

REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

SCOTLAND THE BRAVE

By Pastor Brian De Jong

There is no more stirring sound than bagpipes playing the unofficial national anthem of Scotland – *Alba an Aigh* in Scottish Gaelic or “Scotland the Brave” in English. Ah, Scotland – the land of kilts and pipes and drums and haggis!

Beyond a foggy sentimentality about “all things Scottish,” we should have a deep gratitude for our spiritual forefathers who lived and died for Christ in Scotland. From the day George Wishart was martyred for his reformed convictions, the story of the Scottish church has been faithfulness in the face of persecution.

John Knox is said to have prayed, “Lord, give me Scotland or I die!” Under Knox’s capable leadership, the Reformation took root and a strong church grew up. More than any other place in the Calvinistic world, Scotland was the home of Presbyterianism. Biblical church government and true worship mattered greatly to the Scottish reformers. The crown rights of King Jesus were foremost in their minds and hearts.

After Knox passed to glory, God raised up James and Andrew Melville. Andrew Melville stoutly resisted the king’s tyranny and the tulchan bishops the king appointed. Those men were bishops in title only, and really worked to covertly advance the king’s program of forcibly converting the Scottish Church to episcopacy. Andrew was so formidable in his resistance that he gained the nickname “Episcopo-mastix” – the “Bishop Scourger.”

In the days of the Westminster As-

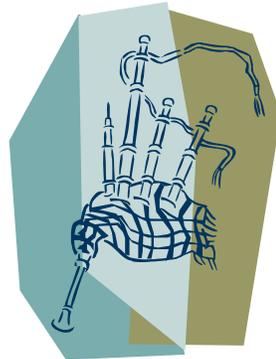
sembly, the Scots were again prominent. George Gillespie, Alexander Henderson, and Samuel Rutherford exerted extraordinary influence on the work of the Assembly. Yet they shared in the sufferings for Christ for their godly faithfulness.

Later still came “the killing times” when Presbyterians were hunted down like animals. If they would recognize the king as the rightful head of the church, they could go free. But if they clung to the conviction that Jesus Christ is the only king and head of his church, they must needs perish. Such fidelity to crown and covenant cost

many a Scottish martyr his or her life. Praise God for Donald Cargill, Richard Cameron and their associates who bravely stood up against government tyranny. They believed in God’s truth and the integrity of His church. So they suffered.

The Scottish Church was brave, yet her story is overlooked. Luther and Calvin get all the headlines, but God did great things in Scotland as well. This is one reason why our Reformation Conference is focusing on Scottish history this year. What better thing could be imagined than to have a Scot talking about Scotland? So Dr. David Murray will shine the spotlight on John Knox’s life and passion.

Let me encourage you in three specific ways as we look ahead to October 26-27. First, PRAY that God would use this conference mightily. Second, plan to attend yourself. Third, look for someone to bring along to the conference. Posters are available to pass to friends, or to post around the community! Let’s get the word out!



Volume 8, Issue 10

October 2013

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Mnemonics...

- *Worldview Movie Night, 11th*
- *Missions Sunday, 13th*
- *Reformation Conference, 26-27th*

A Remedy for Wandering Thoughts

Chapter 7, Sections 7-10

by Richard Steele

SECTION VII

Distractions Affront the Majesty of God

The second effect of distractions is, that they much affront the majesty of God. It was a high affront to God that his people, after they had experience of him, yet in “their hearts they turned back into Egypt.” Acts 7:39. This is the wisdom of a roving heart; come, say they, we like not this presence nor work in our hearts; let us walk into the world again. “But as for them, whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things, I will recompence their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.” Ezek. 11:21. Here one detestable thing offers itself and there another; for every thing that draws the heart from God, its chief good, is therein detestable. Now when “the heart walks after them,” that is the right vein of distractions. Where the heart walks after every trifle, he shall have enough of his ways, saith the Lord. Must the great God wait on a simple worm, till he can be at leisure to speak with him? shall the worst of evils be courted, while the chief good is sighted, and yet even then pretend his service? As if some miserable scullion at the court had made use of great means to possess the king with his low condition, and when the king is come to speak with him, he is sweeping the sink, or scouring the spit, and there lets his prince wait on him to no purpose; may not he justly say, when I come next to meet you, you shall know the difference between the majesty of a king, and the wretchedness of a scuttion. Just so, poor soul, do thou and I obtain leave to approach our heavenly Lord and King, and when he expects the heart earnestly to solicit her great affairs, she is roving away, and bestowed in the kitchen, or worse, while the great and holy God stands waiting to be gracious. What father but would take it for a great indignity to see his son stopping his ears, or whistling, or playing with flies, while he is reading his last will and testament to him, or giving him directions about his greatest affairs? And is not God greater than a father? and can he with his honour abate such a child his punishment, if he do not humbly cry to him for mercy, and study to offend no more? Though divine

vengeance be not always as visible as a parent’s rod, yet it is as real and more heavy.

