarring questions, sending tremors through some of what many of us consider basic Christian beliefs. As one who loves a good question—and a healthy debate even more so—I see this as an opportunity for some vigorous wrestling that will hopefully lead us to greater clarity.

But how shall we have these conversations? Like many people, my initial reaction when reading these articles was, *What were they thinking?* The Banner is not the right place to allow an author to throw out such complex and difficult questions.

After talking with some of my colleagues, however, I realized that we don't have great forums for these kinds of debates in the Christian Reformed Church. Perhaps we need to make more room for this, and then set the table right for such conversations to take place.

We do have a few things to work through: What kind of questions or ideas should be allowed on the table? Should “the answers” be at hand to make the questions easier to digest? What kind of table manners should we expect?

*The Banner* has put some stuff on the table that has made many readers balk. So how should we receive it—with excitement at the possibility of engaging ideas or with our noses pinched at the odor?

Usually we expect our denominational magazine to serve up questions with nice, clean, packaged answers that will inform our opinions. That makes it easy for us, right? But isn't this a little like asking our leaders to predigest our food before serving it to us? I don't know about you, but my jaw works just fine, and having something previously chewed usually makes it a little less appealing.

Maybe we should be asking for more solid or even spicy “food” to test our palates and shake up some things we have been resting on. Don't we learn the most in those times and places where we experience ideas that jar us and send tremors through all that we have accepted?

The only lesson from my catechism class that I consciously remember is the one I disagreed with the most. It was the one about election. I remember debating the pastor on it and wrestling with the question for a number of years before it was settled in my mind. Perhaps we in the church need to embrace a more dynamic learning process that challenges and stretches

The only lesson from my catechism class that I consciously remember is the one I disagreed with the most.

us to become more mature and alive with the Spirit and the mind of Christ.

Let me just say that it's important to get this right. If you are a Christian in the Western world, you'll face questions and challenges to your faith. Young people likely feel the tension the hardest, but it impacts all of us. We need places to sit and talk these things through with each other.

We'll need to use our manners, of course. There will be times where the food isn't spiced to our taste. No questions should be forbidden, but we should certainly ban a spirit of division (Titus 3:10). Someone will say something that sounds arrogant or makes false assumptions. But we can make room for some of that at our table, can't we?

As God's people do whenever they sit and eat together, we should take time to celebrate God's love and faithfulness to the church he loves. That knowledge of God's love and faithfulness should give us courage, grace, patience, and hope as we are stretched, challenged, and encouraged by the questions we work through together. ■

STUDY QUESTIONS ONLINE



Michael S. Van Boom is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Edmonton, Alberta.

# ADS

**Deadlines:** December issue is 11/4/13; January 2014 issue is 12/2/13. Details online.

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

**To Advertise:** Place your classified ad online at [www.thebanner.org/classifieds](http://www.thebanner.org/classifieds) or email it to [classifieds@thebanner.org](mailto:classifieds@thebanner.org) or fax it to 616-224-0834. Questions? Call 616-224-0725.

## Denominational and Classical

### Calls Accepted

With thankfulness and gratitude to God, Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church is pleased to announce that **CANDIDATE FERRY YANG** has accepted the call to be our full time pastor.

### Eligible for Call

We are pleased to announce that **SAM GUTIERREZ** has now completed his academic requirements and is eligible for call as a candidate for the ministry of the Word. Rev. Joel R. Boot, Executive Director

We are pleased to announce that **VICTOR PEREZ** has now completed his academic requirements and is eligible for call as a candidate for the ministry of the Word. Rev. Joel R. Boot, Executive Director

### Meetings of Classis

**CLASSIS AB SOUTH & SASK** will meet in regular session on Friday, October 25 at Burdett CRC. All agenda items should be sent to the Stated Clerk, Rev. J. Cameron Fraser at [clerkabss@gmail.com](mailto:clerkabss@gmail.com)

## Congregational

### Church's 60th Anniversary

**BETHEL CRC** of Lacombe AB will DV celebrate 60 years of God's faithfulness and care on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1st. We invite all friends, former pastors and members to join us for a celebration dinner and program on Saturday and a worship service of joy and thankfulness on Sunday morning. Please contact Anita at [ahgeldof@shaw.ca](mailto:ahgeldof@shaw.ca) for more information.

### Church's 50th Anniversary

**GRACE CRC** of Scarborough (Toronto) Ontario invites all friends and former members of this now multiethnic congregation to celebrate its 50th anniversary on Sunday, November 10. Celebrations will begin with a 10:00 am worship service followed by a light lunch and a special program. For more details, please contact Grace CRC at 416-293-0373, [gracecrc@planeteeer.com](mailto:gracecrc@planeteeer.com), or go to [www.gracecrc.com](http://www.gracecrc.com).

