

at first

FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Something for Nothing!

Saturday, June 17, was a hot and perfect day for the CD group from First Church to hold a "Bigger And Better" Contest. Two groups of CD's competed with one another to see who could venture into the community and trade a paper clip for the biggest and best item!

Group One managed to make several trades and return with a working vacuum, a wind chime and a red sled.

Group Two managed to wheel and deal and ended up with a clock, a microwave, and a lamp.



Anita, Christine, Athieu and Erin



Lisa, Dave, Sarah, and Steve

Our judges from the Common Ground yard sale team concluded Group Two to be the winner with the "biggest and best" items. It is amazing what profits can be netted from a simple paper clip!

What's Happening with Worship

It's a Grand Thing!

(by Linda Fletcher)

I know what you did last summer but what did you do this summer? *Summer?*

Worship Leadership did not take a break this summer as we met in June and August for regular meetings and then held a back-deck gathering in July to discuss what worship means for First CRC. Our minds seem to be always focused on worship and what elements we can enhance or leave alone to help you worship God.



For instance, in partnership with the Facilities committee, we hope to install multi-media equipment in the church sanctuary by the fall. We have been in close dialogue with the ad-hoc committee and we believe that the equipment will be very good for the congregation. Again, we have another opportunity in helping our congregation grow in their worship time – whether it be on a Sunday morning or throughout the week.

What stems from this is that we are hoping to develop a **Multi-media** team: sound technicians, banner designers, computer wizards and worship people all working together to create the best images to display on the screens. Psalm 33:3 says to “play skillfully” which means that whatever we do in worship for God must be done with excellence. By creating a Multi-media team (a sub-committee of WLT) we can set our goals very high to achieve that excellence. So if you are interested in this, please pass your name to Pastor Willemina.

Another project we are working on is purchasing a **Grand Piano**. *You may not know that the current grand piano is not ours.* We are merely storing the piano for a member of our congregation who is currently living out of the country. We have been storing the piano since 1995 and have been silently fundraising since that time for a new one. We have been in contact with the owner of the piano and they are currently making arrangements to take their piano back. We anticipate that it will be gone before December 2006. Why don't we buy the piano from the owner so they don't have to move it? For most of us, the piano sounds fine and we love it. However, those who play it on a regular basis find this particular piano very difficult to play. It requires constant tuning and the keys and pedals are difficult to press. Don't get us wrong, we are very thankful for the use of the piano but feel that the time has come to purchase one for ourselves. The piano has become just as important as the organ was many years ago. We have a piano picked out and now we need your assistance

It's A Grand Night for ... is back! We held a fundraiser in 1995 and 1997 and now 2006! On November 4th, 2006, WLT will host a **Variety Night**. Bring your best talent (jokes, music, reading, acting, singing, juggling, bird calls, dancing- whatever!) to this evening and support the Grand Piano fund with a donation. Coffee and Dessert will be provided. We will send out more information as the evening comes closer, but don't delay – start thinking. Please register your act with Linda Fletcher.

Over the summer our team has changed almost completely as a few of our members had finished their terms. We thank Mae Bork, Jeff Cain, Frances Cook, and Georgina VandeZande for their years of service on the team. We welcome Krista Buruma, Kirsten Eisinga, Dan Hoftzyer and Christa Wolting. Marg Van Daalen has passed the hat of chairperson to Pastor Willemina.

Our Pastors have also been busy this summer planning our Sunday themes. Here is a small list of the themes up to January 2007.

September 10 & 17 – Hospitality
September 24, October 1 – Missions Emphasis (don't miss the October 1st Drama team!)
October 8 – November 26 – Change Series based on the book by Gordon T. Smith, *Beginning Well*.
December 3 – December 25th - Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe.
January 2007 – Series on Epiphany.

Wow! That's a lot to take in; as I said earlier, we've been busy!

As the song book is always open, please send us your comments, concerns and of course, your praise



During Marg Van Daalen's years as Chair, the WLT worked hard to implement the blended worship style in our services. Marg remains the music team coordinator, making sure that there is a team of musicians in place for every service.

Youth Group Highlights

Our Youth Group year is off to a great start! During the weekend of September 8-10, we got to know each other a bit better on our annual camping trip to the Pineries. Although it was a little cold, it was a great weekend overall.

We're looking forward to an exciting year, full of discussions, quality time spent together, and, of course, a lot of fun. We're currently making decisions regarding SERVE for this year (as well as fundraising for it!), and finding out how, as teens, we fit into Christ's body at First CRC and what we can do to serve the congregation. Our leaders this year are Anita Plat-Kuiken, Roger Kuiken, Dan Flaherty, and Sandy Bork. Please come up and talk to any of the young people or leaders for more information on what's happening and what we're up to.



Introducing. . .



