

# WHEATON

## CROSS † CONNECTIONS

### But Then This ...

**By Pastor John Schuurman**

During my recent vacation I spent some time flat on my back on the floors of our house. I was trying to fix various things. You know—hinges that don't work properly, woodwork that needs replacing, rooms that need painting—that house-owner sort of thing. It is the sort of work that I kind of like to do.

Aside from bodily pains such as my sporty blackened thumb nail from a poorly swung hammer and the sore knees from the near constant getting up and down from off of the floor, I enjoy fixing stuff and making improvements to our place. And, because of some previous work experience, there are a couple of the areas of home fixing that I am fairly comfortable with.

One of the things that I like about doing this kind of work is that you can sometimes really see that you did something at the end of the day. There is nothing quite like painting a room a new color to communicate that "someone was recently here working a significant change." In contrast to much of the work that we might call, "people work," painting a room gives quick evidence that a worker was present and got something done. So there is that near-instant gratification that is enjoyable for someone whose usual work does not often have such ready fruit to show.

The other thing that I like about such work is that it gives me time to think and play around in my brain. Painting and woodworking demand concentration to be sure, (I've got the black nail

and a piece of moulding cut too short to prove that you can't wander too far afield), but it is a concentration of a different order—again—than what I usually do.

After painting our kitchen and after cleaning up, I had the pleasure of stepping back, walking around and "beholding what I had done." I was tired and I was filled with satisfaction; and I had the thought, "is this anything like what God felt when he created the creation?" I think that at least in some small part it was. God worked his wondrous work and then he looked at it and then pronounced it good and then he rested. Me too. You too? God often gives his image bearers small god-like moments to enjoy.

## Missions

### **The Women and 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 fourth in that series.

### **Beatrice**

I have seen the human spirit give birth to hope. If everyday a woman's load gets heavier, she will soon be unable to lift her eyes from the ground and will only be able to see the step that lies in front of her. Eventually she will give up. But if someone comes alongside her and says to her, "Let me help you carry that" - imagine the look you will see when she raises her eyes. That is hope.

That is the look I have seen in the eyes of hundreds of widows in Nigeria. Their lives are so hard, but when I watch Beatrice speak to them, even though I don't speak Hausa, I know immediately when she gets to the part about being an orphan herself. She tells them how she rose from poverty, without parents to help her, and she got an education, by the grace of God, even a PhD in America. I watch the eyes of the women as they listen, and I see hope begin to stand on wobbly newborn legs. When she tells them that there are people in their community, and even across the world who want to help them, I see them take their first steps toward the possibility of a better life.

I have long been convinced that part of the ministry God has given to me is what I call "the ministry of standing next to." It's not rocket science. It's just coming alongside someone and caring about what happens to that person. Being faithful to this calling is why God brought me to Nigeria.

I met a twenty year old widow whose name was Helen. She had two children, one of whom was strapped to her back. The baby's name was "Precious." Helen had not finished high school. Her husband died of AIDS a year ago. She and her children have not been tested. Beatrice told her to come to the center to be tested. She told her to go back to school and be a good example to her children. The very next morning Helen came to the center and Abigail gave her the test to see if she was HIV positive. Whatever the results of that test, and I am praying that she is negative, the good news is that she has made contact with the Gwaimen Center now, and she will not have to walk alone after this. There are people who will stand next to her as she faces the next thing. Someone has lifted part of her load. She has hope.

This is part of what Beatrice means when she says, "Education is emancipation." Knowing her status can help her to be free from the paralyzing fear and hopelessness, even if the test says she is HIV positive. Knowing that could save her life and the lives of her children. Knowledge brings power.

In all of the villages we visited and in all of the

meetings we held, the women of the Board went through the group asking the widows to register, stating their names, status (if they knew it), and village. For some of these women this is the first time they have admitted publicly that they are HIV positive. Beatrice thinks that if 200 widows showed up at a meeting, that was probably only 10% of the total number of widows that lived in that village.

The numbers are staggering, but we will be better able to serve their needs if we have an idea of how many there are. Each one has a story, and we don't yet know all of their stories. We do know that for some of them that story includes being HIV positive. For all of them, we know their lives include poverty and shattered dreams. They never intended to become widows and to raise their children alone.