### 60 Years of Ministry

**DR. HARRY G. ARNOLD**, Pastor Emeritus, is congratulated by the congregation of Grace CRC in Kalamazoo, Michigan, as he has faithfully served his Savior and Lord during 60 years of ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

### 40 Years of Ministry

**THE PALOS HEIGHTS CRC** in IL celebrates with our Pastor of Congregational Care, Rev. Bryce Mensink on the 40th anniversary of his ordination. He has previously served churches in California, New York, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin. We give thanksgiving to God for his years of faithful service.

## Birthdays

### 100th Birthday

**STELLA KOSTELYK** is 100! She still plays a wicked game of Scrabble but Pearl can still win. We praise God for her good mind and health! We love you, mom!

### 95th Birthday

**CORDELIA (VANDEGUCHTE) DEBLAEY** will celebrate her 95th birthday on Nov. 27. Her 3 children and spouses, her 8 grandchildren

and spouses, and 18 great-grandchildren give thanks to God for his faithfulness throughout the generations. 2500 Breton Woods Dr. # 3014 Kentwood, MI 49512

**JEANETTE (KEMPEMA) KLEIN** wife of the late Herman Klein, celebrated her 95th birthday on October 10. Her seven children and multiple grandchildren and great grandchildren were on hand for the celebration and thank God for her long life and uplifting spirit. Her address is 9915 Walnut street, Bellflower, CA 90706.

**JEANETTE (VAN'T HOF) VELTMAN** turned 95 years old in September. Her husband, John, and she have 4 sons, daughters-in-law, and lots of grandkids and great-grandkids. Just ask her. She lives at Sunset Manor in Jenison, MI. Jesus loves her and so do we.

### 90th Birthday



**CATHERINE BLACQUIERE** of Grand Rapids MI will celebrate her 90th birthday on December 9, 2013. Her children, grandchildren and great-grand children thank God for her and the blessing she has been in their lives.

## CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### FACULTY OPENINGS

We invite applications and nominations of qualified individuals for the following positions:

#### Pastoral Care

Responsibilities to begin July 1, 2014

#### History of Christianity

With duties in the PhD program  
Responsibilities to begin July 1, 2015

- We want faculty members who engage students, the church, and the wider culture through teaching, mentoring, preaching and scholarship.
- We especially encourage applications from women and members of ethnic minority groups. Faculty members must be committed to the confessions and mission of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
- For more information and to submit applications or nominations, visit [calvinseminary.edu/jobopenings](http://calvinseminary.edu/jobopenings).
- Applications submitted by December 1, 2013 will receive preferred processing.

For more information and to submit applications or nominations, visit [www.calvinseminary.edu/jobopenings](http://www.calvinseminary.edu/jobopenings)



CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
3233 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546

**H. Henry Meeter Center**

### Scholarships for High School Seniors

The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies is pleased to offer the Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors. Awards are given annually for research papers on a topic pertaining to John Calvin and Calvinism. Awards are payable to student tuition accounts at the following colleges: Calvin, Dordt, King's (Canada), Redeemer (Canada), Kuyper, and Trinity Christian. The topic for 2014 is "John Calvin and the Lord's Supper." There is a first prize of \$2,500 and a second prize of \$1,250. Papers must have a **January 15, 2014**, postmark.

For application guidelines and information on the research paper, please visit <http://www.calvin.edu/meeter> or contact

**H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies**  
Hekman Library  
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402  
1-616-526-7081 / fax: 1-616-526-6470  
[meeter@calvin.edu](mailto:meeter@calvin.edu)

**CALVIN**  
College



## DORDT COLLEGE Faculty Positions

Dordt College is seeking applications for the following areas:

**Beginning August 2014**

- Art
- Education
- Engineering
- English
- Psychology
- Statistics/Mathematics
- Theology

Application reviews will begin immediately. Qualified persons committed to a Reformed, Biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest and curriculum vitae/résumé to:

Dr. Eric Forseth, Provost  
Dordt College  
498 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697  
Fax: (712) 722-6035  
E-mail: provost@dordt.edu  
Web: www.dordt.edu/prospective\_employees/faculty/

*Dordt College does not discriminate as to age, sex, national origin, marital status or against those who are disabled.*

### PRISON MINISTRY

The LORD loosens the prisoners  
PSALM 146: 7b

My words walk carefully between these prisoners. Convicted police officers, judges, and public prosecutors, they hold various degrees and are trained to argue. I won't preach that my church is better than the church next door; we have seen the strife this causes. Instead, in the Reformed tradition, I can only exalt the Lord and abase man. This has brought many to conviction and repentance. With your help, I have been able to cover thousands of miles by car each month to hold Bible studies with prison inmates. More information on our website about Pastor Alexander Mazepa.