Ben and Jeannette Vanderlugt have transferred here from the Richmond Hill CRC. They are long-time former Londoners who have lived for the past eight years in Markham, while Ben was the executive director of the Lighthouse Christian Community Centre(Toronto) and Jeannette worked at Home Depot. Now back in London, Jeannette is with the local Home Depot and Ben is exploring opportunities for service in the Christian or service sector. In part, they have returned to be closer to family—Sharon and Melissa Flynn and Steve, Julie and Aeryn Vanderlugt (519-204-2865)



Steven and Julie and Aeryn Vanderlugt have transferred here from Good News CRC. Julie is on maternity leave this year from the Elgin Court Public School in St. Thomas where she was teaching grade 6. Steve is an auto mechanic and works at the Bug Stop. (519-269-3531)



George and Robin Saylor and their children arrived in London this summer to take on the job of the new church plant in North London. They come from North Carolina where George was a senior pastor in a Presbyterian church. George is at work preparing for opening the new church plant. Robin is busy at home-- home-schooling their children, **Eden**, 6, in grade 2; **Karis**, 4, in Kindergarten and **Justin**, 2. (519-204-2075)

Niagara SERVE

By Erin McCallum and Kelly Brouwer



On July 15, Erin McCallum, Sam Moor, Kelly Brouwer, Nik Maloney, Chris Cook and Holly Wallace drove down to Niagara Falls, ON. It was a week that promised to be full of fun, work, friendship, laughter, singing, and most importantly, God. Our first day of getting to know each other consisted of a pool party and barbeque and a scavenger hunt. We met our group on Saturday night and we all instantly became friends. Our work week consisted of LOTS of painting, washing windows, gardening, lots of heavy lifting and cleaning rooms.

We all felt a close connection to God, and each day we had the opportunity to do our individual devotions. Each night we had

a praise and worship service, where we could share God sightings we had experienced during the day. We had an amazing speaker who shared his knowledge of God with us in ways that were funny and that relate to teenagers.

On Tuesday evening, after a hard day of work, we drove to a little farm called Agape Valley, where we had a barbeque and an "extreme hayride". Later in the evening we had a praise and worship service unplugged.

Perhaps the highlight of the week was our trip on Thursday to Niagara Falls. We walked down a picturesque trail along the falls and experienced a wonder that only God can create. We got to experience the full awe of Niagara Falls on board the Maid of the Mist, including the feeling of being completely and utterly soaked. We then enjoyed some free time going through wax museums, fun houses and Tim Hortons on Clifton Hill.

But of course, it can be the small moments that make the trip worthwhile; the feeling of accomplishment you feel when you help another person, laughter and tears, the mad races to the showers, and the feeling of belonging around those new found friends. The friendships you

build on one week of SERVE are indescribable. From Sioux Falls, South Dakota to Bowmanville, Ontario, we learned that we are all a part of God's family. Barriers shatter between Americans and Canadians as you find new friends who all share the same love: the love for God. New friendships are made and old ones are strengthened. SERVE is an experience that cannot be replicated. It will never leave us.



Thank you for your prayers for us while we were away. God protected us and showed himself to us more than ever that week, and we owe it all to him.

Sue Van Daalen reports:

First I want to express much thanks for the warm send off and the words of encouragement I received from many of you before I left. It was a clear reassurance that I was being sent out from a supportive and loving community.

We have just finished our 2 weeks of staff training, where myself and 13 other staff members became acquainted with each other and started our preparation for the upcoming journey that we will begin together. We also spent a lot of time seeking God and His heart for this upcoming school year, the outreach location, the speakers we will be inviting and for each of the 14 students joining us. Our first student flew in on Sept. 15 from Wales, and he will be joined in the next few days by students from Australia, Russia, England, Jamaica, Barbados, the States and a few from Canada as well. We are excited to welcome in so many different cultures and to be able to learn from one another and see God's creativity at work.

Our outreach locations is a big topic of prayer right now. As a base, we are focusing on China, Europe, and the Middle East. Those are obviously very broad, and so we are in the midst of seeking God and His will for these students and where He can best use us. As of now, I know that I'll be leading, along with another staff member, a team to China, but the specific destination and vision is still to be decided.

This is continuing to be a journey of stepping out in faith for me, and as my leader said, faith is not something that can be taught...it's something you have to experience. That statement is becoming very real to me. I am getting more and more excited about my role here, and curious to see the way God will use and also lead me. Thank you for your continued prayers and support, and again, feel free to contact me via email or phone.(at susanvandaalen@hotmail.com or (905) 274-7390 ext.304)

Barrie SERVE

By Jenna Brouwer



The London Group is ready to go.

Being one of the eight participants on Barrie SERVE this summer was a true blessing to my life. Out of the three SERVE projects I have been on these past few years, this one has been by far the best.

