

# WHEATON

## CROSS † CONNECTIONS

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But Then This ....

**By Micah Schuurman**

*[Pastor John would like to replace his own column with this letter and short scene that Micah wrote about on his blog: <http://schuurmantank.blogspot.com/>]*

Dear Friends,

Nearly half of a year has gone by since I last set foot in Wheaton CRC. I miss you all very much. You are my spiritual family and have helped to raise me. I am grateful for your support in the form of money, cards, emails and prayers. You are a blessing to me and I will never stop thanking God for the impact that you have made in my life.

I would like to share with you a short scene from my life:

I saw a dead man recently. He had been run over by a tram. It seems as though he was trying to hurry across the tracks at the last second and that he wasn't able to make it.

I stood around and looked for a while. I wanted to let it all sink in. I don't shock easily anymore and I wanted to try to feel something for this man who had died. I wasn't able to see much... just a huddled mound trapped between two wheels; (When I left, they still had not gotten around to extracting him).

I didn't see any blood. Instead of blood and gore, the one image that remains stuck in my mind is of a newspaper that had clearly belonged to him. It was in the process of being scattered by the wind. It made me think of the scattered feathers that one sees around the corpse of a dead bird that has just hit a window.

If I were a painter and I had the task of capturing "death" on

a canvas, I would choose this scene and begin by painting those scattered papers. Of course, I would include the tram and the curious crowd of people. I would include the police officers. I would include all of these things, but they would be secondary to the centerpiece, the papers.

After all, what do I know about the man? Practically nothing. He may have been a businessman, late for work. He may have been a beggar. All that I know is that he had a paper that he intended to read but that he never succeeded in doing so.

And then, this other thought became clear to me. God doesn't promise that our lives will be free of trouble or perfect if we follow him. But his promise is that he will bring his kingdom, that he will be with us through it all and that he WILL raise the dead. I am sure of it. The time of no regret and no weeping, morning, crying or pain will soon come. We follow a God who keeps His promises. Be sure of it.

Our God took the scattering tragedy of Good Friday and turned it into the beautiful garden of Easter. God is good ... All the time!

Salaam ya habaybi, (Peace, my beloved friends),

Micah

# The De Youngs

## Looking Back Over 40 Years And Ahead to 2009

By Grace Huitsing

(A recent report from Wayne and Sandy lends itself to an interview format by excerpting highlights.)

How did you two catch the vision for service?  
It's hard to believe that about 40 years ago Sandy and I both decided to 'step out of the boat.' In 1967 Sandy went to New Mexico, I went to New York. We decided we needed to learn more, so we went for another summer of missions. But we still couldn't get enough, so Sandy and I married and went together to Puerto Rico and took a team of young people along. And so our journeys combined and they have become a life of adventure in Mexico, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Michigan—each location different, but each also the same. The sameness has been greater because it was our goal to reach out and share the love of Jesus with lost, hopeless people.

“Sandy has usually worked in primary education and you in evangelism, and together you reared 4 children who seem to have caught your vision.

It means much to us that this Christmas we were with our family for just a few days. We were so close all through the years and depended on each other so much and then, poof, we were all separated by miles and countries again. Son Tim and wife Paola and our daughter Pam are missionaries in Haiti. Son James, wife Lisa, and grandchildren Asher and Abram are doing a lot of ministry in their church in Grand Rapids. Son David and wife Kristin live in Lansing, travel a lot to work, but still find time to do youthwork on the weekends.

Do people in Guadalajara have Christmas traditions? What would it be like to celebrate Christmas but without the Christ in your life? Most of the people I work with remember those times well. They lived in a Christmas culture but without the reality of the living Savior in their lives. All during the 12 days of Christmas people dressed up like Mary and Joseph go through the communities. They ask for Posada (a place to stay for the night) but are turned away at most homes. Finally the group is offered entrance at one where food, presents and drinks have been prepared. In most homes the elaborate nativity scenes take the place of a Christmas tree, and on January 6 the holiday of the three kings who came to worship Jesus is observed—the day when gifts are given to the children. At every party there is usually spiked punch and egg nog, as well as the

traditional natural fruit punch which I enjoy. There are also lots of hair-raising fights at the parties because drinking to get drunk is expected at family parties, and alcoholism is very high in Mexican culture.

Among Christians too?

