

at first

FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

A Tale of Two Serves

By Cheryl and Julianna Lantz



It was the best of times... This summer mother and daughter each experienced their first Serve trip. Mom went to a large urban centre and daughter to a smaller outdoor camp centre. The thing that we both shared was a long drive—Cheryl in a packed school bus along with other area churches and Julianna in a van with just her group.

The van was quickly nicknamed “the Beaster” and the 2 guys took shelter in the back to try to escape 7 gals singing Disney tunes for 14 hours! Julianna’s drive ended at Camp Penuel near Ironton, Missouri. This Serve project provided manual labour to build cabins and improve the roads at a camp for inner city kids.

Sometimes they didn’t have the right tools for the job but they always had the right attitude. The groups working on the cabins didn’t break for lunch to get as much done as possible and everyone always looked for work to do. In the evening, the SERVE group sang their hearts out along with the camp kids during praise and worship time.

The big yellow school bus ended its long trip at the big new church in Fairfax, Virginia to join the big crew of Servants destined for the Washington, D.C. area. There were many projects for these crews. Groups of 8 worked on four different sites each—from soup kitchens to day camps to group homes to an organic farm. All of our hosts were amazed at the work ethic of the Servants. Just like the Ironton group, they wanted to do things right and to see something finished/accomplished for all their hard work. The evening praise and worship band was awesome! It was like going to a concert every night.

It was the worst of times. . . well, sort of. Each group had to endure hot, humid weather. The Ironton folks found some relief in water fights and daily swims. The nights were hot for sleeping but they were too tired to stay up long talking. The D. C. group had both indoor and outdoor sites and did their fair of share of sweating. They had the luxury of an air-conditioned home base and recharged to stay awake late each night talking (at least the girls did!)

Both groups found it hard to leave because they were participating in something amazing and had made new friends. We’d like to thank our church for supporting the SERVE project and everyone who helped us with fundraising efforts. Thanks again for the memories. We’d do it again!

What is Happening With Worship?

By Linda Fletcher

What kind of music do you listen to? Does the music you listen to provide a glimpse of who you are as a person?

Music plays such a part of our lives that I bet most of us don't even realize how much it is around us. I grew up in a home that always had music on. Whether it was the radio, a favorite record (yes, record) or my brothers' stereo pounding in the basement, it was there. Wherever we went, we had music on. I suppose that is why I love music so much.

The reason I am asking these questions is because the music we choose in our homes, offices and churches does provide a glimpse of who we are. Music at First is at the heart of who we are. We love to sing and to do music well--all to God's glory.

On Sundays, music plays an important part in our worship services. Music touches people in very different ways by way of the Holy Spirit. We on the Worship Leadership Team choose the music very carefully for a worship service. When we have a piece of music, we go through several steps:

- a) Does it glorify God?
- b) Is it scriptural/ biblical?
- c) Is it familiar – easy to sing?
- d) Where is the focus of the song?
- e) Does it fit with the theme?

If the answer is 'yes' to all of these, we include the song in the service. This is not only applied to the songs we sing, but also to the prelude, offertory and postlude. It all has to fit.



Over the course of the year, we try new songs; sometimes the songs work well and sometimes not so well. We find our songs from attending worship conferences, listening to new CD's and by word of mouth. If you have a favorite song and we have not sung it yet, we'd love to give it a try. In prior newsletters, we have directed your attention to various CDs. One CD that really stands out it is called Today by Brian Doerksen. We have sung several songs from this CD already and we would encourage you to give this one a try. *Faithful One*, *Everlasting* and *Refiners Fire* are just a few of the songs on the CD that we have sung, but there are many more that we are eager to use.

While I am on the topic of music, WLT is looking to expand our Worship teams. We are desperate for drummers and guitarists. We are also hoping to start up a Drama team to help in the worship services. If you feel that you have the gifts and passion in these areas, please email the church office at firstcrc@skynet.ca.



