



# REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

## Heritage

By Pastor Brian De Jong

Having grown up in a Christian Reformed home, church and school, I have a clear sense of my Dutch heritage. That heritage is deeply connected to history – not only my own personal history, but the history of Dutch Reformed Christianity. Having such a heritage contains certain advantages and benefits, although it also has pitfalls connected to it. Boasting in heritage is always out of place.

So what is a “heritage”? In the Old Testament, there are various references to heritage. One instance is Psalm 135:12 “*And He gave their land as a heritage, A heritage to Israel His people.*”

The Hebrew word, *nachalah*, is often translated “inheritance,” but can also be rendered “heritage.” The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised Edition, sorts this out: Heritage is “*that which is passed down to descendants or succeeding generations, distinguished from ‘inheritance’ in that ‘heritage’ frequently refers to things other than property (i.e. traditions) while ‘inheritance’ is used especially of property.*” So the idea is that heritage is the non-material aspects that are passed down – the non-material parts of an inheritance.

So a good name is part of the heritage that I have received. So is the tradition of having pizza for supper on Saturday nights. I did not inherit any actual pizza from my grandparents, but I did inherit a custom and preference for pizza as the most appropriate food to eat on a Saturday evening.

What other things do I include in the heritage I have received? Here are some of the more valuable customs that have been handed down to me:

Attending church on Sunday morning and evening, rain or shine. My parents, and their parents before them, made church attendance a priority. Someone had to be very sick to miss a worship services. That was as true for the evening service as it was for the morning service. Even when we were on vacation, we would seek out some church where we could attend morning and evening worship.

Reading the Bible at mealtimes. Growing up in my parent’s home, we opened each meal with a prayer of thanksgiving for the food we were about to enjoy. After everyone had finished, my dad would break out the Bible and read a portion to us. He sometimes explained and expounded what he had read, and at other times he asked us questions. And he then always closed with prayer. That is just what we did, and anything contrary to that seemed out of place to me.



Prioritizing family times, and extended family gatherings is another part of the heritage I have received. Whenever there were family reunions, we would make plans to attend. If we could meet for a meal with other members of the family, that was bound to happen. Vacations included aunts and uncles sitting around the campfire, roasting marshmallows, listening to campfire stories, or general conversation. Family mattered to my parents and grandparents, so family matters to me too.

Humor, including, but not limited to, puns. They loved to laugh, and to tell jokes and make comments that

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### Mnemonics...

- **7/10 Men’s Lunch Meat is Meat is Meat**
- **7/18-7/22 VBS**
- **7/19 Session Meeting**
- **7/30 Reception/Celebration for Cam and Mae**



www.merf.org

# MERF News

Middle East Reformed Fellowship—“Declaring the Whole Counsel of God”

June 2022



## INDONESIA – Java Island Outreach



Sunday school teacher training at Gunungkidul-Yogyakarta

Indonesia has the world's 4th largest population. It is made up of 1300 different ethnicities in 17,000 islands stretching over 3000 miles along the equator north of Australia. Official figures say that 87% of the more than 275 million confess Islam. The vast majority, however, are nominal Muslims and know very little about their religion. The claim of 11% confessing Christians seems inaccurate in the light of the steady growth of the Indonesian church.

Bahasa Indonesian is the national language, but 737 other languages are spoken. Traditional folkways are strong among all. Indonesia has many young families, over 40% of the population are under 25

years of age. Over 60% live in urban areas.

Half the Indonesians live on Java Island. Javanese language dominates, the second language is Sundanese. The Indonesian capital, Jakarta, is the 2nd largest urban area in the world. Two of the three MERF ministry teams serve on Java Island, one in Jakarta and the other is in Malang (central East Java). The original team serves from Makassar, Sulawesi Island.

Both Java teams have active Bible outreach and training programs both in-person and online. The Jakarta team also shares the gospel via broadcasts in Javanese and Sundanese languages as well as Bahasa

Indonesian.

