



# REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

## A Valuable Asset

By Pastor Brian De Jong

As we resume publication of “Reflections,” let’s pause for a moment to consider the important place of a newsletter in the life of our church. Knowing something of its purposes will make it a more useful instrument for our congregation. So, “Why a newsletter?” Here are several “because...”

A church newsletter is valuable because it can stimulate your growth in the grace and increase your knowledge of God your Savior. You’ll soon notice that there is “meat” in this newsletter. These articles of spiritual substance will stretch your understanding and teach you sound doctrine. They will provoke you to love and serve your God in the everyday affairs of your life. You will also find occasional articles of an intensely practical nature – helping you to put off the old man and to put on the new man – Biblical counsel in written form!

“Reflections” is also helpful as an avenue for increased communication. Through the monthly calendar, through occasional reports from the Session, the Deacons and the Trustees, and through the myriad of announcements contained therein, information flows and the congregation stays informed.

A third purpose for our monthly chronicle is to help us know one another more deeply. The monthly biography will fea-

ture the story of one of our members, giving us a better idea of God’s work in each other’s lives. Don’t be surprised to find your self saying, “I never knew that before...”

Closely connected is another reason for making this effort – because it helps



us to remember, to record and to celebrate our life together as a church body. Thanks to our resident photographer we will include visual records of important events. And this brings up yet another benefit – it gives you a venue to employ your gifts and abilities for the edification of everyone. If you have a contribution that you think others might enjoy, submit it to Megan for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Use your gifts so that others might be blessed!

The final purpose – and really THE PURPOSE behind all purposes – is to glorify God. We want a newsletter (and a church) that is pleasing in God’s sight. As we strive to honor Him in our every endeavor, He will pour out His blessings on us. How happy is the church that lives to please the Lord, and to bring Him glory in all things. How happy is the church that basks in the sunshine of God’s face.

Volume 1, Issue 1  
December 2005

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### Mnemonics...

- *Christmas Program, Dec. 18th evening*
- *Session Meeting, Dec. 13th*
- *Men’s Breakfast & Study, Dec. 5th*

## THE HARMONIOUS MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

BY DR. R.B. KUIPER

The church is the body of Christ. He is its Head, and all who believe in Him are its members. The church is glorious because of the resplendent majesty of its Head. It is glorious also because of the beautiful harmony of its members.

### THE IMPERATIVE OF HARMONY

To all outward appearances the church frequently presents a picture of dissension rather than harmony. Nor are such appearances altogether deceiving. As a matter of plain fact, there is at all times considerable disharmony within the visible church.

For that reason Scripture enjoins church members to manifest their harmony "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:2,3). For the same reason, when the apostle Paul was informed that there were parties in the church at Corinth, he wrote to that church: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10).

What accounts for disharmony in the church? Two factors especially. There are always those in the church who are not of it. Inevitably they occasion division. With reference to such members Paul wrote to the Galatians: "I would they were even cut off, which trouble you" (Galatians 5:12). The faithful exercise of discipline is definitely in the interest of harmony within the church. And those who are truly of the church are still at best very poor Christians. The frequent disobedience of the members of the church to its Head drives them apart.

The obvious reason why the members of the human body normally act so harmoniously is that all of them alike obey the head. If only all the members of the body of Christ would obey the Head, who has enjoined them

with all the emphasis at His divine command that they love one another as He has loved them, what harmony the church would display! Instead, church members indulge so often in the twin sins of pride and jealousy. So few of them have learned to "esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). Time and again they must be told to lay aside "all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speaking" (I Peter 2:1). Like the disciples of old, who disputed with one another which of them was greatest in the kingdom of heaven, they need to be reminded of the Master's telling words: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Those who fail to repent of the sin of wanting to be first will not even be last.

### THE SEMBLANCE OF HARMONY

Often the church is harmonious only in outward appearance, not in reality. Then harmony is a mere sham.

That occurs whenever the church forgets or declines to be militant against whatever evil dwells in its midst. There is flagrant sin, let us say, among prominent members of a given church. To combat such sin will unavoidably disturb the peace. The offender is excused with the trite remark that there is not a church member who does not sin. Thus the storm that threatened to break is dissipated. Peace is maintained. But a malignant disease keeps gnawing at the vitals of the church.

Or let us assume that there is controversy in a church on an important doctrine. There are two opposing groups or wings. It is practically a foregone conclusion that many members will refuse to take sides. They pride themselves on striking "the golden mean." Although the doctrine at issue is of such moment that Christianity stands or falls with it, they opine that this particular doctrine is relatively insignificant. Although one side is essentially right

## Kuiper Continued...

and the other essentially wrong, they insist on the obvious fact that neither is infallible. They are certain to condemn both sides for the "bitterness" that mars their debate, and often they have a point here; but they forget that they themselves are guilty of the heinous sin of doctrinal indifference. They boast of their zeal for the church's peace, but the sad fact is that they are working overtime for its destruction. Middle-of-the-road pacifism in significant doctrinal controversy has ruined many a church.

