

REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

THE CERTAIN THING

By Pastor Brian De Jong

It is beyond dispute that God’s angels do not lie. Therefore we can take as true the message they brought to despised shepherds on the hills surrounding Bethlehem. For when they appeared, their chief spokesmen told these men “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all people, for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

The truth of that pronouncement was discovered shortly thereafter, and has been rediscovered by countless others for over 2000 years. The shepherds did indeed find the sign – a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. But they discovered something more – they found a Savior who is Christ the Lord. And in that blessed discovery of the incarnate Son of God, they encountered God’s salvation. Their sins forgiven and their fears banished, these men rejoiced greatly in this good news – they exulted in God their Savior. He had been given for them, and they had received Him.

This great announcement was not exclusive to those ancient shepherds, though. The angel explicitly said that this good news of great joy will be “for all people.” Every human being of every time and place is included in this joyous pronouncement. The gospel is for all men everywhere. And that means that you and I today can experience the same freedom from fear that the shep-

herds enjoyed. We today can see the Savior of the world who is the Christ of God, and the Lord of heaven and earth. Though we do not see Him with our physical eyes, we can see Him by faith –



with the eyes of our hearts. And as we look unto Jesus, that surpassing joy begins to steal over our hearts as we realize that our sins are forgiven by His blood, and we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

As if to add the “Amen,” the multitude of the heavenly warriors praised God and said, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”

For when God calls anyone into fellowship with His Son, that person begins enjoying the Shalom of God. And in this transformation, the Most High God is certainly glorified.

In a season of the year when the name of Christ is cheapened and abused for material gain, it behooves us as believers to refresh our enjoyment of Christ the Lord. The Son of God came to earth to free us from the dominion of darkness, and to bring us into His own glorious kingdom of light and truth. He came for you, and for me, and for all who would receive Him – though many did not then, and do not today. May God be glorified and may your peace increase as you embrace ever more tightly Christ your Lord!

Volume 2, Issue 12

December 2007

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Mnemonics...

- *Christmas Program, 23rd*
- *Pastor’s Pizza & Bowling Party, 27th*

Preacher of Christian Gratitude

by R. B. Kuiper

A certain catechism asks the question: "How many things are necessary for you to know, that you . . . may live and die happily?" And it replies: "Three; the first, how great my sins and misery are; the second, how I am delivered from all my sins and misery; the third, how I am to be thankful to God for such deliverance" (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day I, Question 2).

These three things are so many aspects of the message which God has commissioned His church to proclaim. And it is to proclaim the third as well as the other two. Did not the Lord Jesus in His great commission charge the church to make disciples of all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20)?

GRATITUDE AND THE GRACE OF GOD

The Scriptural doctrine of salvation by grace has often been abused. In the apostolic church there seem to have been those who recommended continuing in sin in order that grace might the more abound (Romans 6:1). In the history of the Reformed churches one reads of those who stressed the truth of the believer's complete dependence on the grace of God for godly living to the detriment of the complementary truth of his unqualified responsibility for godly living. This writer has known a man who was at once a member of a Christian church and a drunkard. When admonished to break with his sin, he invariably replied: "Salvation is by grace, not by works," and having said that, went merrily on his way.

More illogical reasoning is hardly imaginable.

No one who has been saved by grace can possibly be content to live in sin. He who willingly serves sin, by that very token gives conclusive evidence of not having been saved. To the query: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" the apostle Paul retorted: "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2)

Scripture teaches salvation by faith, not by

works; and salvation by faith alone is the exact equivalent of salvation by grace. But nowhere does Scripture teach salvation by a faith that does not work. On the contrary, it denounces such faith as dead and therefore utterly worthless. James says emphatically in his epistle: "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). And when Paul insists with utmost strenuousness on justification by faith only, he has in mind living faith; in his own words, "faith that worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). Paul and James are in complete agreement.