Phone: 888-844-2624  
Website: coah.org  
Email: info@coah.org

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Informative FREE Magazine.



**MARGARET J GUNNINK** 3962 Whispering Way Dr SE Grand Rapids MI 49546... celebrated her 90th birthday on October 25, 2013. Children, Larry & Phylis; Arvin & Gerda; Roger & Irene; Verlyn & Kathy; Marcia & Bob Ackerman, along with grandchildren/great-grandchildren honored Margaret with a special family gathering. We praise and thank God for the wonderful, Christ-centered home she has established for our family.



**EVELYN (VAN DAHM) LANDIS** Happy 90th Birthday to Evelyn, of 500 Parkside Dr., Zeeland, MI. on November 11. Her children (Judy and Art Jongsma; Keith and Jacqueline Landis), her grandchildren (Kendra and Erwin van Elst; Michelle and Dave DeGraaf; Andy and Heidi Jellison; Anastasia and Tom Stevens), and her seven great grandchildren thank God for her long life, exemplary faith, keen intellect, and ceaseless devotion to family. She is a highly valued matriarch of the family. Much love to you, Mom and Grandma!

**VERLA (HOUSEMAN) LIGTENBERG** celebrated her 90th birthday on October 30 in Santa Barbara, CA, with her daughters, Sheri, Candy & Glenn Ornee, grandchildren Danny, Jamie & Corey Gilliland & 3 great grandchildren. Her church family, friends, & loved ones give thanks for her! "The joy of the LORD is her strength!"



**MARCIE SCHIPMA** (nee Buikema), wife of the late Charles Schipma, will celebrate her 90th birthday on Nov 15. Her children, Chuck & Mary Schipma, Jack Schipma, Trudy Voss, Doreen & Frank Voss, and Susan & Doug Slinkman are so very thankful for the blessing she is to all of us. She has been blessed with 19 grandchildren and 43 great grandchildren (3 more on the way). Marcie lives at 1115 S. Villa Ave., Villa Park, IL 60181



**JEANETTE (STOIT) STOB** wife of the late John C. Stob, will celebrate her 90th birthday on November 24. She resides at Victorian Inn, 12600 Renaissance Circle, Homer Glen, IL, 60491. Her three children and spouses, six grandchildren and spouses, and five great-grandchildren celebrate with her, and thank God for His many blessings.

### Church Position Announcements

**MISSING PARSON** — Height: Standing tall on God's Word. Weight: Not too serious, we like to have fun. Eyes: Looking toward God, with a vision for those across the street. Could you be the one God has chosen for us? We are Calvin CRC in Holland, MI. We have strong programs, vibrant worship, friendly people, and lots of energy. What we are missing, though, is a pastor to help equip us to reach the lost and challenge us with motivating messages. Our mission is to Seek God's heart and Share God's love. If you can hear God calling you in our direction, please send us your resume: searchteam@calvinministries.org or Search Team, Calvin Church, 387 W. Lakewood Blvd., Holland, MI 49424.

**INTERIM PASTOR WANTED** Georgetown CRC, in Georgetown Ontario, is seeking an Interim Pastor. We are a caring and supportive congregation of more than 500 members that includes a good mix of all ages. Georgetown is a small suburban town (pop. 40,000) located on the western edge of the Greater Toronto Area. The interim pastor would faithfully preach two services each Sunday (1 Sunday off every six weeks); assist us in seeking God's direction in developing a dynamic vision and a mission statement for our congregation; meet regularly with our church executive; and provide pastoral visits for urgent care. This is a contract position, expected to last from 6 months to a year. Interested applicants are invited to send a cover letter and resume to info@gccr.on.ca with the subject line "Interim Pastor".

**INTERIM PASTORS AVAILABLE** Full or Part-time Contact: CRC Interim Ministry Connection 616-460-1811

**ELEANOR VANDER LINDE** Birthday blessings to Eleanor who joyfully celebrated her 90th on October 17 surrounded by her four daughters and their families including 12 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. Married to her beloved husband Adrian (deceased, 2005) for over 60 years, a lifelong faithful member of the Christian Reformed Church, Eleanor is happy, healthy, and active residing in her new (2010) home at 909 Centre Ave in Fort Collins, CO 80526. Eleanor is a blessing to her family!