The prophet Zechariah exhorted the Jews of his day: "Love the truth and peace" (Zechariah 8:19). He did not urge them to seek peace at the expense of truth, for he realized that peace purchased at that price is not really peace at all. No, he regarded truth as an absolute prerequisite of peace that is truly peace. He also knew that the way of truth is the *sure* road to peace.

### THE REALITY OF HARMONY

There is much disharmony within the church. There is also a great deal of simulated harmony. These are sad facts. But they do not alter the truth that the church of Jesus Christ is characterized by a very real harmony.

The book of Acts paints a beautiful picture of the early church at Jerusalem: "All that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:44-47). Although the New Testament nowhere commands other churches to imitate the "communism" of the Jerusalem church, every true church of Christ is characterized by a goodly measure of the same harmony, for the same Spirit indwells it.

Shortly a difficulty arose in the church at

Jerusalem. The Grecians murmured against the Hebrews because, as they supposed, their widows were neglected in the daily ministration (Acts 6:1). It was then that under the guidance of the apostles a new office was established in the church. It was the deaconate, the office of mercy. It is a permanent office in which throughout the centuries the love of the members of the church for one another, particularly for the poor and needy, comes to tangible expression.

In the same letter in which he berated the Corinthian Christians for divisions among them, the apostle Paul strongly stressed the truth that believers are members of one body. And not only did he exhort them to behave toward one another as members of the same body should, he also declared boldly that in essence harmonious cooperation of the members of the church is as much a fact as is the harmonious cooperation of the members of the human body. The church *is* the body of Christ. Believers *are* the members of that body. They *are* controlled by one Head. Therefore they *do* act harmoniously. All that is plainly implied in the assertion: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13).

The harmony that prevails among the members of Christ's body is made to stand out strikingly in relation to their diversity. Harmony presupposes diversity. When identical voices sing identical notes, no one thinks of harmony. But when different voices singing different notes blend with one another, the product is harmony. If the human body consisted of several parts, all of the same size and shape, harmony would be out of the question. Now that it consists of many widely differing members, all aiding one another, the quality of harmony is outstanding. There is much diversity among the members of Christ's church. Some have five talents, others but one. Some have attractive characters, others are relatively unattractive. Some are leaders, others followers. Some are rich, others poor. Some are highly educated, others unlearned. Some are



## Kuiper Concluded...

strong in the faith, others weak. But each needs all the others. They complement one another. They cooperate with each other. Collectively they constitute one body. And all are bound together by the greatest of Christian virtues -love.

That is harmony indeed. And such harmony is of the essence of the church. Where it is wanting there is no Christian church. It is found in every true church. For the church is undeniably the body of Christ.

*This excerpt is taken from Dr. R.B. Kuiper's classic work, The Glorious Body of Christ. This book was originally published by Eerdmans, and is now reprinted by Banner of Truth.*

"Whoever seek the world to be their bed, shall at best find it short & ill-made, & a stone under their side to hold them waking, rather than a soft pillow to sleep upon."  
*Samuel Rutherford*

The Letters of Samuel Rutherford by  
Frank Gaebeléin

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## December Birthdays



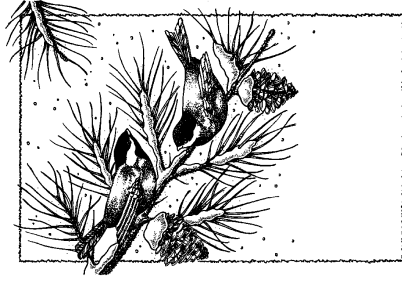
Enjoying the food & fellowship at the Harvest Home Dinner.



Grace OPC

# December 2005

*Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ*



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Men's Breakfast & Study 7:30 a.m.
4	5 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	6 Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	7 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	8	9	0
11 Missions Sunday	12 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	13 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.	14 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	15	16	17
18 Christmas Program p.m.	19 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	20	21 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	22	23	24
25 The Lord's Supper	26 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	27 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.	28 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.	29	30	31



# Orthodox Presbyterian Mission Works

*Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa*



**Pastor Kim & Barbara Kuhfuss**  
Roberts, WI



**Pastor Roger & Beverly Gibbons**  
Brainerd & St. Paul, MN



**Pastor Todd & Julie Wagonmaker**  
Houghton, MI



**Pastor Stephen & Lisa Oharek & Family**  
Cedar Falls, IA

There are prayer sheets to help you pray for missionaries in your area. Please pick one up by the mailboxes.

## Women's Presbyterial of the Midwest

### Saturday, September 24, 2005 "God is Planting"

I had the privilege of being the representative from Grace OPC at the Women's Presbyterial, held in Cedar Falls, IA. Covenant OPC has a new facility, supplied by the Lord; that is very beautiful and very adequate for growth. The women there were very gracious in their hospitality and eager to have guests.

Pastor James Bosgraf and Jack deTroye were the speakers for the day, telling about the mission works in the presbytery and in Haiti, where Jack and a crew of 7 went to build housing for mission teams to use in assisting the ministry. Special music was the Cono Girls Group from Cono Christian School in Walker, IA. It was a special treat to hear these girls sing the praises of our great God.

