

**FIRST REFORMED
CHURCH**
keeping



IN TOUCH

December 2008 - January 2009

Glory to God in the highest.



1136 Vansickle Rd N, St. Catharines Ontario L2S 2X3

NEWSLETTER

In Touch is the church newsletter of the First Reformed Church of St. Catharines published bi-monthly.



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ENGAGING A BROKEN WORLD

As I sit in my office writing this article, it is cloudy and raining, the economy is not good, our elected officials in Ottawa can't get along, my sermon's not done yet, and my back is sore. Did you hear that? My back is sore. O, poor pastor. No sympathy

from you eh? You have your problems too you say? I know. So what do we do?

Let's see, besides prayer, and maybe the affect of a good back massage or medication, what will enable us to endure the things we face each day? The word vacation sounds good, but is so temporary. A song like He's Got the Whole World in

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

continued on page 2

YOUTH NEWS	2	CONGREGATIONAL MEETING	3
GROW UP!!!	4	HAPPY 100TH	5
DEVOTIONS	6	THE BELL	8
BIRTHDAY CORNER	9	EET SMAAKELYK	10
REMEMBERING CHRISTMAS	11	WORD SEARCH	13
SENIOR MINISTRY REPORT	14	CHRISTMAS CARDS	16
THE CHILDREN'S WORSHIP CENTRE	17	MISSIONARY'S LETTERS	18
WILLY UPDATE	20	NURSERY SCHEDULE	21

His Hands would minister to me, but I want to know that while God is in control, He also has something to teach me, or a way to bless me, or an experience that will totally reveal His love for me.

Hey that's what Advents about. In advent I am reminded of a perfect plan of God, a plan that involved lousy weather, a poor couple, a really imperfect government, a sermon being brought to life and a sore back (Mary's). And how after that joyous birth, Jesus handled life as He faced the cross. I am pretty sure that Jesus not only know what to do (WWJD?), but He would know Who to trust. Jesus engaged His heavenly Father is His daily routine to know that He would be encouraged and directed. And He faced death.

Well then herein is the answer. Really Advent can be celebrated as a victory party. Jesus has come, He as won the victory over sin, His forgiveness is wrapped up in Christ, and He has entrusted me with faith through the Holy Spirit to live for Him. AMAZING? Yes!

As for the clouds and the rain, well I am dry inside. As for the economy I'll just have to be a little more careful with money. As for the government, Ill pray 'God give wisdom to figure this out'. As for my sermon, it will get done. As for. what was that last thing? O my sore back. It still hurts, but hey when I think about what God has done in my life through Jesus and how others need to hear and see that in me today,

God's grace is amazing and He will engage me by faith even in the troubles of life to share His grace with others.

PASTOR ART

YOUTH NEWS

As we have begun a new school year, we also start a new season of youth, welcoming new students out to our weekly events and bible studies, this year there is a total of eight new young people in our junior youth program. There are many opportunities for youth to get involved within the church, every Sunday Paul Koole and Rich Wubs have a bible study with the senior youth (grades 10-12), while Pastor Art teaches a post graduate class with the juniors (grades 7-9). Wednesday night, Yolanda Koole, along with other various leaders and the senior youth have a time of fellowship and bible study, while Pastor Art and the juniors have Catechism. The youth recently held its second evening worship service on discipleship, which is a project they have been working hard on planning especially on Wednesday nights, they plan to hold an youth service in the evening every 6 weeks or so, a great way for all of the youth to be involved in the different aspects of church life, but also for the congregation to see what the youth has been doing, and support their efforts in Kingdom work.

The youth also participate in social events which happen every Friday night, sometimes the groups are split up, other times the entire youth group is there for a large group event. Some of the events we have recently done as a group are: bowling, gym games night, the great pumpkin scavenger hunt, home-made mini-putt night with the parents, and paintball, all of which were very fun an exciting. Upcoming events include:

November 28th – Fast Food Potluck

December 5th – Senior Youth at Paul & Yolanda's

continued on page 3

December 12th – Parent’s Night Out

December 19th – Youth Christmas Party

December 26th – Junior Youth Movie Night

Some of our junior youth will also have starring roles in this year’s Christmas play, so be sure to come and support our youth and Sunday school programs by coming to see the production of Angel Alert Sunday December 21.

Please check out the youth webpage at: www.frcyouth.com, the youth bulletin board or talk to Yolanda Koole for more information about what the youth is up to and how you can get involved.

YOUNG ADULTS IN COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

Candice Brenneman – Brock University – General Science

Cody Brenneman – Niagara College – Police Foundations

Vailey Crowley – Niagara College - Accounting

Tabithia Fretz – Conestoga College – Nursing

Bill Easby Jr. – Niagara College – Electrical Engineering Technology

Corey Easby – Niagara College – Police Foundations

Chantell Louwse – Child and Youth Studies

Christine Moes – Brock University – Physical Education Movement

Bethany Moes – Brock University – Recreation and Leisure Outdoor

Samantha Schonewille – Algonquin College – Television Broadcasting

Esther Sliedrecht – Redeemer University – English, Social Work and Religion

Jennifer Witteveen – Mowhawk College - Nursing

Comments on the November 20/08 Congregational Meeting

The discussion concerning

Renewal was an example of a refreshing change in congregational meetings especially for me not having been there for 10 years or so. In the past, the time of occasional heated debates has made room for a more relaxed atmosphere. Maybe it has to do with the prosperity of today’s folks. The announcement of an almost \$120,000 kitchen did not create a ripple of financial discussion. When the kitchen will be in place, it will give great potential for community dinners and gatherings (outreach).