### Anniversaries

#### 60th Anniversary

**DE GRAFF** Bernard and Sylvia (Van Someren), 16316 South Park Ave, South Holland, IL 60473 celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on October 27. Our family - Jerry and Grace Singer (Kevin and Bethany [Matthew and Tyler], Kim, Katie), Wes and Cindy (Eric, Amanda), Shirley, Dave and Dawn (Dan and Christie, Rob and Rachel [Rozemarijn], Rachael), Glen, and Wayne give thanks to God for His love and faithfulness.

**SMIT** Leon and Fay (Ungersma) of Churchill, Montana celebrated 60 years of marriage on Oct. 20. Their children Mike & Diann, Kevin & Peggy, Curt & Deb, and their 8 grandchildren & 5 great grandchildren praise God for His faithfulness.

**TAMMINGA** George & Henrietta (Hofmeyer) of 344 Manor Hill Ct., Lombard, IL 60148 will celebrate 60 years of the Lord's blessings on their marriage Nov. 28. Children: CDR Cindy Tamminga, U. S. N; Kristy (Dan) Bootsma; Scott (Denise) Tamminga. Grandchildren: Joshua, Joe, Matthew Bootsma and Nathaniel, Kathryn, Micah Tamminga.

#### 50th Anniversary

**SMIT** Jim and Lynne (Terpstra) celebrated 50 years of marriage on October 17th. They have been a blessing to so many, including their children and their grandchildren. Congratulations on 50 years, may the Lord bless you for many more.

### Obituaries

**BAAS** Harvey Jay, age 84; July 20, 2013; Rockford, MI; A CRC pastor with a servant's heart, who shepherded Second Randolph, WI, Bradenton, FL, Evergreen Park, IL, Bethany in Holland, MI, and Pioneer in Cedar Springs, MI. The youngest of thirteen children, He is survived by his wife of 62 years: Marilyn; sister Tena DeKorver; sisters-in-law Anne Baas and Doris Baas; his five children, thirteen grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

**WORSHIP COORDINATOR** Community CRC in Kitchener, ON, a large dynamic, community-oriented church is seeking a Worship Coordinator. The successful applicant of this part time position (20 hours per week) will help organize our talented musicians and praise teams, individuals interested in visual arts and drama, and provide leadership and meet with the pastors and worship committee to plan blended worship services. Please send resume by October 29, 2013 to Search Committee chairperson, Peter Herfst at mpherfst@rogers.com.

**PASTOR** North Street CRC, (Zeeland, MI) a church that strives to be "deeply rooted, ever growing, and bearing fruit," seeks a full time pastor to help us grow in our worship to God, our witness to others, our daily work, and our devotion to God's word. Inquiries may be sent to northstreetsearchcommittee@gmail.com

**PASTOR** First CRC of Oostburg (WI), a caring and serving congregation of 420 members, is seeking a full-time senior pastor. We seek a pastor who will use his gifts to continue our tradition of sound biblical preaching, work with ministry teams and members, and provide leadership in service and evangelism. Applicants may contact the Search Committee Chair Ryan Wessels at firstoostburgcrg@gmail.com.

**MUSIC LEADER** Covenant CRC (Grand Rapids) is an intergenerational, 600 member, music-loving church seeking an energetic, organized, part time Music Leader to oversee our music ministry and help organize our blended worship services. For further information, see our website: covenant-crc.org



**BOER** Christine, nee Bulthuis, age 88, went to be with her LORD, September 30th, 2013, 1019 S. Fairview, Lombard, IL, 60148. Beloved wife of the late Arthur Boer; loving mother of James (Carol) Boer, Judy (Thomas) Becvar, Jean (David) Mulder, June (Raymond) VanDenend, and Jan (Robert) Stob; devoted grandmother of 25; great-grandmother of 24; fond sister of Talena Barnes and preceded by 4 brothers and 1 sister; aunt of many nieces and nephews. Memorials to CareNet, Pregnancy Services of DuPage, 515 Ogden Ave, Suite 200, Downers Grove, IL, 60515 or ECFA, 1530 N. Main Street, Wheaton, IL 60187

**DE BLECOURT** Hybo went to be with his LORD, September 28th, 2013, 11414 West 73rd Place, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. Beloved husband of Eleanor, nee Ridderhoff; loving father of Karen (Curt) Knapp and Paul (Kristie) De Blecourt; devoted grandfather of Anna, Katelyn, Micah, Kyle, Daniel, and Kara De Blecourt; fond brother of Josephine (Hubert) Eisses, Eleanor (Clarence) Ouwenga, Martin (JoAnn) De Blecourt, Louis (Shirley) De Blecourt, the late Minnie and the late Harriet De Blecourt; uncle of many nieces and nephews. Memorials to The Bible League International, PO Box 28000, Chicago, IL, 60628 or Southwest Chicago Christian Schools, 12001 South Oak Park Ave, Palos Heights, IL, 60463

**HALMA** Lorraine (Weg) age 79 of Seal Beach, CA went to be with our Lord on September 12, 2013. She is survived by her loving husband of 59 years, Jim, children Sheryl Goedhart, Randy and Carol Halma, Lori Bumsted as well as 7 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren, 4 sisters and 1 brother.

