

# REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

## Why I Am A Presbyterian

By Pastor Brian De Jong

Why are you a Presbyterian? Were you just born into Presbyterianism? Did you inherit it from your parents? Were you genetically predisposed to Presbyterianism? Those are good questions, though not often asked. Although nobody has posed them to me lately, I would like to answer them so that you can understand your pastor better.

I was born and raised in a Christian home. If you know my parents, you'll realize that they are wonderful Christian people who blessed me far more than I appreciated as a youngster. They took me to church each and every Sunday. I was baptized as an infant and was raised in the faith. My father read the Bible to us at every mealtime, and he always prayed before and after the meal. He and my mom sacrificed to send us all through Christian schools where we got Christian educations.

The church of my childhood was not Presbyterian, but Christian Reformed. In my little world, Dutch Calvinism was all that existed. I recall asking my dad about Presbyterians at one point (who knows why). His answer was diplomatic – many Presbyterians are good Reformed people, though some were theologically liberal. I recall being unimpressed with those Presbyterians.

When I left my parents' home to attend Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, I pledged to attend church regularly. I wandered around to various Baptist congregations, and even visited a PCUSA

church in Carbondale. But then the Lord drew me to a PCA congregation called "Evangelical Presbyterian Church." My first impression was that it was probably a cult, since it met in a house and not a "church building."

As I got to know people, and listened to the teaching, I was hooked. God began a massive work in my life,



and he used that church full of Presbyterians to change me. I discovered that they believed all of the same Reformed doctrines that I'd been raised with. But I also began to realize that these Presbyterians had

a serious interest in studying the Bible – far more than I had ever experienced before. Added to that, they were concerned about evangelism. They had a sweet fellowship that was spiritually alive and theologically sound – what a combination that was!

As the years passed, and I was being drawn toward the ministry, I was studying the Bible seriously on my own. Somewhere in that study I came across a verse that hit me like a thunderbolt. It was Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

In that chapter, Paul was speaking to the ELDERS of the church in Ephesus. He told them that the Holy Spirit had made those presbyters (elders) to be

*Continued on last page...*

Volume 13, Issue 6

June 2018

Inside this issue:

<i>Pastor's Article</i>	1
<i>Hopps in Haiti</i>	2-3
<i>John Ploughman</i>	4-5
<i>Technology and the Christian</i>	5
<i>Serving the Refugees on Lesvos, Greece</i>	6
<i>June Birthdays and Anniversaries</i>	7
<i>June Calendar</i>	8
<i>Recipe Corner</i>	9
<i>Spurgeon Corner</i>	10

### Mnemonics...

- *Meadowview Manor, June 17th*
- *Session Meeting, June 19th*

# Hopps in Haiti



## **Wear and Tear**

Everything wears down as it gets older. That includes the vehicles we drive and the clothes we wear. It also includes us - we suffer the wear and tear of life both physically and emotionally. See the bushing in the picture? The one in the metal is supposed to look like the one on top. The wear and tear of the La Gonâve roads has nearly destroyed it.

This past month we were thankful for our Haiti Minute Men, Don and Jim, who traveled to Haiti to replace some worn out parts on the Kawasaki Mule. They replaced the rear universal joints and fixed an overheating problem. My own body, worn

out from having to take a moto-taxi to visit the churches over very rough roads, is thankful I can once again use the Mule to get to the churches.

After returning to Kaliko from La Gonâve, the men, who have become good friends over the years, also completed many smaller jobs at the Mission Home. We are thankful for those churches who have given toward the Kaliko Roof Project and, Lord willing, the work will be completed this fall once the temperatures cool down a little.



## **Haiti is Beautiful!**

Any short-term trip to Haiti is not all work! During the two weeks Jim spent with us, we were able to hike up the ravine into the mountains. We reached the highest point we've ever hiked and even saw flowing water. In the shade of the mountains the trees grow well and the vegetation is lush. Haiti has some beautiful spots if you are willing to do the work to get there.

## **Reaching the Children Part 2**

Last month we told you about the translation work Heather is doing with the help of Pastor Delfils. The aim is to have

materials that can be used to teach the children at church. Heather, with the help of Esther and Ethan, has enjoyed teaching Sunday School to the young kids from the neighborhood. In the picture, Heather is reading and discussing the account of Jonah from the Haitian Creole version of The Jesus Storybook Bible with the children. It is encouraging to see their keen interest in God's word and His world, too. Their classes often take little rabbit trails. For example, one child asked if the fish that ate Jonah was a shark. Then the discussion turned to sharks and their sharp teeth. Do sharks eat people? What about whales? Do they eat people? How big is a whale? You get the picture. Eventually, after answering a barrage of questions, Heather directs them back to the Bible story and promises to bring pictures of sharks and whales to the next class. What a blessing to be able to invest in the lives of these children. Pray that the Spirit of God would continue to be at work in their young hearts!