We are really blessed, not only as a congregation, but as a country as well. Let’s be grateful that we are so blessed—we think of the almost 1,000,000,000 people having hardly enough to eat. What we see and hear is that women and their children suffer the most; their motherly love and protection brings them to that position. Does that built-in love allow them to respond more fervently to the Lord’s 2nd command to “love our neighbour as ourselves?”

There are many women missionaries who answered the call to bring the Gospel in word and deed to those who have never heard of our Saviour. Is not every Christian called to work with his or her talents in whatever situation that might be, including the capacity of leadership?

- Bill Snoei

This article was written by Mr. Al Nyp for the RCA publication, The Pioneer, in December of 1983. Mr. Nyp preached in our church many times over the years and we include this article to remember and honour him.

GROW UP!!!

How often have you been told to “Grow Up!”?

I guess it’s a common, if not overused, reprimand given by adults to young people. I know it was often directed towards myself some years ago.

Although those two words “grow up” are often used when we are at a loss for some more constructive advice, nevertheless they hold a very deep meaning in the young (and old) Christian’s life.

Once we accept the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible teaches we become “new creations.” And the one thing that is absolutely necessary for the “new creation” to have any meaning is that it **MUST GROW**.

The message in God’s word to you and me is very plain. Jesus changes lives—not just once, but constantly. Being a Christian means constantly changing, as we become more and more “Christ-like.” And this

“growing up” process creates a great many problems it seems.

A young, dedicated Christian came up to me one Sunday morning after a worship service which had obviously touched her deeply. “You know,” she said to me, “I really felt at one time during this morning’s service like shouting ‘Amen’ or ‘Hallelujah.’” When I asked her why she didn’t, she replied, “But people would look at me as if I’m crazy; things like that just aren’t done in our church.”

That is sad! Our very human nature forces us to resist change of any kind and encourages us to fear it in others. It seems that the older we get, the more stubbornly we resist the urgings of the Holy Spirit to “grow up.”

We, in the Reformed Church in Canada, are very traditional in our ways. Our forms of worship are usually set and followed very faithfully—and that’s good. There should be “order” in our worship as Paul teaches. However, when that very “order” in our worship becomes so rigorous that it no longer offers room for growth or spontaneity of praise, I

wonder if it is still so good. I wonder, then, if our tradition does not become a stumbling block in our relationship to God. I wonder if the apparent lack of emotional involvement in our worship isn’t contributing to the lack of witnessing power of our Church.

Lanny Wolfe, a contemporary gospel song writer, wrote a song that I like very much. He writes in the song, “I keep falling in love with Him, over and over again.” Becoming a “new creation” in Christ Jesus means just that, constantly growing in Him and becoming more like Him. It never stops! Each and every experience (emotional or otherwise) brings me closer to being like Him. We should eagerly anticipate every one of those experiences as God’s Spirit leads us into them. But, in order for this to happen, our old (human) nature must first die, so that our new (spiritual) nature can be created fully.

Young people, you may wonder why I’m “sermonizing” so much this month, but I believe very strongly that our strength in growth and outreach in the Reformed Church, as a small part of the Church of Jesus Christ, lies in **YOUR** ability to overcome the resistance to change as dictated by your



continued on page 5

“old nature” and the “old nature” of so many of your elders. It lies in your desire to be bold in serving the Lord. It lies in your ability to serve Him honestly and openly “in spirit and in truth.”

It lies finally in your ability to “Grow Up!” to degrees that some of your parents, elders and church leaders have been afraid to do.

The benefits of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ are uncountable and immeasurable. But they only continue as we continue to “grow up” as Christians to be more and more like Him. When we stop growing, so do the benefits and blessings of that relationship.

So, Young People, in conclusion, I urge you, not to be afraid of change—rather, challenge it with the Bible in your hand. Do not be afraid to grow—rather, strive for it in response to the Holy Spirit’s leading in your life.

In short—GROW UP!

HAPPY 100th!

The Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO), one of Canada's oldest music associations, celebrates its 100th anniversary from October 19, 2008 to July 2, 2009.

Founded in 1909 as the Canadian Guild of Organists, the RCCO has since become a nation-wide, inter-denominational community of professional and amateur organists, church musicians, choral conductors and others sharing an interest in the organ and church music. The RCCO assists its 1150 members across Canada in the development and practice of fine organ and choral performance and sound church musicianship and works to promote these interests in the wider Canadian public.

The College's national office in Toronto publishes Organ Canada/Orgue Canada, furnishing a uniquely Canadian perspective on the College's work and organ-related activities here and abroad. To help celebrate a century of music, the RCCO will publish a history of its activities since 1909. In

addition, a series of articles on various aspects of organ music in Canada will appear in The American Organist magazine.

The Niagara Centre of the RCCO has a membership of 30 with our very own Jeanne teSligte serving as President. One of the events celebrating the RCCO's centennial, was a concert featuring choral and organ works by Niagara composers held on November 23 and, next year, on Sunday, April 26 at 7:30 p.m., Stephen Fraser, who was born and raised in Thorold and who has studied organ at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY and also in Paris, France, will be giving an organ concert at St. Thomas Anglican Church in St. Catharines. Members of the RCCO recently participated in an organ marathon during the city's Open Doors Niagara venture and, as well, participate in Organ Crawls and enjoy other social events.