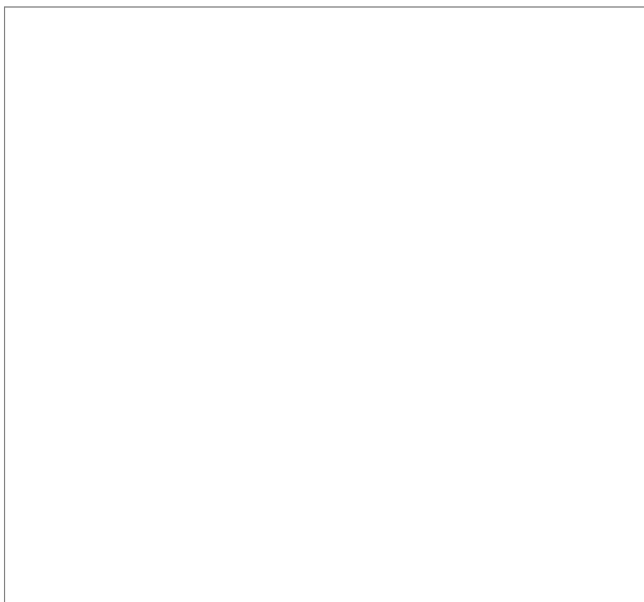
Every house in Nigeria has numbers written on the outside, a means the government used to take a recent census. If the members of the household had been counted, the number of those living in that house was spray painted on the outside. Their names were recorded in the government's book. I don't know how recent the census was, but I do know by the number of funerals in the village in just the time I was there, those numbers can no longer be accurate. Having your name written in that record book doesn't necessarily bring a better life.

The widows have to learn to trust the promises of the Gwaimen Center. The people who will walk alongside them aren't in this for the money, as some of them have learned from hard experience with other NGOs. But it is a heavy responsibility for Beatrice and the other women who serve on the Board of Gwaimen in Nigeria to have so many looking at them with hope in their eyes.

As the women of the Board move among them writing the widows' names in the book, they are telling them in a small way "You are precious." You matter, and we know your name and we will help you. Imagine the hope that results if you think your name is written in a book that is about Life not death.

# Theo's View

Editors Note: Shortly before Theo and Greta Anema left for their new home in Minnesota, I received a call – would I be interested in a series of cartoons that Theo had drawn? Of course, I said yes and after reviewing them I decided to share them with the congregation. This is the first of seven. Each triggers an insight on our spiritual journey. Thank you, Theo



## Roseland's Pastor Joe

**By Grace Huitsing**

***In a recent interview, Pastor Joe Huizenga shared what brought and has kept him at Roseland Christian Ministries Center in these very critical times.***

*Pastor Joe, what persons or experiences shaped you to take on the leadership at Roseland?*

Well, I think my parents had a heart for “the least of these” and nurtured us at an early age. For example, when I was in high school, my dad would take us a few Sundays a month to help in a soup kitchen in Joliet. Then my CCHS soccer coach, Roger Nelson, who was also the chaplain and chapel leader, influenced me a lot. Now the pastor at Hope CRC, he became my mentor and remains my mentor today.

While studying at Trinity Christian College, I had a six month internship at Roseland, but stayed on for eight. Then, after a year at Western Seminary, I took off two years to work with Rev. Tony. Actually, I had breakfast with Rev. Tony the day he suffered his heart attack, followed later by a stroke. Returning to Western to complete my studies, I hung around and lived among the international students.

*Did your wife share the vision of serving in Roseland?*

At Western, I met Octavia, a fellow student from Detroit, and on graduating in 2006 we married and came to Roseland. We're blessed with a little son and expect our second child in October, actually around Missions Week.

*Through the years, Roseland residents have been blessed with worship services, food, shelter, and counseling. There has been a faithful staff, a diligent board, and churches to help, with some government aid. But what has the recent cut in government aid meant?*

Well, the program for homeless Women and Kids has continued. We have the shelter upstairs for them and they eat their meals there as well. But the cut-off in government funds for the Drop-in Center leaves about 80 to 90-- mostly men--with no place but the streets, and in July we've had to modify our Meal Program from serving them lunch and dinner, to one meal a day. Now we serve the daily meal at about 3 p.m., and try to provide enough calories to sustain them. We hope to continue this until year's end.

*And the faithful staff? How have they been affected?*

We've had to let some people go, and have cut the hours of other staff members. It's been rough going, but we still believe God is with us and will provide. Some of the churches have sent some funds and others support us in prayer. But there will definitely be changes. Probably the churches will help, perhaps to provide meals.

*With the very difficult times Roseland Christian Ministries is going through, are there any bright spots that have encouraged you recently?*

We're glad we can continue with our housing program. We've rehabbed three houses in two years, and very soon a young couple will be moving into one of them. We want God to continue to be glorified in this place. God has been with Roseland Christian Ministries for 30 years, and we know He will provide.