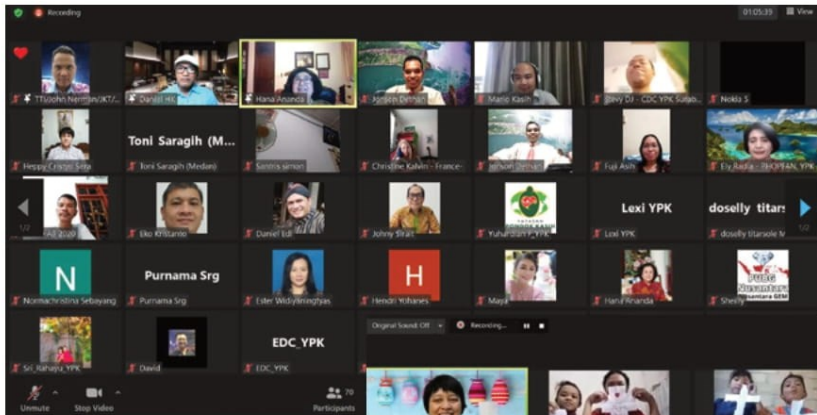
### Online Biblical Training

In God's providence, despite the frustrating disruption and challenges, months of extended COVID measures hindering Bible teaching face-to-face actually resulted in expansion of online activities beyond anything imagined. Before COVID, most activities were in the immediate vicinity with occasional long ministry trips to far areas. Trips provide encouragement to small fellowships and the training of local spiritual leaders. COVID lockdowns and the rise of internet apps, especially

ZOOM meetings, enabled online outreach and biblical training opportunities to greatly multiply overnight. Existing online programs blossomed and new ones were added, targeting a variety of different audiences. Suddenly requests came in from far and wide to join the online biblical training events.

No longer were classroom space, distance or accommodation an issue. Indonesian believers are hungry for God's Word. Even during the COVID restrictions, from the security of their own homes, located miles and miles away, believers and serious seekers have been able to connect. They could receive Bible teaching, ask questions, share and pray together. Previously, it would have been difficult and expensive, if not impossible, for many of the participants to have such opportunities. Finally, now in-person activities are starting up again as the online programs also continue to expand. Praise God!

In **Malang**, Pastor Jonson Dethan's regular livestream Bible teaching become YouTube videos, available at any time. Over 1700 are subscribed to the channel, they come from a variety of religious backgrounds and



Above: Pastor Jonson Dethan teaching online. Right: Online Sunday school Easter celebration

places. Some ask questions or make comments.

In **Jakarta**, Tommy & Elisa Christanto prepare short radio and online audio and video Bible programs in both Bahasa Indonesian and Javanese languages. These are done in a variety of formats. This includes, devotionals, Bible stories with songs & simple related handicrafts, as well as Bible knowledge activities & quizzes. Some are shared on YouTube and others by WhatsApp. Many are designed especially for children. Others target teenagers and some



are for adults. Pastors and Sunday school teachers express appreciation for these online resources to share the gospel and nurture their churches. These have been especially valuable during the extended pandemic restrictions. A regular online Sunday school class for children and prayer meetings continue online. Also, online Sunday school teacher training courses meet a big demand, with participants from all over Indonesia and beyond.

In addition, Sundanese and Sumba speakers serve part-time on the team. A weekly Bible radio program is aired in the Sundanese language. Another is about to be launched in the Sumba language.

*“For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.”*  
— Psalm 62:1-2

**Joint Projects**

It is especially encouraging to see other MERF ministries combining efforts

Arabic team provided recordings sung from the Arabic Psalter to air during the Muslim Ramadan fast. Interest in the Arabic language has provided an opportunity to share beautiful Psalms along with translation to Indonesian.

**In-person Outreach**

As the pandemic subsides, in-person Vacation Bible School events, along with children’s ministry training, distribution of Christian literature and small diaconal aid

projects among the poor are increasing. Some new on-line contacts can now be followed up in person. Prayer is needed for wisdom to balance online and in-person gospel ministry. These ministries bring God’s transforming Word to many Indonesians.

with the Indonesian team to share the gospel. Currently the MERF Augustine Program Coordinator’s 7-minute simplified catechism YouTube series – *The Minister’s Cat* is being translating to Indonesian. Also, this year at the request of Christian radio stations in Indonesia, MERF’s



Tommy & Elisa Christanto visit gospel radio listener community in Central Java mountains

TO get through this world, a man must look about him and even sleep with one eye open; for there are many baits for fishes, many nets for birds, and many traps for men. While foxes are so common, we must not be geese. There is a very great difference in this matter among people of my acquaintance: many see more with one eye than others with two, and many have fine eyes and cannot see a jot. All heads are not sense boxes. Some are so cunning that they suspect everybody, and so live all their lives in miserable fear of their neighbors; others are so simple that every knave takes them in, and makes his penny out of them. One man tried to see through a brick wall and hurts his eyes, while another finds out a hole in it and sees as far as he pleases. Some work at the mouth of a furnace and are never scorched, and others burn their hands at the fire when they only mean to warm them. Now, it is true that no one can give another experience, and we must all pick up wit for ourselves; yet I shall venture to give some of the homely cautions which have served my turn, and perhaps they may be of use to others as they have been to me.

