

# REFLECTIONS

The Monthly Newsletter of Grace OPC

## FREE INDEED!

*By Pastor Brian De Jong*

As a freedom loving people, we Americans cherish our liberties. Freedom is the conceptual cornerstone of our country, and has long distinguished our society from others. Patrick Henry's words resonate with us -- "Give me liberty or give me death!"

The ideal of liberty was not original to America, however. One of the clearest statements ever written on liberty is found in the twentieth chapter of our Westminster Confession of Faith -- that excellent chapter entitled "Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience." Our Puritan forefathers thoroughly understood liberty, and that the gospel brings freedom to men and women, boys and girls.

Looking back even further still, we see that the concept of liberty shows up in the ministries of Jesus and His apostles. In John 8, for instance, Jesus tells the Jews that if they would continue in His word, and were truly His disciples, then "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." Several verses later He promised them that, "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

Paul also emphasized this theme in his letter to the Galatians. "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (5:1) And again, "For you were called to freedom, brethren, only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (5:13)

From both a Biblical perspective and a confessional viewpoint, we affirm several aspects of true liberty. First we would believe that true freedom comes only from God. The Son sets men free, and they are free indeed. Any so-called freedom arising from another source is actually cleverly disguised slavery.

We also believe that true liberty is always defined by God's "perfect law of liberty."

Freedom, according to God's word, is not the ability and opportunity to do anything and everything we please. Nor are we ever free to sin against God. Rather, our freedom is defined by the boundaries of God's word.

We are not freed from obedience, but we are freed in order to gratefully obey God's commands. Godly obedience is true freedom, no matter what men may say.

We also believe that "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship." (WCF 20.2) As the Lord of our consciences, God has freed us from all human tyranny -- especially in religious matters. Mere mortals may not require us on their own authority to believe certain things or to act in particular ways. They are especially forbidden from regulating how we are to worship. Only God holds the prerogative to make such decisions and declarations.

While holy men do have the responsibility to instruct God's people in what the Lord requires, those men must never wickedly usurp God's place as the only Lawgiver for Israel. In other words, the church's power is a "declarative" power -- declaring God's will as it is revealed in God's word -- "Thus saith the Lord..." But when men set aside God's word and begin commanding or requiring us to believe and obey anything contrary to God's word, such men have become tyrants. God has freed us from their tyranny, and we ought not submit again to such slavery. Christ has freed you in order that you may enjoy your Christian liberty. Never forfeit your freedom! But instead, use your freedom to obey God's word and to serve others in Christian love. This is true liberty!



Volume 1, Issue 5

May 2006

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### Mnemonics...

- *Trustee Meeting, May 2nd*
- *Men's Breakfast & Study, May 6th*
- *Ladies Luncheon, May 6th*
- *Youth Group, May 14th*
- *Session Meeting, May 16th*

# Promoting Spiritual Growth

*By Pastor Brian De Jong*

1 Thessalonians 5: <sup>11</sup> *Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.*

As believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, and as co-heirs of eternal life, we have a God-given duty to encourage one another to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior. This duty to promote growth is given not only to the Pastor, the Elders and the Deacons. This is the joyful privilege and awesome responsibility of every believer, irrespective of physical age, spiritual maturity, or station in life. In other words, this is your own personal duty. God wants you to encourage and build up your brothers and sisters in the faith.

How exactly does spiritual growth happen? What brings about that process? Ultimately we must admit that although we may plant the seed, or water the soil, it is only always God who makes things grow. Indeed, He grants growth according to His holy purposes. Sometimes it seems like believers make little progress in the faith. At other times, we resemble the weeds that grow in our flowerbeds. So at bottom, it is the mysterious will of God that accounts for seasons of great spiritual progress, as well as occasional times of spiritual declension.

Yet we also know from God's word that He has included men in this ministry of reconciliation. The Lord could easily have done His good work without our participation – He surely didn't need our help! But for His own wise reasons, He delights to use people just like ourselves. He draws to Himself those whom He has chosen, and He outfits us for our task. He then commands us to “encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, and be patient with everyone.” We have an ongoing obligation to “spur one another on to love and good deeds” as well as to “bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”

Here at Grace Church this type of ministry has long been active. The stories I hear about the “old days” often include direct spiritual assistance from one person to another. There is a heritage of spiritual care in this congregation. Even these days there are some individuals meeting together to encourage one another, to pray for each other's needs, and to study the Bible together.