Celebrating the king of instruments - to the glory of God!

submitted by Jeanne teSligte

STOP FUSSING- KEEP TRUSTING

Hebrews 11: 1-8
"Abrahamwent, even though he did not know where he was going: (v. 8).

There are days when you have to deal with a difficult person or make an important decision or confront the possibility of a serious change in your life and affairs. At these moments you have little idea of where you are going or what you should do once you get there. If anyone enjoins you to "have faith" or "trust in God," this simply doesn't appear to be very appropriate. "Faith is being sure of what (you) hope for or certain of anything as you face the next few hours or days in your life.

This is what the journey of faith is all about; it is facing each day of the year or mile of the journey "even though (you) do not know where (you) are going." God does not tell his children what he is going to do with their lives- or where this day's journey will take them; God only reveals to them who he is. This was enough for Abraham, and he obediently "went, even though he did not know where he was going."

You know how ungracious it would be to interrogate God about your future in those hours when you are nearest to God and he seems

so close to you. Extend those hours to include this day and every day of your life, for God is always this close to you and will continually be with you wherever this journey will take you.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

My loving God, you have been

my gracious Leader on this long journey.

You turn my gripes into gratitude,
my screams of despair into proclamations of joy.

You cancel out my past failures.

You love me even in my weaknesses.

You assure me of life everlasting in that glorious dimension that crowns the conclusion of my earthly pilgrimage.

Rather than fussing about my future,

I ought to explode with praises and spend this life and the next in giving thanks to you.

I can do no less, Lord, than to live each day of the journey to the full.

entrusting myself totally to your mercy,

and demonstrating my joy in loving relationships with your children around me.

You are my hope and salvation.

I commit the remainder of my pilgrimage into your hands, O Lord.

Let me be a daily reflection of your love and glory.

STOP THE WORLD-I WANT TO GET OFF

Mark 1: 14-20 " 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said" (v. 17).

"I want to get off," is the response of despairing and depressed people to the tragic, complex, violent events in their world. The storm warnings are out and people, frustrated and fearful, are running for their lives in search of security or some measure of serenity that will blot out this world's disturbing threats of their wellbeing. Those who are older tend to reach back into the past and try to hang on to forms and traditions. There are those who crawl farther back into the womb of the church and cling desperately to the "horns of the altar" as a sanctuary from life's vicious storms. There are others who latch on to those

movements that feature religious ecstasy, the get-ready-for-heaven gospel, or Christ-is-coming-soon emphasis, in response to the convulsions of this world today.

Jesus' message is not always comfortable, but this is still his message to you in this hour: "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He does not give this earth's human creatures permission to get off this calamitous ball of clay. He invites and commands them to follow him, to serve him and fellow creatures on this world, knowing well the possible consequences of obedience to him.

The strange and wondrous thing is that it is in such obedience, when results in a loving commitment to people, that you discover an out-of-this-world joy and serenity that cannot be eradicated by those tragic, complex, violent events that are exploding all about you.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

I live, my God, in a
churning, conflict-ridden,
revolutionary world.
It is frightening at times,
and my reaction is to
retreat to the sanctuary
of the past where I
assume I can be free

from the everyday
tensions of this life.

I even look to my church where
I hear those great
words about my safety and
security in you.

Forbid, O God, that I run away
from such
crises and conflicts.

You have placed me in the midst
of such
and have commissioned
me to serve you in
just such times as these.

Help me, ungirded with your
grace,
to be filled with your
Spirit and

to find my place to fulfill
my responsibilities
as your child and servant.

Grant to me the courage to put
my reputation, job
income, even my life on
the line
toward the
accomplishment of your
purposes.

May I be faithful to
you in precisely
this kind of
world.

gleaned from TWO
MINUTES WITH
GOD

One Minute to
Listen. One Minute
to Pray.

Preaching should break a
hard heart and mend a broken
one. John Newton who
wrote Amazing Grace.

There is nothing that makes
us love someone so much as
praying for them. William Law

Prayer does not fit us for the
greater work; prayer is the
greater work. Oswald
Chambers

Prayer - the key of the day
and the lock of the night.
Thomas Fuller

By words the mind is winged.
Aristophanes

submitted by Valerie
vanHartingsveldt



THE BELL

I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (John 1:12)
I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
I am united with the Lord(1 Cor. 6:17)
I am bought with a price(1 Cor. 6:19-20)
I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)
I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)
I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt.5:13-14)
I am a member of the body of Christ(1 Cor 12:27)
I am free forever from condemnation (Rom. 8: 1-2)
I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil.3:20)
I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31 -34)
I am a minister of reconciliation for God(2 Cor.5:17-21)
I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)
I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)
I cannot be separated from the love of God(Rom.8:35-39)
I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor.1:21-22)
I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8: 28)
I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)
I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3: 12)
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)
I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15: 1-5)
I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2: 10)
I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). I have been justified (Romans 5:1)
I am God's co-worker (1 Cor.. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship(Eph. 2:10)
I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil 1: 5)
I have been redeemed and forgiven(Col.1:14).I have been adopted as God's child(Eph 1:5)
I belong to God
Do you know
who you are!?



