

# WHEATON

## CROSS † CONNECTIONS

### But Then This ...

**By Pastor John Schuurman**

Notes to self in the wee hours of the morning:

It is 2:30 a.m. Rest tonight has been short and fitful. We leave for Africa tomorrow—er ... tonight. Yikes! If I can get this column off of my mind, maybe I can get back to bed and to some meaningful rest. Doubtful – but possible.

Preached an “Easter Sermon” for the holiest day of the Christian year yesterday. It was about the joy and mystery and wonder and fear of being “resurrection people.” There is an adventure! As a preacher, I’m very interested in “making the Bible apply to our daily lives” but even more interested in trying to “make our lives apply to the Bible.” When you see the Bible as God’s self-revelation and as the true account of what he is doing to save his people and his creation, then making our lives fit into his story – that story – becomes a pretty important distinction. Maybe that’s why I can’t sleep.

We face some big challenges as a church of the resurrection.

The economy and stewardship and church debt and unemployment and all of the rest of that is much on everyone’s mind. As resurrection people, a big challenge is to proceed into whatever places we go in the confidence of that great event. If Jesus is true to his word that he goes before us into Galilee – or wherever – then I guess we can deal with money issues too.

While I do believe that all giving for the Lord

goes into the same pot, we do sometimes need to make painful distinctions, “first nests -- then eggs,” as the birds are fond of saying. So for a time we do some painful cutting here so that we can make it there. Lots of us hate reducing our ministry share to the denomination. But at this point in the day, neither the Lord (or the denomination), suggest that the church should go further into deficit spending to pay ministry shares.

What a tremendous need we have to be wise stewards and to step into our real life situations, (remember the paragraph about preaching?)□, knowing that Christ also goes before us in our money questions. Lord, give us joy and hope and adventure – and maybe now – maybe especially now – in our giving to you.

3:42 a.m. Not drowsy yet.

4:05 a.m. Getting drowsy. Think I’ll try it. Lord, let the adventure slip away for a bit while I try to catch what is left of the morning.

And Lord, thank you for this opportunity to travel and view your missions up close. May Janet and I be blessings from you to all with whom we come in contact. Amen.

# Editors Note

**By Ed Gabrielse**

Editing and publishing the **Cross Connections** this year has been a real joy. It was made possible by the scores of members who have written vignettes of their lives or their work, and the work of others, in God's kingdom.

Every month on deadline Sunday I am apprehensive about the responses. I have nightmares of publishing a 2 page newsletter. But by midnight, my e-mail box is full and each issue is up to twelve or sixteen pages.

Many of you have thanked me for the efforts in publishing **Cross Connections**. You may not realize it, but it is a lot of fun for me to be the first to discover what you have written and are willing to share with other members. Without the contributions of so many of you, we would not have a newsletter.

When I undertook this effort, I assumed it would be a lot of work. That much is true. But I had no idea of the unmitigated joy and blessing that opening each e-mail would hold for me. I want to thank all of you for that.

Pastor John was unable to write his usual column before leaving on his Sabbatical so instead we have a provocative article from Ted De Jong. He deserves special thanks for these observations.

I want to thank Marilyn Storms for duplicating the copies, Thonglo for getting them in the mailboxes, and Tom Lynema for getting each one on our website ([www.WheatonCRC.org/news](http://www.WheatonCRC.org/news)) every month. Their work has made my job a real pleasure.

*There will be no **Cross Connections** for the next three months (June, July and August). We will begin again on the last Sunday of August with the distribution of the September issue. Have a great Summer.*

# Bible League Volunteers

**By Carolyn Bommelje**

Many of you may not be acquainted with the work of the Volunteers for the Bible League. The Volunteers are groups of women whose object is to raise funds for the work of the Bible League. These groups are found all across the United States and Canada. Our local group is known as the Chicago West Suburban Bible League Volunteers. Wheaton CRC has always been well represented in this group, with usually 3 - 4 women participating at all times throughout the years. Currently our representatives are Susan Anderson, Carolyn Bommelje, and Hildi VanderVeen. Flora DeGroot retired last year after more than 30 years of service. She is to be commended for her dedication to this group.