Well, the new Christians usually opt out of all the main Christmas traditions here. They have learned the true meaning of the season and don't want to spoil it. They enjoy getting together to worship without many frills or changes in their normal style. They frown on the party culture, the drinking, dancing, loud music and the nativity scenes. They usually try to buy their children a gift if they can afford it, but their Christmas Emmanuel Festival lasts all year long.

It's good to hear that last month 15 students again attended four days of classes of the Bible League Church Planting Institute at your home, getting ready to start new congregations.

Our newest simple church group was a house filled with new believers and seekers. There were about 8 adults and 10 children. The leaders who started the group were baptized last month and have been Christians for about 5 months. Only the Lord can do this.

We look ahead to 2009. Any new developments we can pray for?

We are targeting five housing developments for new house church plants by handing out tracts and Bible Studies. Pray that the seed will fall there on fertile soil and will bear much fruit. Pray that hosts will be available to open their homes to their neighbors and the gospel. There are about 30-50 thousand people that live in these communities without a church close by.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE TOWARD OUR TRACT MINISTRY WE COULD SHARE EVEN MORE. THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT.**

I believe that God listens and brings about miracles through our faith in Him. He can change the most difficult dispositions.

**WE NEED YOUR PRAYERS TODAY.”**

# Hymn Stories

I love thy kingdom, Lord!  
The house of Thine abode  
The Church our blest Redeemer saved  
With His own precious blood.

Author – Timothy Dwight  
Composer – Aaron Williams

This is the only American hymn written from the time of the Pilgrim Fathers until the beginning of the nineteenth century that is still in general use today. It has been termed “one of the imperishable lyrics of the Christian Church.”

Timothy Dwight is truly one of the illustrious names in early American history. He was born in Northampton, Massachusetts, on May 14, 1752. His mother was the daughter of evangelist Jonathan Edwards. Young Timothy graduated from Yale College at the age of seventeen. He served for a time as chaplain with George Washington in the Revolutionary War. Upon his return, he became a Congregational minister, a successful farmer, a representative in the Connecticut State Legislature, a faculty member at Yale, and President of that institution in 1795.

His work at Yale was outstanding. Not only did he raise the academic standards, but he brought a spiritual emphasis to the campus that was startling. Prior to his administration most of the students at Yale had been infected with the “free thought” of Thomas Paine, Rousseau and the French Revolution. It is estimated that there were no more than five professing Christians on campus when Dwight assumed the presidency. His dynamic leadership ignited a spiritual revival which soon spread to other New England campuses as well.

In 1797, Timothy Dwight revised Isaac Watts’s Psalms and Hymns and added thirty-three of his own hymn texts, including, “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”. This collection was so successful that it was used almost exclusively in Congregational and Presbyterian Churches throughout the New England States for the next thirty years. Other literary works by Dwight include five volumes of sermons under the title, *Theology Explained and Defended*. He also authored an important book entitled *The Triumph of Infidelity*, a satire against the leading skeptics of his day. His most valuable secular work, since it depicted social and economic conditions in New England at that time, were his four volumes entitled *Travels in New England and New York*.

All of Timothy Dwight’s accomplishment seem more amazing when it is realized that for the last forty years of

his life, he was unable to read consecutively for more than fifteen minutes a day. His defective eyesight had been caused by a case of small-pox, and the pain in his eyes is said to have been agonizing and constant.

The tune for this hymn text, “St Thomas.” First appeared in Aaron Williams’s collection of tunes of 1763. It is also often used with Isaac Watts’s text, “Come, We That Love the Lord.” Since Williams never claimed authorship of this tune, many believe that it was not Williams’s original melody but rather an adaptation from a work by George F. Handel, composer of the oratorio, *The Messiah*. Aaron Williams was a music director and clerk of a Scottish Presbyterian Church in London, England.

This and many other hymn stories were inspired by events which have been documented in a book called “101 Hymn Stories” compiled and written by Kenneth W. Osbeck, and its sequel, “101 More Hymn Stories”.

# Vietnamese New Hope CRC

**By Pastor Huu Phu Nguyen**

Greetings to all who receive this and support our ministry!  
As we reach the end of 2008, we are pleased to report many blessings in and through our ministry here in DuPage County.

Our worship and youth leadership has been assisted greatly by the efforts of Gio-Sep Van Vo, currently studying at Northern Baptist Seminary. We have been pursuing relationships with other Vietnamese churches in the region. Among those are Love Church of Chicago, Faith Community Church of Chicago, and Vietnamese Evangelical Church of Aurora.