DECEMBER

- 16 Mr. Gerrit Wensink**
- 17 Mrs. Margaret Vos
Mr. John
VanHartingsveldt
Mrs. Jenny Brouwer
- 18 Mr. Scott Daniel
Mr. Michael Botbyl
Bill Easby Jr.
Leah Broekema
- 21 Vailly Crowley
- 22 Mrs. Wendy
Schonewille
Mrs. Sandy
Crowley
- 24 Mr. Doug McLean
- 25 Mr Alfred Dyck
- 27 Mrs. Darlene
Vanderlee
- 28 Owen Schonewille
- 29 Mrs. Bep
Westera**

- 31 Christopher
Peacock
Rachel Schonewille

JANUARY

- 01 Ashley Moes
- 03 Jonathan Brouwer
- 07 Braden
VanSlageren
- 08 Mrs. Sophie
Schonewille
- 11 Mrs. Janet Daniel
- 13 Miss. Sandra
deMol
- 16 Amy Vanderlee
- 19 Mrs. Wendy de
Haan
- 25 Jeffrey Sheppard
- 26 Mr. Bill Sliedrecht
- 29 Mrs. Sharon Snoei
- 30 Mrs. Trudy
Sliedrecht

FEBRUARY

- 01 Jocelyn Hunter
- 04 Mrs. Louise
VanAtte
- 06 Mrs. Mary
Nieuwenhuysen**
- 07 Mr. Bert Dekker**
- 10 Mr. Jan Post
Ashley Schonewille
Danielle Bouw
- 11 Mrs. Aydney deMol
- 12 Mrs. Beerdje
Schalk

- Mr. Robert
Broekema
- 13 Caitlin Brouwer
- 14 Michael Moes
- 17 Mr. John Snoei
- 18 Mr. Nick VanGeest
Mr. Willy Kisongo
Beth Adams
- 21 Mr. Gerrit Moes
Mr. Martin Vuyk
Mrs. Marley
Droppert
- 22 Corinna
BrestvanKempen
Christopher Frazer



** indicates that this person has reached the age of 80 years. A special congratulations to you! If your birthday does not appear on this list, please accept our apologies and our birthday congratulations and call Wendy DeHaan at 905 937 1867. so that your name can be added to our list.

Make your own Christmas Cake!

Applesauce Fruitcake

3 c. all-purpose flour
 2 tsp. baking soda
 1 tsp. baking powder
 ½ tsp. ground cloves
 ½ tsp. nutmeg
 ½ tsp. cinnamon
 ½ tsp. salt
 1 lb. candied cherries
 ½ lb. mixed candied fruit
 ½ lb. candied pineapple
 ¾ c. dates
 1 c. raisins
 1½ c. pecans
 1½ c. walnuts
 ½ c. butter
 1 c. sugar
 2 eggs
 ½ c. grape juice
 1½ c. applesauce

Sift and mix flour, baking soda, baking powder, spices and salt. Cut up fruit and coarsely chop nuts. Mix fruit and nuts. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and beat well. Alternately add dry ingredients and grape juice to creamed mixture, beating well after each addition. Mix in fruit, nuts and applesauce. Pour batter into well-greased pan. Bake at 275 F degrees for about 2 ½ hours. Let sit about 10 minutes in pan. Remove cake and cool thoroughly. Makes one 4" high by 10" round cake or 2 loaf pans. Can be frozen.

submitted by Ricki Bleijerveld

The Unspeakable Gift!

Christmas is the time of year
 We remember those we hold dear,
 Exchanging of gifts between family and friends,
 Restoring of friendships and making amends.
 It all began on that first Christmas morn
 Many years ago when the Christ child was born.
 When God the Father, in His infinite love
 Sent us the "Unspeakable Gift" down from heaven above.
 Jesus came to redeem sinners from eternity in hell,
 And to all kindred and nations this story we must tell.
 His unfathomable love to which nothing can compare,
 Men's broken relationship with God, Jesus came to repair.
 May the peace of Christmas live within our heart.
 God grant that to others we too may this impart!
 And as we celebrate Christmas this year,
 Let us remember that Jesus is always near!
 - Ruth Beltman

Well here it is "Christmas is all around us again". At times my thoughts go back to the Christmas of 1953 which was a very memorable time in my life. In May of that year our family of six immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands. My father had secured a job at a dairy farm on Pelham Rd. The going rate for farm help was \$100 a month, free rent and a daily supply of milk. Soon it became apparent, however, that the monthly salary could not accommodate a growing family so, because of necessity, my mother bravely overcame the language barrier and started cleaning homes for various ladies in the Glenridge area. After all, a dirty floor is a dirty floor no matter what language you speak. Canada was good to us. Dad had been able to buy a

second hand car which, I might add, he promptly deposited in the ditch for lack of driving skills. A second hand washing machine was the next big ticket item to grace our home. Needless to say, luxury items were few and far between for us, and we really appreciated simple things which we now take for granted. For instance the day we purchased a second hand electric fridge it was a big thrill. Mom was constantly making ice cream and we marveled how this was possible. Just when things started to run smoothly, wouldn't you know it winter came upon us. Now, in the immigration manual back in the old country, they never informed us about all that white stuff. But being the hardy immigrant kids we were we braved all these hardships, took my mothers

continued on page 12

Family News

The In Touch Team would like to have a new spot in the "In Touch" to help us all keep... In Touch. We are requesting you to send us your family's news: births, special awards, someone getting a job, an amazing vacation, etc. We hope to use this as a way for us to get to know each other better.