Salvation by grace presents the purest motive for godly living. While all other religions tell men to do good in order that they may be saved, Christianity commands Christians to do good because they have been saved. Every other religion says: "Do and live." Christianity alone says: "Live and do." Thus the Christian is motivated in his actions by love for God and gratitude to God. And the ultimate aim of his life is not his own good, not even his own highest good, but the glory of God, his Saviour.

Salvation by grace, far from serving as an excuse for godlessness, offers the strongest incentive for godliness. Salvation by grace is nothing else than salvation by God, and God does all the saving. Even when the regenerate work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, as they most certainly must, they do so only because God first worked in them, and right along keeps working in them, both to will and to do (Philippians 2:12, 13). Thus God is entitled to all the credit for man's salvation. This has Preacher of Christian Gratitude a most direct and important bearing on the life of him who is saved. If God had done, let us say, fifty percent of the saving and he himself had done the other fifty percent, he might reasonably devote half of what he is and has to God and half to himself. If God had done ninety percent of the saving and he himself had done the remaining ten percent, then he should in fairness devote to God ninety percent of what he is and has, and might well reserve the remaining ten percent for himself. But the fact is that God has done the entire work of saving him, and therefore it behooves him to say:

Kuiper Continued...

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my *all*.

GRATITUDE AND THE LAW OF GOD

Just how is the Christian to show his gratitude to God for the gift of salvation?

There are those who at this point divorce the guidance of the Holy Spirit from the Word of God, particularly from the law of God contained in His Word. That is one of the outstanding characteristics of Mysticism, which time and again in the history of the church has lifted its ugly head in the guise of exceptional piety. There is much of it in Christendom today. The followers of the Oxford Group Movement, also known as Buchmanism and Moral Rearmament, seek to discover the will of God by praying to God and then listening to Him in silence with pen and paper at hand to jot down what He may reveal. Modern dispensationalism distinguishes sharply between the dispensation of law and that of the Spirit and insists that the Christian, controlled as he is by the Spirit, is not bound to obey the decalogue. Yet that school of thought must be credited with teaching that nine of the ten commandments — the fourth excepted — are in substance repeated in the writings of the apostles, to which the Christian is subject. Barthianism denies that the Bible contains the objective revelation of the will of God for man's behavior in all times, places and circumstances, and teaches that the Christian in his behavior is free from law, program and pattern, free to do the will of God, as he is guided by His eye from day to day. And how many Christians in their search for the will of God substitute a myste-

rious sort of subjective leading for the objective guidance of Holy Scripture!

The will of God expressed in His Word, particularly in the moral law, is the one and only infallible guide for the Christian life of gratitude. With the Spirit shining upon the Word and bringing its truth to light, it is also a completely sufficient guide. In the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith, "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men" (Chapter I, Section VI).

*“Salvation
by grace
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purest motive
for godly
living.”*

It may never be forgotten that the strictest obedience to the letter of the law, if it be not at once obedience to the spirit of the law, is actually disobedience. That is a way of saying that only he who is motivated by love for God in the keeping of God's commandments is keeping them at all. And that applies to the second table of the law as well as the first. The first table requires love for God, the second demands love for neighbors; but only he who loves his neighbors for God's sake loves them as God would have him. True love for neighbors springs from love for God.

That is plainly implied in the admonition of the apostle of love: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God" (I John 4:7).

Christians should love God because He first loved them. Christians actually do love God because He first loved them. "We love him because he first loved us" (I John 4:19) is not a command but a statement of fact. With that fact in mind Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Kuiper Concluded...

GRATITUDE AND THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

It is impossible to receive Christ as one's Saviour without at once acknowledging Him as one's Lord. He who claims Christ as his Saviour but refuses to obey His commands is deceiving himself. The simple fact is that he is as yet unsaved.

Jesus declared: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). Once upon a time, when great multitudes followed Him, He turned and said: "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). Repeatedly He admonished those who would be His followers not to act rashly but first to consider the demands of discipleship. When a certain man vowed enthusiastically, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," Jesus held him in check by reminding him that "foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Luke 9:57, 58).