In June Pastor Huu went to Colorado for a retreat with other Asian CRC pastors. Late that month, we again collaborated with Wheaton CRC in a five-evening VBS at Winfield. Many volunteers from VNH and WCRC planned and taught Bible stories and music.

Our sixteenth anniversary celebration was observed in late September. We were honored to have guests from other Vietnamese churches in the area, and friends from Indiana and the CRC's of Classis Northern Illinois

We hosted a seminar for pastors and youth leaders of Southeast Asia and Pacific Island origin. Nearly forty people attended for two and a half days of workshops, discussion and worship. We were assisted by members of Christian Reformed Home Missions.

And just in the middle of this month, a friend of the ministry donated a 2002 minivan to be used by a member family or sold for funds to aid the ministry. We are so very grateful for this generosity. This person also gave us a minivan in the late 1990s. What wonderful support the Lord has prompted people to extend!

Other notes: In January, Wheaton CRC gave us a copier. We got a new roof on the building in the fall, and a new water heater in December! Some of our sermons are presented with a list of questions about scripture passages to be answered by parishioners. We now bring DVDs to members who cannot attend worship due to illness, weather or job conflicts. Pastor Huu's translated Heidelberg Catechism is used as "52 Bible Studies" in churches in VietNam!

In closing we are so very grateful for the support of our

Classis and the individual churches that support us. We would like a few laptops for someone to bring to VietNam for pastors there.

# Library News

**By Eleanore De Jong**

Some of the new books have been donated to our Library by members of the congregation. We thank them for their donations. I have not read many of these books and so I cannot be responsible for their content. If you enjoy them, or object to them, please let me know in a short note with your signature.

As shelf space is filled in the Library, we cannot accept additional donations.

## Non-Fiction

A Tale of Two Sons. by John MacArthur

Money, Possessions and Eternity. by Randy Alcorn

The Treasure Principle. by Randy Alcorn

Life Savors for Women. by James Stuart Bell

Life Savors: Savory Stories to Inspire Your Soul.  
by James Stuart Bell

Looking for God: An Unexpected Journey Through  
Tattoos, Tofu and Pronouns. by Nancy Ortberg

Risking Faith: A 40 Day Journey Into the Mystery of  
God. by Steve Stephens

A New Kind of Normal: Hope Filled Choices When  
Life Turns Upside Down. by Carol Kent

The Twelve Steps for Christians: Based on Biblical  
Teaching. by Friends in Recovery

Splitting Heirs: Giving Your Money and Things to  
Your Children Without Ruining Their Lives.  
by Ron Blue

Maroon and Gold Will Bind Our Hearts: A History of  
Calvin Athletics 1915-1953. by David B. Tuuk

Elim: A Chicago Christian School and Life Training  
Center for the Disabled. by Robert P. Swierenga

Mistaken Identity: Two Families, One Survivor,  
Unwavering Hope. by Don VanRyn

Cooking On Purpose: A Collection of Recipes.  
by Wheaton CRC

The Name Book: Over 10,000 Names, Their  
Meanings, Origins and Spiritual Significance. by  
Dorothy Astoria

First Comes Love, Then What? Challenging Your  
Assumptions on Dating, Love and Commitment.  
by Kimberly Bear

## Adult Fiction

Summer Snow. by Nicole Baart

Searching for Spice. by Megan DiMaria

Scoop. by Rene Gutteridge

The Wedding Machine. by Beth Webb Hart

America the Beautiful. by Laura Hayden

Home to Holly Springs. by Jan Karon

Someday. by Karen Kingsbury

On Sparrow Hill. by Maureen Lang

Chasing Fireflies. by Charles Martin

When the Nile Runs Red. by Diann Mills

Fossil Hunter. by John B. Olson

Auralia's Colors. by Jeffery Overstreet

Beyond the Night. by Mario Schalesky

## Children's Books

Violet Comes to Stay. by Jan Karon

The following are by Stan Berenstain:  
The Berenstain Bears Go To Sunday School

The Berenstain Bears Say Their Prayers

God Loves You

The Golden Rule

## DVDs and CDs

Beyond Narnia. by C. S. Narnia

Christmas in Two Acts. by O. Henry

Veggie Tales:

Lord of the Beans: A Lesson in Using Your Gifts

The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything

Wonderful Wizard of Ha's: The Story of the Prodigal Son

## Insights and Encounters

By Gary Clousing

At the beginning of the year we always think about time. We have another 365 days given to us by God. As I reflect on this I think of how time is really in God's hands. We don't even know if we will have the whole year. God might call us home to be with Him where time is no more. The time we have now is already planned for us by our Creator God. He has each moment already planned out.