**KOOLHAAS** Elsie (Nootenboom), age 86, moved from Richmond, VA, to Heaven on October 6, 2013. There to welcome her to her new home was her Lord, Jesus Christ, husband Abe, parents Gerrit and Gertie, brothers Art, Maynard, Gerald, and Leslie, and a host of family and friends. Remaining on earth are her four children Glenda (Gregg) Paul, Carol (Randy) Loemker, Susan (Josiah) Hack, Mark (Joyce) Koolhaas, 9 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. In memory of her Godly wisdom and counsel, donations to The Footsteps Christian Counseling Center are appreciated – 6851 Courthouse Rd, Chesterfield, VA 23832, Footsteps@LifeSpringFoundation.org.

**KOSTER** Jeanne H. age 92; August 31, 2013; Grand Rapids, MI; She was preceded in death by her husband James P. Koster, daughter Lorraine Pickard and son Baby Jeffrey Koster, brothers Ryven Ezinga and Neal Ezinga. She is survived by her children: Carol and Larry Versluis, son-in-law Tom Pickard, Candace and James Oprzedek, and James R. Koster; grandchildren: Shawn Marie Versluis, Aaron Versluis, Jennifer and Benn Smith, Sarah Pickard, Christine and Ben Bojda, Claire Pickard, and Dalton Koster; great-grandchildren: Andrew, Thor, Cody, James, John, Clara and Thomas; siblings: Frieda Docter, Katherine Ezinga, Mary Heys, Louise and Tony Vander Baan, Nancy Ezinga, Beatrice and Albert Van Eerden, Joan and Norman Roobol, Donald and Sandra Ezinga, Robert Ezinga, Betty and Larry Bengelink and Ruth and Al Cooley.

**LAWRENCE H.** Franken (Larry); aged 85; October 3, 2013; 1289 Bowdoin St. SE, Kentwood, MI 49508; He is survived by his wife of 60 years: Harriet (Jalving) Franken; children: Carl (Barb) Franken, Nancy (George) Kessler, Steve Franken; daughter-in-law: Nancy Franken; grandchildren: Joshua and Bethany Franken, Joel and Karli Franken, Nick, Alex and Jennifer Kessler, Michael Franken, Nichole and Cole Kooistra, Andy Thorton; great grandchildren: Hannah, Caleb, Drew, and Mason; twin sister: Phyllis Cornelisse; brother-in-law and sisters-

in-law: Gordon and Norma Schrotenboer and Connie Meinke; several nieces and nephews.

**RUSSELL** Clayton Lyle aged 85; September 3, 2013; Grand Rapids, MI; Clayton was preceded in death by his brother, James Russell, and sister, Clarice Hubbard, and granddaughter, Lark Van Assen. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; children: Karen (Wayne) Vogel, Phyllis Russell, Lisa (Greg) Van Assen and Todd (Julie) Russell; 7 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren; sister, Joyce Pratt and 3 brothers-in-law

# Superintendent SEARCH



**Holland Christian Schools** in Holland, Michigan, is prayerfully searching for a new **Superintendent** who will build upon its rich history and pursue the mission of academic excellence and a vibrant Christian education to its 1,700 PreK-12 students.

We invite you to view a brief **video introduction** to the search and explore the full Opportunity Profile at: [www.hollandchristian.org/superintendent\\_search](http://www.hollandchristian.org/superintendent_search).

To inquire, call **Laura Coverstone** of SIMA at **615-261-4623**.



## STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Publication Title: The Banner; 2. Publication No. 0041-300; 3. Filing Date: Oct. 1, 2013; 4. Issue Frequency: Monthly; 5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12; 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$24.00; 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407; 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407; 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407; Editor: Rev. Robert DeMoor, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407; Managing Editor: Judy Hardy, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407. 10. Owner: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, Kent, MI 49508-1407; 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None; 12. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during preceding 12 months.