The very first thing Saul of Tarsus did upon experiencing the saving grace of Christ on the Damascus road was to ask: "Who art thou, Lord?" And as soon as he heard the answer he exclaimed: "Lord, what shall I do?" (Acts 9:5, 6; 22:10) He did not accept Christ first as Saviour and subsequently as Lord. He did both simultaneously. To believe in Christ and to obey Him are not two separate acts but two phases of a single act.

The blood of the Son of God which flowed on Golgotha not only atoned for the sins of the elect, it also purchased them. They are "bought with a price" (I Corinthians 6:20, 7:23). Consequently they belong to Him. They are His very property. It follows that He will never permit any man to pluck them out of His hand (John 10:28) but will certainly save them to the uttermost

(Hebrews 7:25). But it also follows that they are in sacred duty bound to honor Him as their Lord and Master by obeying Him...

...The apostle Paul often spoke of himself as "a slave of Jesus Christ." That is an accurate description of every Christian. But, like that great apostle, he serves his Lord joyfully, from the inner compulsion of a heart aflame with loving gratitude to Him who loved him so exceedingly that He redeemed him from the abject servitude of Satan and sin with His own precious blood.

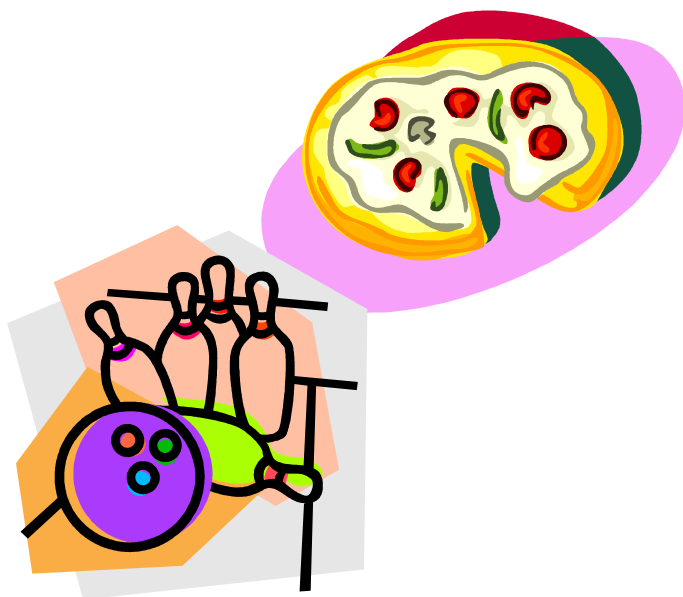
Taken from The Glorious Body of Christ by R. B. Kuiper, Chapter 30, pg. 189-194.



Pastor's Pizza & Bowling Party

Everyone's invited to Pastor's Bowling & Pizza Party on Thursday, December 27th!

We will bowl from 3 p.m.-5 p.m. at Lakeshore Lanes in Sheboygan, and then come back to church for pizza and games. The cost for bowling is \$8 per person and the cost for pizza will be around \$2.50 per person. For more details, see Pastor Brian.



MALAWI REPORT

from Rev. Ivan De Master

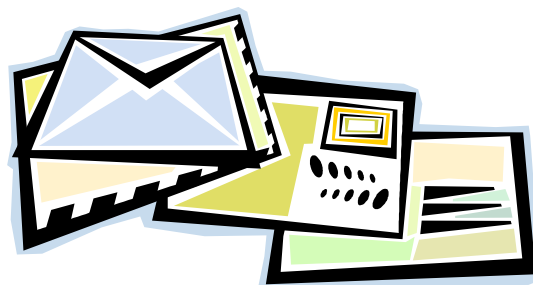
Correspondence continues with Pastor and Ennie Tembo. Grace De Jong has begun a pen pal relationship with their daughter Emily Tembo and Emile Doro with their daughter Promise Tembo. Two of the students have written or e-mailed me.