SECTION VIII

Distractions Hinder the Benefit of Ordinances

The third effect of distractions is, that they hinder the benefits of a holy duty. God seldom thinks of those prayers, that we think not of ourselves. “And there is none that calleth on thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.” Isaiah 64:7. The Lord counts such prayers as none at all, when a man doth not stir up himself to his business.¹ That which in God’s account hath no being, can have no good effect. The benefits of ordinances are many and great; they are like the medium to sensation, as the air to the eye or ear: there is no seeing nor hearing without it; so are ordinances to the soul; they are the conduits to convey God’s grace to us, and cur desires to him; when a dirty distraction gets in, the conduit is stopped and the soul starved. And in this sense God’s name, which should be most sacred and dear to us, is most palpably taken in vain. When we use a great solemnity to no effect; the wind and tide to serve, and yet the soul to sleep; the mariner to be at dice or cards, till the opportunity be lost, what a great evil is this, when our voyage is for life and death? If you could by the expense of one serious hour gain a lordship, would you not be intense and earnest that hour? would you not reject the company that would divert you, and disdain any ordinary business that would interrupt you? stay, and let me alone this hour, for I am busy. Now by the good management of one serious hour in prayer, reading, hearing, or meditation; you may, yea shall infallibly gain at least one grain of grace, which is worth more than a kingdom, yea, than a whole world. And is not that an evil thing, and bitter, that then interrupts you and frustrates your profitable employment, whereby it comes to pass that you get nothing? Pearls are being given, and you get nothing. Orient graces in the hand of God, ready to give, and you obtain none

Wandering Continued...

of them; who would entertain, that can be rid of such companions.

SECTION IX

Distractions Deprive the Soul of its Comfort

The fourth effect of these distractions is, that they deprive the soul of its purest comforts. The highest, truest, and purest joys and comforts, meet the soul in the service of God. "I sat under his shadow with great delight," there are then delights, and great ones too in the ways of God, "and his fruit was sweet to my taste." If thou hast any spiritual taste, his fruit will be sweet to it. "He brought me to the banqueting-house." Cant. 2:3, 4. God's house is his banqueting-house, and every ordinance is a rare feast to the soul that doth spiritually improve it. Now these idle wanderings of the heart, first by their disturbance, then by their guilt, do damp and deprive the soul of the comforts thereof. Just as a black cloud doth hide from you the bright and warming beams of the sun. How often have you missed of those joys of the Holy Ghost, sweeter than the music of the spheres, by these vain thoughts? with what sweet content do you look back on a duty, where communion hath been held between God and you? and what a folly is it to lose an hour, and neither reap pleasure nor profit by it? ²

There is fatness in God's house, and rivers of pleasures with him, but he shall have "leanness in his soul" that gives way to these, and of all those rivers drinks not a drop, not one drop of true comfort and pleasure. O what a heaven do negligent sinners lose? how many gracious smiles, blessed tokens, celestial raptures, the dainty diet of angels, and all through the idleness of the soul! "My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness;" I am full, brimful of joy and comfort, my heart runs over, and "my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips." Psalm 63:5. Now all these gleams of sweet comfort and refreshing, are stolen away by these wicked distractions. For an upright and

attentive heart would seldom want the sweet comforts, that usually accompany sincerity and seriousness. He that can keep his meditations fixed on the right object, his meditation shall be sweet; and where should the Lord make his servants joyful, but in the house of prayer?