13. Publication Name: The Banner; 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: September 2013.

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total No. Copies (Net Press Run) .....	91,019	89,910
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions		
Stated on Form 3541 .....	58,924	58,357
(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions .....	0	0
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution .....	27,556	27,497
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS .....	37	24
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation .....	86,517	85,878
d. Free Distribution by Mail		
(1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541 .....	35	35
(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541 .....	0	0
(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS .....	1	0
(4) Free Distribution Outside the Mail .....	5	5
e. Total Free Distribution .....	41	40
f. Total Distribution .....	86,558	85,918
g. Copies Not Distributed .....	4,461	3,992
h. Total .....	91,019	89,910
i. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation .....	99.95%	99.95%

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

Jane E. Hilbrand, Operations Manager

H. Henry Meeter Center

### Continuing Education for Pastors

The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies is pleased to offer the Emo F.J. Van Halsema Fellowship for pastors from within the Reformed tradition.

This research fellowship is awarded annually. It comes with an honorarium of up to \$1,250 and the use of an office at the Meeter Center. The Center possesses books, rare books, articles, and electronic resources to be used for research or sermon preparation. The deadline for application for the 2014 fellowship is **January 1, 2014**.

For further information and applications, please visit <http://www.calvin.edu/meeter> or contact

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[meeter@calvin.edu](mailto:meeter@calvin.edu)

**CALVIN**  
College

**SEGRAVES** Kenneth age 70, July 12, 2013, Munster, Indiana. He is survived by his wife, Jo of 48 years, daughter, Juli (Marshall) Robertson and grandchildren, Cassidy and Connor. Ken was a Cadet Counselor at Munster CRC for many years.

**SOODSMA** Johanna (Jo) 82 yrs went to her eternal home on July 5. Leaving her husband Rufus and children Ruth (Ken) Moses, Joel (Corinne), Stuart, Stephen, Jason (Karen), 12 grandchildren. one deceased Timothy Soodsma. Psalm 121.

**SPOELHOF** Cornelia "Kay" aged 86; September 8, 2013; Grand Rapids, MI and Rochester N. Y.; She was preceded in death by her husband of 57 years, Charles "Chuck" Spoelhof. She is survived by her children: Beth (Stephen) DeVries, Philip (Patricia) Spoelhof, Gordon Spoelhof, Ronald (Renee) Spoelhof; sister: Jeanette Miedema; brother: Gary (Delores) Maliepaard; brothers-in-law and sister-in-law: John (Jo Mae) Spoelhof and Ken Split; nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

**TAMELING** Kathleen, nee Vanderleest, of Elmhurst, IL, went to be with Our Lord September 11, 2013. Wife of the late Benjamin. Mother of Bernard (Gretta), Judy (Russ) Erffmeyer, Ken (Janice), Calvin (Madelyn), and Ginger (the late Butch) Swierenga. Grandmother of 13, and great-grandmother of 19. Sister of Ruth (the late James) De Boer; the late Edward (the late Marge), the late William (Dorothy), the late Robert (the late Marge), Vanderleest and the late Marilyn (Harvey) Wieringa.

**VANDE KERK** Henry, aged 101; September 2, 2013; Grand Rapids, MI; He was preceded in death by his parents: Frank and a Goldie (Schilder) Vande Kerk; his first wife: Fanny Calkhoven; his second wife: Christine Voss; He is survived by his children: Del (Willy) Vande Kerk and Neva (John) Jarvis; five grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

**VAN DE WEERT** Barney, age 89; September 18, 2013; Grand Rapids, MI; He was preceded in passing by his father, Cornelius Van De Weert, mother, Anna Drenth, his wife, Alma Theodora Van Den Berg, and his brothers, Peter and John. He is survived by his sisters: Minnie Pruiksmas, Emma Jellema, and Ella King; brothers: Cornelius, Gary, Herman, Albert, and Martin; children: Margaret Vorndam, Anne Dieleman, Barney Van De Weert, Garret Van De Weert, Susan Vander Ploeg, Mary Stough, Leslie Grodesky, Amy Bedford, and Steven Van De Weert; their spouses; 19 grandchildren; one great granddaughter.

**WOLBERT** Harris "Bill" went to be with the Lord on 9/16/13. He was born in Zeeland on 11/9/26 & passed away at his home in Holland. Bill is survived by his wife Grace, 2 children, brother Jay & sister Marcia, 5 stepchildren, 21 grandkids & 6 great-grandkids. Bill was preceded in death by his first wife Anna (Knol), stepson Al Reitsma and sister-in-law Ann.

## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

The Board of Trustees of Providence Christian College has commissioned a Presidential Search Committee to identify the next president of the college; an individual who is deeply inspired by a biblical and Reformed world and life view, equipped to creatively implement the college's mission and vision, and will be significantly committed to the long-term success of Providence Christian College in such a way that brings glory to the Living God.