Recently I was able to send to boxes of books for the students. I had sent one box previously which was received. These are small boxes and can hold 3 or 4 volumes of Matthew Henry Commentaries or similar study books. In each I added a couple copies of the OPC Book of Church Order.

From the special funds received money was sent to pay for the costs of the students at the theological school and to help with travel expenses. \$1000 was sent to help with church building expenses, \$550 was sent for 100 Bibles

(with special instructions that the women receive the majority of these Bibles.) Some funds were also sent for the family needs of the Tembos.

On Sunday, November 25, I will share the pictures and the ministry of the church in Malawi with the OP Church in Appleton and the do the same with the OP church in New Berlin on Sunday, December 9. These opportunities are a way of letting others know of the Lord's church in Malawi.



December Birthdays



Happy Birthday!!!

Comments on Finances

by Joel Moody

General Fund receipts through October totaled \$127,505.66 as compared to the budget of \$120,043.93. General Fund disbursements through October totaled \$111,668.13 as compared to the budget of \$120,043.93. Through the end of October, the General Fund increased by \$18,906.91.

Benevolence Fund Receipts through October totaled \$14,434.50 while the budget was \$13,604.17. Each month, \$425.00 is sent to Worldwide Outreach for the General Missions outreach of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In addition, each month \$187.50 is sent to the Midwest Presbytery's Church Extension

Committee. For October, \$650.00 was disbursed within our congregation from the Christian education scholarship monies. During October, \$850.00 was sent to Sheboygan Co. Christian High School and \$550.00 was sent to Pine Haven in support of their respective ministries. Remember to pray for these institutions as they educate students as well as minister to the aged or infirm within our community. During November, funds will be collected towards the annual Thank Offering which is used by our denomination in a variety of ways, some of which are described in special bulletin inserts during the month of November.



Grace OPC

December 2007

Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Men's Bible Study, 7:30 a.m.
2	3 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	4 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m.	5 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	6	7 Pine Haven Craft & Bake Sale	8
9 Missions Sunday	10 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	11	12 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	13	14	15
16	17 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	18 Pine Haven Study, 1:30 p.m. Session	19 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	20	21	22
23 Christmas Program, 5 p.m.	24	25	26	27 Pastor's Bowling & Pizza Party	28	29
30 Lord's Supper (p.m.)	31 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.					

Missions Report– Missions OPC, St. Paul, MN

MINISTRY FRUIT AND CHALLENGES

by Rev. John Shaw

October has always been my favorite month of the year. Not only is it the month when I was born, but I enjoy the excitement of college football, the crisp, cool air, the turning and falling of the leaves, and the advance of the seasons. At the same time that one season ends and the plants begin to die, another season comes with all the excitement of new things – cool air, November winds, and the possibility of snow.

In some ways, it feels like our mission work is in a similar transition stage. We have come – in a variety of ways – to a different season as a congregation. When we arrived last summer, many of the families had been at the church less than six months, and several more families began attending regularly after our arrival. Now, many of those families have joined the church and have been attending for more than a year. And, thankfully, they have begun to take a real interest in the church, giving of themselves for the body. Very exciting!

As a result, they are beginning to ask many good questions – when will we become an organized church, what does that mean, what steps are necessary, etc.

So now we have to begin preparing for the future, as a congregation, in a purposeful way. Over the next year, I hope to begin officer training, and I have been encouraging the group to pray regularly that God would provide good leaders for this church. Also, we plan to establish several committees to augment the work of the steering committee: evangelism, outreach and publicity, missions, etc. And our women's group has really taken off. Not only do they meet twice a month for a book study, but they established a whole list of committees (hospitality, fellowship, social, nursery, etc.) that have become quite active in the regular

activities of the church. And, the session has scheduled a congregational meeting for January that will allow the congregation to become more involved in future planning.