*Thank you, Pastor Joe, for telling about the people who led you on the way, and for sharing the current needs at Roseland so we at Wheaton can more clearly pray and support you all. See you soon!*

*Note: Pastor Joe will lead our Sunday morning worship on October 11<sup>th</sup>, the first day of our Mission Emphasis week. The theme is "Come, See the Works of God."*

*To kick off the festivities, Lisa Riihimaki will tell us of her work in China, her new connections with Pioneers and her continued work with Coffee Shop and with Urban Missions on Sunday evening, October 4<sup>th</sup>.*

*On Sunday evening, October 11<sup>th</sup>, Micah Schuurman and Joel Sytsma will tell about their mission work experiences*

*On Wednesday Evening, October 14<sup>th</sup>, Ben and Brenda Michelson will tell about their work in Mali.*

*A scrumptious dinner will be prepared by the women from Lawndale CRC.*

*On Sunday morning, October 18<sup>th</sup>, Rev Henry DeVries will lead our services in the morning and Joe Owens will tell us about his work with*

*the Bible League in Africa in the evening.*

***Be sure to put these dates on your calendar.***

## 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.

## Library News

### **By Eleanore DeJong**

The following titles have been added to the library during the Summer months:

#### **Non-Fiction**

Bridges, Jerry  
Respectable Sins – Confronting the sins we tolerate

Tauke, Beverly Hubble  
Sins of the Family – Becoming the redemptive generation

Klumpenhower, Gary  
Native Gems for His Crown – A book about our work with the American Indians  
(Recommended by Gary Clousing and Ted DeJong)

Goudzwaard, Bob  
Globalization and the Kingdom of God

Donaldson, Dave  
A Revolution of Compassion

Caudill, David S.  
No Magic Wand – The idealization of science and law

Seerveld, Calvin  
Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves – Alternative steps in understanding art

Schultze, Quentin J.  
Habits of the High-Tech Heart – Living virtuously in the information age

Kwantes, Anne C.  
She Has Done a Beautiful Thing For Me – Portraits of Christian women in Asia

Seebeck, Doug  
My Business, My Mission – Fighting poverty through partnership – Stories from around the world

Duin, Julia  
Quitting Church – Why the faithful are fleeing and what to do about it

Vos, Mirth

Letters to Myself on Dying – A journal of hope, pain & courage  
(Mrs. Vos is the sister of Dr. Joel Nederhood)

### **Fiction**

Austin, Lynn  
Until We Reach Home

Lewis, C.S.  
Til We Have Faces

Snelling, Lauraine  
A Promise for Ellie

### **Junior Books**

dePaola, Tom  
***Tom dePaola's Book of Bible Stories***

## Getting to Know

### **Scott, Emily (Postma) & Jakob Cederlund.**

#### ***By Larry Kendrick***

Scott was born in Chicago and grew up in Palos Heights. For high school, he went to Chicago Christian High School before attending Calvin College.

Emily was born in Toledo Ohio, the youngest of 6 kids (4 boys, 2 girls). I spent my summers at Grace Youth Camp (now Grace Adventures) which my dad help build the cabins and chapel.

Jakob was born in Naperville, IL.

#### *Places we've lived individually or together:*

Scott: Palos Heights, IL., Dekalb, IL. Grand Rapids Mi.

Emily: Toledo, OH., Grand Rapids, Mi.

Together: Bowling Green, OH., Toledo, OH., Downers Grove, IL., Aurora, IL., Bartlett, IL.

#### *How we met:*

We met during Scott's Senior year at Calvin through friends of Scott's, Emily's new roommates. We were married in Toledo, OH in June 1993.

#### *Occupations:*

Scott: Sr. Planogrammer for Ulta Salon, Cosmetics & Fragrance, Inc. Emily: Medical Technologist in Hematology, Chemistry, Immunology, and Infectious Diseases and now a lab supervisor at the global headquarters of a leading manufacturer of lab (hematology) instruments.

#### *Schools we attended:*

Scott: Chicago Christian High School, Calvin College, Roosevelt College.

Emily: Toledo Christian School. Grace Bible College for 1 year then transferred to Calvin College for a BS in Biology and Chemistry, then Bowling Green University in Ohio for a certificate in Medical Technology. Bennedictine University for an MBA.

Jakob: In the fall, Jakob will beginning kindergarten at Sycamore Trails Elementary.

#### *Hobbies:*

Scott: Collecting and writing about comic books.

Emily: Quilting and reading

#### *Favorite TV show:*

Scott: West Wing

Emily: Leverage

Jakob: Ben 10

*Favorite movie:*

Scott: Star Wars

Emily: The Hunt for Red October

Jakob: Toy Story 2

*Favorite book:*

Scott: The Great Gatsby

Emily: Last of the Breed by Louis L'Amour

*Favorite "pig-out" food:*

Scott: Potato Chips

Emily: Brownies

*Favorite vacation:*

Toronto

*Favorite Bible verse:*

Scott: Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...