A complete prospectus for the position is available at [presidentsearch.providencecc.edu](http://presidentsearch.providencecc.edu). Inquiries, nominations and applications may be directed via email to [presidentsearch@providencecc.edu](mailto:presidentsearch@providencecc.edu) or mailed to: Providence Christian College, Attn: Chair, Presidential Search Committee, P.O. Box 93074, Pasadena, CA 91109-3074.



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## IRA Matching Gift

We are happy to inform you that on January 2, 2013, President Obama signed into law the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012. For our supporters who are 70 ½ or older, the Act includes an IRA Charitable Rollover extension which provides a renewed opportunity to give from your IRA to Calvin Theological Seminary through the end of calendar year 2013.

In addition, your IRA gift will be matched, up to \$110,000, by a group of Calvin Seminary supporters. For every dollar you give via your IRA, a matching gift will be made to the Calvin Seminary Annual Fund. To find out more about this opportunity, contact Bob Knorr at 616-957-6039. We appreciate your partnership and your important prayerful and financial support of Calvin Seminary.



CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

3233 Burton Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4301 • 800 388-6034

## DIRECTOR OF COUNSELLING SERVICE

Crossroads Counselling Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta is seeking an individual possessing a vibrant relationship with God and a demonstrated passion for Christian counselling to fill the position of **Director of Counselling Services**. The Director of Crossroads Counselling is responsible to the Board of Directors to lead, develop and pursue the vision of Crossroads Counselling Centre.

### The Director's responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the staffing and day to day operations
- Mentor counsellors and review counselling case loads
- Design appropriate organizational structures
- To provide the Board with a monthly Director's Report
- Build and sustain relationships with churches, including the sponsoring churches, within the Lethbridge region
- Build and sustain community partnerships within the Lethbridge region

### Qualifications sought for this position include:

- Strong interpersonal skills
- Demonstrated leadership abilities
- A Master's degree in Psychology or related discipline
- A Chartered Psychologist designation is preferred, but not necessary
- Extensive experience in counselling

The Director of Counselling Services is a demanding role and applicants must be able to articulate their personal theoretical approach, vision and passion for counselling. Although the administrator works in an office environment, he/she does not always work standard office hours. The hours of work often extend beyond an eight-hour day to attend meetings or to complete major tasks.

By mail to: **Crossroads Counselling Center**  
#202, 542 - 7 Street, Lethbridge,  
Alberta T1J 2H1

Or by email: [jkno1@shockware.com](mailto:jkno1@shockware.com)

## Employment

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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 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407; or email it to [editorial@thebanner.org](mailto:editorial@thebanner.org). Thanks!

**J**oanna, age 4, was out for a walk with her grandma. Two nuns wearing long black robes and wimples approached, offering a friendly hello as they walked past. Joanna turned and watched them go. She asked, "Grandma, who are those ladies?"

"Those ladies are nuns," said grandma.

"Oh," replied Joanna.

When they returned home, Joanna's mother asked if they'd enjoyed their walk.

Joanna said, "Mom, we saw two 'nothing ladies'!"

—*Jeanne Jellema*

**T**wo intrepid explorers met in the heart of the Brazilian jungle. "I'm here," declared one, "to commune with nature in the raw, to contemplate the eternal verities, and to widen my horizons. And you, sir?"

"Oh," sighed the second explorer, "I came because my young daughter has begun violin lessons."

—*John Veltkamp*

**A**n elderly gentleman was making a visit to his long-time doctor and friend, who was

soon to retire. At the end of his annual physical, he said to the doctor, "People are always laughing at me. I can't remember where I was or what I was doing."

The doctor replied, "Just forget it. Now go to the front desk and pay your bill."

Less than a minute later, the man returned and said, "Doctor, what did you tell me to do?"

The doctor hung his head and said softly, "I can't remember. Let's go have some coffee."

—*Adrian Vander Starre*

**I** joined a health club last year and spent about \$1,000, but I haven't lost a pound. Apparently you have to actually go there.

—*Sue Lauritzen*

**A** small town in the Midwest had been hit hard by drought for years. Every Sunday the farmers would come to the church and pray for rain. And every week the pastor told them that they needed to pray more.

One week a man stood up and said, "Preacher, every week we come here and pray, but nothing changes."

"That's because you don't have enough faith," the preacher responded.

"What do you mean, we don't have enough faith?" said the man. "We're here praying week after week."

The preacher said calmly, "Yes, but how many people do you see with umbrellas?"