**Tackling the SAT** On Saturday, May 5th, Ethan and Emma joined thousands of high school students around the world as they wrote the SAT, the standardized test used for admission to U.S. colleges. After several months of prep in addition to their regular school work, they confidently wrote the test. It was a big deal! Ben, Heather, Ethan and Emma overnighted at a hotel in the capital so they would be close to the private school in Port-au-Prince which is licensed by the College Board to administer the SAT. Sign-ins

*Continued on next page...*

began just after 7:30 AM. They calmly tackled the four test sections and wrote the essay. What a relief! Our two excited Juniors were happy to head back home to Kaliko in the early afternoon. Elijah and Esther, who stayed at home with Mr. Jim, had decorated the house and baked a cake in honor of their siblings' accomplishment. As parents, we are thankful for opportunities like these for our children. What a blessing that they could write the same SAT as their US counterparts right here in Haiti. We rejoice in what the Lord is doing in Ethan and Emma as they prepare for the next step in their educational journey to the Lord's glory. They would like to thank all of you who prayed for them.



## Comfort for the Grieving

Please pray for us as we have had opportunities to talk to folks in our neighborhood who are grieving the loss of loved ones. There was a very tragic accident on Route Nationale #1, our main highway, a few miles from our home. Sadly, 16 people died at the scene and many more were injured. A friend told us that a young man from his church who was to be married next month died in the crash. Another friend, Ti Blan, said that his nephew died in the accident and then another of his nephews died a day later from an illness. Both were 24. Three others were killed near our local market a week later. A young man in our Port-au-Prince church lost his brother when police opened fire on a demonstrators at a rally. Pray that we would have words of comfort and hope for those who are suffering in our midst. Our hope in life and death is only found through faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## Prayer Requests

- Port-au-Prince church - pray for more visitors. Ben begins a new sermon series on Proverbs. Also ask the Lord to give wisdom and strength as we encounter some difficult discipline situations in the church.
  - La Gonâve - pray for two members of the Doglace church who are sick. Pastor Lexene is having difficulty with his eyes and Sylvania is suffering from an undiagnosed stomach ailment.
  - Team Haiti 2018 - this team of 11 will arrive in late June to do Vacation Bible School programs at churches here. Pray for the team as they prepare to come and minister in Haiti.
  - Families affected by several accidents in the Kaliko area - for comfort and a turning to Christ in their time of need.
  - Delfils family - give thanks for their son Carlens who has returned to Haiti after a year at college in Florida. We all give thanks for the joy Carlens brings to the church.
- Hopp family - we give thanks for good health though several are suffering from spring-time allergies. Pray for continued wisdom as we look at future options for Ethan and Emma who are finishing their junior (Grade 11) year.

## Kid Corner

There's been a lot of talk about the SAT around our house lately. How has this test impacted you?

**Ethan:** I've been preparing for a few months. I wrote it. I'm glad it's behind me!

**Emma:** It's been exciting to think about the future and consider what the Lord has for me to do. I was ready to write it. I'm thankful to have one under my belt now.

**Elijah:** It has made me consider writing it myself in a couple years. I am excited what God has for Ethan and Emma in the future.

**Esther:** I was so happy for Ethan and Emma to finally be done. They worked so hard. I decorated the house and baked a cake for them with Elijah. It was fun to celebrate it being over

