

# REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

## READ YOUR BIBLE!!!

*By Pastor Brian De Jong*

So what did I learn at the Greenville Seminary Theology Conference this year? Was it worth the trip? Would I do it again? Yes, it was worth the trip and I would do it again. And what did I learn? I learned that I should read my Bible.

You might think that a Pastor knows that already, and you'd be right. But how often don't we need to be reminded of the value and importance of reading and studying the Bible! It was the shot in the arm that I needed – I came back encouraged.

The first speaker at this year's conference was Dr. Benjamin Shaw. He spoke on the importance of translating the Bible into common languages, and how that is best done. Next up was Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn, a specialist on the Westminster Assembly. He explained the views of the Westminster Assembly on the Scriptures, and how that comes through in the Confession and Catechisms.

The evening session on Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> featured a young Scot named Dr. David Murray. He spoke from 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1 on the inspiration of the Scriptures. His talk was entitled "Holy Spirit + Holy Men = Holy Bible." He was very practical and quite encouraging about the power of the Bible in our lives.

Wednesday was a full day of conference sessions. Dr. Tony Curto gave an

excellent talk on the "self-authenticating nature of the Bible." This answers the question, "How do we know that the Bible is the actual Word of God?" He spoke with freedom, power, clarity and passion. It was very stirring.

The next speaker was assigned the topic of the modern Roman Catholic view of Scripture. Though not as "juicy" as some of the other topics, this was an important lecture that opened my eyes to the attitudes of the current pope. In the afternoon Dr. James White gave a lecture on Bart Ehrman. When I saw that in the program, I thought to myself,

"Who is Bart Ehrman and who cares?" WRONG!!! It was a very important talk about one of the most popular critics of the Bible in America today.

The evening ended with another sermon by Dr. Murray on "Salvation, Sanctification and Spectacles."

The conference ended with a lecture by Dr. Joey Pipa, the President of Greenville Seminary and another presentation by James White. Dr. Pipa dealt with the value and place of creeds in the church, and how they relate to the Bible.

As a result of the conference, my convictions were encouraged and my batteries recharged. I've taken a fresh delight in reading the Bible, and would strongly encourage each of you to take time every day to read and ponder the Scriptures. They are powerful and will transform your life in very good ways!



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### Mnemonics...

- *Visual Arts Night, 16th*
- *Wednesday Potluck, 21st*

# The Word of God is the Shield of Faith

by John Calvin

To bear these attacks faith arms and fortifies itself with the Word of God. When the temptation suggested is, that God is an enemy because he afflicts, faith replies, that while he afflicts he is merciful, his chastening proceeding more from love than anger. To the thought that God is the avenger of wickedness, it opposes the pardon ready to be bestowed on all offences whenever the sinner retakes himself to the divine mercy. Thus the pious mind, how much soever it may be agitated and torn, at length rises superior to all difficulties, and allows not its confidence in the divine mercy to be destroyed. Nay, rather, the disputes which exercise and disturb it tend to establish this confidence. A proof of this is, that the saints, when the hand of God lies heaviest upon them, still lodge their complaints with him, and continue to invoke him, when to all appearance he is least disposed to hear. But of what use were it to lament before him if they had no hope of solace? They never would invoke him did they not believe that he is ready to assist them. Thus the disciples, while reprimanded by their Master for the weakness of their faith in crying out that they were perishing, still implored his aid, (Matthew 8: 25.) And he, in rebuking them for their want of faith, does not disown them or class them with unbelievers, but urges them to shake off the vice. Therefore, as we have already said, we again maintain, that faith remaining fixed in the believer's breast never can be eradicated from it. However it may seem shaken and bent in this direction or in that, its flame is never so completely quenched as not at least to lurk under the embers. In this way, it appears that the word, which is an incorruptible seed, produces fruit similar to itself. Its germ never withers away utterly and perishes. The saints cannot have a stronger ground for despair than to feel, that, according to present appearances, the hand of God is armed for their destruction; and yet Job thus declares the strength of his confidence: "Though he slay me,