Those of us on WLT really do not like to boast about our accomplishments because we give God the glory for all we do. However, once in a while we just have to share our joys. CRC Publications produces a quarterly magazine, *Reformed Worship*, which we use as a tool to help plan worship. We are proud to announce that First CRC has been published! Our Christmas 2003 theme, *The Places of Christmas* (from the Garden of Eden to the New

Jerusalem), has been put into print for all of North America CRC and non-CRC churches to re-use in their own churches. We are so thankful for the gifts of creativity that God provides for our church in our church!

Praise God from Whom ALL blessings flow!

Staff-- Senior Social

This twice-a-year event is made possible by volunteers who plan the program and provide the food. All had a wonderful time.



Seniors' Elder Rjini Koops cuts the cake



Alice Barata pours coffee for Fran Bouwman and Truus Zwiers



Barb Morrison and Donna Kuiken prepare sandwiches for lunch

Youth Group Starts Again!

First Church's youth groups have held several get-togethers this past month to kick off the new season. Our first meeting was held September 11 when fourteen people showed interest in going on SERVE next summer!

We were blessed by GREAT weather for camping the week-end of September 16 – 18 and enjoyed a Saturday afternoon relaxing on the beach!

September 25 we attended a dynamic youth service hosted by Aylmer CRC where Jolene DeHeer spoke to us about not making excuses for doing God's work.

Our Oct. 2 meeting is scheduled for us to discuss the Micah Challenge and add our voices to this call.

Our Youth Group will continue to meet throughout the winter, even though our leader Anita Plat-Kuiken, will be busy with her new baby! We plan to attend the Southwest Retreat for area CRC youth groups in November, have a movie night, and hold a few meetings with our leaders, Roger Kuiken, Dan Flaherty, Michelle Super and Sandra Bork.

Keep your eyes open for our fundraising efforts for SERVE 2006!

Someone Else's Shoes...

by Pastor Willemina

What cleaning gadgets do you use in your kitchen: a sponge, a brush, a cloth, a plastic 'scrubby'? Do you leave them out in the sink or hide them underneath in the cupboards?

During three of my four years in Vancouver, I lived in an intentional community house. "What is that?" you might ask. Well, several fellow Regent students and I decided to rent a house together. But we didn't want to be the type of housemates who were merely ships passing each other in the night.

CD's Are Off and Running!

Our Compact Disciples (CD's) have kicked off their season by going to the beach, having a meeting/fun afternoon at Anita's, going roller blading, and doing a Scavenger Hunt at White Oak's Mall. Congratulations to the winners of the scavenger hunt: Kristen Dykstra and Amber McCallum.



CD's future plans are roller skating, and a movie night at Pastor Willemina's, as well as a meeting with our pastors on November 19.

Finally, at this time, the CD program is still looking for a male leader to help out on Saturday afternoons. Give some thought to putting in your time in this ministry!



We wanted connection, commitment and the possibility for authentic Christian community. So, we committed to dividing all household chores, took turns cooking each weeknight, and contributed to a common food budget. We also had weekly household meetings with our infamous whiteboard on which anyone could write down issues or concerns arising the week previous.

At one of our weekly meetings, a housemate had listed "Kitchen" on the whiteboard. When we came to that topic, she slipped to the kitchen and

returned carrying various cleaning gadgets in her arms. With great precision, she laid them out on our dining room table: a yellow sponge, a rectangular brush, a blue washcloth, a plastic pink scrubby, a dish brush with soap in the handle. With controlled exasperation she asked, "Do we *really* need ALL these items by the kitchen sink?" One by one, she held up the objects. And with each object came an argument of how that was the best item by which to clean the kitchen sink and countertops. Personally, I argued for the dishcloth (aka "wasdoekie"). My mother ALWAYS used a dishcloth—and she's one of the cleanest people in the world. Besides which, you can use the cloth to grab crumbs, which is MUCH better than the sponge which just shuffles crumbs along. At the end of this presentation we all looked at each other with great amusement. And I was amazed how bits of our stories and childhood were so deeply connected to these simple kitchen gadgets. More than that, I came to appreciate the diversity of my housemates, with just that much more understanding of who they were in the common tasks of living. Could that be one of the keys to authentic Christian community?