Emily: Ephesians 2:10: For we are his masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

*How long we've been attending WCRC:*

We've been attending WCRC since May, 2006.

*Favorite thing about WCRC:*

In our time at WCRC, we've greatly enjoyed our time together with so many people. We've always been welcomed at this church.

*Additional things people may not know about us:*

At heart, all three of us are geeks.

## A Brilliant Conversation

*An atheist professor of philosophy was speaking to his class on the problem science has with **GOD, the ALMIGHTY**. He asked one of his new Christian students to stand:*

**Professor:** You are a Christian, aren't you, son ?

**Student:** Yes, sir.

**Professor:** So, you believe in **GOD**?

**Student:** Absolutely, sir.

**Professor:** Is **GOD** good?

**Student:** Sure.

**Professor:** Is **GOD** all - powerful?

**Student:** Yes.

**Professor:** My brother died of cancer even though he prayed to **GOD** to heal him. Most of us would attempt to help others who are ill. But **GOD** didn't. How is this **GOD** good then? Hmm?

*(The student was silent)*

**Professor:** You can't answer, can you? Let's

start again, young fella. Is **GOD** Good?

**Student:** Yes.

**Professor:** Is Satan good?

**Student:** No.

**Professor:** Where does Satan come from?

**Student:** From . . . **GOD** . . .

**Professor:** That's right. Tell me son, is there evil in this world?

**Student:** Yes.

**Professor:** Evil is everywhere, isn't it? And **GOD** did make everything. Correct?

**Student:** Yes.

**Professor:** So who created evil?

*(The student did not answer)*

**Professor:** Is there sickness? immorality? hatred? ugliness? All these terrible things exist in the world, don't they?

**Student:** Yes, sir..

**Professor:** So, who created them?

*(The student had no answer)*

**Professor:** Science says you have 5 senses you use to identify and observe the world around you. Tell me, son, have you ever seen **GOD**?

**Student:** No, sir.

**Professor:** Tell us if you have ever heard your God?

**Student :** No, sir.

**Professor:** Have you ever felt your **GOD**, tasted your **GOD**, smelled your **GOD**? Have you ever had any sensory perception of **GOD** for that matter?

**Student :** No, sir. I'm afraid I haven't.

**Professor:** Yet you still believe in **HIM**?

**Student:** Yes.

**Professor:** According to empirical, testable, demonstrable protocol, science says your **GOD** doesn't exist. What do you say to that, son?

**Student:** Nothing. I only have my **Faith**.

**Professor:** Yes, **Faith**. And that is the problem science has.

**Student:** Professor, is there such a thing as heat?

**Professor:** Yes.

**Student:** And is there such a thing as cold?

**Professor:** Yes.

**Student:** No, sir. There isn't.

*(The Lecture Theatre became very quiet with this turn of events)*

**Student:** Sir, you can have lots of heat, even more heat, superheat, mega heat, white heat, a little heat or no heat. But we don't have anything called cold.

We can hit 458 degrees below zero which is no heat, but we can't go any further after that.

There is no such thing as cold. Cold is only a word we use to describe the absence of heat. We cannot measure cold.

Heat is energy. Cold is not the opposite of heat, sir, just the absence of it.

*(There was pin-drop silence in the lecture theatre )*

**Student:** What about darkness, Professor? Is there such a thing as darkness?

**Professor:** Yes. What is night if there isn't darkness?

**Student:** You're wrong again, sir. Darkness is the absence of something. You can have low light, normal light, bright light, flashing

light . . . but if you have no light constantly, you have nothing and its called darkness, isn't it?

In reality, darkness isn't anything. If it were something, you would be able to make darkness darker, wouldn't you?

**Professor:** So what is the point you are making, young man ?

**Student:** Sir, my point is your philosophical premise is flawed.

**Professor:** Flawed? Can you explain how?

**Student:** Sir, you are working on the premise of duality. You argue there is life and then there is death, a good **GOD** and a bad **GOD**.

You are viewing the concept of **GOD** as something finite, something we can measure.

Sir, science can't even explain a thought. It uses electricity and magnetism, but has never seen, much less fully understood either one.

To view death as the opposite of life is to be ignorant of the fact that death cannot exist as a substantive thing. Death is not the opposite of life: just the absence of it.

Now tell me, Professor, do you teach your students that they evolved from a monkey?