In the business meeting, the constitution was presented for approval. This has to be done at the next Presbyterial and introduced at this one. Also the money that was collected from this group of 30-35 ladies was \$921.24. It was approved to give \$50 to each speaker, \$100 to Cono Christian School and \$700 to the work in DeKalb, reported on by Jim Bosgraf Rosemary LeMa-

hieu, president, officiated at the meeting and the day. LuAnn Lee will be president, Barbara Johnson, vice president, and Martha Acker, secretary treasurer.

The best news! Presbyterial will be held in Oostburg next year September 23, 2006. Plan now to attend.

Ivan and I had the additional privilege of staying with Pastor Stephen Oharek and Lisa and their 3 children and being at their worship service on Sunday. They are very hospitable and gracious and lots of fun. The worship service and Sunday school were a blessing to us, as well as the potluck dinner which they have EVERY week. We got to Reedsburg to worship with Christian McSchaffrey and his congregation at night. We are trying to visit all the churches in the presbytery on retirement.

Prayer requests for all the churches who responded are available in the church foyer.

*Carla DeMaster*



The trustees working hard on the church grounds.

Digging up the ground with big equipment.

## *Let Me Be A Woman*

*Report by Samantha J. De Jong*

What does it mean to be a woman of God? Am I doing all that He requires of me as His daughter? In Let Me Be A Woman, Elisabeth Elliot answers these important questions, giving her sisters in Christ a Biblical philosophy of femininity. "The fact that I am a woman does not make me a different kind of Christian," she states, "But the fact that I am a Christian does make me a different kind of woman." In this book, Elliot discusses how a Christian lady's faith should shape her behavior.

Foundational to every woman's life should be the recognition that being a creature of God obligates us to obey His commands. The complete submission we owe

Him involves denying our will, exercising self-discipline, and cultivating humility. A woman's obedience to God finds ultimate expression in submission to her husband. "It is the will of God that woman be subordinate to man in marriage," Elliot says. "No effort to keep up with the times, to conform to modern social movements or personality cults authorizes us to invert this order. Tremendous heavenly truths are set forth in a wife's subjection to her husband, and the use of this metaphor in the Bible cannot be accidental." Self-control and submission to God and her husband should be defining characteristics of every Christian woman's life.

## **A Remarkable Puzzle—** *Test Your Bible Skills*

*Submitted by Antoinette De Master*

Can you find the names of 25 books of the Bible in this paragraph? This is a most remarkable puzzle. Someone found it in the seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping himself occupied for hours. One man from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Roy Clark studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Vicks mentioned it in her column once. Once a woman judges the job to be so involving, she brews a cut of tea to help calm her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot...that's a fact. Some people will soon find themselves in a jam, especially

since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. The truth is, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have. Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have been shown. One revelation may help, books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. And punctuation or spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete. Remember, there are 25 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph.



# Lona Tupper, continued...

## HOLIDAY BARS

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup powdered sugar

1 cup butter

Mix and press in the bottom of a greased 9" X 13" cake pan.

1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk

Spread over above crust & top with:

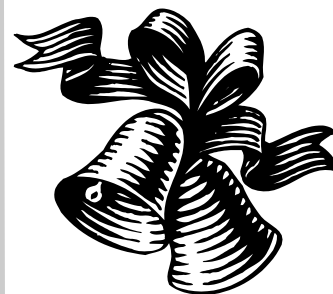
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups coconut

1 12 oz. bag chocolate chips

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup maraschino cherries, cut in half

Bake at 325 degrees for 20 minutes or until coconut is a light to medium brown.

*Deb Arndt*



“There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen, that it is from the hand of God. For who can have enjoyment without Him?”



**Proclaiming the  
Excellencies of our  
Lord Jesus Christ.**

The Monthly Newsletter  
of Grace OPC

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CHECK OUT THE WEBPAGE:  
[WWW.ALL-OF-GRACE.ORG](http://WWW.ALL-OF-GRACE.ORG)

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## Getting to know... Lona Tupper

*Written by Harlan Harmelink*

### **Did You Know...**

- ★ *That the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was founded on June 11, 1936?*
- ★ *That the denomination was originally called “The Presbyterian Church of America”, but that the PCUSA successfully sued to force a name change?*
- ★ *That the judge in the case required the new denomination to include an adjective in its name to clearly distinguish it from the PCUSA, and the adjective “Orthodox” was chosen?*
- ★ *That the leader of this new denomination was Dr. J. Gresham Machen, a professor at Princeton Seminary?*
- ★ *That 148th General Assembly of the PCUSA found Dr. Machen and others guilty of “disloyalty” and ordered him suspended from the ministry?*
- ★ *That Dr. Machen moderated the 1st General Assembly of the OPC, which had 34 minister and 17 elders?*
- ★ *That in the early years, the OPC internally debated over Arminianism, Dispensational Premillennialism, and abstinence from alcohol?*

*continued on p. 9*