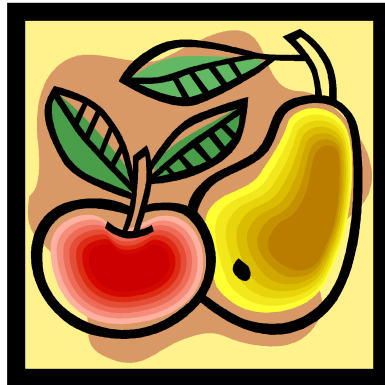
Obviously, we approach this transition with much prayer, not always sure how prepared we are, as a congregation, to take on these responsibilities. We have known each other for only a short time, and we come from diverse church backgrounds. But the Lord continues to bless us, and we move forward with great anticipation for what God has planned for us.

As for me, this has been another month with some tremendous highs and some difficult struggles.

...Lots of exciting things have been happening, as well. Just this past month, a new man visited who has been a devout Roman Catholic for many years. He has been studying the Bible and really testing RC doctrine. We met for a discussion one evening, and I plan to stay in touch with him.

...In October, a RPCNA pastor from Pittsburgh called about an acquaintance who had recently moved to the Twin Cities – Maureen Reichel. Maureen suffers from cerebral palsy and moved to the Twin Cities without knowing anyone. My wife and I have visited her four or five times and she was finally able to attend church this past Sunday – the first time at church in over two years. The church had been praying for her and she was warmly received; she even spent the afternoon at someone's home for dinner.

And the International Sewing Circle continues to meet. One of the ladies, who has been attending the class from the beginning, finally asked for a Bible in October. She had been the most hostile to the Bible study when we first began meeting last year.



Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Potluck

Everyone is invited to attend the Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Potluck, which will be held on Sunday, December 2nd after the morning worship service and the Sunday School time, which will start earlier than usual.



IS TOMORROW JUST ANOTHER DAY?

By Don Schlernitzauer

“As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like the flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.”

~ Psalm 103: 15-16

“The LORD knows the days of the blameless, and their heritage will remain forever.”

~ Psalm 37: 18

Most ophthalmologists are concerned with older people in that the majority of eye diseases are diseases of aging. Though now retired, I still peruse the obituary columns for the frequent listings of those God privileged me to attend. The details are much the same: birth, marriage, occupation, children, grandchildren—all summarily recognized so that friends and acquaintances will be informed.

Psalm 103 is right; man’s days are like grass. The wind, which never ceases, does its part, taking the last vestiges away, so that even the place where it once grew cannot reveal that it was ever there. If you think this is not appropriate to man, just reflect on your meager knowledge of you own great-great-grandparents with whom you share your genetic make-up. It is true that “its place knows it no more.”

However, before we queue up to agree with the Preacher of Ecclesiastes that “All is vanity” (Ecc 1: 2), we need to be reminded of the rest

of the story as given in Psalm 37: 18. Men, even our blood descendants, may forget our days, but there is One who knows each one of them, and in His knowledge our days will live forever. That is, if we are blameless, if we have become the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor 5: 21).

Isn’t that striking? Not only are we to live forever, that which issues forth from all our days even into eternity will remain forever. Each day is a gift from God, and taken together, they are our heritage, and the LORD says in that way our days will remain forever!

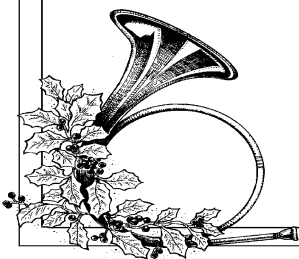
I don’t know about you, but that makes me want to “number my days that {I} may get {not only} a heart of wisdom” (Psa 90: 12), but that my days may be fruitful for the Lord Jesus Christ.

It’s best, therefore, not to think of tomorrow as “just another day.” Each day is unique, a gift of God, and we have kingdom work to do while it is yet day. Perhaps this day I’ll write a note of encouragement, or visit an ailing brother or sister in Christ, or move mountains on my knees.