yet will I trust in him." The truth is, that unbelief reigns not in the hearts of believers, but only assails them from without; does not wound them mortally with its darts, but annoys them, or, at the utmost, gives them a wound which can be healed. Faith, as Paul declares, (Eph. 6: 16) is our shield, which receiving these darts, either wards them off entirely, or at least breaks their force, and prevents them from reaching the vitals. Hence when faith is shaken, it is just as when, by the violent blow of a javelin, a soldier standing firm is forced to step back and yield a little; and again when faith is wounded, it is as if the shield were pierced, but not perforated by the blow. The pious mind will always rise, and be able to say with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me," (Psalm 23:4.) Doubtless it is a terrific thing to walk in the darkness of death, and it is impossible for believers, however great their strength may be, not to shudder at it; but since the prevailing thought is that God is present and providing for their safety, the feeling of security overcomes that of fear. As Augustine says, - whatever be the engines which the devil erects against us, as he cannot gain the heart where faith dwells, he is cast out. Thus, if we may judge by the event, not only do believers come off safe from every contest so as to be ready, after a short repose, to descend again into the arena, but the saying of John, in his Epistle, is fulfilled, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," (1 John 5:4.) It is not said that it will be victorious in a single fight, or a few, or some one assault, but that it will be victorious over the whole world, though it should be a thousand times assailed.

*Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book III, Chapter II, Paragraph 21, translation by Henry Beveridge, esq.*

# Spring Presbytery Report

by Pastor Brian De Jong

The Spring 2010 Presbytery meeting was held in Momence, Illinois on March 19. Here is a brief overview of what took place.

The day began for me with a meeting of our Candidates and Credentials Committee in Orland Park. We had routine business to handle, plus preparations for the licensure of Mr. Curtis Moleterno. The meeting concluded by about 5:00 pm, allow my traveling companion Elijah and I enough time to drive down to Kankakee. After checking into our motel, we grabbed a bite of dinner and were at Momence OPC by 7:00 pm.

Each Spring our Christian Education committee sponsors a seminar for the Presbyters who desire to attend. This year the topic was “Application in preaching” by the Rev. Doug Clawson. He gave two talks about the importance of application in sermons. His own perspective is sometimes called “Redemptive-Historical,” although that term means different things to different people. Overall I found his lectures to be agreeable and encouraging.

The next morning Presbytery began at 8:30 am with a sermon by our candidate, Mr. Moleterno. The business moved along briskly through the morning, with our new moderator, Rev. John Hilbelink, doing a very capable job.

After the morning break I began giving the C&C report. We examined and licensed Mr.

Moleterno and then began examining Rev. Steve Rhoda. Rev. Rhoda came to us from the Christian Reformed Church. He was examined on the floor in Theology and did a fine job.

After lunch we heard from several fraternal delegates from the Presbyterian Church in America, the United Reformed Churches and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. We also examined three young men in “faith and life” to bring them under care of the Presbytery.

After the afternoon break, the Foreign Missions Committee gave a very interesting report about new opportunities in missions for our denomination. By dinner time it began to appear that we might finish by the end of the day. That was a happy thought to many in Presbytery, myself included.

My last appearance on the floor came as I gave the report of the Archivist/Historian. I was elected to another two year term in that post. Once again Megan’s hard work made me look good in the eyes of the Presbytery.

By 8:30 pm we had finished all of our business and were free to go home. Rather than sleep in Kankakee, I decided to drive home. Around 1:00 am we pulled in the driveway – tired but glad to have participated in the work of the church of Jesus Christ!




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## Spring Movie Night

Everyone is invited to our Spring Worldview Movie Night, which will be held on Friday, April 9th. We’ll be viewing and discussing “**The Bridge over the River Kwai.**” Bring snacks for sharing. We’ll begin promptly at 7:00 p.m



# April Birthdays



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## SOWING??

Are you ready to start your garden?

Do you need a larger plot of dirt for your seeds?

Rodney Nyhof has agreed to plow up land west of the shed for those interested in gardening on the church property.

All you have to do is let Gail Moody know how much land you desire before plowing time (May 1st). If you need help in gardening, we have lots of experienced gardeners in our assembly!





Grace OPC

# April 2010

*Showing forth the  
excellencies of  
Jesus Christ*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	5 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.</i>	6	7 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	8	9	10
11 Missions Sunday	12 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology, 3:30 p.m.</i>	13 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	14 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	15	16 Visual Arts Night, 7:00 p.m.	17
18	19 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.</i>	20	21 Fellowship Meal, 6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	22	23	24
25 Lord's Supper, (p..m.)	26 Theology, 3:30 p.m.	27	28 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	29	30	

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# Visual Arts Night

- What?** Visual Arts Night  
**When?** Friday, April 16th  
**Time?** 7:00 p.m.  
**Where?** At the church

**Have an artistic work to enter?** Check out last month's issue of Reflections for the article "A Night for the Visual Arts" (also available online at [graceopc@tds.net](mailto:graceopc@tds.net)) for details on how to submit art or craft items and how the evening will go or speak with Pastor Brian.