I want to offer this column as a means by which we can hear stories that are not necessarily our own. There is a common saying—that we won't understand someone until we walk in their shoes. Let's try it, then. Let's walk in someone else's shoes, see life from their perspective and celebrate their unique contribution to the body of Christ. In fact, I encourage you not to wait for the next article. Find someone in our church community who is different from you. Introduce yourself and find out how life looks from their perspective. Ask them what cleaning tool they use for their kitchen sink and countertops. Come to understand and appreciate their stories, their experiences—and you will be amazed.

Editor: Jan Westerhof
453-0284
westerhof@skynet.ca
Printing: Barb Morrison

Introducing . . .



Len and Denise Luyt have returned to First Church after an absence of six years. In the meantime, they lived in Illinois, where Len pursued post-doctoral studies in Chemistry and in New Hampshire, where he worked for a pharmaceutical company. Back in London, he is now a scientist with the London Cancer Centre and an assistant professor at UWO. Denise is a physiotherapist and is working for Body Mechanics Physiotherapy. Phone: 434-9287



Neil Van Andel is a new student member. He is a 3rd year mechanical engineering student at UWO. He regularly attends Common Ground which he enjoys very much. His home church is Palmerston CRC.



Katrina Vander Velden is one of our student members. She is a 4th year music/education major at UWO, with a concentration on the flute. She has joined a Praise Team, as pianist, and has attended a couple of small groups--Sewing the Seeds of Friendship and the Evening Coffee Break. Her home church is Drayton CRC



David and Sara Nicolai moved to London last fall from Calgary where they lived for a while. Originally, they are both from northern B.C. Sara is a student at UWO pursuing a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy. David is a heavy duty mechanic and is working for Toromont Caterpillar. They are members of small group which they enjoy very much. Phone: 438-6927

From Susan Van Daalen

Over the past two years, while I attended Redeemer University College, God has opened up my heart and has led me to new unexpected places on my journey with Him. This past February I had the opportunity to travel to Amsterdam on a 10 day mission trip. During this short period, our team was faced head on with the brokenness that's in our world. But more importantly, God used this time to show us how he still has a strong grip on the world, even in a place as broken as the Red Light District. We were able to see this through the ministries run by Youth With A Mission within the city, some of which we were able to participate in. The short time I spent in Amsterdam challenged me in many different ways. After much thought and prayer, I have decided that I would return to Amsterdam in the fall to further pursue my missions minor. More importantly, I will be headed to Amsterdam to further discover my identity in Christ. The program I am enrolled in is called Discipleship Training School, a six month program put on by Youth With A Mission. For the first three months I will be living in Amsterdam and doing intensive training in ministry while participating in some of the ministries in the Red Light District. For the last three months, I will be sent abroad, to another urban setting somewhere in the world, where I will be completing the 'outreach phase.' During this time I will be putting into practice all that I have learned during the first phase.

I know that these next months will be very challenging for me, but I feel like this is where God has called me to at this point in my life. I have no doubt that if I'm open to it, he has big plans for me there. I would greatly appreciate your prayers for me as I chase after God in Amsterdam. Thanks and God bless you all.

Sea to Sea and First Church



On Friday, July 22, at 5:00 am, after 3 frantic days of organization and preparation Ben and I left our home to begin our journey to Winnipeg and join the Sea to Sea bike tour for three weeks as support personnel. We were excited about the trip, but anticipating two very long days of driving.

We arrived in Winnipeg on Saturday evening, joined up with the tour for the Sunday night celebration service and were quickly put to work on Monday morning.