The Session is delighted to see this trend, and is in the process of implementing a mentoring program. The idea for this mentoring program arises from such passages as 2 Timothy 2:2 “*The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*” By pairing together more mature and less mature believers, we desire to promote spiritual encouragement and Christian growth. This is really another name for one-on-one discipleship, with a heavy dose of mutual encouragement mixed in. Through personal interaction, discussion of God's word, and seasons of prayer, we expect that blessings will flow to all involved.

While the details of the program are still being worked out, we can announce that Don Schlernitzauer and Carla De Master have agreed to serve as co-coordinators. Carla will be helping the women and Don will be encouraging the men. More specifics will be made available in the coming months, and will be published through the Bulletin and/or Reflections.

For the present time, the Session simply encourages everyone to pray for God's continued blessings upon Grace Church, and upon the plans for this new initiative. May much good fruit come to the praise of His glorious grace.



Grace OPC

# May 2006

*Showing forth the  
excellencies of  
Jesus Christ*



**JESUS**  
**THE WAY,**  
**THE TRUTH,**  
**THE LIFE.**

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	2 Trustee Meeting 7:00 p.m.	3 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	4	5	6 Men's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Ladies' Luncheon 12 p.m.
7	8 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class 4 p.m.</i>	9 Pine Haven Study 1:30 p.m.	10 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	11	12 Catechism Class 11 a.m.	13
14 Missions Sunday Youth Group	15 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	16 Session Meeting 6:30 p.m.	17 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	18	19	20
21	22 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m. <i>Theology Class 4 p.m.</i>	23 Pine Haven Study 1:30 p.m.	24 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.	25	26	27
28 Lord's Supper <i>Malawi Farewell (tentatively)</i>	29 Women's Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.	30	31 Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.			

## WIDE AS THE WATERS

*The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired*

*By Benson Bobrick*

Reviewed by Joel Moody

I recently finished reading the aforementioned book and would like to share a bit about the book. Bobrick reveals to the reader the various translators and translations leading up to the King James Version of the Bible. He describes some of the struggles within the Roman Catholic Church as well as Protestantism as it developed in England. Some of these struggles were precipitated by the greater availability of the Bible to the English people. Bobrick shares with us some of the political struggles as well between the ruling Monarch and various church leaders. He brings us into the time periods of King Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary Tudor, Elizabeth I, and others. These were periods that varied in their degrees of tolerance (or intolerance) in allowing (or forbidding) the Bible's availability to the people in their own tongue. I would highly recommend this book.

During the medieval time period, the Bible available to the English was the Vulgate, St. Jerome's translation of the Bible into Latin in 405 A.D. Before The Scriptures had been translated into the English vernacular (common tongue of the people), the Bible "was reserved unto the medieval clergy to dispense as they saw fit." (p.11). The limits on the availability of the Scriptures would continue for another thousand years. Bobrick brings the reader into the times and events of those involved in the translation of the Bible into English. He describes the consequences to some of those who brought the Word to the people in their own language, such as John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, Miles Coverdale, and others. As a result of the increased availability of the Scriptures, religious debates ensued within the land and beyond. The English language be-

came more standardized as a result of the increased availability of the written Word after Gutenberg's invention of movable type around 1450 A.D. In addition, "once the people were free to interpret the Word of God according to the light of their own understanding, they began to question the authority of their inherited institutions, both religious and secular, which led to reformation within the Church, and to the rise of constitutional government in England and the end of the divine right of kings." (p.12). "In 1604, a committee of fifty-four scholars, the flower of Oxford and Cambridge, collaborated on the new translation for King James. Their collective expertise in biblical languages and related fields has probably never been matched, and the translation they produced -- substantially based on the earlier works of Wycliffe, Tyndale, and others -- would shape English literature and speech for centuries." (Comments taken from the jacket cover). Bobrick gives examples of some of the words or phrases that have become common to the English language: "Tyndale had coined words and phrases like 'peace maker,' 'passover,' 'long-suffering,' 'scapegoat,' 'the Lord's Anointed,' 'flowing with milk and honey,' 'filthy lucre,' 'the salt of the earth,' and 'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Coverdale, 'tender mercies,' 'respect of persons,' 'lovingkindness,' 'a perfect Babel,' 'the eleventh hour,' 'to cast pearls before swine'; the Geneva Bible, 'Vanity of vanities,' 'except a man be born again,' and other unforgettable turns of phrase. The Second Wycliffe version, Matthew's Bible, and the Bishop's Bible had likewise been sifted for their own grains of gold." (p.258) "In the end, the King James Version was such a book, wrote Macaulay (in his essay on Dryden), that if 'everything else in our language should perish it would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power.'" (p.259).