# John Ploughman

## Chapter 15: Faults

He who boasts of being perfect is perfect in folly. I have been a good deal up and down the world, and I never did see either a perfect horse or a perfect man, and I never shall till two Sundays come together. You cannot get white flour out of a coal sack nor perfection out of human nature; he who looks for it had better look for sugar in the sea. The old saying is, "Lifeless, faultless About dead men we should say nothing but good; but as for the living, they are all tarred more or less with the black brush, and half an eye can see it. Every head has a soft place in it, and every heart has its black drop. Every rose has its prickles, and every day its night. Even the sun shows spots, and the skies are darkened with clouds. Nobody is so wise but he has folly enough to stock a stall at Vanity Fair. Where I could not see the fool's cap, I have nevertheless heard the bells jingle. As there is no sunshine without some shadows, so is all human good mixed up with more or less of evil. Even poor law guardians have their little failings, and parish beadles are not wholly of heavenly nature. The best wine has its dregs. All men's faults are not written on their foreheads, and it's quite as well they are not, or hats would need very wide brims. Yet, as sure as eggs are eggs, faults of some sort nestle in every bosom. There's no telling when a man's sins may show themselves, for hares pop out of the ditch just when you are not looking for them. A horse that is weak in the legs may not stumble for a mile or two, but it is in him, and the rider had better hold him up well. The tabby cat is not lapping milk just now, but leave the dairy door open, and we will see if she is not as bad a thief as the kitten. there's fire in the flint, cool as it looks: wait till the steel gets a knock at it, and you will see. Everybody can read that riddle, but it is not everybody that will remember to keep his gunpowder out of the way of the candle.

If we would always recollect that we live among men who are imperfect, we should not be in such a fever when we find out our friends' failings. What's rotten will rend, and cracked pots will leak. Blessed is he who expects nothing of poor flesh and blood, for he shall never be disappointed. The best of men are men at best, and the best wax will melt.

It is a good horse that never stumbles,  
And a good wife that never grumbles.

But surely such horses and wives are only found in the fool's paradise, where dumplings grow on trees. In this wicked world the straightest timber has knots in it, and the cleanest field of wheat has its share of weeds. The most careful driver one day upsets the cart; the cleverest cook spills a little broth; and as I know to my sorrow a very decent plowman will now and then break the plow and often make a crooked furrow. It is foolish to turn off a tried friend because of a failing or two, for you may get rid of a one-eyed nag and buy a blind one. Being all of us full of faults, we ought to keep two bears, and learn to bear and forbear with one another. Since we all live in glass houses, we should none of us throw stones. Everybody laughs when the saucepan says to the kettle, "How black you are!" Other men's imperfections show us our imperfection for one sheep is much like another; and if there's an speck in my neighbor's eye, there is no doubt one in mine. We ought to use our neighbors as mirrors to see our own faults in, and mend in ourselves what we see in them.

I have no patience with those who poke their noses into every man's house to smell out his faults, and put on magnifying glasses to discover their neighbors' flaws. Such folks had better look at home; they might see the devil where they little expected. What we wish to see, we shall see or think we see. Faults are always thick where love is thin. A white cow is all black if your eye chooses to make it so. If we sniff long enough at rose water, we shall find out that it has a bad smell. It would be a far more pleasant business, at least for other people, if fault-finders would turn their dogs to hunt out the good points in other folks; the game would pay better, and nobody would stand with a pitchfork to keep the hunters off his farm. As for our own faults, it would take a large slate to hold the account of them; but, thank God, we know where to take them and how to get the better of them. With all our faults, God loves us still if we are trusting in His Son. Therefore, let us not be downhearted, but hope to live and learn and do some good service before we die. Though the cart creaks, it

*Continued on next page...*

will get home with its load, and the old horse, broken-kneed as he is, will do a sight of work yet. There's no use in lying down and doing nothing because we cannot do everything as we should like. Faults or no faults, plowing must be done; imperfect people must do it, too, or there will be no harvest next year. Bad plowman as John may be, the angels won't do his work for him, and so he is off to do it himself. Go along, Violet! Gee, whoa! Dapper!

---

## Technology and the Christian

By Jon D. Payne



We live in an unprecedented age of digital connectivity. In this strange new world, we are electronically linked to endless numbers of people and places as well as a flood of information. Smartphones, laptops, and tablets connect us to just about everything. We are connected all the time and everywhere.

It has all happened so fast. Personal computers have only been in homes since the late 1970s. And the ubiquitous smartphone—now in the pockets and purses of more than 2.5 billion people—was only unveiled in 2007. Tim Challies writes: "Over the past three decades, digital technologies have powerfully changed our lives. They are woven into the very way we understand and relate to the world around us. We are now a digital culture. We are no longer who and what we were just a few decades ago."

Indeed, we are the first generation to experience this brave new culture of digital connectivity, and those who are under fifteen years of age have never known anything different. While many of us are immigrants to this new digital age, our children and grandchildren are natives. It's all they've ever known. It's all they will know.