Every two years the Bible League selects a new country for the Volunteer groups to adopt. In the last two years we worked for the country of Mexico. The volunteers were able to raise more than 1 million dollars to provide more than 270,000 Bibles for the people of Mexico. Our own missionaries, Wayne and Sandy DeJong, whose work we support in Guadalajara, work hand in hand with the Bible League, using their Project Phillip Bible studies as well as training seminars for the nationals to become church planters. This year we have the exciting opportunity of working for the continent of Africa, assisting the Bible League in raising money for Bibles and New Testaments.

Africa's people live on earth's second largest continent and are in great need of the Holy Scriptures. The Volunteers will work for the next 2 years to raise funds to provide as many Bibles as possible in as many languages as possible.

In the sub-Saharan area, approximately 50 per cent of the population is under the age of 18. Many don't have access to Bibles and study materials that are written specifically for young people. There are more than 200 million African

Christians without Bibles. Providing God's Word for the common African - the men, women, and children who struggle daily to survive - this is our goal. Africans need God's Word more than anything.

*This week you will find in your mail boxes a letter and envelope asking you to support the work of the Volunteers for the Bible League. Please consider a generous gift today and be part of changing African people's lives for eternity.*

## Missions

### **The Children of the Gwaimen Center**

**By Mary Sytsma**

*Editors Note: After reading the e-mails she sent back during her recent visit to the Gwaimen Center, I asked Mary to introduce us to some of the women and children she met. This is the third in that series. The other two can be read at <http://www.WheatonCRC.org>. Click on "News" for access to previous newsletters.*

### **The Voiceless Ones**

Recently, I experienced the worst case of laryngitis I have ever had and for about four days I had absolutely no voice. It was frustrating as I tried to explain things to my students in class in barely a whisper. I wrote things down and asked other people to speak for me. I felt renewed frustration every time I tried to answer the telephone. I couldn't sing. I don't like to be voiceless, mostly because I'm not used to it. I am used to being heard.

This issue I want to introduce you to Saratu. She is about four, withdrawn, afraid, and sad. She cried herself to sleep every night. She only spoke to the other children, and that only rarely. When an adult spoke to her, she simply didn't respond. Abigail, who cares for all the children with a warm and protective love, couldn't even coax Saratu to speak.

When I tried to get close to her, she moved across the room. I know that she had never seen another white person, which only

added to her fears, but I so wanted to be able to love her up close, to hold her, and to soothe her hurts, but she would have none of it. She simply chose not to speak to me, not to trust me, and she very seldom made eye contact. Gradually, things began to change for Saratu. She became more at ease with the other children. She even smiled occasionally. After two weeks of almost daily contact, she let me sit in her vicinity while I was reading a Bible story to the children

Saratu comes from a part of Nigeria that is mostly Muslim, and as you may know from the recent events in Jos, there is real tension between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. Saratu's parents are Christian, and her father is a pastor, but the area where they live is controlled by Muslim leaders. In their small village in the bush it is customary for young girls to marry by their early teens, even among Christians. Her parents didn't want this for her. They sent her to the Gwaimen Center just two days before I arrived. Her parents wanted her to be able to go to school. They wanted her to grow up among Christians. They wanted her to have more choices for her future. One of the women who is on the Board of the Center agreed to take her into her home to live. What a heart wrenching decision this must have been for her parents - to send her away from them when there is so little possibility of travel and visits.

Saratu cries herself to sleep every night because she misses her family. She has never lived in a village as big as ours. She isn't used to so many people, so many strangers. I think she is waiting for her mom and dad to come and get her.

*Saratu is unusual in some ways. Both of her parents are alive. They care about her and want what is best for her. But she is like so many of the children at the Center in other ways. She really needs "gwaimen" - which is a Hausa word that means comfort, hospitality, welcome, shalom. She needs a place to grow up in the faith, to be taught to pray, to sing Bible songs, to play games with other children, to go to school, to be healthy, to eat regular meals, to be loved, all of which will happen because she is part of the Gwaimen Center. And as she gets used to having all of those things in her life, I think Saratu will also discover her voice.*

# Status of CRC Finances

**By Rev. Gerald Dykstra**

**Exec. Dir. CRCNA**

Dear partners in ministry:

Thank you for the helpful comments and reflections I received following my recent letters about the ongoing financial challenges we all face. I want to continue our dialogue by sharing an update about what we are doing at the denominational and agency level.