As SAG (Support And Gear) drivers our job was to space ourselves out along the route, usually every 20 - 30 km, find a safe space to park our vehicle off the road and wait. We carried with us supplies of fresh water, snacks, usually cookies or crackers, a first aid kit, a bike pump and sundry bicycle repair items. We also supplied Kleenex or wet wipes when needed, had the day's map handy and provided encouragement and moral support when the next hill looked too big or the saddle sores proved too painful. I also used my vehicle to shuttle people to showers, hospitals, the closest bike shop, or into camp when they just couldn't peddle the whole day. Often cyclists, who left camp in the cool, damp morning hours, would shed clothing along the way and I would spend parts of my evenings distributing articles of clothing that had been left in my van earlier in the day.

While I often felt that it was the cyclists who were doing the hard work and admired their determination and stamina, we also received much praise and thanks from them. They told us how much they looked forward to seeing a friendly face along the side of the road and that they often checked their odometer in anticipation of the next scheduled stop. One cold, wet, windy morning just outside Thunder Bay spent directing people into warm shelter, distributing towels, blankets and rubbing feet so that feeling would return quickly impressed upon me how much we were appreciated.

The Sea to Sea bicycle ride across Canada was an exciting experience for the Christian Reformed Church as over 150 cyclists participated in the 100th birthday of the Canadian CRC by raising money for Home Missions. We at First also found ourselves part of the adventure. John Vander Steen was the representative from our church and we have already heard his reports of his experiences and impressions. He's sharing few pictures in this newsletter. Heather Fieten and Ben Almond also were participants on this trip, which required lots of support people. And when the cyclists arrived in southwestern Ontario, First Church sent two busloads of (somewhat rowdy) people to Guelph for the Sunday Worship Celebration.

What I Did on my Summer Vacation or A Port in a Storm - Tales of a Sea to Sea "SAG" Wagon Driver By Heather and Ben

When people talk of their summer vacation they usually speak of cottages and camp grounds and relaxing days spent soaking up the sun or fishing. Holiday stories do not usually include peleton meetings, mobile kitchens, cheering crowds and days spent sitting at the side of the Trans Canada Highway waiting for the next cyclist to pass by, and maybe stop. But when they do, they make for a great experience.

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It wasn't all work; there was lots of time to play too. I think Ben swam in almost every body of water, including pools, that exist between Winnipeg and Guelph. We spent time in some of the most beautiful campgrounds this province has to offer.

Highlights of the trip for me included meeting up with family in Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, a quiet weekend spent sight seeing in Sault Ste. Marie and the ferry crossing into southern Ontario. We were greeted by cheers from the crowds

on the ferry as it docked in South Baymouth and many people met up with family members left at home 7 weeks earlier. When we disembarked in Tobermory the exit ramp was lined with people cheering and waving banners in support. It was a harbinger of things to come as the road from Owen Sound to Guelph was dotted with supporters at rest spots every 10 to 15 kilometers. It was touted as a day-long progressive dinner.

As those of you who journeyed to Guelph for the celebration rally can attest, it was a wonderful and moving experience. The cyclists and support felt like Olympians entering the stadium to a lengthy standing ovation. We left the tour on a high note but also with a longing to continue on to Halifax.

Thank you for your prayers and support. What a blessing and honour it has been to be a part of such a wonderful celebration of our Church's 100th anniversary in Canada.



Visitors from home



Water fights break out on the bus

In Memory

Sid Vander Tuin

by Richard Vander Tuin

Dad was born in Kollum, the Netherlands, on April 27, 1912, the oldest son of a young labourer and his wife. Life wasn't easy and by age 13, Dad had left school to help support the family. By the time he was 16, he had become a barber, training as apprentice.

In 1932, during the Depression, he opened his own shop because he couldn't find work anywhere. Where did he get the money? His friend Martha loaned him 30 Guilders—he said he never paid her back! In 1934 he married Martha—a marriage that lasted 65 years.