This was so evident at the end of 2008. My dad had suffered for years with Parkinsons. It was like being on a roller coaster. There were ups and downs and sometimes more downs than ups. We never knew when God would call him home but there were times when we thought that this was it. Then my dad would rally and go through one of his good times.

God had it all planned when he would take my dad to be home with Him.

The way everything worked out could not have been planned better.

I had spent the weekend before Christmas with Judy's family. We had a great time visiting and sharing together. On Tuesday I drove to Indiana to spend Christmas with my folks and my brother's family. My dad was doing okay. Christmas morning he was still able to get up and sit in his recliner. We wished him Merry Christmas and had him open a few gifts. That evening he took a turn for the worse. He died two days later, December 27, at about 4:00 in the afternoon.

Timing couldn't have been better. My older brother lives in Seattle and my younger brother lives in Indiana. Things are a little slower between Christmas and New Years which made it nice for all of our schedules. Nobody had any major event happening.

The big problem we had was getting a minister to do the service. My folk's minister was on vacation along with half

the clergy we contacted. The one we could get had another funeral. In God's providence and timing He provided just the one to do the service.

Nick Ahrens, pastor of Bridge Community Church in Frankfort, IL was available and happy to do the service. Nick Ahren's family, along with his parents are long time members of my folk's church (Faith CRC in Tinley Park, IL). Our family has known the Ahrens for at least 25 years. Nick Ahrens knew my dad real well and had followed many times in his footsteps. One example is when my dad stepped down from the classical home missions board. Nick Ahrens took his place. At the service he could tell stories about my dad that our family wasn't even aware of.

The funeral service was a time of celebration of my dad's life. It was great that Nick Ahrens could help us in this celebration. The service of committal at Mount Greenwood Cemetery in Chicago was also beautifully done by Nick Ahrens. The service was concluded with a military ceremony. After the airmen folded the flag, one of them played taps on the bugle. Chills went up and down everybody's spine as the taps echoed through the cemetery. What a fitting end to the life of someone you hold dear.

Through this whole time with my dad's illness, his death, his funeral, and his burial we could see the hand of God.

As we enter a new year it is good to remember that we also are in God's hands. No matter what happens in 2009 and beyond, God is there with His love and care. God has everything already planned for our lives. We just need to be faithful and follow His leading. Everything is in His time.

By Hets Duncan

As time goes on, fewer and fewer of our church members remember Nick and Bess Taming. Even those who do, probably remember Nick as somewhat feeble and Bess as a smiling, quiet, supportive wife.

But some of us remember them quite differently. To the six of us (Pete Taming, Edie Rooks, Joan Post, Betty (Bubbles) Palmbo, Nick Jr. and myself), they were Mom and Dad. As a family, we grieved together as six year old Edith was laid to rest. They were vibrant, warm, enthusiastic and full of love for us and for our Lord.

To our church family, they were the inspiration for summertime events at the mushroom farm - ice cream socials, rides on the "train", and hymn sings around the old pump organ.

Dad would often write a paragraph or two in a bible and

give it as a gift to one of us. I recently ran across one that he gave me and I would like to share what he wrote:

To Hets Molenhouse (Christmas 1979)

Let us therefore draw near to God with confidence to the throne of Grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. We can also find help, strength and grace in time of need by reading God's word.

This word of God has an answer to all of our problems, sorrow, needs, making decisions for our doubts, also for worry. When you are ready to quit, when you are tired, when you want to know about love. This word can be the Lamp to our feet a light for our way. Read Romans 8:31 to the end. You can't go wrong when you read this Word prayerfully and faithfully. It is God speaking to us directly and He only can give that peace that passes our understanding. He also wants to be submissive to His will, for He knows what is best for us.

I personally have found God to be true to His word. He will never leave us or forsake us. He giveth and giveth and giveth again, even tho we are unworthy.

Your Mom and Dad (sic)

These words have meant so much to me. Someday, I will be able to thank them in person for their guidance, prayers and encouragement. And together we will praise our God through all eternity.

# Humor Me

## It's a Conspiracy

Have you noticed that stairs are getting steeper. Groceries are heavier. And, everything is farther away. Yesterday I walked to the corner and I was dumbfounded to discover how long our street had become!