**Professor:** If you are referring to the natural evolutionary process, yes, of course, I do.

**Student:** Have you ever observed evolution with your own eyes, sir?

*(The Professor shook his head with a smile, beginning to realize where the argument was going )*

**Student:** Since no one has ever observed the process of evolution at work and cannot even prove that this process is an on-going endeavor, are you not teaching your opinion, sir? Are you not a Preacher rather than a Scientist?

*(The class was in uproar )*

**Student:** Is there anyone in the Class who has ever seen the Professor's Brain?

*(The class broke out into laughter )*

**Student:** Is there anyone here who has ever heard the Professor's Brain, Felt it, touched or Smelled it?

No one appears to have done so. So, according to the established rules of empirical, stable, demonstrable protocol, Science says that you have no brain, sir. With all due respect, sir, how do we then trust your lectures, sir?

*(The room was silent. The Professor stared at the Student, his face unfathomable)*

**Professor:** I guess you'll have to take them on **Faith**, son.

**Student:** That is it sir . . . Exactly !

The link between man & **GOD** is **FAITH**.

That is all that keeps things alive and moving.

*That student was Albert Einstein.*

**Received over the internet with no validation of accuracy or authenticity.  
Editor**

# Insights and Encounters

**By Matt Baarman**

I believe I subconsciously tried to talk myself out of writing about this topic, but I received a little repeat good news this past week that has encouraged me to try and share anyway. As many of you know, a little over five and half years ago Adam was born and brought into our lives. The very next day while I was trying to get back to the hospital to hang out with my new son, Nancy had already received news that there was something wrong with Adam's heart.

After waiting for test results, our fears were diagnosed as Ventricular Septal Defect (VSD). In a nutshell, there was a hole in Adam's heart between the left and right sides, which was causing inefficient oxygenation of his blood. A lot of children with this defect tend to be under weight as the act of eating is too much exercise and can cause heavy breathing as if they were running in a race.

Notifying family and friends was a mixed bag of emotions. We were proud parents of a beautiful new baby, but we had concerns and very few answers to the hard questions of what was to come. Some of the common expressions were "why", "what does that mean", or "just hang in there". Essentially, our doctors informed us that either the hole would close naturally or Adam would have to have open-heart surgery. The next few months were difficult as we had many visits to specialists at Children's Memorial Hospital. We had to find a way to return to a "normal" routine while we grasped onto the hope the hole would close on its own.

After 16 months of waiting, the hole had not closed; in fact, the hole was causing more damage by pulling in the aortic valve. Although this was difficult news, I relied on knowing God had a plan for Adam; be it the wonderful son he is today or an organ donor for another child in need. I did everything to prepare myself for the

surgery day, from donating blood for Adam's surgery to considering thoughts of losing him.

The morning of the surgery, we arrived at the hospital very early. We were waiting for the doctor to come answer some last minute questions and ultimately get Adam. I thought this would give us a chance to make sure we were okay with the surgery, but instead, Adam was drugged and whipped away quickly.

The next 5 hours would be the longest wait I have ever experienced. I could only image and consider the "what ifs". The feeling of being so close to my son, but so helpless left me greatly separated from Adam. This is the last place I wanted to be, there had to be something I could do to help. The things that keep me sane during this time was reminding myself that God was in control and has a plan for our little man. However, part of me wonders, if this was a routine medical procedure for modern medicine, which produced such a painful event for me, how God must have felt to let man crucify his only Son?

I was so relieved when the doctor finally came to tell us the wonderful news that Adam's surgery went amazingly well. The next 7 days of recovery in the hospital would determine Adam's fate. With the prayers coming in from more places than I knew possible, Adam was recovering at home by the 3rd day. Truly, this was a "Yea God" moment in the Baarman household. In the following months, we would use this experience to help other families prepare and go through similar surgeries with their children. Adam will continue to have checkups periodically throughout his life to ensure the patch does not interfere with the conductivity of his heart. These appointments always bring back my fears that something more could go wrong, but thankfully, he has passed his most recent checkup so I won't have to worry for another three years.

***In November, Adam turns 6 years old. He starts Kindergarten, plays the piano, loves football, and enjoys his new soccer team. Although Adam just thinks of his "mark" as no big deal, I will forever be reminded of God's Goodness by the scar on his chest.***

# Living in Christian Community

By Joseph Kok

Acts 2:42-47

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup>All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup>Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. <sup>46</sup>Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people*

I have been thinking about the characteristics and sense of Christian community both in our church and in general, over the last few months. As I saw the bulletin notice, announcing the deadline for upcoming newsletter contributions, I realized that it would be a good opportunity to explore and write on such things. I have greatly been blessed with great friendships and good experiences, and through reflection, I'm going to look at the framework of these things.