How grateful I am for the gospel of God and for the knowledge that His ways are not man’s ways, even in assessing the days that He has made. May He find me rejoicing and being glad in them, doing my Savior’s will, confident that “The LORD knows ... {my} days..., and, {therefore}, their heritage will remain forever.”

Christmas Program

The Christmas Program will be held on Sunday evening, December 23rd
at 5:00 p.m. The theme is “Lessons in Carols.”



A Chance to Die by Elisabeth Elliot

by Gail Moody

I thought I had read all the best books in our church library until I read an unforgettable biography written by Elisabeth Elliot entitled **A Chance to Die**. This gem reveals the godly character of a woman who spent 53 years as in missionary in India *without a furlough!* Amy Carmichael breathed a life of total obedience to her Lord. Being immersed in her life as I read, I

was impressed with her self denial and her total reliance on God to meet all her earthly and spiritual needs.

I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in following in the steps of Christ.



Thank You!

Kaliko Beach, Haiti
Oct. 30/07

Dear Brothers & Sisters at Grace OPC,

It is with grateful hearts that we write to thank you for your faithful support of the Gospel work being done in Haiti. We rejoice in the way God has continued the work here. It is a great blessing for us to be a part of what the LORD is doing in Lagonav and on the mainland for His glory.

Our whole family keeps healthy and happy by God's grace. We are transitioning well here and are enjoying both the delights and challenges of living in this dry & weary land. Our hearts offer up praise to our Savior for how He is working in and through us to become more like Him. Day-to-day life is full of adventure and the unexpected. We are growing in patience and flexibility. ☺ We are thankful to be representing the OPC and you folks here in Haiti. It is truly an honor.

Ben preaches with an interpreter almost every Sunday. It is a delight to worship with our Haitian brothers and sisters. This is a marvelous and encouraging time in our week. A great way to start each week.

We do look forward to living on the island of Lagonav where we can live alongside our 7 churches there. We hope, LORD willing, to move there as a family in the spring once the guest house is completed.

Again, thank you so much for giving to foreign missions & may the LORD bless your cheerful giving.

Under Mercy,

Ben & Heather, Ethan, Emma, Grace, & Elijah

P.S. Thanks specifically for the money for musical instruments. This is a great blessing to the churches on Lagonav. ☺



Wingard Update

19 Nov 07

Dear Friends,

“The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His steadfast love.” (Psalm 147:11) The Lord surely heard and answered your prayers for the Sunday School Seminar that was held this past Saturday, the 17th of November. Thank you *very* much for your prayers. Just as it is much harder to sit on the sidelines and cheer for an amateur sports game than to play, so it is much harder to be on the invisible prayer team supporting a ministry than to be participating in it. May the Lord take delight in your prayers and may you rejoice that He hears and answers.

This is Africa. No one comes on time to events. We’ve never waited less than an hour for a wedding to begin, once it was almost 8 hours. So you can imagine our surprise when we arrived at the college house where the seminar was to take place, about 3/4 hour *before* it was to begin, and found the room over half full of people taking their tea, bread and banana, which we’d scheduled for the half hour before the seminar. From each of the 12 churches, we had invited the pastor, a teacher and an alternate. By the time the seminar was under way, every church was represented, some by several people -- more than the three invited. I must confess that we did offer transport money and a free lunch (rice and beans), which contributed to the incentive, but nevertheless this was a remarkable turnout.

A local pastor, Steven Hamya, opened with a message and prayer, and then we had 4 speakers - - who explained the materials given to each church, including the new Luganda children’s catechism, who explained how to teach children and how the teacher needs to prepare, and who demonstrated an actual lesson. One of the speakers was a Kenyan lady, Rachel Kiplagat Magala, whom a few of you

know or have heard about; she has had a range of experience teaching Sunday School, as well as her own 10 children. Afterward she was commended by many of the Ugandan women for the excellent presentation, full of knowing tips on teaching in this context. (I was thrilled!) The other three were mission women and God equipped us to give help to the new teachers in their awesome responsibility. It was rewarding to see that at least 2 teachers, or alternates, were young people who had been in the Sunday Schools for which this material was first prepared in 2001 (before the church split)! We had excellent feedback from pastors and teachers.