SECTION X

Distractions Grieve Away the Holy Ghost

The fifth effect of distractions in the worship of God is, that they grieve away the Holy Ghost. It is true what the blessed apostle hath said, "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities," Rom. 8:26, and so he helps against these when they are but infirmities mourned for and striven against; but when they are contracted

*"Must the
great God
wait on a
simple worm,
til he can be
at leisure to
speak with
him?"*

habits, then they grieve and quench the Holy Spirit. The Greek word in that scripture signifies "to take and heave up a thing over against you," to heave with you. But if our spirits instead of helping shrink away, and heave none, this promise will do us no good. If we leave the business wholly to God's Spirit, without our diligent co-operation, he will leave it to our spirits, without his divine co-operation. The Holy Ghost will dwell only with a holy heart, and these idols in the heart do heavily trouble that sweet Spirit. "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face, should I be inquired of at all

by them?" Ezek. 14:3. Read on, and you will see what consequence this is of. What are worldly and sinful distractions, but idols in the heart? what are abused objects of the eye or ear, but the stumbling-blocks of iniquity before the face? and how can the Holy Spirit dwell in such a soul, or abide such doings? Luther somewhere says that the Holy Ghost dwells not in Babel, but in Salem; that is, delights not in the heart where is nothing but confusion, that is the meaning of Babel, but in the heart where there is quiet, peace, and freedom, that is the meaning of Salem. "In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his..."

Continued on the back page...

October Birthdays



Phone Number

Kate Nagle can be reached at her cell phone for the next two weeks. Her landline will be down temporarily.





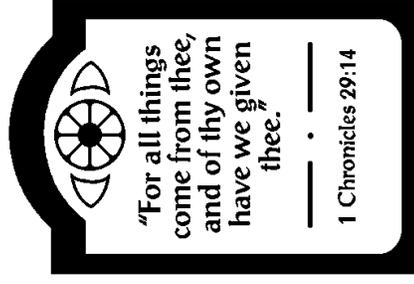
Grace OPC

October 2013

*Showing forth the
excellencies of
Jesus Christ*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	3	4	5
6	7 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	8 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	9 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	10	11 Worldview Movie Night, 7:00 p.m.	12 Presbytery Mtg. in Wheaton, IL
13 Missions Sunday	14 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study,</i> <i>1:30 p.m.</i>	15	16 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	17	18	19
20	21 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	22	23 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	24	25	26 Reformation Conference
27 Lord's Supper (p.m.) <i>Reformation Conference</i>	28 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Pine Haven Study,</i> <i>1:30 p.m.</i>	29	30 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	31		



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Reformation Conference 2013

Saturday, October 26th

9:00 a.m. Session 1 – John Knox's Life: 10 Lessons from the life of John Knox

10:30 a.m. Session 2 – John Knox's Passion: Holy And Spiritual Worship

Sunday, October 27th

9:00 a.m. Luke 24:27—Jesus On Every Page: The Reformed View of the Old Testament

5:00 p.m. Acts 24:16—A Good Conscience: The Engine Room Behind the Reformation

All the sessions will be held at Grace and are free & open to all.

Our speaker this year, David Murray was a pastor in Scotland for 13 years before accepting a call in 2007 to be Professor of Old Testament and Practical Theology in Puritan Reformed Seminary. He is also Pastor of Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church. He is the author of Christians Get Depressed Too, How Sermons Work, and Jesus on Every Page. You can read his blog at HeadHeartHand.org/blog or follow him on Twitter [@davidpmurray](https://twitter.com/davidpmurray).

Meadowview Manor

Come to encourage the residents of Meadowview Manor Nursing Home on Sunday, October 6th at 3:00 p.m. There will be a time for hymn singing and prayer, a message and time afterwards to visit with the residents. Contact Pastor Brian if you have any questions.



Worldview Movie Night

When?

Friday, Oct. 11th at 7:00 p.m.

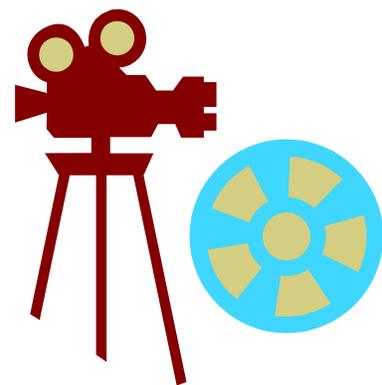
Where?

Grace Church

What?

Watch & discuss the movie “The Life of Pi”

Popcorn will be provided. Feel free to bring a snack to pass!