Nobody is more like an honest man than a thorough rogue. When you see a man with a great deal of religion displayed in his shop window, you may depend upon it that he keeps a very small stock of it within. Do not choose your friend by his looks: handsome shoes often pinch the feet. Don't be fond of compliments: remember, "Thank you, pussy, and thank you, pussy," killed the cat. Don't believe in the man who talks most, for mewing cats are seldom good mousers. By no means put yourself in another person's power: if you put your thumb between two grinders, they are very apt to bite. Drink nothing without seeing it; sign nothing without reading it, and make sure that it means no more than it says. Don't go to law unless you have nothing to lose: lawyers' houses are built on fools' heads. In any business, never wade into water where you cannot see the bottom. Put no dependence upon the label of a bag, and count money after your own kin. see the sack opened before you buy what is in it, for he who trades in the dark asks to be cheated. Keep clear of the man who does not value his own character. Beware of everyone who swears: he who would blaspheme his Maker would make no bones of lying or stealing. Beware of no man more than of yourself we carry our worst enemies within us. When a new opinion or doctrine comes before you, do not bite till you know whether it is bread or a stone. Do not be sure that the gingerbread is good because of the gilt on it. Never shout "hello!" till you are quite out of the wood, and don't cry fried fish till they are caught in the net. There's always time enough to boast—wait a little longer. Don't throw away dirty water till you have got clean; keep on scraping the roads till you can get better work: the poorest pay is better than none, and the humblest office is better than being out of employment. Always give up the roads to bulls and madmen, and never fight with a coal heaver or contend with a base character, for they will be sure to blacken you.

"Neither trust nor contend,  
Nor lay wagers, nor lend,  
And you may depend—  
You'll have peace to your ends."

I cannot say quite so much as that old rhyme does, for there's more than that which is needed to give peace, but certainly it will help toward it. Never ride a broken-kneed horse: the trader who has once been a fraudulent bankrupt is not the man for you to deal with. A rickety chair is a dangerous seat. Be shy of people who are overly polite, and don't be too fast with those who are forward and rough. When you suspect a design in anything, be on your guard: set the trap as soon as you smell a rat, but mind that you don't catch your own fingers in it. Have very little to do with a boaster, for his beer is all froth; and though he brags that all his goods and even his copper kettles are gold and silver, you will soon find out that a boaster and a liar are first cousins. Commit all your secrets to no man; trust in God with all your heart, but let your confidence in friends be weighed in the balances of prudence, seeing that men are but men, and all men are frail. Trust not great weights to slender threads. Yet be not evermore suspicious, for suspicion is a cowardly virtue at best. Remember that men are not angels; but they are not devils, and it is too bad to think them so. one thing be sure of, never believe in any priest of any religion: for before a man could be bad enough to pretend to be a priest, he must have hardened his heart and blinded his conscience to the most horrible degree. Our governors imprison gypsies for telling fortunes, and yet they give fat pensions to those vagabonds who deceive the people in much weightier things. "Bad company" said the thief, as he went to the gallows between the hangman and a priest; a very honest speech, and a very true word, though spoken in jest. It is the ignorance of fools which keeps the pot boiling for priests. May God clean this land from the plague of their presence and make men wise enough to see through their crafty devices. Lastly, my advice to all is—remember that good wisdom is that which will turn out to be wise in the end; seek it, friends, and seek it at the hands of the wisest of all teachers, the Lord Jesus. Trust Him, and He will never fail you; be guided by His word, and it will never mislead you; pray in His name, and your requests will be granted. Remember, he that leans on man will find him a broken reed, but he who builds on Christ has a firm foundation. You may follow Jesus with your eyes Shut, if you please; but when others guide you, keep all your eyes open even if you have a dozen and all of them as powerful as telescopes.