In his 93 years, he saw progress of industry and science, the major events of the 20th century, the growth of his family through World War II, major illnesses, immigration to Canada in 1954, marriages, disappointments, celebrations, births, deaths—including the death of a son and friend. My father was strong, forceful, tough, fiercely independent, loyal,

self-educated and with lots of soft spots. His values and principles were rooted in his Christian faith and that is the way he lived his life. He never hesitated to make other aware of how he felt and what he thought. He was a leader in his Christian community wherever he was.

Our mother was the love of his life. Prior to her passing in 1999, she spent a number of years in a nursing home. For all those years, everyday, without fail, he was with her 2 to 3 times a day. When she died, part of him went with her. There was not a day he didn't miss her.

On May 11, 2005, he went to join her and Peter (a son) in his sleep—at peace and ready. We celebrate his long eventful life, his accomplishments and triumphs over adversity—his courage, loyalty and devotion to all he held dear. We will miss him.

In Memory

Mies Van Der Wel

Mies Vander Wel was born in Holland. After she immigrated to Canada, she became a French Professor at Huron College at UWO. She was a lifelong academic, attending five different universities in Holland, in France, in Israel (where she studied Greek and Hebrew after she retired) and UWO. One of her favorite places was Chapters where she could enjoy her love of books and coffee.

Mies was a faithful member of First Church, easily recognizable by her handmade black beret. She always took an active part in worship responses and church meetings. For many years she was the Sunday School Superintendent and many of our members can attest to her powers of persuasion as she recruited teachers. She loved photography and was our unofficial photographer for many years, our major source for pictures of our church's history.

After a short battle with cancer, her Lord called Mies home on July 9, 2005. She remained confident always of the Lord's loving care and protection.

Common Ground Begins New Season



On a warm and sunny Sunday afternoon, Common Ground held its first gathering of the year at Hank and Anne Vander Laan's home. The pool was a major attraction! There was plenty of time for getting members to become acquainted with each other, with our CRC campus chaplains, with our student and youth elders, our pastors, and other church members ,

A light supper of burgers, hot dogs and salads was a real treat. (It is common knowledge that if you feed them, they will come.) Finally there was a time of worship with singing led by a student praise team, and Pastor Willemina presenting a message and introduction to this year's worship theme.



Fanshawe College Chaplain Grace Miedema speaks to the group

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Food planning (and preparation) for Common Ground is now Kathie and Rick Postma's service. They are taking over from Alice Barata, who has been doing this since the beginning and has earned the gratitude of the students for her delicious, home-style soups and casseroles



A praise team led the group in singing; Katrina Vander Velden, Brian Bork, Hannah Hoogendam, UWO Campus Chaplain Mike Wegeman, and Kirsten Eisinga (Student member of Campus Ministry Committee.)



Student elder, Peter Minnesma, chats with new Fanshawe College student.



Common Ground is focused on students and 20-somethings in our midst. Every other week, they meet for a focused worship service followed by a light supper and some social/discussion time. Having found a place at First, these young people have enriched our fellowship with their regular attendance at worship, by joining praise teams, teaching church school, attending other small groups, serving on committees, and going on various mission trips.



Transportation Coordinator, Tim Heerema, on the job



Worship Time

Micah Challenge Sunday

By Trisa Haak

Restorative Justice and Synod 2005

By Rev. John de Vries

On Sunday, September 25, First Church participated in a unique worship experience called Micah Challenge Sunday. This worldwide effort calls for believers to live out God's biblical mandate to act justly and love mercy by advocating for the relief of poverty in Third World countries.

Our church really got "wrapped up" in this, most notably by the large white band that encircled the church! This symbolically represented the white wristbands that are part of the "Make Poverty History" Campaign. Inside the sanctuary, white banners at the front of the church also provided visual reinforcement of this campaign.