We’re praying that the initial enthusiasm will become a joyful, sustained commitment to the Lord, to the church and to the children, keeping the teachers faithful in their preparation and teaching.

Some of you may be wondering how the women in the Kakoli church are doing. Saturday, after the seminar, we went to Kakoli for the weekly women’s Bible study. Malaria and other problems had greatly reduced attendance the past couple of weeks, so it was a joy to see 14 ladies this week.

They clapped when I asked if better health accounted for their high attendance. Our study on Anger prompted questions about disciplining their children. It was so good to see that they connected our discussion of anger with the commonly accepted practice of severely beating a child. We discussed how as Christian women they had to rethink what they had learned from their own experience of being beaten, based on the Scriptures.

You would be interested in a complicating factor in their homes -- the presence on their compounds of parents-in-law and brothers- and sisters-in-law, all of whom may object to the way they discipline their children. “Not easy!”

During our time of prayer they opened up with prayer matters, like one co-wife whose unbelieving husband brought the local (banana) brew into the home and splashed it all over. The smell was so intolerable that she took her mat out to

Report Concluded...

the tiny kitchen hut to sleep that night. Her husband objected, made her return to the house and locked her inside. Another woman suffered the loss of her harvest of (kidney) beans, which were stolen.

She is a very young (AIDS) widow with young children; the beans must represent a substantial portion of their food until the next growing season.

Such is village life dominated by an animistic ethos.

Thank you again for praying for us and the church here. May you enjoy a blessed Thanksgiving Day and season of thanks!

Gratefully,

Dorothy and Brian

Books to Inspire

New Books in the Church Library

by Carla De Master

Several new books have been carefully reviewed in the Reflections last month by Samantha. Here are some additional purchases for your enjoyment and growth.

Biographies: Amazing Grace in the Life of William Wilberforce, by John Piper. Wilberforce spent 20 years ridding the British empire of slavery. 4 for girls: A Cup of Cold Water, about Nurse Edith Cavell in World War I. Dr. Oma, the healing wisdom of Countess Juliana von Stolberg in 16th century German, Wings like a Dove, the courage of Queen Jeanne d'Albret in the 16th century, and Against the Tide, the valor of Margaret Wilson in Scotland in the 17th century.

Other biographies include: Ten Girls Who Used Their Talents, Ten Boys Who Used Their Talents, Men of Science, Men of God 101 men who believed in the Bible and in a personal Creator God, in a small book. Heroes of Faith books: Into All the World. (David Brainerd,

Adoniram Judson, Robert Moffat, John Paton); Well with my Soul, (Philip Bliss, William Cowper, Frances Havergal, Horatio Spafford); David Livingstone and C. S. Lewis.

For Kids: A Home for Virginia and A Safe Place by Patricia St. John, and Kindness Counts.

Pamphlets to answer those questions: Why Do We Baptize Infants? What is True Conversion? What Are Election and Predestination? What is a True Calvinist? What is the Christian Worldview? What is the Lord's Supper?

Miscellaneous: When Darkness Will Not Lift by John Piper, A Journey in God's Sovereignty, a Theological novel by Belcher, Praying Backwards, by Bryan Chapell, Let Me Be a Woman, by Elisabeth Eliot, By Design, by Susan Hunt, Spiritual Mothering, by Susan Hunt.



Young Reflections

A page designed especially for the children of Grace Church (by Samantha De Jong)



Two thousand years ago, a young woman wrapped her baby son in a blanket, and put Him in a manger to rest. The woman and her husband knew that the newborn child was no ordinary one.