Through the end of March, ministry share receipts are running at 90 percent of the 2009 budget. You may recall that in February the total projected shortfall of the agencies and denominational offices for FY2009 was \$6 million. Through a variety of measures, including reductions to employee benefits and compensation, we reduced expenditures by \$2.5 million. We plan to meet the balance of the shortfall by using our limited reserves.

We continue to monitor our financial situation carefully and expect to have further discussions about the ministry budgets for 2009-2010 with the Board of Trustees when they meet April 30 - May 1.

Our ministries have been significantly impacted by the present economic conditions. As you well know from your own experience, when resources are reduced, ministry changes. Like you, agency staff and boards are carefully and painfully dealing with the need to reduce our ministries, both in North America and worldwide.

As we in the Christian Reformed Church in North America have worked together obediently and faithfully to nurture our ministries, we have done so in complete dependence on God and his provision. Now as we experience the present global economic downturn, we ask you

to join us as we:

1. Pray that God will give local church leaders, as well as the agency and denominational leaders, wisdom and discernment as we seek to follow his plans for ministry. As we decide how and where to reduce and realign our ministries, we do so trusting that God will provide new challenges and opportunities. As Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"

2. Encourage each other to give generously during the coming months. Your support through ministry shares and offerings are important to the work of the ministries of the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

During April and May, four of the Christian Reformed mission agencies are scheduled to receive offerings. We ask that you support these mission efforts, as well as our other agencies and institutions, as they appear on the CRCNA Deacons' Offering Calendar. Your financial gifts will help to support current ministries and grow the new ministries that God calls us to do.

Following are suggested offering dates from the 2009 Deacons' Offering Calendar:

April 12 Easter Sunday - Home Missions  
May 10 CRWRC - offering for Embrace AIDS Campaign  
May 24 Back to God Ministries International  
May 31 Pentecost - World Missions

I am deeply grateful for the way in which God has blessed our congregational and denominational ministries, and I know he will be faithful in guiding us to do the work that brings about his kingdom.

*Once again, please feel free to offer me your perspectives and advice. Visit our website, [www.crcna.org/letter0904](http://www.crcna.org/letter0904) to add comments or read comments that others have posted.*

# Hymn Stories

## **Onward Christian Soldiers**

**Author – Sabine Baring-Gould**

**Composer – Arthur S. Sullivan**

***Onward, Christian soldiers, Marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus Going on before!  
Christ, the royal Master, Leads against the  
foe;  
Forward into battle See His banner go!  
Onward, Christian soldiers, Marching as  
to war,  
With the cross of Jesus Going on before!***

Baring-Gould was one of the truly gifted preacher – literary men of the nineteenth century. In addition to being ordained to the Anglican ministry in 1864, he was a noted writer throughout his life. His publications include eighty-five books on such varied subjects as religion, travel, folk-lore, mythology, history, fiction, biography, sermons and popular theology. All are notable works. It is said that the British Museum shows more titles by him than by any other writer of this time. Yet, amazingly enough, the work for which Sabine Baring-Gould is best noted and remembered today is a simple children's hymn written in 1865.

The author has left the following account regarding the writing of this hymn:

*It was written in a very simple fashion, without thought of publication. Whitmonday is a great day for school festivals in Yorkshire, and one Whitmonday it was arranged that our school should join forces with that of a neighboring village. I wanted the children to sing when marching from one village to the other, but couldn't think of anything quite suitable, so I sat up at night resolved to write something myself. "Onward Christian Soldiers" was the result. It was written in great haste.*

Commenting on this hymn some thirty years later, Baring-Gould remarked:

*It was written in great haste, and I am afraid that some of the rhymes are faulty. I am certain that nothing has surprised me more than its popularity.*

A great hymn text must always be wedded to a fine tune in order to have universal appeal. Baring-Gould's hymn was first sung to the slow movement of Haydn's Symphony in D, No. 15, but that union has long since been forgotten. The present tune, "St. Gertrude," written by Sir Arthur S. Sullivan, was composed six years after the writing of the text.