**KIDS KORNER** (Also for Kids of any age)

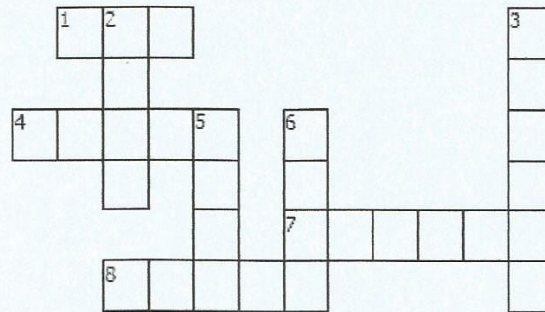
# Noah and the Ark

Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

Genesis 6:22 (NIV)

Based on Genesis 6:9-22; 7:24; 8:14-19 (NIV)

Do you know what kind of lights were on Noah's ark?  
Flood lights!



**ACROSS**

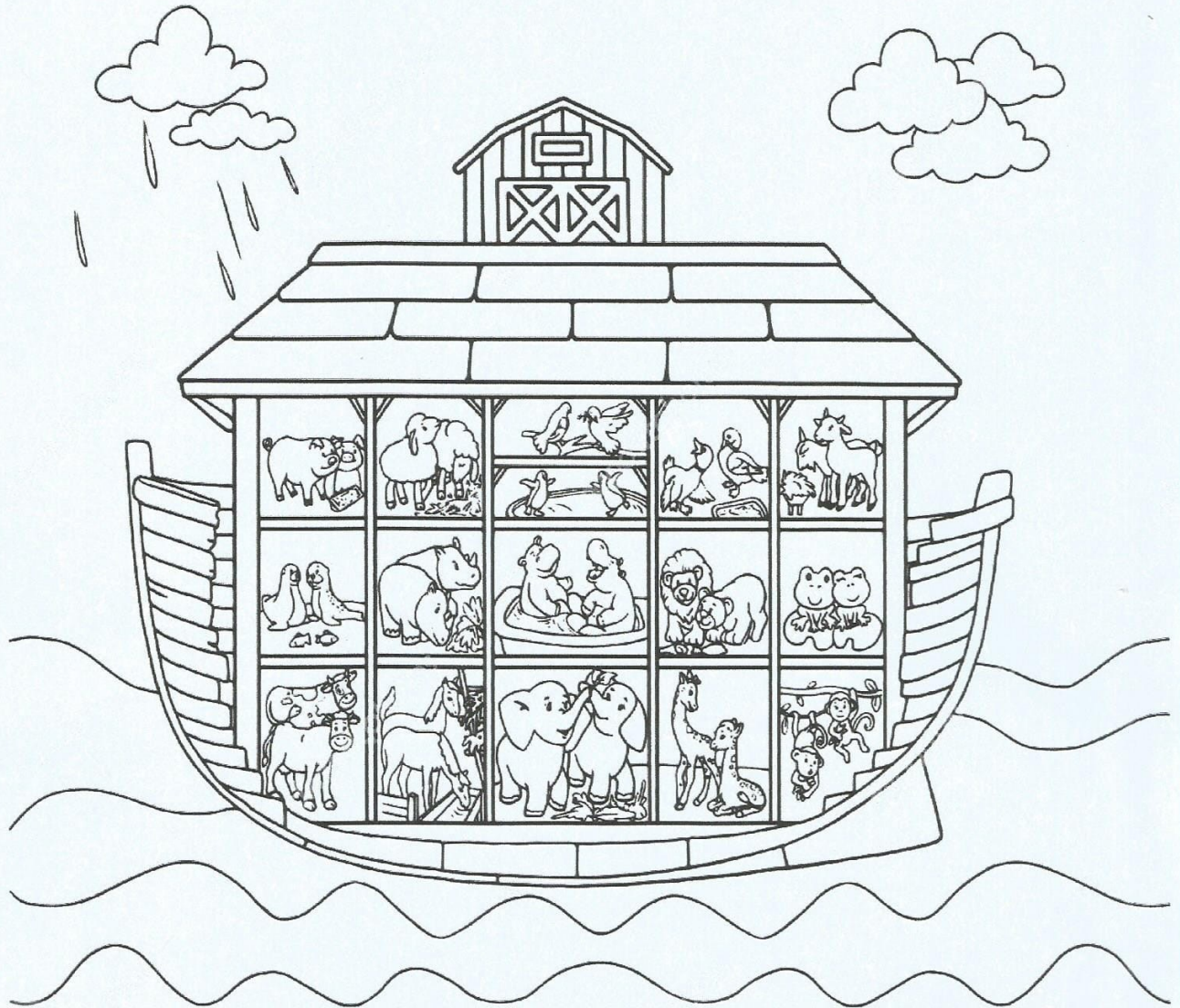
- 1. A large wooden ship built by Noah
- 4. A large amount of water covering an area that is usually dry
- 7. A creature that lives and moves but is not a human
- 8. The third planet in distance from the sun; the planet on which we live