Comments on Finance

by Joel Moody

General Fund receipts for August totaled \$11,589.54 as compared to the budget of \$13,049.60, while General Fund disbursements for August totaled \$11,381.89. August year to date General Fund receipts totaled \$110,132.85 as compared to the budget of \$110,921.70 (a shortfall of \$788.85), while August year to date disbursements of \$100,385.62 were \$10,536.08 below budget. Through the end of August, the General Fund has increased by \$9,810.71. The increase in the General Fund was due to lower than budgeted disbursements. Year to date General Fund receipts for August were 3.7% above last year's total on an average Sunday while disbursements were 0.2% above the prior year.

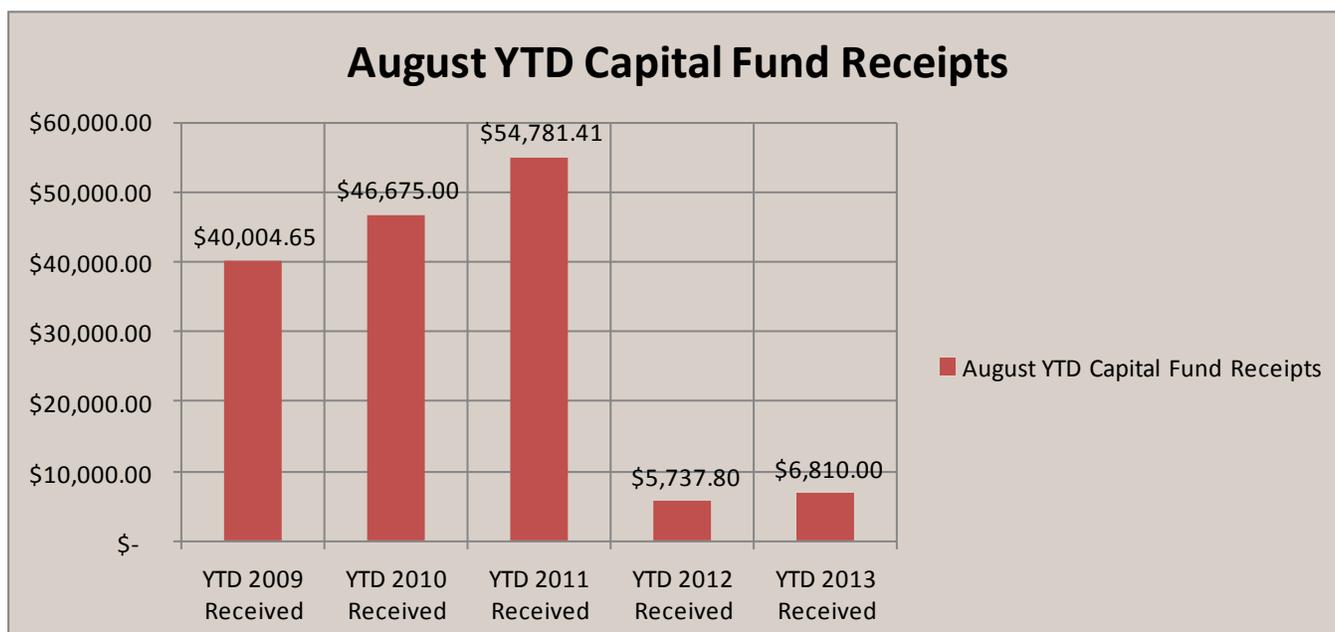
Benevolence Fund Receipts for August totaled \$1,254.50 as compared to the budget of \$1,493.75 (a shortfall of \$239.25). Year to date Benevolence Fund Receipts through August totaled \$11,554.65 and were below budget by \$395.35. Please refer to the graph for a historical trend of benevolence receipts as well as the current benevolence budget.

... August Year to Date giving for the **Capital**

Fund was \$6,810.00. Please refer to the Capital Fund Graph that shows the historical giving for the years indicated in the graph. You may contribute to the Capital Fund by marking your gift as "Capital Fund" and placing it in the offering plate. Please note that the Capital Fund is used to pay for current and future needs that may exist to purchase additional equipment (such as the sound system, tables and chairs, etc.) or building-type items (such as a parking lot, driveway, furnace boiler, etc.). Through August, \$736.74 was disbursed from the Capital Fund. Two Wi-Fi thermostats were purchased for a cost of \$386.97, an office chair for a cost of \$159.99, and a baby changing station for a cost of \$189.78.