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



The Monday Morning Women's Bible Study meeting at the church.

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### *Lord, Teach me*

Lord teach me to love you,  
And teach me to worship you,  
Lord teach me to honor and praise you,  
And help me to learn about other things too,  
Teach me, teach me! Teach me to love and obey,  
Teach me to be kind and to pray,  
Teach me, teach me! Teach me day by day.

*Katy Chupp*

*This poem was written by Ivan & Carla De Master's 9-year-old granddaughter.*

## May Birthdays

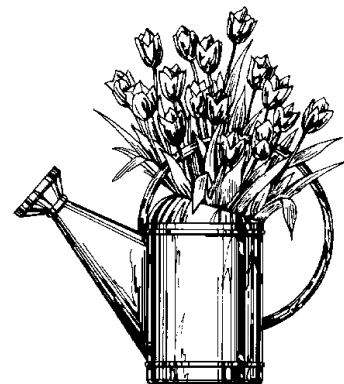


Happy  
Birthday!!!

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## Ladies Luncheon

The Ladies Luncheon will be held at the church on May 6th starting at noon. All ladies and girls are invited to attend. Please contact Gail Moody for more information.





# MALAWI DINNER & GAME NIGHT



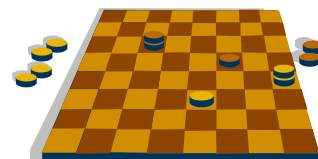
The Malawi Dinner & Game night was held on April 1st at Grace Church. Several Malawian students from Lakeland College joined us to make a traditional meal from their country in Africa. They worked hard to prepare the food.



Mark Berenschot lead with a Psalm before the meal. The core food was called Nsima (see the recipes on the following page.) The food is traditionally eaten with bare hands, after they have been washed & moistened with water. This part was optional for us.



After the dinner, everyone enjoyed snacks and desserts and sectioned off into different groups to play their favorite game. Among the games enjoyed were Pit, Boggle, Monopoly, and Rummikub.



# Malawian Recipes

by Mrs. Ndamyo Mwanyongo

## Fried Cabbage

### Ingredients:

Cabbage  
Onions  
Tomatoes  
Salt  
Vegetable oil

### Method:

1. Chop onions, tomatoes, and cabbage.
2. Heat a small amount of vegetable oil in a saucepan.
3. Fry onions and tomatoes
4. Add salt.
5. Add cabbage to the soup.
6. Continue stirring for about one minute.
7. Serve with nsima, rice, or potatoes.

## Stewed Chicken

### Ingredients:

Chicken  
Onions  
Tomatoes  
Salt  
Vegetable oil  
Spices (according to one's wish)

### Method:

1. Cut chicken into small pieces.
2. Put chicken in a saucepan, add salt, and allow

to stew on medium heat for about 15 minutes.

3. Chop onions and tomatoes.
4. Fry the pieces of chicken in a frying pan, allowing them to brown.
5. Fry onions and tomatoes to make a tender soup.
6. Pour the soup on top of chicken, add some water, and allow it to boil on medium fire for about 10 minutes.
7. Add spices according to one's wish.
8. Serve with nsima, rice, or potatoes.

## Nsima

### Ingredients:

Corn flour  
Water

### Method:

1. Boil water in a saucepan (2 cups of water for one person).
2. Mix a small amount of flour separately with warm water. Say one cup of water for 8 cups.
3. Put the mixture into the boiling water, and stir until it makes a porridge thickness.
4. Let the porridge boil for about 10 to 15 minutes, depending on amount of nsima to be cooked.
5. Add more flour to the boiling porridge while stirring with a wooden spoon until you make a thick porridge.
6. Keep on stirring until there is no trace of flour.
7. Put in a big serving plate in small pieces ready for serving.
8. Serve with chicken, beef, fish, beans, or eggs with vegetables.



# Toys and School Supplies for Malawi

*Ivan and Carla DeMaster*



Pictures from Ken Koehler ~

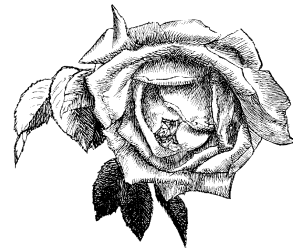
I went out to the Collins Marsh State Wildlife Area, north of St. Nazianz on Thursday (April 17th), and took these

pictures of the Blue Heron nesting in the top of a dead tree in the Mud Creek Bog. What a site to see such big beautiful birds flying in and out of their nest.