To begin the service, various members stood up and snapped their fingers every 3 seconds, which reminded us that every 3 seconds someone dies of poverty-related issues ...someone's daughter,....someone's son,....another child,....

During the children's message, the kids were told that they were blessed to have slept in a bed, to have food on the table for breakfast, to be able to go to school, to be able to see a doctor when they were sick. They were also given a white Make Poverty History wristband to wear, and encouraged to tell their friends why they were wearing it!

Pastor Willemina preached about the Banquet Story, where the poor, blind, and disabled are certainly not excluded from God's great feast. It was a sobering reminder to those of who lead such busy lives that we should never be too busy to refuse an invitation to God's kingdom.

After the service, more than 100 names were added to the Micah Challenge petition that will be sent to the Canadian Micah Challenge headquarters. It will be a lobbying tool that will demonstrate to global and national leaders the strength of our support for the Millennium Development Goals, and beyond the MDGs, our determination to go on working for less poverty and greater justice in the world. The Micah Call is

intended to join Christians together as well as to show our desire to work with other. People were also given a green sheet about the Make Poverty History platform, and encouraged to sign their names to the petition on the website. We were also asked to send a letter to Paul Martin, asking him to stick to Canada's promise of 0.7% GDP in foreign aid spending, continue debt cancellation, and support fair trade initiatives.

Our church members were also asked to "put their money where their mouth is" by committing to a donation to a CRWRC program called "Free a Family". For only \$0.73/day or \$22 a month, a family can be freed from the weight of poverty through this CRWRC program. The display will remain in the Fellowship Hall over the next few months.

As follow-up, there will be a Micah Challenge Tidbit in the bulletin for the 8 weeks following Micah Challenge Sunday, and we will be asked to pray for one of the 8 Millennium Development Goals each week.



The Micah Challenge committee consists of Trisa Haak, Selena Buma, Leanna Zeyl, Marg VanDaalen, and Pastor Pieter (posing on a dark and rainy night.)

**"...And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."
Micah 6:8b**

After the June meeting of Synod, the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) as a denomination has a richer future. Restorative Justice (RJ) principles and practices were proposed, debated, and unanimously accepted to be incorporated into the life CRC churches. In Chicago, the three representatives of the Synod 2005 Restorative Justice Study Report, Dr. Rev. Clayton Libolt, Mrs. Gail Rice, and I met with the Synodical Pre-advice committee to discuss the RJ report and answer questions. Synod's unanimous acceptance of the eight motions presented testified to the quality of the report, the timeliness of the topic and the felt need to update CRC justice ministries.

The Reformation made many "reforms," but the justice system and its "blindfolded lady justice" inherited from the Roman era did not receive the Reformers' consideration. The board of Trustees will decide how the recommendations of Synod will be implemented. At a minimum it is anticipated that "regional volunteers" will nurture awareness of "restorative justice" ministries and needs as they network with church members. Already the denominational justice website provides a forum for all members to exchange "restorative justice" resources and experiences.

For me, the action of Synod marks another significant step on my eighth year 'restorative justice' pilgrimage. The journey began in 1997 when, as member of the Ontario Multifaith Council (OMC) Research Committee, I submitted a proposal that the OMC place restorative justice on their agenda. The acceptance by OMC has led to Family Group Conferencing' workshops and the development of training materials. At the same time presentations were made to the Committee for Contact with the Government. As a follow-up, Peter VanderMeulen (CRC Office for Social Justice and World Hunger) and I collaborated to initiate the CRC Criminal Justice Consultation.

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The Feb. 2002 consultation was attended by CRC judges, lawyers, prosecutors, wardens, chaplains, police, parents and youth workers. It was unanimously concluded that the present Criminal Justice System is failing, that the voice of the church needs to be heard, and that members need support and guidance.