**DOWN**

- 2. The covering that forms the top of a building, vehicle, etc:
- 3. Men, women, and children generally; human beings
- 5. The entrance into something such as a room or building
- 6. A good man chosen by God to build an ark

EARTH	NOAH	DOOR	FLOOD
ARK	ROOF	PEOPLE	ANIMAL

Color a rainbow over Noah's Ark



Answer to last month Crack the Code: For God so Loved the World that He Gave His One and Only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not Perish but have Eternal Life



*Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ*

Grace OPC

# July 2022



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	8	9
10 Men's Lunch Meat is Meat is Meat	11	12	13	14 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	15	16
17	18 VBS	19 VBS Session Meeting	20 VBS	21 VBS	22 VBS	23
24	25	26	27	28 Ladies Bible Study @ 7am	29	30 4:30 pm Reception/ Celebration for Cam & Mae at the De Jong's house. Everyone invited!
31 Lord's Supper						



# July Birthdays

Stephanie Arndt	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Amy Gross	6 <sup>th</sup>
Noah Friberg	7 <sup>th</sup>
Megan Boss	9 <sup>th</sup>
Joel Moody	18 <sup>th</sup>
Brian Wingard	18 <sup>th</sup>
Carl Nyhof	19 <sup>th</sup>
Phyllis Nyhof	24 <sup>th</sup>
Graham Ver Velde	25 <sup>th</sup>



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# July Anniversaries

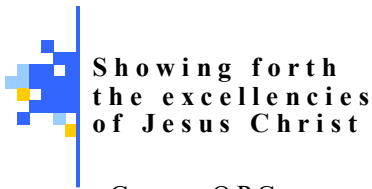
Jim and Arenda Onnink

July 30th 50 Years

Tim and Tammy Voskuil

July 20th 37 Years





Showing forth  
the excellencies  
of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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# Spurgeon Corner

“Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.”

Exodus 14:13

These words contain God’s command to the believer when he is reduced to great straits and brought into extraordinary difficulties. He cannot retreat; he cannot go forward; he is shut up on the right hand and on the left; what is he now to do? The Master’s word to him is, “Stand still.” It will be well for him if at such times he listens only to his Master’s word, for other and evil advisers come with their suggestions. *Despair* whispers, “Lie down and die; give it all up.” But God would have us put on a cheerful courage, and even in our worst times, rejoice in his love and faithfulness. *Cowardice* says, “Retreat; go back to the worldling’s way of action; you cannot play the Christian’s part, it is too difficult. Relinquish your principles.” But, however much Satan may urge this course upon you, you cannot follow it if you are a child of God. His divine fiat has bid thee go from strength to strength, and so thou shalt, and neither death nor hell shall turn thee from thy course. What, if for a while thou art called to stand still, yet this is but to renew thy strength for some greater advance in due time. *Precipitancy* cries, “do something. Stir yourself; to stand still and wait, is sheer idleness.” We *must* be doing something at once—we must do it so we think—instead of looking to the Lord, who will not only do something but will do everything. *Presumption* boasts, “If the sea be before you, march into it and expect a miracle.” But Faith listens neither to *Presumption*, nor to *Despair*, nor to *Cowardice*, nor to *Precipitancy*, but it hears God say, “Stand still,” and immovable as a rock it stands. “*Stand still*,”—keep the posture of an upright man, ready for action, expecting further orders, cheerfully and patiently awaiting the directing voice; and it will not be long ere God shall say to you, as distinctly as Moses said it to the people of Israel, “Go forward.”

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Morning, July 24th, C. H. Spurgeon

evoked laughter from others. Though the De Jongs knew how to be sober and serious, they also knew how to have a good time. Humor was always a part of our gatherings, and so humor has an important place in my life.

And perhaps most of all, a deep commitment to Jesus Christ and to His word, the Bible. Here my father set the tone most clearly. He was devoted to his Savior, and zealous for the honor and glory of Christ in this world. Though faith is not passed down from father to son, because it is a gift of the Holy Spirit to our hearts, yet my father’s faith made a deep impression upon me. The Spirit used my father’s example to shape my faith and mold me into the person I am.

I am thankful to the Lord for the heritage I have received, and the advantages that has afforded to me in life. I am also conscious of the need to pass these benefits to my children and grandchildren, that they may also enjoy these good things.