A "sense of community" is defined as a "feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together."<sup>1</sup>

I've been a part of this church since I was six years old, so it has been home for 20 years. Now, years removed from that period of time, I can remember when I was that young, and was one of the children tearing around church. In those days, our church was home because my family all went there together; as well, I had friends there that I didn't see elsewhere.

These days, our church is still my home twenty years later. I've come and gone from here geographically a few times. There's been times even when I did live here, that I didn't always

make a practice of regularly attending. I am led and inspired to believe that our church is my home now due to the fact that "everyone knows my name." Upon further consideration, I have a connection here with the music and worship that is lifted up in God's name. Strong ties and powerful examples surround me that model Jesus Christ creating the greatest aspects of our church community.

The aspects of close & intimate relationships are an honoring thing. Upon facing any problem, community members are surrounded by individuals to whom they can turn for a listening ear and Godly love. I felt like I belonged to something when I heard from members of the WCRC body while away in the Navy. It was good to be reminded that folks were thinking of me while I was away. Some tapped into my love of reading, and sent packages of books out for me to pass the time with. I was able to share widely with others while writing a blog or two of my experiences while I was underway on deployments.

People with warm and inviting greetings upon return -- inquiring of well being, current activities and being generally happy to have your presence again are vital parts of feeling included in the body. The care packages from Young People's are endearing every year and they remind college students and other young people that they are loved and remembered, even when not seen.

I am thankful to have been a part of the Christian community, and especially within our church. Through a generous, interested and caring spirit, I intend to carry this onward as the church continues on and new people are included in the body. I have been blessed greatly in knowing those we have attending from Wheaton College, and I know that they see these things carried out in me.

1. **Chavis, D.M., Hogge, J.H., McMillan, D.W., & Wandersman, A. (1986). *Sense of community through Brunswick's lens: A first look. Journal of Community Psychology, 14(1), 24-40.***

# On Worship

**By Ted DeJong**

The results of the congregational survey which was recently conducted sheds light on some of the perennial problems involving our worship services. When serving on the council in the mid 1980's, I served as the head of the Worship Committee for six years. It was a stressful time with many complaints.

Most of these complaints involved the music and the lack of informality in the services. As a reflection of the times in which we lived, some wanted more contemporary services with less structure and more praise while others insisted we keep the status quo. The services we now experience slowly evolved from the input and experimentation of that time. Reflecting back on these events, it is interesting to note in the recent survey that only 18% of the congregation desires a less formal worship format while still maintaining variety in the service.

Reflecting on the changing patterns of worship have led me to three basic conclusions:

First, we must always remember that Sunday worship services are not primarily about "God and I" but rather about "God and Us". Too many times we view Sunday worship as a private time spent between me and God. Our evaluation of the service is based on "What did I get out of it?" rather than "What did I contribute to it?" Worship services are not about spending private time with God. Worship services, rather, are a time for the worship of God by the whole congregation. Extended times for meditation and reflection are best kept in the privacy of the home or separate place of worship.

Certain elements of the service must be designed so that the individual can have some quiet time for meditation and prayer, but the primary purpose is for worship by all members of the body. Every worshiper contributes in a

different way; some by singing, some by playing an instrument, some by speaking, and some by praying. All believers must identify with others as they give expression to their gifts. Even if I do not always appreciate someone else's particular expression, I must thank God for their expressions and join with them in their praise. Worship services should not be a place of criticism.

Second, we must maintain an atmosphere of reverence. I suggest that this reverence should begin before the service to prepare minds that are ready to listen. Greetings and cordiality should be part of the welcoming process, but visiting should occur after the service rather than before. The atmosphere of reverence should extend to all parts of the service. Many of the interruptions caused by leaving and reentering the sanctuary during the service can distract from the intensity and beauty of the worship experience.

Third, we must have structure. Too much informality leads to a breakdown.

I learned the importance of structure from my work in a science museum. One of our nation's premier science museums for children decided to introduce an entirely new look to encourage increased attendance. Old exhibits were replaced with new ones in an effort to increase interest. The results were disastrous. Long time members with their children were completely disoriented when they found that their favorite exhibits were no longer in place. The museum lost its identity. Children could no longer enjoy the experiences that they looked forward to. The end results were that many of the "people pleasing" exhibits had to be brought back before the museum, once again, reached the comfort level needed by its patrons.

I suggest that the same principle holds true for many other situations, including worship services. A certain level of comfort is needed for worship to occur. Too many changes at one time can disrupt this comfort level. Changes can and should occur, but only at a rate and for reasons that members can accept. I am not suggesting that we cannot change any elements of the service, but I am suggesting that changes that are introduced should not violate a sense of continuity in our patterns of

worship.