August YTD Benevolence Receipts Actual vs. Current Budget





Book Reviews

Submitted by Carla De Master

I discovered a worn out, much loved copy of The Valley of Vision in the church library in Portland and have enjoyed it ever since, getting my own copy and 2 cds of music based on the words. This is a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions. “These prayers are drawn from the largely forgotten deposit of Puritan spiritual exercises, meditations and aspirations. They testify to the richness and color of evangelical thought and language that animated vital piety in an important stream of English religious life.” Wherever you are in your Christian life, there are prayers and devotions in this book that will speak to your soul.

A contemporary, recently published book, Snow on the Tulips, written by Liz Tolsma, daughter of another author, Neil Tolsma, is a historic fiction, based on the Dutch resistance movement in the Netherlands at the end of World War II. It begins with the rescue of the only man in the massacre of 11 by the Nazis. The

danger of aiding this man, the family that works together to aid him, and the subsequent end of the war, all make for an exciting adventure. The way Liz weaves the Christian faith of the main characters so naturally makes it applicable to life today.





Grace Talent Night

Mark your calendars!

On November 16th, we will have the Grace Church Talent Night.

Not just music (although our music talent will be abundant!).
Readings, skits, yodeling, etc. (Speak with Gail Moody to participate)

We will finish the evening with a hymn sing accompanied
by Harlan's daughters!

Come One, Come All!

Deacons' Report

by Jeff Froh

The Lord continues to bless Grace Church and the Diaconal outreach.

Outreach the past 3 months:

- Dental assistance
- Monthly household bill \$ assistance
- Funeral needs
- Financial counseling
-



Current Deacon balance - \$7488.37



“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.”



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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**SERMONAUDIO.COM/
GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Spurgeon

Corner

*“Why sleep ye? Rise & pray lest ye enter into temptation.”
(Luke 22:46)*

When is the Christian most liable to **sleep**? Is it not *when his temporal circumstances are prosperous*? Have you not found it so? When you had daily troubles to take to the throne of grace, were you not more wakeful than you are now? Easy roads make **sleepy** travellers. Another dangerous time is *when all goes pleasantly in spiritual matters*. Christian went not to **sleep** when lions were in the way, or when he was wading through the river, or when fighting with Apollyon, but when he had climbed half way up the Hill Difficulty, and came to a delightful arbour, he sat down, and forthwith fell **asleep**, to his great sorrow and loss. The enchanted ground is a place of balmy breezes, laden with fragrant odours and soft influences, all tending to lull pilgrims to **sleep**. Remember Bunyan’s description: “Then they came to an arbour, warm, and promising much refreshing to the weary pilgrims; for it was finely wrought above head, beautified with greens, and furnished with benches and settles. It had also in it a soft couch, where the weary might lean.” “The arbour was called the Slothful’s Friend, and was made on purpose to allure, if it might be, some of the pilgrims to take up their rest there when weary.” Depend upon it, it is in easy places that men shut their eyes and wander into the dreamy land of forgetfulness. Old Erskine wisely remarked, “I like a roaring devil better than a **sleeping** devil.” There is no temptation half so dangerous as not being tempted. The distressed soul does not **sleep**; it is after we enter into peaceful confidence and full assurance that we are in danger of slumbering. The disciples fell **asleep** after they had seen Jesus transfigured on the mountain top. Take heed, joyous Christian, good frames are near neighbors to temptations: be as happy as you will, only be watchful.



Evening, October 23, Morning & Evening, by C. H. Spurgeon

Wandering Thoughts Concluded

...dwelling-place in Zion.” Psalm 76:2. The unkindness offered is very great; as if you should earnestly importune some noble friend, to accompany and help you in some arduous affair, and he comes to go with you, once and again; and still, when you should come along, and promote your own business, you steal away about some trivial matters, and leave your noble friend in the lurch. This is the very case: you humbly importune the Holy Spirit of God, to help you in the service of God, and he most graciously comes to help you; but one distraction or other charms away your heart; and the Holy Ghost is left alone. And thus he is often sinned against, till at length he is sinned away. In this way often you see the evil of

distractions, which was the seventh point to be handled.

¹ What is the reason that Christians are so much shadows rather than substance, when they come to forgive injuries, depend on God, etc., but because their service of God is more in show than in substance, according to that threaten-

² Thy prayers will tire thee out, for thou hast only the difficult part of duty ; thou crackest the shell, but atest not the kernel ; like one that reads an excellent book, whose sense or language he understands not, which is a great trouble, whereas he that understands both is much delighted. — White.