Our culture is a swelling sea of digital connectedness. But are we, as Christians, becoming spiritually untethered in the midst of it? Are we being careful and wise with our technology? Are we losing our spiritual moorings in this cast and growing ocean of digital technology and omni-connectedness? Has the endless connectedness of our modern age actually made us less connected to the things that really matter, things that have ultimate significance? For instance, has it made us less connected to God and to our families? Could it be that our gadgets and gizmos that guarantee so much are actually fostering new level of spiritual and relational superficiality in our lives? Isn't it time to stop and ask, Do I own my technology or does my technology own me? God's Word states, "Look carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15).

More than a directive to improve time management, this is a divine command to live circumspectly—to walk with God carefully, purposefully, and wisely. Christians should never live passively, allowing the culture to shape and mold them into its image. Indeed, if we are not careful, the tools of digital technology that we have shaped will soon be shaping us. Social scientists have demonstrated that this is already happening in our culture. Indeed, millions are addicted to their screens because of social media, video games, news, sports, and entertainment. Dear Christian, this will happen to you if you let the flood of new digital technology roll over you without any serious reflection about how best to harness it for good. Therefore, take some time to evaluate your use of digital technology. And may your most solid and growing connection be to Christ.

*Taken from TableTalk, Weekend Devotional, May 19-20, Page 51*

# Serving Refugees on Lesvos, Greece



Dear friends at Grace Church,

Most likely you have heard of the ongoing refugee crisis that is currently impacting millions of adults and children around the world. I am excited about the great opportunity to return to the island of Lesvos, Greece this July, and serve alongside other volunteers from around the world. Our team will daily be serving refugees within Moria camp. Although we will not know specifically how we will serve until we arrive, we will have opportunities to love our neighbors by helping newly arriving families move into housing, set up tents, deliver meals, run various errands for full-time workers, etc. We will be working under the umbrella of Greater Europe Mission who partners with Euro Relief, a registered Christian NGO on the island. There is constant change in this part of the world and if we are unable to be on the island, then our team will serve in a refugee camp in/near Athens.

Our team consists of 8 individuals from College Church in Wheaton, and the dates of our trip are July 10-21. I've had the opportunity to share my experience with many of you. Here are some specific updates from Moria:

- Over 7,000 people now living in Moria camp, last summer the population was around 3,000 people.
- The Greater Europe Mission refuge center is now open. This center is located outside but near the camp, and will provide a place for Greater Europe Mission volunteers to continue Gospel conversations with people living in the camp.
- Pray for movement of people out of the camp, for enough resources of blankets and tarps, and for protection and hope for each person.
- Pray for Greek and European Union leadership to address the mounting refugee crisis with wise and feasible short and long-term solutions.

We would certainly appreciate your prayers. Please pray that God would be preparing many opportunities for us to share the saving message of Jesus' love to individuals we spend time with in Moria camp, as well as those we get to know in the small towns of Lesvos. Please pray that our team would serve with compassion, an open mind, and in the strength that He provides.

Thanks again!

Kristin Berenschot

# June Birthdays

Anna TenPas	1st
Olivia Boss	3rd
Cameron De Jong	8th
Jonah Mamazza	8th
Lynn Jensema	14th
Harlan Harmelink	15th
Sandy Kaeiser	19th
Griffin Froh	22nd
Leila Ver Velde	22nd



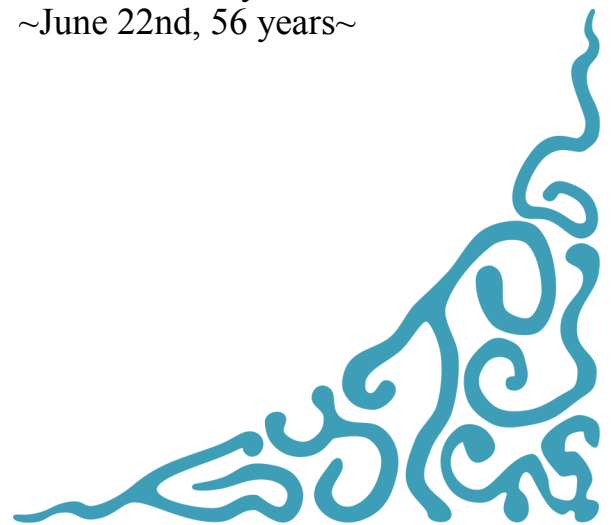
---

## *June Anniversaries*

Bob & Debbie Boss  
~June 12th, 42 years~

Howard & Audrey Voskuil  
~June 22nd, 56 years~

Dan & Sara TenPas  
~ June 18th, 24 years~





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

# June 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Meadowview Manor, 3pm	18	19 Session Meeting, 6:30pm	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Church Office:  
4930 Green Valley Ln  
Sheboygan, WI 53083