An angel had told them, months before, that He was the Son of God, who would save His people from their sins. As the child grew, His mother noticed that He never lied, or fought with His brothers. When she gave Him a command, He always obeyed her without arguing or complaining. In fact, during the thirty-three years He was on earth, He never broke even one of God's commands.

When He became a man, He traveled about, healing people, and teaching them about God's kingdom. Sometimes He even brought dead people back to life. Even though He spoke only the truth, His words made some people hate Him very much. The more He taught, the more they wanted to kill Him. One night, these evil men arrested Him, claiming He deserved to die. Did this surprise Him? No! He let His enemies capture Him. This was part of His great plan to save the people He loved.

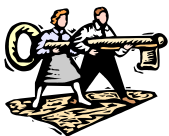
The wicked Jews brought their prisoner to the Roman governor, who had the authority to kill Him. They were so violent, that, though he didn't want to, the ruler gave orders to have the Man they hated crucified. Roman soldiers pounded nails through His hands and feet, into a wooden cross. Later that day, after enduring great pain and the mockery of his enemies, the holiest Man who ever lived, the Son of God, died. His friends sadly buried Him nearby.

The story is not over, though, the best part is still to come. On the third day after His death, the Man's friends found His tomb empty. He had risen from the dead! Because He had never sinned. He was able to, in a sense, trade places with His people. He received all the punishment we deserve for breaking God's law, while those who trust Him receive the blessing He deserved for keeping God's law. By bringing Him back to life, God showed that He is no longer angry about our sins. Now anyone who believes in the Son of God will be forgiven and live in Heaven when they die. Do you trust Him to take away your sins?



CRACK THE CODE!

Use the key below to decipher the secret message. Write your answer on a separate paper, and give it to Samantha De Jong to earn a prize!



**A-1 B-2 D-3 E-4 F-5 G-6 H-7 I-8 L-9 M-10 N-11 O-12 P-13 R-14 S-15
T-16 U-17 V-18 W-19 Y-20**

“5 12 14 6 12 3 15 12 9 12 18 4 3 16 7 4 19 12 14 9 3 16 7 1 16 7 4 6 1 18 4 7 8 15

12 11 4 1 11 3 12 11 9 20 15 12 11, 16 7 1 16 19 7 12 4 18 4 14 2 4 9 8 4 18 4 15 8 11

7 8 10 15 7 1 9 9 11 12 16 13 4 14 8 15 7 2 17 16 7 1 18 4 4 16 4 14 11 1 9 9 8 5 4.”



Thank you to all of the ladies who worked to make the beautiful quilt hanging in the back of the sanctuary.

Pumpkin Muffins

- ★ 1 box yellow cake mix
- ★ 1 small can of pumpkin
- ★ 3/4 cup of cinnamon chips

Mix the above ingredients together and place in a muffin pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Yield: 24 small muffins.

Pam Schlernitzauer



“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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- ★ Did you know that John Hus was born in 1373?
- ★ That although his family was poor, he managed eventually to go to the University of Prague?
- ★ That he began to preach in 1402 in the Catholic church but soon after became part of

the early Reformation and familiar with the ideas of John Wycliffe?

★ That John's last name actually means "goose" and while in prison, he asked some friends to get him out "if you love the goose" (meaning himself)?

★ That he was commanded to go to the Council of Constance in 1414 because of his teachings and was transferred among several prisons?

★ He was sentenced to be burned at the stake and among his last words were, "I shall die with joy today in the faith of the Gospel which I have preached"?

★ He died singing to the Lord and his ashes were taken and thrown into the Rhine River?

Information found online at <http://www.prca.org/books/portraits/hus.htm>

Pine Haven Craft & Bake Sale

It's time again for the annual Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary Christmas Bake and Craft Sale. The sale will be held Friday, Dec. 7th, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Oostburg State Bank. All proceeds help support the residents of Pine Haven.

The Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary Board needs donations of crafts for this sale. If you are crafty and would like to donate for this good cause, please contact Marge Halbach or Kate Nagle for more information.