Informal discussions with Rev. Henry Numan, Synod 2001 delegate from British Columbia, led Classis BC Northwest to develop a Restorative Justice Overture which was submitted to Synod 2003. In response to this Overture, Synod appointed and mandated the Restorative Justice Study Committee to probe more deeply into Scripture for RJ supports, to include the American Criminal Justice realities and to report to Synod 2005

The seeds of Restorative Justice have been visibly planted within the life and ministry of the CRC denomination. Synod's decision marks the beginning of a longer journey as we approach new horizons. Rooted in Biblical teachings, restorative justice principles set the table for reparation, restitution, reconciliation, and forgiveness. In Southwest Ontario, it the Chatham-Kent Restorative Justice Committee, started by CRC member initiative, has just received provincial government funding. This will facilitate the hiring of trained staff to begin restorative justice conferencing. With referrals from the judges and police, trained staff will facilitate sessions with youth in trouble with the law and work toward personal and community healing as alternative to jail.

How does restorative justice work? RJ can take different shapes; in South Africa the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provides one example. Native circle sentencing is another. Conferencing, originally developed in New Zealand and Australia, was introduced in the USA by Real Justice and in Canada by the Mennonite Central Committee and the RCMP is the model used most often in Ontario.

For RJ conferencing to be initiated the offender must admit their guilt before the Judge may consider the process. Offenders are made accountable for harm done in a way that the current

System, which is focused solely on past behaviour and future punishment, does not do. Victims have opportunity to express their anger and their pain and to ask for reparation from the offender.

Often, guided by trained facilitators, unscheduled miracles of reconciliation take place between victim and offender. Forgiveness happens and God's grace is experienced again.

Our Members recommend;

Breakout Churches

by Thom S. Rainer. Published by Zondervan, 2005.
Reviewed by Jake Van Dyk

In 2001, Jim Collins published a business best seller entitled, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . and Others Don't*. In *Good to Great*, Collins describes how he set up a research team to evaluate 1,435 established companies. He found 11 companies that had transitioned from mediocrity to excellence over several years and he analyzed what characteristics the "Great" companies had that the "Good" companies did not have. Using the "*Good to Great*" model, Thom Rainer set up a research team of 11 people to review data on some 50,000 churches in the USA. "*Breakout Churches*" is the story of 13 churches and the leaders who moved them from stagnancy to growth and from mediocrity to greatness. Rainer carefully defines the 6 characteristics of a "breakout church" and compares the resulting 13 breakout churches to 39 "regular" churches. With the aid of a graphic, which is used liberally throughout the book, he discusses 6 major factors that distinguish the breakout church from a regular church. While some of the factors leading to breakout churches appear obvious, the analysis of these factors is very instructive.

Perhaps the biggest critique of the book lies in the narrow definition of a breakout church; none-the-less, the characteristics that aid breakout are probably relevant to church growth no matter how the breakout church is defined.

Rainer writes this book in an easy to read manner. While the results of this research are not likely to be a panacea for church growth, it is very instructive to understand the factors that have aided the growth in these breakout churches. As such, this book is a "must read" for anyone interested in church growth.

P.S. For those of you not wanting to read the book, or for those wanting a more detailed review before borrowing or purchasing it, a more detailed, 4-page book review is available by e-mailing Jake Van Dyk at vandyk@uwo.ca.

The Miracle of Kindness

By James Kok
Reviewed by Rev. John de Vries

Is your study group looking for an exciting and Christian life-expanding study guide? I recommend you consider Rev. James Kok's recently published book, *The Miracle of Kindness: Changing the World One Act at a Time*. Each of the nine chapters has a study guide that help the reader reflect, discuss and put into practice "small starts" that nurture "big results."

To order, telephone, CRC's Faith Alive Resources at 1 800 333 8300. When I ordered copies of this life enriching book for family members and hospital employees, the books arrived in my mailbox within three days.



Face painting is always a big hit at the annual Church picnic