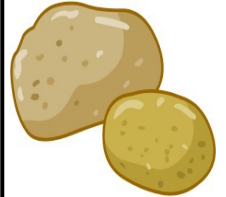
Phone: 920-565-2160  
Website:  
graceopcsheboygan.com  
Email:  
graceopc@ids.net  
revbriandjong@gmail.com



# Company's Coming Mashed Potatoes

## Ingredients:

- 2lbs Simply Potatoes Traditional Mashed Potatoes
- 2ounces soft fresh goat cheese, cubed (chevre)
- 2ounces cream cheese, cubed
- 2tablespoons butter, cubed
- 2slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium red bell pepper, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium green bell pepper, diced
- 3green onions, thinly sliced (if they are large use 2 1/2)
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt (to taste)
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cheddar cheese, shredded, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup parmesan cheese, grated, divided (not the canned type)



*“For He  
has satisfied  
the thirsty soul,  
and the  
hungry soul  
He has filled  
with what  
is good.”*

## Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees, and grease a baking dish.

Peel the film at the corner of the Simply Potatoes package to vent and heat on high for 3 minutes in the microwave. Carefully remove the film (be careful not to burn yourself with steam) and stir. Microwave on high for 1 more minute.

In a large bowl, mix the potatoes, goat cheese, cream cheese, and butter. Stir together until well-blended.

Carefully stir in the crumbled bacon, bell pepper, green onions, and pepper. Taste at this point and see if you want to add the salt. Stir in 1/3 cup of the cheddar and parmesan cheese until well combined.

Transfer to a prepared baking dish and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

Bake, uncovered, for 20 to 25 minutes or until heated through.



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

Church Office:  
4930 Green Valley Ln  
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Phone: 920-565-2160  
Website: [graceopcsheboygan.com](http://graceopcsheboygan.com)  
Email: [graceopc@tds.net](mailto:graceopc@tds.net)  
[revbriandejong@gmail.com](mailto:revbriandejong@gmail.com)

*Spurgeon*

*Corner*

*“He humbled himself.”*

*Philippians 2:8*

Jesus is the great teacher of lowliness of heart. We need daily to learn of him. See the Master taking a towel and washing his disciples’ feet! Follower of Christ, wilt thou not humble thyself? See him as the Servant of servants, and surely thou canst not be proud! Is not this sentence the compendium of his biography, “He humbled himself”? Was he not on earth always stripping off first one robe of honour and then another, till, naked, he was fastened to the cross, and there did he not empty out his inmost self, pouring out his life-blood, giving up for all of us, till they laid him penniless in a borrowed grave? How low was our dear Redeemer brought! How then can we be proud? Stand at the foot of the cross, and

count the purple drops by which you have been cleansed; see the thorn-crown; mark his scourged shoulders, still gushing with encrimsoned rills; see hands and feet given up to the rough iron, and his whole self to mockery and scorn; see the bitterness, and the pangs, and the throes of inward grief, showing themselves in his outward frame; hear the thrilling shriek, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” And if you do not lie prostrate on the ground before that cross, you have never seen it: if you are not humbled in the presence of Jesus, you do not know him. You were so lost that nothing could save you but the sacrifice of God’s only begotten. Think of that, and as Jesus stooped for you, bow yourself in lowliness at his feet. A sense of Christ’s amazing love to us has a greater tendency to humble us than even a consciousness of our own guilt. May the Lord bring us in contemplation to Calvary, then our position will no longer be that of the pompous man of pride, but we shall take the humble place of one who loves much because much has been forgiven him. Pride cannot live beneath the cross. Let us sit there and learn our lesson, and then rise and carry it into practice.

CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

**SERMONAUDIO.COM/**

**GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

**GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM**



Evening, June 3rd, C.H. Spurgeon

## Front Page Concluded...

“overseers” – episcopoi. Their assignment from the Holy Spirit was to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.

From that verse I learned that elders = overseers = shepherds. God’s Spirit had made and appointed those elders to oversee the church of God. That was, is and always will be God’s plan for His church. He wants her to be governed and overseen by elders. Thus God has ordained Presbyterianism as His way of governing His church on earth – I was convinced. Though some in the church today will claim that God has no preference

in matters of church government – this one verse says otherwise. God has prescribed the rule of elders over the church of God – and that is the heart and core of Presbyterianism. I remain convinced to this day, and am thankful that, in His grace, God has made me to be one of those elders to oversee the church that Jesus bought with His blood.