Please put your articles in the In Touch box, or contact one of us about your ideas for articles. Thanks so much.

The In Touch Team.

Welcome to our Family

In 2008, the following have joined with our church family in worshiping and serving our gracious God:

Christina Lenc (Confession of Faith)
Henk and Bep Westra (Reaffirmation)
Vic and Oeke Mueller (Transfer)
William and Dorothy Veenhof (Transfer)
Stephanie Hoogendam (Marriage)
Khemran Ablack (Marriage)
Kevin Laarman (Marriage)
Mark Valstar (Marriage)

In the next issue of In Touch, we hope to provide you with a glimpse of the lives and personalities of our new family members in order to assist you in developing relationships with them.

washing machine lid and had a great time sliding down the hill behind our house.

Of course life was not all fun and games. Every morning this bus would stop at the front of our house, pick up my 2 brothers and myself and cart us off to school. Personally, I found that I excelled at everything except english, which was very difficult because they used that in every subject. But as time went by, and lot of extra effort on the teachers part, we eventually mastered english, how else would I be writing this article. And then before we knew it our first Christmas in Canada was fast approaching. I was really looking forward to the holiday season, until my teacher announced that it would be a good idea if we all brought a gift to school, around \$2.00 and have a random exchange of gifts in our class. I couldn't believe my ears. At the ripe old age of thirteen my financial status was rather shaky. Matter of fact I didn't have a penny to my name. Asking my parents was out of the question. So, here I was, walking to the classroom package-less. Visions of schoolmates laughing at me or maybe....they would even expel me from school. Then a thought

came to me, I'd tell the teacher that I left the gift on the bus by mistake. Even though I was poor I still liked to keep up appearances. Then the moment of truth arrived. The teacher was moving row by row, handing out the gifts, which were on a tray she carried, she got closer and closer. I started to sweat. How could I lie to this nice teacher who always smelled so nice? Finally she was at my desk, and all I could do was shake my head negatively and I barely was able to faintly manage a "no". It did not deter her for she gave me the warmest smile, reached in her skirt pocket and gave me a beautifully wrapped package, as she whispered Merry Christmas. Upon opening it I saw the most beautiful hat and scarf set. In later years, as I look back on the Christmas of 1953, I realize this is what Christmas is all about. We celebrate the birth of baby Jesus, as a gift for each of us, and there are also people who unselfishly are contributing where their heart tells them to.

Wishing all of you a Blessed Christmas
Sincerely, Corrie VanderLely

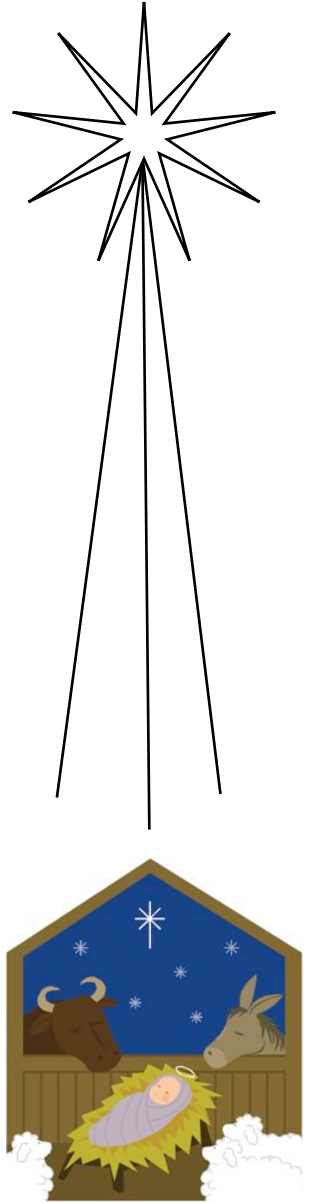
A man and his wife were having an argument about who should brew the coffee each morning. The wife said, "You should do it because you get up first, then we won't have to wait as long to get our coffee." The husband said, "You are in charge of cooking around here and you should do it because that is your job, and I can just wait for my coffee." Wife replies, "No, you should do it, and besides, it is in the Bible that the man should do the coffee." Husband says, "I can't believe that, show me." So his wife fetched the Bible, opened the New Testament, and showed him at the top of several pages it indeed says... HEBREWS.

- submitted by Corrie VanderLely

“Kindness is like snow, it beautifies everything it covers.” – Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Word Search – Unto Us a Child is Given

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



ANGEL
BABY
BEHOLD
BETHLEHEM
CLOTHES
DAVID
ELISABETH
EMANUEL
EXALTED
FAVORED

BAGRIEL
GOOD TIDINGS
GREAT JOY
HOLINESS
HOLY
JESUS
JOSEPH
LORD
MANGER
MARY

NAZARETH
PEACE ON EARTH
RIGHTEOUSNESS
SALVATION
SAVIOUR
SHEPHERD
SWADDLING
THE HOLY GHOST
THE WISE MEN
VIRGIN

Senior Ministry Report

I go to prepare a place for you.

(John 14: 2) Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms, if it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. (John 14: 1-6a) This Scripture was read by the Chaplain Fred VanderBerg in a memorial service at Shalom Manor and Gardens on November 15, 20-08.