# MINISTRY TO PRISONERS

**Crossroads Bible Institute Students Share Their  
Thoughts And Talent From Prison**



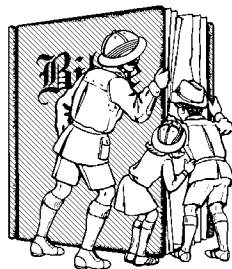


# THE BIBLE

The Bible contains  
The mind of God.  
The state of man.  
The way of salvation.  
The doom of sinners.  
The happiness of believers.  
Light to direct you.  
Food to support you.  
Comfort to cheer you.

It is  
The traveler's map.  
The pilgrim's staff.  
The pilot's compass.  
The soldier's sword.  
The Christian's charter.  
A mine of wealth.  
A paradise of glory.  
A river of pleasure.

Its doctrines are holy.  
Its precepts are binding.  
Its histories are true.



Its decisions are immutable.  
Christ is its grand subject.  
Our good its design.  
The glory of God its end.

Read it to be wise.  
Believe it to be safe.  
Practice it to be holy.

Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully.

It should  
Fill the memory.  
Rule the heart.  
Guide the feet.

It is given you in life,  
Will be opened at the Judgment,  
And be remembered for ever.

It involves the highest responsibility,  
Will reward the greatest labor,  
Condemn all who trifle with its  
sacred contents.

It is "the Word of our God which  
shall stand for ever." AUTHOR UNKNOWN

# Prison Ministry

*from Ivan De Master*

On Thursday, April 20, the annual banquet was held for the Good News Jail Ministry. This event is to promote and to support of the ministry of Chaplain Rick Cawthon. Chaplain Cawthon works in the Sheboygan County Jails ministering to the inmates, the staff, and the police and judicial departments as well. He also helps to coordinate the ministry of the volunteers.

The banquet was held at the Blue Harbor Banquet Hall with about 500 in attendance. The speaker was Rev. Harry Greene who is head of the Good News Jail Ministries across the country and in several other countries as well. He challenged us to recognize the opportunities we have to bring the gospel to men and women who are faced with the brokenness of their lives. He himself found Christ while an inmate in prison.

Three former inmates who found the Lord while in the Sheboygan County Jail also spoke briefly about their faith in Christ. One of them, Chris, is a young man that I visited weekly for about 5 months. He was released about two months ago, being found innocent of the charges against him. He is now attending one of the churches in Sheboygan and looking for work. He is getting help for his spiritual problems and seeking to serve the Lord.

The ministry of the chaplain is supported by individuals and churches of the county. The goal of the evening was to

raise twenty five thousand dollars for this ministry. There is a council that works to promote this ministry during the year. Mr. Floyd Leo is the president of this council. Through their labors and prayers the needs of this ministry have been met.

It is always difficult to determine the number of inmates who were truly converted through the ministry. However, during 2005 488 inmates did profess to believe in Christ. Many of them were given Bibles and 2304 Bible lessons were completed. There were 1753 one-on-one visits made during the year by the chaplain and volunteers. 204 worship services were held and 228 Bible studies conducted. The Lord knows that the sowing of his Word is bringing a harvest to his glory.

This week Monday I was able to give a Bible to one man and to encourage him to ask the chaplain for a Bible study. He was thinking of asking for the book, "The Da Vinci Code". I told him not waste his time on that book but to spend his time in God's Word. He professes to be a Christian but continues to make very poor choices. He and others need our prayers.





# The Schaeffers

*book review by Carla De Master*

While watching a video on the lives of Francis and Edith Schaeffer, I was recalling the impact of their writings on my life. We have several books in the library by them. I hope you have discovered them and treasure them too. Here are some of them.

When we were raising our first family, there were few books beside the Bible on child rearing. Dr. Spock helped me diagnose diseases and physical problems but Edith Schaeffer helped in the guiding of the family in her books Hidden Art and What is a Family? A quote from Edith on what is hidden art goes this way: "I would define 'hidden art' as the art found in the ordinary areas of everyday life. Each person has, I believe, some talent which is unfulfilled in some hidden area of his being--a talent which could be expressed and developed." Some of the 12 hidden art topics Edith covered in the book are music, sketching, painting and sculpting, writing prose and poetry, and drama. Each of these areas can be developed in the home, making it a meaningful appreciative place to be. In the ordinary event of serving a meal, artistic touches make it special.

Edith had a home where children grew in music appreciation by playing instruments and listening to a variety of music. ( I was delighted this past week to know our grandson's favorite radio station was classical music.) One thing from her chapter on sketching that helped me a lot was teaching children to take sermon notes. At two, Mom can take the child on her lap and sketch what the pastor is talking about and by 5-8 the child can take simple notes in picture and words. I used this with all our children with a variety of results. Some of the papers I have kept are sermon notes by our

kids.