Sullivan, born in Bolwell Terrace, Lambeth, England, on May 13, 1842, was a noted English organist and composer. This tune was written in the home of a Mrs. Gertrude Clay-Ker-Seymer in Dorsetshire, England, while Sullivan was a guest there. He dedicated the music to his hostess and the tune is known as "St. Gertrude" to this day. Sullivan is also the composer of the well-known secular classic, "The Lost Chord," as well as a number of operettas such as "HMS Pinafore," "The Mikado," etc. That's right, the composer of "Onward Christian Soldiers," is half of the "Gilbert/Sullivan" team.

The present version of this hymn was first published in America in John R. Sweney's "Gems of Praise," by the Methodist Episcopal Book Room in Philadelphia, 1873. Sabine Baring-Gould is also the author as well as the composer of another very lovely children's hymn, "Now the Day is Over."

Despite his unceasing labors as a writer and preacher, Sabine Baring-Gould lived to the age of ninety years. He died in 1924, but his hurriedly written "Onward Christian Soldiers" is marching on from the lips of young and old alike.

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."

# English as a Second Language: Celebrating 20 Years of Service

**By Grace Huitsing**

**THE CONNECTION:** About 20 years ago a group of Vietnamese refugees settled in Wheaton and environs. When a committee of Classis No. Illinois learned of their needs, they began to serve. Early on, members of WCRC Gordon Anderson and Everett and Joyce VanderMolen took a warm interest, and seminary student Huu Phu Nguyen began his enthusiastic ministry of service that led to New Hope Vietnamese Church. To help with language needs, the committee procured the services of Wheaton graduate student Susan DeHaan, and the English language program began. The following year, Dennis Kroll, with ELIC in China, studied in Wheaton's grad program, and Rosemari Kroll led the class, while others helped with the children.

**WORLD RELIEF** offers affiliation. In a few years, two classes became necessary, and as volunteer Grace Huitsing came on, World Relief offered to supply a second teacher and invited us to come under their umbrella, providing processing and testing, curriculum aid, etc. (The neat thing here is that World Relief is the social arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, of which the Chr. Ref. Church is a member.)

Now most of our New Hope friends have gone on to become hard-working citizens, and while our connection with New Hope remains strong, the ESL class membership has become diverse.

**WCRC VOLUNTEERS.** Various churches in Wheaton offer their facilities and provide coffee service, but far more important, volunteer aid. Through the years, WCRC members Joyce, Gordon, Stephanie Disselkoen, and Bob and Mary Hooyer helped the Vietnamese children with homework. Other members with a warm interest in the students have ably served as teacher aides, including Nell Vander Ark, Gretta Anema, and Jane Gabrielse, while long-time aide Irene DeWolf continues with Aubrey Wise Goodell this year. The Outreach Committee, under Susan Anderson, takes an active interest in the program, including hosting an hour for conversation over dessert each year and welcoming the students to our church.

**A DIVERSE GROUP.** The purpose of the program is to assist refugees and immigrants improve their English and adapt to the culture of this country in a Christian setting. From 8 to 12 members attend, and the lessons are adapted to meet the needs of the current year's group. Given a higher level this year, including a few visiting scholars, we've assigned a reading about Habitat for Humanity, as well as certain parables and the story of Easter. After discussion, short writing assignments follow, such as "A turning point in my life." Students also enjoy our library books.

With a few from Vietnam, Columbia, Mexico, and one from Guatemala, Turkey and Japan this year, the students enjoy the coffee break and talk readily with each other, growing concerned about the others' needs. It seems natural to include these needs in our opening prayer, offered in the name of Jesus. We ask the church family to pray for the seed sown and the love given in this outreach ministry of our congregation.

# Sea to Sea Bike Tour

**By Chris Meehan,**

**(CRC Communications)**

Nov. 14, 2008 -- The Christian Reformed Church on Friday morning disbursed funds to denominational agencies and organizations that played an important role in helping to coordinate and to participate in the Sea to Sea Bike Tour 2008. After expenses, the tour raised more than \$1.5 million.

This money will be used for a number of poverty-fighting programs worldwide, including helping to build a Christian school in the Dominican Republic, equipping business leaders with the tools to share their skills with cross-cultural partners, and improving communities in Sierra Leone, says a press release put out before the ceremony.