Opening words were spoken by Bernice Robson: "All these people (that we remember today) were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. (Heb. 11: 13a). Response from all present: They admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth (Heb. 11: 13b). People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own (Heb. 11:14). Hear our prayer, O Lord... For we dwell with You as aliens, as strangers, as all our ancestors were (Ps. 39: 12). And now, Lord, what do we look for? Our hope is in You (Ps. 39: 7). Those in attendance responded by singing, "Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if You lead me, I cannot stray.

Special music by Shalom Manor staff was followed by Scripture reading. We all read together, "I am not my own but belong, body



and soul, in life and death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ."

A candle of remembering of the 12 loved ones who had passed away was lit by a member of the families present and some words of thankfulness and rememberings were spoken by those who chose to do so. After we sang, "There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son, precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One. Thank you, oh my Father, for giving us your Son and leaving Your Spirit, 'til the work on earth is done."

Closing words were spoken by Alice Hayhoe.

This was a very emotional service and words of encouragement and songs of praise comforted all of us present. A special thank you to the staff of Shalom Manor and the Gardens for giving their time and effort in making this a blessed memorial service.

We thankfully remembered and praised our Lord for the lives of many, especially those from our church: Mr. Willem Nieuwenhuyse, Mr. Jacob Frans and Mrs. Alice Nauta.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Ps. 23).

- submitted by Bill VanDyk

Bookends of Life

*In life we have two bookends,
a beginning and an end.
The things between the pages
show how our lives were spent.*

*The chapters stacked so neatly
are bound at the seams,
Filled with our aspirations,
our failures and our dreams.*

*The many happy chapters
hold sorrow in between.
The valleys and the mountains
are part of life's great scene.*

*It takes a set of book ends
to make one's life complete.
The content comes together
when both the ends do meet.*

*One day upon completion,
our lives will be made whole.
When Jesus reads our memoir,
the mirror to our soul.*

*We cannot change the content,
once written, nevermore.
It's stored amongst God's
archives
upon that golden shore.*

This poem was on a card in loving memory of Jane Brown who was the treasurer of Hope Reformed Church in Orlando, Florida for many years until the age of 95!

Miss Me - But Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me,
I want no rites in a gloom filled room
Why cry for a soul set free?
Miss me a little—but not too long
And not with your head bowed low,
Remember the love that we once shared.
Miss me—But let me go.
For this journey that we all must take,
And each must go along,
It's all a part of the Master's plan,
A step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick of heart,
Go to the friends we know,
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds.
“Miss me—But Let Me Go...”

- submitted by Bill Snoei



Christmas Cards

It's because you're on the list of folks
that I'm indebted to.

I have a list of folks I know,
all written in a book,

And every year at Christmas
time, I go and take a look.

And that is when I realize
that these names are a part,

Not of the book they're
written in but of my very heart.



For I am but a total of the many
folks I've met,

And you happen to be one of
those I prefer not to forget.

And, whether I've known you for
many years or few,

In some way you have had a part of
shaping things I do.

For each name stands for someone who
has crossed my path sometime,

And in that meeting they've become the
"rhythm and the rhyme."

And while it sounds fantastic for me to
make this claim,

I really feel that I'm composed of each
and every name.

And every year, when Christmas comes,
I realize anew

The very best gift life can give is
knowing folks like you.

And may the spirit of Christmas that
forever endures,

Leave its richest blessing in the heart of
you and yours.

And while you may not be aware of any
special link,

Just meeting you has shaped my life,
more than you can think.

For once I've met somebody, the years
cannot erase

The memory of a pleasant word or of a
friendly face.

So, never think my Christmas cards are
just a mere routine

Of names upon a Christmas list,
forgotten in between.

For when I send a Christmas card that is
addressed to you,

- Author unknown

- submitted by Corrie VanderLely



The Children's Worship Centre

Wonderful things are happening each Sunday morning at 10:30 as the boys and girls enter the Worship Centre and prepare to worship God in a special room that has been created for them.

The purpose of the Worship Centre is to provide an environment which allows children to talk and listen to God in a very meaningful setting by following a set order of service each week which will prepare them for worship with the congregation when they are older.

Two adults—a teacher and a greeter are involved each Sunday to guide the boys and girls through the worship program.

The physical setting of the room encompasses shelves on each of the walls of the room which hold baskets or “gold” boxes containing materials for Old Testament stories, New Testament stories, parables and liturgical items. A desert box, Bible corner, Bible story books, individual baskets of art

supplies and floor mats for each child complete the room.

The teacher presents a Bible story each week, using the various materials from the appropriate basket. The children respond to the story by using materials to “re-create” the story or by choosing a variety of art activities. It is a personal time to think about the story. Scripture is read which relates to each story and prayers of thanksgiving and the feast are part of the worship time.

The greeter meets the children at the door, prepares the feast and meets the parents at the end of the session.

The order of worship in the Centre is:

1. Assemble in God's Name (call to worship, greeting, songs)
2. Proclaiming God's Word (stories, wondering questions, response activities, reading Bible)
3. Give Thanks to God (preparation and feast)
4. Go in God's Name (songs, blessing)

Teachers and Greeters involved in the program are: Jolanda Broekema, Janet Daniel, Yolanda Koole, Lois Schonewille, Trudy Sliedrecht and Allison VanSlageren

Many thanks to the members of the congregation

who have donated many hours of time and many of the materials to make the Worship Centre a reality for our young children.