And, you know, people are less considerate now, especially the young ones. They speak in whispers all the time! If you ask them to speak up they just keep repeating themselves, endlessly mouthing the same silent message until they're red in the face! What do they think I am, a lip reader?

I also think they are much younger than I was at the same age. On the other hand, people my own age are so much older than I am. I ran into an old friend the other day and she has aged so much that she didn't even recognize me. I got to thinking about the poor dear while I was combing my hair this morning, and in doing so, I glanced at my own reflection well, REALLY NOW - even mirrors are not made the way they used to be!

Another thing, everyone drives so fast these days! You're risking life and limb if you happen to pull onto the freeway in front of them. All I can say is, their brakes must wear out awfully fast, the way I see them screech and swerve in my rear view mirror.

Clothing manufacturers are less civilized these days. Why else would they suddenly start labeling a size 10 or 12 dress as 18 or 20? Do they think no one notices? The people who make bathroom scales are pulling the same prank. Do they think I actually believe the number I see on that dial? HA! I would never let myself weigh that much!

Just who do these people think they're fooling? I'd like to call up someone in authority to report what's going on --but the telephone company is in on the conspiracy too: they've printed the phone books in such small type that no one could ever find a number in there! So I asked my daughter to find the number but she told me that no Eisenhowers are listed.

Unless something drastic happens, pretty soon everyone will have to suffer these indignities.

## The Five Dumbest Criminals of 2008

1) Early this year, some Boeing employees decided to "borrow" a life raft from one of the 747s. They got it home without being detected, but upon inflating it for a float on the river, they noticed a Coast Guard helicopter coming toward them. They forgot that upon inflation, a radio beacon would automatically activate. They were fired.

2) A bank robber walked into a branch of Bank of America and realized he had forgotten to write a note for the teller. So he grabbed a deposit slip and wrote on the back, "Put all your money in this bag". Then thinking that some one may have seen him write the note, he left the bank and went to Wells Fargo across the street. When he approach the window, the teller told him that she could not accept the note because it was written on a BoA deposit slip. He would either have to fill out a Wells Fargo slip or go back across the street to BoA. Looking somewhat defeated, the mans said, "OK" and left. He was arrested a few minutes later as he was waiting in line at BoA.

3) A motorist was caught in an automated speed trap. He received a citation in the mail along with a photo of his car, the radar readout and a request for \$40. Somewhat incensed, he sent the citation along with a photo of \$40 to the police department. A few days later he received another citation and a photo of a pair of handcuffs. He paid the ticket.

4) A guy walked into a convenience store with a shotgun and told the startled cashier to put all the money in a bag. Spotting a bottle of Scotch on the shelf, he told her to put that in as well. She refused and insisted on seeing his ID. He reached in his pocket and pulled out his drivers license. She looked it over, agreed that he was over 21 and gave him the bottle. He left and the clerk called the police. She not only gave them a description, but also his name and address.

5) A pair of Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first one shouted, "Nobody move!" When his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.

# Kids Korner

1. Who wanted to put his hand in Jesus' side after the resurrection?

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2. Who did Jesus call away from his job as a tax collector?

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3. Jesus healed the mother-in-law of one of his disciples. What was the name of that disciple?

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4. One of his disciples gave Jesus a kiss, but not out of love. Who was he?

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5. Who baptized an Ethiopian he met on the road?

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6. Simon (Peter) and his brother left their father to follow Jesus. What was the brother's name?

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7. Hosea was told by God to marry an unfaithful wife. What was her name?

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8. Who was Abraham's second son?

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9. What other name does the Bible give to the Magi?

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10. What does the Lord prepare in the presence of our enemies?

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11. In the parable of the sower, where did the seed fall that was choked?

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12. Where did Martha and Mary live with their brother Lazarus?

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## Look it up

1. John 20 : 24-25

2. Matthew 9 : 9

3. Matthew 8 : 14-15

4. Luke 22 : 47

5. Acts 8 : 27-38

6. Matthew 4 : 18

7. Hosea 1 : 3

8. Genesis 21 : 2-3

9. Matthew 2 : 1

10. Psalm 23 : 5

11. Matthew 13 : 7

12. John 11 : 1

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Note: If you are between the ages of 7 and 12 any time during the calendar year 2009, sign your name and put your answers in my mail box (Gabrielse) by Sunday, February 8th.

## Running Totals:

Sarah Dykstra	12
William Fan	12
Kathryn Kmiecik	11

Once again, we have a contest for a \$25 gift certificate to be awarded in the January, 2010 issue. Don't miss an issue.