Some 220 riders took part in this summer's journey that began in Seattle, Wash., moved across mountains, pedaled over the plains, traveled through cities, large and small, and traveled through a portion of Canada on the way to the New Jersey shore.

"It was a huge undertaking," said Rev. Jerry Dykstra, executive director of the denomination during a brief ceremony honoring the accomplishments of the bike tour. Dykstra himself rode with his wife, Linda, on part of the tour.

"This was a phenomenal event in the history of the Christian Reformed Church. We were able to do it bi-nationally ... and I praise God for that." Money raised from the tour is going to organizations that have programs that help to fight poverty in North America and around the world. The riders raised the money in donations as part of their pledge to join in the tour that was held in conjunction with the Reformed Church in America.

"The issue of poverty is complex," says Dykstra. "This money will be channeled in ways that have a significant impact on poverty." The funds, he said, go to groups that have found ways to develop programs that work to break the cycle of poverty. "It is incredibly amazing to me that through people riding bikes we can do this."

Checks on Friday morning went to the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Christian Reformed World Missions, and Partners Worldwide, an organization with ties to the CRC that helps break the cycle of poverty by working to train and develop business people in various countries to begin or more profitably operate their businesses.

Accepting the check for Partners Worldwide was Lou Havemen, a Partners' donor developer, who was one of those who rode the entire tour. Haveman, in fact, was one of the first people who sat down at a table more than a year ago to discuss the possibility of putting on the tour, which was based in large part on a similar Sea to Sea tour undertaken across Canada in 2005. "Lou was in this from the start," says Dykstra. Money raised from the tour is also being given to Christian Reformed Home Missions and the Reformed Church in America. In addition, funds will be given to the Christian Reformed Foundation. That money will be available for local churches, organizations and individuals working to end the cycle of poverty through grants. The applications for these grants will be available in a few weeks.

*"We did this to raise the money, but in the process people's lives were changed and friendships were developed," says Dykstra. The fund-raising effort also brought enthusiasm to CRC congregations all along the way who helped supply the needs of riders as they rode through various communities.*

# Insights and Encounters

## **By Sue Wielard**

Where do I belong?

For some reason I seem to ask myself that a lot lately.

I think it's partly because of the stage I am at in life. Just four years ago our home was full of kids and constant activity. I liked that. It fit. I fit. But things keep changing. In a month, one child will be married. In a year, the last one will head off to college. I keep needing to adjust. It's hard. Where do I fit?

In a recent church service, the liturgy said something about knowing who God is and who you are. The image that immediately popped into my mind was that of a giant foot in a giant shoe about to step on a tiny ant. (These were cartoon characters, but I knew who was who!) Instead of being squished, the ant was picked up by a large, careful hand. That was the second image. The final image was the googly-eyed ant, still in hand, being looked at with a wide smile. This "cartoon in my mind" was accompanied with feelings of love, happiness, and complete trust.

Things change in our lives all the time. Changes with family, friends, jobs, health-the list goes on and on. It's often hard to figure out just where we fit in it all, where we belong. Even though I don't often get answers as specific as I would like, God has used Bible passages, words from a song, and even a cartoon to let me know where I fit, where I belong.

I belong in the palm of His hand.

## **By Carey Wise**

When I was a teenager, at times the whole world seemed to be against what I wanted to do and say. I would often be quick to yell out

"It's just not fair!" I remember my dad would pause for a moment after hearing my desperate plea and then proceed with a grin by saying "Life is not fair". I hated that statement. It was a quick answer that cut out all reason and debate.

Today, it's Good Friday and to be honest I'm feeling anything but good. The last couple weeks have been tough and I'm tired. Grueling deadlines at work with constant rush jobs; kids getting bad colds and having to take numerous trips to the health clinic. The recent discovery that my wife will need knee surgery and the stress of wondering how are we going to handle all the medical bills. It's not fair I once again mumble to myself.

It's easy to get caught up in the madness of this world and feel alone because of it. To say no one understands what I'm going through. How easy is it to wallow in our misery and to blame God that this is not the life I expected. But how much more unfair is it for one person to be forced to pay the penalty for every wrong thing I've done? For every sin ever committed? It was His immeasurable love and grace given willingly so that we may have new life.