**Everyone is invited to attend this event!** There will be a short devotional talk about God's creativity and ours, a time for each artist to tell about their work & answer questions, and some refreshments will follow!



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## Donation Needed

Sheboygan County Christian High is excited about the strong interest coming from the Port Washington-Saukville area. There are five students interested in enrolling for the 2010-2011 school year, but are in need of transportation. SCCHS is seeking the donation of a van or cash donations toward purchasing a van for transporting these students. If you have questions or would like to make

a donation, call for more information.

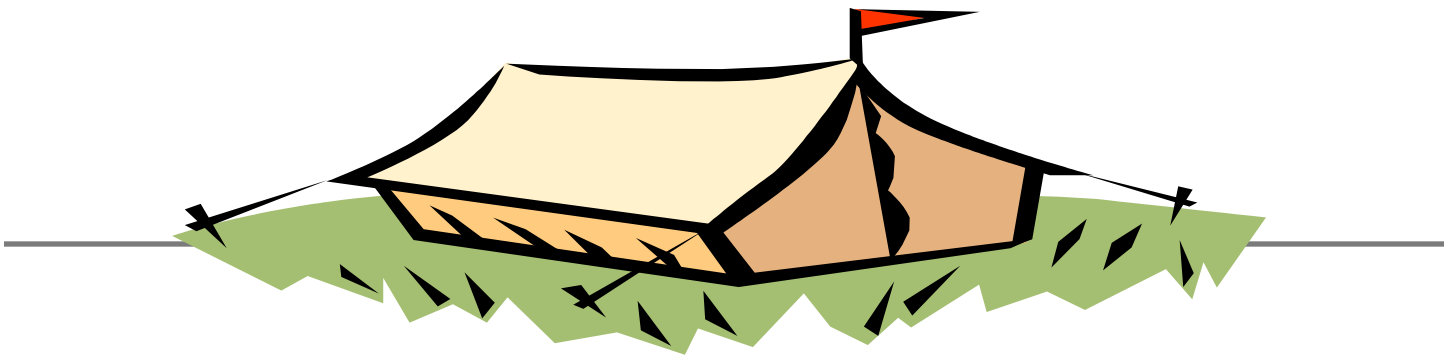


## Camp Calvin

Camp Calvin will be held June 21-26, 2010 at Camp Whitcomb-Mason (W294 N8436 Camp Whitcomb Rd., Harland, WI 53029, (Milwaukee Boy's Club) 30 miles NW of Milwaukee. It is for youth entering grades 4-9 in fall of 2010. For more information, call Jeff Otten

(Camp Director) at 262-783-4632, Steve Potter (Registration) at 414-321-3047, Dewey & Deb Otten (Health Form Details) 262-781-2192 or check out [campcalvin.com](http://campcalvin.com)

Brochures with Health Registration sheets are located on the desk in the fellowship hall.



## Camp Westminster

Camp Westminster will be held August 2nd-6th, 2010 at Green Lake Conference Center (W2511 State Road 23, Green Lake, WI 54941.) Everyone is invited to attend this event. The speaker will be the Rev. Dr. Craig Troxel who will speak on The Lord's Prayer: Praying the Way He Taught Us.

For more information, see the brochures available on the desk in the fellowship hall for registration & payment information as well as detailed schedule & activities. Also visit [glcc.org](http://glcc.org) to see more on Green Lake.



# Library News

*from Phyllis Nyhof*

We received many books as donations and we thank all who donated. We also purchased some books, and they are all ready to be checked out. The childrens books have been moved into the Northeast Sunday School room. They can be checked out in there. The Adult new books will be on the cart in the entry and they can be checked out there.

## **Childrens Books**

Jungle Hideout  
Strike Three!  
Captive Treasure  
Mystery– Pelican Cove  
Treasure– Pelican Cove  
The Daring Rescue of Marion  
Trapped– Bottom of the Sea  
Mystery– Vanishing Present  
Mystery– Tattletale Parrot  
Touchdown Pass  
Elsie Dinsmore  
Elsie’s Girlhood  
Elsie’s Holiday  
McGee & Me– The Big Lie  
Mystery– Gravestone Riddle  
Mountain Born  
SCOUT  
Pelts & Promises  
The Safe Place  
Mighty Mustang  
Mystery– Candy Box  
God Made Me  
What is Love?  
God Made Me Special  
Dinosaur Quest– Diamond Peak  
In the Spring of the Year  
The Mysterious Message  
Midnight Sky  
Footprints in the Barn  
Who, Me?  
Eliz. Gail– Strange Birthday Party  
Eliz. Gail– Mystery-Johnson Farm  
Eliz. Gail– Trouble from the Past