What is a Family? " records deeply human experiences as wife, mother and grandmother at L'Abri, the world-renowned Christian community in Switzerland. The unique insights she has gained there as helpmate to her brilliant husband, Dr. Francis Schaeffer, mother to their four children, counsellor to the hundreds who have stopped at L'Abri in their search for meaning in life, are invaluable to everyone who wants to capture the essence of Christian family living." Eleven topics are covered with the wisdom of experience, with numerous examples.

L'Abri tells where and why the community in Switzerland began about 10 years after WWII when young people were seeking meaning in life. It means "shelter" and provided students with a place to ask questions and receive answers that were true and from the Word of God.

No Little People is the culmination of 16 sermons given in the chapel at L'Abri or in speaking engagements around the world. Dr. Schaeffer is a student of scripture and a student of contemporary culture and can apply truth to life. It is wonderful to know that in God's eyes there are no little people, no little places. Ten things or people from the Bible are expanded and applied, such as Moses' rod, the men in the fiery furnace, David, the furniture in the tabernacle, Elijah and Elisha.

True Spirituality was written after Francis Schaeffer had spent time alone rethinking his past agnosticism and Christianity after about 10 years in the ministry. He develops in this book what the Bible says about the meaning of the finished work of Christ for our present lives. It was written 2 years before L'Abri began and edited and published 10 years later.

## COMMENTS ON FINANCES

*from Joel Moody*

### General Fund

First quarter actual General Fund receipts totaled \$49,995.29 as compared to budgeted receipts of \$33,518.50. Actual disbursements for the same period were \$30,783.06.

### Benevolences

First quarter Benevolence receipts totaled \$4,438.30 as compared to budgeted receipts of \$3,750.00. Actual benevolence disbursements for the first quarter were \$2,075.00. Each month \$525.00 is disbursed towards Presbytery and Denominational Missions needs. In addition, during March, \$500.00 was directed to the support of Rev. Karl Thompson serving the Menominee Indians in northern Wisconsin.

During April, \$2,000.00 was directed to the Hub Spokes Missions Program. For May, \$500.00

is budgeted for disbursement to the Kings' Men Offering. Those funds assist newer churches in their building needs.

### Ashley De Troye

We have received designated gifts towards Ashley De Troye's planned missions trip to Nigeria totaling \$1,816.00. In addition, the Sunday School offerings are being set aside for this same purpose. Those now total \$536.15. Both of these amounts include receipts through April 23, 2006. On Monday, April 24, 2006, a check was disbursed for both of these amounts to the Christian Medical and Dental Association/Global Health Outreach for the support of Ashley's planned trip. Further news will be provided if there is a need for more funds towards her trip.

## ANNUAL PINE HAVEN SPRING SALE

Mark your calendars for Fri., May 5. It's time again for the annual Pine Haven Auxiliary Spring Bake & Craft Sale. The sale will be held from 9:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. in the lobby of Oostburg State Bank. The following items will be available to purchase: homemade cookies, bars, pies & breads, afghans, and more.

**S A L E**

We ask for your support of residents by donating homemade baked goods & handmade arts & crafts to be sold at this sale.

Contact Kate Nagle or Marge Halbach if you are interested in helping. Also, don't forget to purchase a few treats for yourself & others.







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

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of Grace OPC

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CHECK OUT THE WEBPAGE:  
**WWW.OPC.ORG**

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★ The men responsible for the creation of the Confession of Faith & Catechism we use in the OPC church came from England?

★ They met at Westminster Abbey in 1643 at the request of Parliament?

★ They met to see how to make the Church of England like the Church of Scotland & Reformed ones?

★ The “Westminster standards” is a name for these Confession of Faith & Larger and Shorter Catechisms they came up with?

★ This did not last in England, but Scotland government accepted it?

★ The Presbyterian Church in America & later the Orthodox Presbyterian Church accepted them with some changes?

★ All this info and more can be found on the OPC website at <http://www.opc.org/preface.html>

### PISTACHIO BREAD

- 1 pkg. instant pistachio pudding mix
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 white cake mix
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 cup sour cream
- 4 eggs beaten

Combine all ingredients, mix for 2 minutes. Spread in 2 greased loaf pans.

Combine:

- 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 1/2 cups chopped nuts
- 1 Tbsp. cinnamon

Top and cut through loaves. Bake at 350° for 55 minutes.

*Phyllis Nyhof*



“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?”