My favorite service of the year is on Maundy Thursday. It is an emotionally draining service, but one that needs to be attended. One of the songs the choir occasionally sings at this service is "Thy Will be Done". The third verse goes like this..."Then they took my Savior and led him to the tree and there they broke his body, poured out his life, put him to death, to rise again" There is a moving crescendo on that very last part. To me, that song sums up all what Jesus went through as he bore the weight of the world on his shoulders.

*So the next time I feel that life's not fair, maybe I should remember the One that went through the most unfair treatment with the most generous spirit. That's what I'll be doing today. Thank God for the amazing gift of His Son.*

# Summer Holidays

## **By Flora DeGroot**

I love summer holidays!

Paul and I try to take one big vacation a year. Our time at Deer Valley Ranch in Colorado with the kids was one of our favorites. The beauty of the mountains was just breathtaking.

*Our trips to Europe with family and friends are unforgettable. The one we took with our friends from high school stands out. We sang as a choir in two churches, rode bikes through the Dutch countryside and hiked in the mountains in Switzerland. We stayed in a “Ma and Pa” hotel in Germany. It was the most fun. Every room was different. Some had big and beautiful rooms with post beds while other had to make do in rooms the size of closets – hardly enough room for one bed. We all came home with great memories of the love and joy of friendships that only grow stronger with the passage of time.*

## **By Erica Plaisier**

I couldn't decide on one specific summer holiday so I instead chose to remember an incredible childhood of summer vacations. I was fortunate to grow up in a family that loves to travel. Each summer my parents, sister, brother and I would take the family motor home on a three-week camping trip. By the time I was 24, I had traveled to all 50 states and camped in 49 of them (we took the easy way out in Hawaii).

So many of my memories of growing up are from those trips and I will always remember that sense of being totally carefree, riding along the road, singing to an Oak Ridge Boys tape, and just being with my family. We usually took our trip the month of August, after having spent two months of our summer with our own friends and being out of the house more than we were in. Those trips gave us all a chance to reconnect with each other and while we had the

inevitable sibling fights, we had plenty of amazing times too.

Pre-GPS, I vividly remember my parents planning out the route in the atlas before we left, choosing national parks, beaches and zoos to visit along our way. A high point was getting to serve as navigator throughout the trips. That gave me the chance to sit up front and talk with the driver, my dad. While most of the time we just chatted lightheartedly, some of those conversations would impact me greatly – dealing with junior high angst, calming fears about going to a new high school and deciding on a college all were covered riding in that front seat.

*I had the opportunity to experience the country in a unique way; Scott and I plan to do the same with our boys. I can't wait.*

# Imagination

## **By Ted DeJong**

Children are born to imagine. Can you remember when you could imagine yourself being a superhero, super athlete, or having powers that would allow you to do anything that your imagination brought to mind?

What is imagination? From where does it arise? Psychologists may identify it as part of the id or ego. Scientists may insist that it is simply an arrangement of neurons or series of synapses, simply a phenomenon of interacting brain cells. Sometimes it may be best to forget about these conjectures and just enjoy our imagination. But the question still remains as to its nature and essence.

Man was created in the image of God and bears what Christians refer to as communicable attributes – things we bear in common with our creator. Such attributes include creativity, love, compassion, and yes, imagination. Can you conceive of God without an imagination? Just think of the alternatives that God considered before creating the universe and man's place in it.

Admitting that our imagination is part of the image of God in which we were created goes a long way in explaining why it is so important a part of being human. Imagination, then, becomes essential to the whole learning process. Einstein stated that imagination is more important than knowledge. C.S. Lewis defines the imagination as “the organ of meaning.” Action must be preceded by imagination. A sculptor studying a block of stone or a painter before a blank canvas imaging their final products before any action occurs.

God has endowed every person with an imagination. All ideas are products of this imagination. And all behavior stems from ideas. What do you do with your ideas?

Consider the parable of the Sower. I am convinced that the implications of the parable go far beyond the conventional interpretations. If all things are controlled by God, including your imagination, ideas and gifts, are those ideas that enter your mind falling on good soil or poor? Are they being acted upon or simply left in the garbage heaps along the side of the road? I suggest that real satisfaction and joy comes to those good and faithful servants who act on a carry out the challenges which God places before them.