Thank you to the parents who bring their children each week—the attendance has been wonderful. We have been blessed with numbers as high as 22-24 boys and girls.

And thank you to the young children at First Reformed who love and worship God in our special room each Sunday.

Thanks be to God and to God alone be glory.

- submitted by Lois Schonewille



Dear Friends,

Happy Thanksgiving!!!

I hope that you all enjoyed time with family gorging yourself on turkey, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie! I'm very pleased to report that I did the same with my 'family' here! We had 15 adults and 9 kids together for a veritable Thanksgiving feast. While it took more effort (and expense – a 14 lbs. turkey was \$50!), we had all the traditional fixings – I even made my first pumpkin pie! (From a can, don't get too excited, but I did make the crust!) But beyond food, there is a lot to be thankful for in the past year. Last Thanksgiving I had only been in China for 2 months. This year I thank God for how much more comfortable I feel here, for a lot of progress in the language, for relationships developed with foreign and Chinese friends, and for His blessings on my family and friends back home.

Other than Thanksgiving, the major event of the past month has been attending Duffey's wedding. It was my first Chinese wedding, made even more special because it was an old and dear friend. (In a following email I will include a link to photos that will explain more of the wedding process, if you are curious.) Overall it went very well! While I didn't have much chance to talk to the

groom (naturally), I was able to see his family again. I had met them many years ago, but then I wasn't able to speak a word of Chinese. It was really a great feeling to be able to converse with them at least a little this time! I also met four other former students at the wedding, including Wayne and Jerry. While once again we didn't have much chance to talk, I trust that each effort to visit will one day reap eternal rewards! Oh, and Duffey asked me to give a speech at the wedding – in Chinese! With the help of a couple friends here, I think I pulled it off – everyone afterward told me I sounded very Chinese! I was truly honored to be asked.

With this vacation, the holiday and my birthday, I am currently feeling much more relaxed than I was a month ago, a real blessing! I am just as far behind in everything, but now I feel more rested to dive into the Christmas season. We don't know yet what we will do for our Chinese friends this season, so you can ask the Father for wisdom and creativity. And of course it will be busy on top of study and all the normal activity of life, so please continue to pray for energy, wisdom in ordering each day, motivation for study, and discipline to spend quality time with the Father every day.

Enjoy the Christmas season there! It is my favorite time of year back home, so savor it on my behalf! May it be a truly blessed season. I will be remembering you in the rush of the season as well. Grace and peace,

Kim

Praises:

- Rest and refreshment! Holidays, good food, friends, and Christmas season coming up!
- A very good experience attending Duffey's wedding.
- One of my best birthdays ever! Had the day off school, Stacey made me a big surprise brunch, then we spent the rest of the day scrapbooking at home. The following day went out with a big group of girls to an Indian restaurant and then Dairy Queen for dessert!

Requests:

- Ideas and wisdom for celebrating the Christmas season with Chinese friends, particularly non-believers. To make the most of the opportunities Christmas provides.
- Duffey, Wayne, Jerry, and other students I saw at the wedding – pray that the Father work in their hearts and lives, and provide opportunities for me or others to share with them.
- The Thursday night group (which has now changed to Tuesday, so we'll just call it the B study group) decided to intentionally stay small, focusing on believers and helping them grow in their skills to study the Word. Pray for us to have wisdom in what to do in this group, and that the Father would multiply our efforts, equipping and inspiring these Chinese believers to go out and lead

continued on page 19

groups on their own.

- Stacey - as she prepares to go but still has many projects to finish up. Pr especially for this coming Saturday, December 6 as she helps coordinate a craft and bake sale to raise money for the earthquake area.

- Study and other responsibilities – Pr that what needs to get done would continue to be done even in the midst of a busy season.

Pictures: In another email I will send you a link to photos from this Fall, including the wedding and Thanksgiving.

DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY,

Thank you for your prayers!

Praise Points:

- We are feeling more settled and re-adjusted, back into the swing of things here
 - We have been receiving a warm and enthusiastic welcome back from our Ugandan, Indian, Filipino and missionary friends
 - We have been able to connect with the Chinese who are here to build the main road going from Soroti to Lira. Tim has been playing basketball with them on their compound and loving it!
 - The Kingdom Cameras program is off to a great start! A number of the cameras that were donated last winter have been distributed to pastors and ministry workers. Each one of them is extremely grateful as they are using the cameras to earn a living and money for ministry.
 - We now have a location for the much-needed resource center we've been wanting to establish. It should be open by mid-December.
 - The outcome of the Ride for Refugees – over 1,400 riders and \$600,000 raised; of that over 100 rode and raised over \$23,000 for the traumatized children and Karamojong tribe in Uganda!

Prayer Requests:

- For us during this holiday season as it is difficult to be away from family
- For the people coming out tomorrow on vision-trips that their time here may be a great confirmation of what they have sensed God's calling to be:
 - Jim & Margaret – looking into joining our team long-term
 - Lee – looking into returning short-term as a trainer of lay-counselors for traumatized children
 - For those interested and/or planning to come and join our team, that God will bless them in their preparations
 - For Ben, our Ugandan friend, as his cancer has come back full-force in his chest. He is so weak and in so much pain that he can't walk, can't eat, can barely drink, can't sleep. Please pray for God's mercy to prevail in his life.
 - For God to continue to pave the way for the opening of the resource center
 - For the wonderful and likely possibility of having up to 200 traumatized children that have been directly affected by the LRA rebels spiritually counseled at youth camps organized by Fida's Children Associated with Armed Forces (CAAF) program. Pray that God would continue to open and prepare the way.