Eliz. Gail– Trouble-Sandhill Ranch  
Eliz. Gail– Teddy Bear Mystery  
Eliz. Gail– The Dangerous Double  
**Lamplighter Books-**  
Three Weavers  
Nobody Loves Me

## **Adults– Study Guides**

Matthew Henry Commentaries– Genesis-Revelations  
Unfashionable (making a difference in the world by being different)  
Celebrating the Sabbath  
Kingdom Prologue  
A Man and His World  
The Root and Branch  
What Jesus Demands from he World  
The Book of Psalms  
Whatever Happened to Biblical Tongues?  
The Call of a World Task  
Prayer– An Adventure with God  
Isaiah  
Holiness– J. C. Ryle  
Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul  
Living for God’s Glory– An introduction to Calvinism  
Genesis, Exodus and Judges in Climatological Context  
The New Absolutes– William Watkins  
Marx & Satan

## **Devotional**

Keep a Quiet Heart  
Twelve Baskets of Crumbs  
The Race



## Library News Concluded...

### **Music**

Joy to the World  
Stories behind the best loved songs of Christmas

### **Biography**

Elisabeth Elliot– Love has a Price Tag  
The Life of Robert Murray M'Cheyne  
Fox's Book of Martyrs  
Martin Luther has a Wife

### **Tapes/Cd's/DVD's**

To You and Your Children– R. C. Sproul  
New Testament– King James Version (Audio)  
The Screwtape Letters– C. S. Lewis (Audio)  
FIREPROOF– DVD  
Darwin's Deadly Legacy– Dr. D. James Kennedy (VCR)  
The Supremacy of Christ in a Postmodern World–  
John Piper/Justin Taylor (Audio)  
Amazing Grace– The History & Theology of Calvinism (DVD)  
Desiring God– Raising Children who Hope in  
the Triumph of God– John Piper (VCR)  
Covenant Baptism– Marked for Life—R. C. Sproul (VCR)

### **Parents**

Already Gone (Why your kids will quit church  
and what you can do to stop it)  
The Christian Baby-sitter's Handbook  
How to Grow a Young Reader  
How to Grow a Young Music Lover  
UPGRADE (10 secrets to the best education  
for your child)  
Child Training Tips  
Gospel-Powered Parenting

### **Christian Church**

The Elders of the Church  
The Rise of Roman Catholic Theology  
Infant Baptism & the Covenant of Grace  
The Gravedigger File– Papers of the  
Subversion of the Modern Church



# Ask the Pastor

by Pastor Brian De Jong

Lynn Baatz recently asked a question which others may also share. I thought this would be of broader interest to the congregation, so here is Lynn's question: "Could you explain how young men are prepared for the ministry?"

The answer to that good question begins with a young man having some interest in the ministry, and some desire to be trained for that purpose. The OPC typically wants its candidates for the ministry to undergo a standard college education to gain a bachelor's degree. That can be done at any institution.

The next step is usually a traditional seminary education lasting for three years. Their course of study should include the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, Old Testament studies, New Testament classes, theology and pastoral ministry classwork. Since preaching is such an important part of pastoral ministry, classes in "homiletics" are required by most institutions.

Some of the seminaries serving the OPC include Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Westminster Theological Seminary in California, Reformed Theological Seminary, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Mid-America Reformed Seminary and Covenant Theological Seminary.

During the early portion of the seminary time, many men "come under care" of the Presbytery of their home church. For instance, a student from Grace Church studying in Greenville would come under the care of our Presbytery.

Coming under care involves an examination of "faith and life" which covers his testimony of faith in Christ, his personal call to ministry and his habits of Christian living. This process establishes a formal relationship between the student and the Presbytery, and allows the student to begin working toward the second step. That second step is licensure.

In order to be licensed, a student must pass exams in English Bible, Greek and Hebrew, Church History, and theology. He must also write a theologi-

cal paper on a topic assigned by the Candidates and Credentials Committee. A theology paper topic might be something like this: "Explain and Defend the Regulative Principle of Worship."

He will also be assigned an "exegetical" paper, where he must translate, analyze and interpret an assigned passage of Scripture. From this he will produce a sermon which will be preached before the Presbytery at his licensure examination.