***So, I encourage all of us to remember that worship services are not for you and me, they are for us. These services require reverence to allow an intense sense of communication with our Lord. And that structure and some degree of predictability are a necessary part of effective corporate worship.***

# Devilish Correspondence

**By Vern Geurkink**

In a letter to his brother, C. S. Lewis tells how he came up with the idea for The Screwtape Letters. It happened while he was sitting in church one Sunday:

*Before the service was over—one cd. wish these things came more seasonably—I was struck by an idea for a book wh. I think might be both useful and entertaining. It wd. be called “As One Devil to Another” and would consist of letters from an elderly retired devil to a young devil who has just started work on his first “patient.” The idea would be to give all the psychology of temptation from the other point of view. (Letter to Warren Lewis, July 20, 1940)*

Within the year, letters from a certain Screwtape began to appear as a regular feature in The Guardian, a weekly Anglican magazine. A satisfied subscriber, who normally welcomed his copy when it appeared in his mailbox, became increasingly alarmed at the guidance offered in Mr. Screwtape’s letters. Says Lewis: this country clergyman wrote to the editor, canceling his subscription on the ground that “much of the advice given in these letters seemed to him not only erroneous but positively diabolical.” (preface, 1961)

When The Screwtape Letters appeared as a book in 1942, it became an instant best seller and remains one of Lewis’ most popular books. Five years later he appeared on the cover of Time magazine with a devil perched on his shoulder. As an eminent medieval and renaissance scholar who was a noted Oxford professor, Lewis was not thrilled that his greatest fame came from writing a satire about a devil! In an address to students at King’s College in 1944 entitled “The Inner Ring”, Lewis bemoaned this connection:

*Everyone knows what a middle-aged moralist of my type warns his juniors against. He warns them against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.... The Devil, I shall leave strictly alone. The association between him and me in the public mind has already gone quite as deep as I wish: in some quarters it has already reached the level of confusion, if not of identification. (The Weight of Glory, p56)*

In opening a book about devils and temptations that are geared to pave the way to hell one would expect it to be severely grim and serious. But even before he gets to the preface the reader is surprised to find a page with two quotations:

*“The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn.”—Martin Luther*

*“The devil . . . the prowde spirite . . . cannot endure to be mocked.”—Thomas More*

You can almost see the author’s eyes sparkle as he tips us off that he intends “to use satire and mocking ‘to drive out the devil’ and ‘that his best weapons will be humor and ridicule’”. (Devon Brown in C. S. Lewis: An Examined Life, Bruce Edwards, Ed. p178).

***“I have no intention of explaining how the correspondence which I now offer to the public fell into my hands.” That opening line in the preface adds another tip off: this is fiction! And the reader wonders if she is stepping into a novel, a fantasy, a***

**satire, a drama, or what? Well, how about reading it and finding out? In fact, how about reading it together? with me? on Sunday evenings? beginning this Fall? Watch the bulletin for details.**

**And don't forget, Lewis thought it "might be both useful and entertaining."**

# Embrace AIDS Campaign

**By Gordon Andersen**

Last spring, the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) entrusted our Young People's group with \$1,000 to stimulate support of the CRWRC's Embrace AIDS campaign. First the Young People built a prayer booth in Room 200. If you have not seen it or visited it, do so in the next few weeks. Pray for those who suffer from the consequences of HIV/AIDS infections throughout the world.

On May 3, over 100 people showed up for a video in the sanctuary and a sit-down luncheon. In addition we fed the Young People and Young Adults groups, who did set-up, decorating and serving tables, and preparation, cooking and kitchen service/cleanup.

We served a Mali recipe for chicken and onions, a Guam recipe for rice and beans, and a Haiti recipe for cole slaw. Available was room temperature milk and water plus hot tea and sponge cake from the USA.

Thanks to your generosity, we netted over \$1,900 in offerings for CRWRC from that event.

At the meal, we offered "seed money" to anyone who wanted it: \$20 bills each in an envelope with a seed pack attached as symbolic of the concept -- sunflowers, squash, beans, carrots, zinnias, sweet corn, cucumbers, etc. Nineteen packs went out. A sheet went

with each envelope listing a number of suggestions for multiplying the resources.

What means did members use to gain increase with their seed money?

Several made muffins, Rice Krispie treats, cookies, brownies, and cakes for sale or donation to Senior Moments attendees, Wheaton college students, ESL class members, attendees at a school track meet, employees at a workplace cafeteria, and strollers at a suburban garden walk.