—*Sandy Swartzentruber*

**A** woman was trying hard to get the last of the ketchup out of the bottle. During her struggle, the phone rang. She asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone. "Mommy can't come to the phone right now," she heard the little girl say. "She's hitting the bottle."

—*Herm Kelderman*

**I**t had been a dry summer—for two months there had been no rain in our area. One day as we were about to eat dinner at our camper with our 5-year-old grandson, Kendrick, I said, "Let's pray," intending to pray for rain.

Kendrick said, "I'll pray, Grandma, and I'll keep it short."

*Oh well, there goes the rain prayer, I thought.*

Imagine my delight when he started his prayer by saying, "God, could you please send rain for my morning glories?"

We were on the same page after all!

—*Marcia Rataczak*



"Don't take this wrong, Bob—but you have halo-tosis."

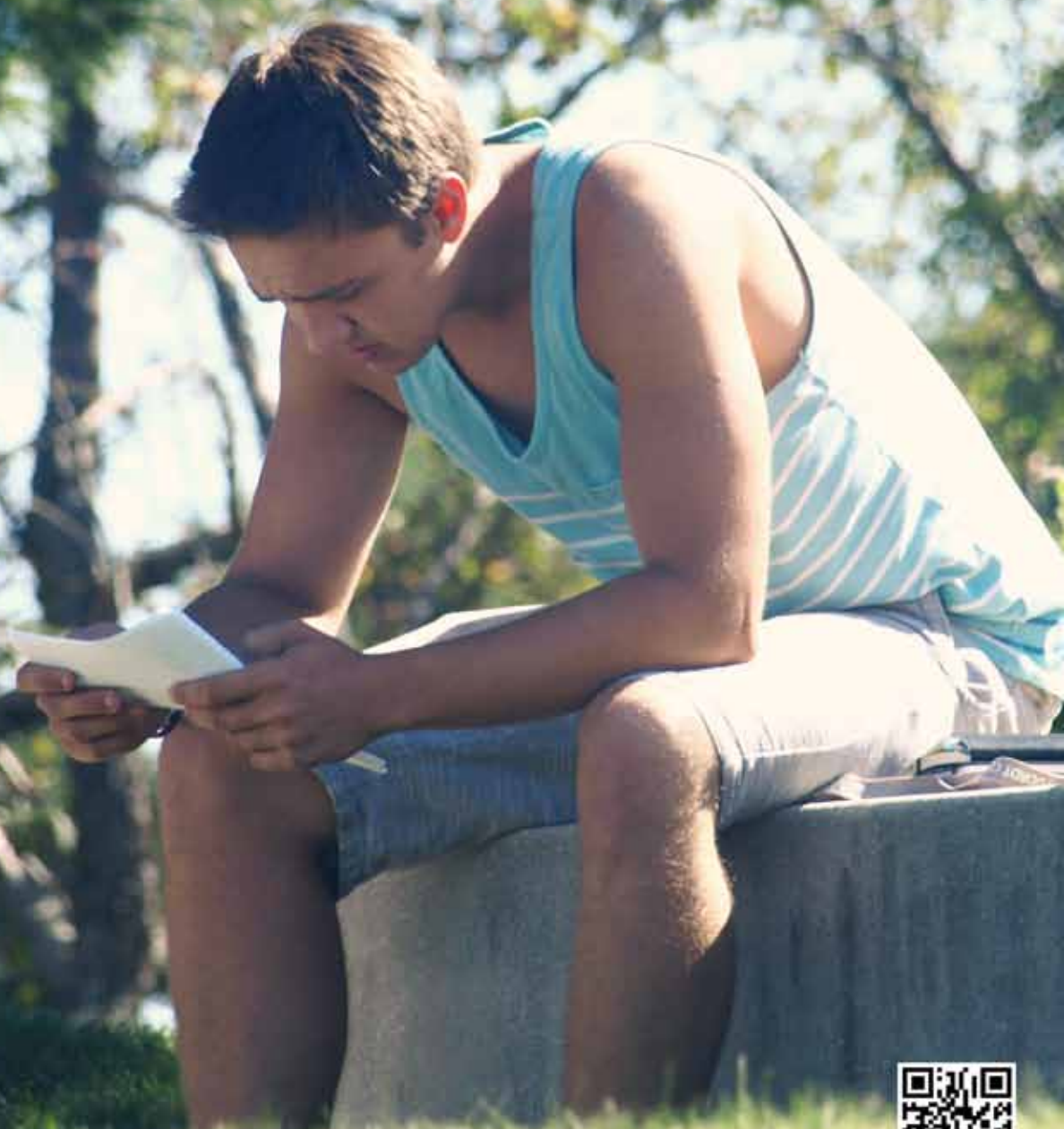


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