On the day of his licensure exams, the candidate will take a theology examination on the floor of Presbytery. He will also preach his sermon. His work will then be evaluated and, if he passes, he is "licensed to preach the gospel." He is also eligible to pursue a call to ministry in an OPC congregation.

When he receives a call from an OPC congregation, he goes through another battery of tests for his ordination. These include exams on the Westminster Standards, the OPC Book of Church Order, apologetics and a more in-depth Theology exam. If he passes these, he will then be ordained as a minister of the gospel in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and installed in the congregation that has issued the call.

This work typically takes at least 2 years, although it can expand or contract to meet the needs and abilities of a candidate.

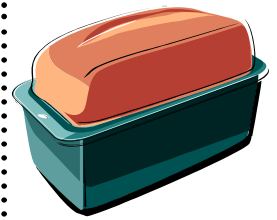
The committee responsible for most of the leg work is the Candidates and Credentials Committee. It is made up of five ministers and three elders. The committee presently includes myself, Rev. Iain Wright (Orland Park), Rev. Bruce Hollister (New Lenox, IL), Rev. Dr. Craig Troxell (Wheaton), Rev. Dr. John Wiers (Quad Cities), John Mazunik (Elder in Cedar Falls, IA), Dr. Steve Werkema (Elder in Wheaton), and Jack Pluister (Elder in Orland Park).

This committee is a time consuming committee that does important work for the Presbytery, although the Presbytery is ultimately responsible for the care, licensing and ordination of men to the ministry. Pray for us as we shepherd men toward ordination and service to the kingdom of Christ!

## Cracked Wheat Bread

- ★ 2 1/4 tsp. active dry yeast
- ★ 1/4 cup warm water
- ★ 3 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- ★ 1/4 cup brown sugar
- ★ 1 Tbsp. butter
- ★ 1/2 Tbsp. salt
- ★ 1 cup boiling water

Soften yeast in 1/4 cup warm water for 10 minutes. Combine 2 cups flour (minus 2 Tbsp.), brown sugar, butter, and salt. Pour boiling water over mixture. Cool to warm. Add softened yeast to wheat mixture and gradually stir in rest of flour to make smooth dough. Knead for 8-10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, cover lightly. Let rise 1 1/2 hours in a warm place. Punch down dough and knead into a loaf. Place dough into a greased pan. Cover lightly and let rise until double in size, about 1 1/2 hours. Bake in preheated 400° oven for 30 minutes. Makes 1 loaf.



“The eyes  
of all look  
to You,  
And You  
give them  
their food in  
due time.  
You open  
Your hand  
And satisfy  
the desire of  
every living  
thing.”

## Call for Recipes!!

Did you bring something to the last Sunday Fellowship Meal? There were so many delicious dishes, we would like to include a page of recipes in the next issue of Reflections! Just e-mail your

recipe to [graceopc@tds.net](mailto:graceopc@tds.net), put it on the secretary's desk or in the mailbox S. Boss.





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

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★ Did you know that John Calvin was converted in 1533?

★ Did you know that he started writing his long, immensely helpful work the Institutes of the Christian Religion while traveling through Europe?

★ Did you know that the first edition was published in 1536 while he was in Basel, France?

★ That that very year he had to flee France because of the war that broke out between King France I of France and Charles the I of Spain?

★ Did you know that he completed the last edition of the work in 1559 in Geneva, just 5 years before his death?

★ Did you know that even in the process of the revision, he suffered, “Last winter when I thought the quartan fever was summoning me to my death, the more the disease pressed upon me the less I spared myself, until I could leave a book behind me that might, in some measure repay the generous invitation of godly men.”

★ That Calvin recognized God’s help in writing, “all truth & sound doctrine proceed from God, I shall in all simplicity dare fearlessly to protest what I think of this work: I shall recognize that it is God’s more than mine...”?

★ That he also urged readers to be good Bereans, “above all, I must urge him to have recourse to Scripture in order to weigh the testimonies that I adduce from it.”

*Quote taken from Calvin: Institutes, edited by John McNeil, translated by Battle, Westminster Press: Philadelphia, pg. 3, 7-8.*

## Wednesday Potluck

On Wednesday, April 21 at 6:00 pm you can enjoy two great things at once. First, we are having a mid-week potluck. Sloppy Joe’s, chips and beverages will be provided. Each family is asked to sign up to bring either a salad or a side or a dessert. Afterward we will enjoy a spiritual feast, as we indulge in the study of God’s word and in prayer. Here is an excellent opportunity to be both physically and spiritually nourished, and to enjoy great fellowship with other Christians. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