One couple bought donuts to entice YP workers to a mulch-spreading work day resulting in a donation; another offered a van ride and admission to the Chicago Botanical Gardens; and another brought the proceeds from the sale of used toys, clothes and books at a local school rummage sale.

Several returned seed money doubled or tripled and more with no comment as to how it was occurred!

In a few cases, donations came in from members who had not gotten any seed money: One who sometimes rents a room donated a portion of the proceeds; another was given some apples and made applesauce and donated some of her sales; and the CARE Committee cleaned a home and was given a check towards the project!

In sum, nearly \$1,700 more came from these participants, bringing the total to CRWRC to \$3,580.54!

Thank you again for your participation and support of our group and CRWRC in this effort. Further, thank you for your support in so many other activities of our group over these many years!

**Be sure to look at the August 2009 issue of *The Banner*. On page 10 is a picture of our group and an article about the Embrace AIDS campaign in the Chicago area.**

# Humor Me

## **Hollybrook Golf Club**

An 80 year old man who had just moved to Hollybrook, was an avid golfer. He went to the golf club for the first time to play, but he was told that there wasn't anybody he could play with because they were already out on the course.

He repeated several times that he really wanted to play. Finally, the Pro said he would play with him and asked how many strokes he wanted for a bet. The 80 year old said, "I really don't need any strokes as I have been playing quite well. The only real problem I have is getting out of sand traps."

And he did play well. Coming to the par four – 18<sup>th</sup> they were all even. The pro had a nice drive and was able to get on the green in two. The old man had a nice drive but his approach shot landed in a sand trap next to the green. Playing from the bunker, he hit a high ball which landed on the green and rolled into the hole! Birdie, match and all the money!

The Pro walked over to the sand trap where his opponent was still standing in the trap. He said, "Nice shot, but I thought you said you have a problem getting out of sand traps?"

"I do," replied the old man. "Please give me a hand,"

## **Actual Calls Received at a Public Golf Course – Amhurst, MA**

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Yes, I need some information. First, is this your correct phone number?

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Yes, I'd like a tee time between 12 o'clock

and noon.  
Staff Between 12 o'clock and noon?  
Caller Yes  
Staff It will be tight but we can squeeze you in.

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Yes, I had a tee time for this afternoon but I'm running late. Can you still get me out early?

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Do you have a twilight rate?  
Staff Yes, it's \$15 after 2 o'clock  
Caller Good, what time does that start?

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Do you have a driving range there?  
Staff Yes.  
Caller How much for a large bucket?  
Staff Four dollars  
Caller Does that include the balls?

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Yes, I would like some information about your golf course.

Staff OK, what would you like to know?  
Caller I don't know, that is why I called.

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller Do you have a driving range there?  
Staff Yes.  
Caller How much for a bucket of large balls?  
Staff Sorry, we are all out of large balls. But we can give you twice as many small balls for the same price.

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
Caller What do you have for tee times tomorrow?  
Staff What time would you like?  
Caller What times do you have?  
Staff What time of the day?  
Caller Anytime  
Staff Morning or afternoon?  
Caller Whenever  
Staff We have 16 times open in the morning and 20 open in the afternoon. Would you like me to read the whole list?

Caller No, I don't think any of those times will work for me.

Staff Golf course, may I help you?  
**Caller Yes, my husband just called me on his cell phone and told me he is on the 15<sup>th</sup> hole. How many more holes does he have to play before he gets to the 18<sup>th</sup> hole.**

# Kids Korner

1. Who poured expensive perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped it off with her hair?  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Who was the woman that Jesus first appeared to after his resurrection?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Who was the woman that received the disciple John to be her son?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who was the woman that had seven demons driven out of her by Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Who was scolded by Jesus for working too hard on preparing dinner?  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Who was Martha's sister? (She also had a brother who died and was brought back to life by Jesus.) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Jonah told the people of what city that their town would be destroyed in 40 days?  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Who challenged the Israelites three times a day for forty days?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Abraham's servant went all the way to Mesopotamia to find a wife for who?  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. What kind of food did Daniel and his friends eat for ten days?  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. When they repented, what kind of clothes did the people of Nineveh put on?  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Who was Queen Esther's cousin?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Look it up

1. John 12:1-3

2. Mark 16:9

3. John 19:25-27

4. Luke 8:2

5. Luke 10:39-40

6. John 11:19-43

7. Jonah 3:4

8. 1 Samuel 17:16

9. Genesis 24:2-10

10. Daniel 1:12

11. Jonah 3:8

12. Esther 2:7

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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, September 13th.

Running Totals		
Sarah Dykstra		24
William Fan	60	
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.**