Giving flesh to your imagination may require stepping out into areas that are foreign to you. But before dismissing an idea as ludicrous, ask yourself, “Why did God allow that idea to enter my mind?” If it withstands the tests of scripture and practicality, step out into the unknown. You may be surprised by what God has in store for you.

There is no age limit on this enterprise. The quality of life you lead is determined largely by your own decisions. If you do not expand your horizons, you will continue to live in a small and cloistered world. But if you have the courage to step out with what ever gifts God has given you, you will find yourself surprised by joy.

*Psalm 5:3 In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*

# Humor Me

## **More Conversation Starters**

No piece of paper can be folded in half more than seven times.  
*(Go ahead, I'll wait)*

It is impossible to lick your elbow.  
*(Half of you are trying it right now)*

The King of Hearts is the only King without a Moustache.  
*(Check it out)*

Pearls melt in vinegar.  
*(Trust me)*

A duck's quack does not echo – and no one knows why.  
*(Next time you have a duck handy, try it)*

Most dust in the house is from dead skin.  
*(Who comes up with this stuff anyhow)*

Turtles can breathe through their butts.  
*(Does anyone really care?)*

At five minutes and six seconds after 4:00 on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July this year, the time and date will be:

**04:05:06 07/08/09.**

*(Some one clearly has too much time on their hands)*

## **On Angels**

All angels are girls because they gotta wear dresses and the boys just didn't go for it.  
- Antonio 9

Some of the angels are in charge of helping heal sick animals and pets. And if they don't make the animals get better, they help the

child get over it.  
- Vicki 8

Angels talk all the way while they're flying you up to heaven. The main subject is where you went wrong before you got dead.  
- Daniel 9

It is not easy to become an angel! First you die. Then you go to heaven, and then there still is the flight training to go through. Finally, you got to agree to wear those angel clothes.  
- Matthew 9

My guardian angel helps me with math. He's not too good at science.  
- Henry 8

Angels don't eat, but they drink milk from Holy Cows.  
- Jack 6

## ***On Grand Parents***

Grandmothers are just "antique" little girls.

Never have children, only grandchildren.  
- Gore Vidal

Grandchildren don't stay young forever, which is good because Grandfathers have only so many horsey rides in them.  
- Gene Perret

One of the most powerful handclasps is that of a new grandbaby around the finger of a grandfather.  
- Joy Hargrove

It's amazing how grandparents seem so young once you become one.

Grandparents are like a piece of string – handy to have around and easily wrapped around the fingers of their Grandchildren.

If your baby is beautiful, perfect, never cries or fusses, sleeps on schedule, burps on demand and acts like an angel all the time, you're the grandma.  
- Teresa Bloomingdale

Grandmas hold our tiny hands for just a little while but our hearts forever.

If I had known how wonderful it is to have grandchildren, I'd have had them first.  
- Lois Wyse

It's such a grand thing to be a mother of a mother – that is why the world calls her Grandmother.

# Kids Korner

1. What were the last words Jesus spoke from the cross?

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2. When Joseph buried Jesus, who was with him?

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3. What was Jesus known as?

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4. Who divided the Jordan river with his cloak?

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5. Who built a calf of gold to make the Israelites happy?

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6. What was Andrew's occupation before he was called by Jesus?

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7. What does "Emmanuel" mean?

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8. Who stayed with Naomi rather than return to her own people?

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9. Who was on trial at the same time as Jesus?

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10. Where did the demons beg Jesus to allow them to go after they were cast out of the two men?

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11. After Jesus healed the two blind men, what were his instructions to them?

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12. Who was the mother of Rachel?

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## Look it up

1. John 19:30

2. John 19:38-39

3. Matthew 2:23

4. 2 Kings 2:8

5. Exodus 32:1-4

6. Matthew 4:18

7. Matthew 1:23

8. Ruth 1:16-19

9. Matthew 27:15-18

10. Matthew 8:32

11. Matthew 9:30

12. Genesis 30:22-24

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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, April 12th.

Running Totals	
Sarah Dykstra	24
William Fan	48
Kathryn Kmiecik	34
Dakota Nickols	12

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