Love, in Christ,

Tim, Angie, Avalien & Moses

A Star for Christmas

Ontario artist Trisha Romance has created a children's book "that marries the true story of the Nativity with every bit of wonder I had embraced as a child."

A Star for Christmas portrays the life of a carpenter who is building himself a home with no one but a reindeer for company. The richly illustrated story uses the carpenter to reveal a deep faith in Christ.

Romance, a mainstream artist known nationwide for her ability to capture the heart of family on canvas, says her relationship with God began when she was young.

"Ours was a simple, cozy home, rich in love and faith," she says. "When I was four years old, I developed an ulcer on the cornea of my right eye that eventually threatened my sight and had to be cauterized. I believe it was a miracle that saved my sight.

"When the bandages were removed for good, I felt an indescribable sense of light, freedom and happiness. This experience was the beginning of my deep faith, which has remained firmly grounded ever since."

This experience also marked the birth of her artistic career, which has won her three decades of awards as well as the Order of Ontario.

The graduate of Sheridan College resides in Niagara-on-the-Lake. She finds inspiration for her paintings through her three children.

The roots of her new book go back to the early 1980s, she says. She still remembers searching for one like it for her son Nathan, then a toddler.

She also prays this will be the first of many tales to come.

"It is my hope this story will find its way into the hearts of many," she says. "May God be given the glory. As always, it is His hand that moves mine across the page."

- Emily Wierenga

November/December 2007 issue of Faith Today

Willy update:

Willy is currently living in Ottawa, one of the coldest cities of Canada besides Winnipeg. Why would Willy want to live there? In September of this year, he had secured a job in Waterloo at a public grade school teaching grades 7 and 8, french, history and geography.

All was going well; he was even coaching a soccer team, his favourite sport, and winning games! Unfortunately the Ontario Teachers College checked his credentials and said he was not qualified to teach. The school sadly had to let him go. They were quite happy with Willy and the students liked him very much. Willy was very upset by this news and traveled to Ottawa. He was misinformed about the course he took in the summer as he was told that was all that was needed for his teaching certificate. Willy then applied for Ottawa University for the necessary classes and has just been accepted for the January to April term. This has been very frustrating for him, with his endeavour to be a teacher and to support himself. We are encouraging him to look towards the future and continue on.

Below is the address Willy is currently residing. The support and care committee is funding Willy's rent and bus pass. He has a very small furnished bedroom, sharing a bathroom and kitchen in a house in Quebec. He can use his French with his fellow roommates. The bus takes him to the University for his studies. He is anticipating finding a part time job that will work with his school schedule.

Please pray for Willy, that his stay be comfortable (and warm) and that he does well academically.

Pray for Willy's family in the Congo, that they be safe from the turmoil in their country.

Willy Lusanga Kisongo

19 Meilleur Ave.

Gatineau, Quebec

J8Y 5W1

e-mail wkisongo@yahoo.fr

Wendy Schonewille

Care and Support Committee

P.S. if anyone would like to support Willy in other financial ways, eg. tuition (he is a part time student so there is no OSAP), phone cards, etc. please see Wendy or Dave Schonewille

Heart Disease

Read: Zechariah 7: 8-14

Do not harden your hearts. Psalm 95: 8

Pharmaceutical companies make billions of dollars selling drugs that prevent hardening of the arteries, a condition that can lead to heart attacks which kill thousands of people every year.

A more serious condition than hardening of the arteries, however, is hardening of the heart, and it cannot be prevented by any wonder drug. The prophet Zechariah warned the Israelites about it. They had hardened their hearts and refused to listen to the words of the Lord. Symptoms of this deadly condition were their refusal to execute true justice and their failure to show mercy and compassion (Zech. 7: 9). As a result, the Lord became angry and stopped listening to them (v. 13).

While it's important to keep plaque from forming in our arteries, it's even more important to keep our hearts from becoming callous to people who are important to God: widows, orphans, aliens and the poor (v. 10).

It's crucial to follow own doctor's orders to keep our arteries from hardening. But it's even more crucial to obey God to keep our hearts from becoming hardened to the needs of others.

Ask God to bring to mind a person who needs the help of someone with a soft heart.

- Julie Ackerman Link

If I can right a human wrong,
 If I can help to make one strong,
 If I can cheer with smile or song,
 Lord, show me how.

- Kleiser

Nursery Schedule

	9:15 - 10:15		10:15 - 11:45	
4-Jan-08	Yolanda Koole	Gloria Botbyl	Cheryl Prudhomme	Bethann Vanslagaren
11-Jan-08	Allison Vanslageren	Justine Dyck	Brenda VanSlageren	Jessica Botbyl
18-Jan-08	Corinna Visser	Heather Schonewille	Sharon Snoei	Ashely Moes
25-Jan-08	Carol Wubs	Bethann Vanslageren	Jeanette Etherington	Brittany Schoewille
1-Feb-08	Bethany Moes	Katelyn Easby	Evelyn Moes	Adrienne Schoewille
8-Feb-08	Marlene Peacock	Melanie Botbyl	Jeanette Frazer	Marissa Vanderlee