We were part of a smaller group of about sixty SERVEants from Michigan, Thunderbay, Chatham, and Simcoe. It was really amazing to see how our group of people became so close over the eight days that we were there. I was used to being on a larger SERVE site with more people, but at Barrie you got to know a lot more people on a different level. A lot of us were also reunited with friends from past SERVE projects, so that was amazing.



the entire group

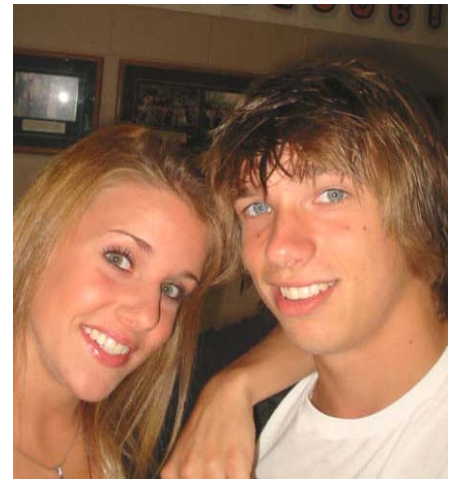
Our SERVE project took on quite a few large tasks. One group re-sided a house, another one cleaned up a whole apartment, and one built a shed. There were also smaller tasks that were assigned such as serving food at drop-in centers, sorting a whole lot of clothes, yard work, painting, or just tidying up rundown buildings and homes.



the painting crew

After long days of work everyone always looked forward to going back to the nice school, where we had dinner, social time, worship and small groups. This year we were blessed with an amazing speaker named Charlotte. She really touched a lot of us including myself.

Another highlight was going to the caves and beach for half a day where we enjoyed and explored God's beautiful creation and spent time with friends.



Jenna and Adrian-"bus buddies"

Personally, this year's SERVE has really had a great impact on my life. God challenged me with choices I had to make about my life and who I wanted to be. I really believe that He put me in the right spot at the right time with the right people. One message from Charlotte that has stuck with me was when she told us we have to "drop our image" and be who God wants us to be no matter what people think. I found I could really do that on SERVE, and as I went home I decided that I wanted to try to live up to what I learned that week and live my life for God alone.

I'd really like to thank all of you who supported our mission trip this past year, and for your prayers before, after and during our mission. God bless.

Missionary News

Back in the DR

By Jacqui Gerrits

Many of you have been wondering about where I am and what I have been doing. The rumours are indeed true; I am back in the Dominican Republic. I am back at the same school and while I am not teaching grade six anymore, I am excited for the opportunity that has me teaching my former students. I am now the grades seven, eight and nine science teacher which means that I have mostly former students. It has been fun to teach the ones that have grown so much since being in grade six and it has been especially great to have my students from last year. The science is a lot more work than I was expecting, but we are discovering amazing things about how God has created us and our world. God's hand is so evident in his creation it is tough not to find opportunities to talk about his greatness.

Life for me here is entirely new. Since I was pretty sure I was leaving, I sold most of what I had, furniture and the truck being the biggest, and moved completely out of my apartment. I now have a new place to live and new roommates. I don't have my own vehicle, but one of my roommates does and is more than generous when it comes to letting me use it.

I thought the biggest change in my future was going to be adjusting to life at home in Canada, but it has turned out to be adjusting to life in a different way here in the DR. Yet through it all, God continues to remain the same. I am grateful to God for that constancy and am confident that no matter what adventures are in store for me here, he is in control and is ever faithful in his love.



Jacqui visits the DR team

The Kapteyns Report

July 2006

Greetings from steamy Chambery, where it's hotter than Porto Velho! We are almost halfway done with our two month intensive course in French. Ray and I are both at the intermediate level, which means we can understand a whole lot, and we can make ourselves understood with lots of long pauses while we search for words, and lots of "how do you say...". We both had eight years of French in school, which we are slowly digging up from the recesses of our brains. But we know we'll still have a long way to go in French when our two months here are over. We learned in Brazil that language school is only the beginning of language learning, and if one is attentive and alert, language learning continues throughout all the years one lives in a foreign country.

We have worked out our class schedule so that one of us is always at home with the children. We've discovered a good library—with books in English—and many beautiful parks, so the kids sort of like it here. But they are eager to get to Cameroon, because, as Peter said, "We want a home".

Thanks once again for all your support, and a special thanks to those who have given extra financial support during this move. It's turning out to be a very expensive undertaking.

Our departure date for Cameroon is Sept. 1, and our address there will be: Ray and Ann Kapteyn

*c/oSIL
BP 1299
Yaounde
Cameroon*

*For financial contributions: Wycliffe Canada
4316 10th NE
Calgary AB
Y2E 6K3*

**Deacons recommend using church budget envelopes marked Kapteyns for those wishing to make financial contributions.
Wilma Gesink –Deacon missionary rep*

The DR Revisited

This year a second team went to the Dominican Republic on service. In late April Harry De Jonge, Carl Banninga, Kevin Linden, and Steve Tigchelaar left for a week of work and fellowship.



Their work this time was part of a larger plan to expand the Ministry Center in Santa Domingo. Most of their effort was spent on concrete forming for a new addition to the Center.



Unlike some of the other trips our members have made, their work was not as directly involved in the life of the community. That involvement came mostly after work. The group worshipped in the local church and made friends with members in the community, especially the children!



Every day the team took some time to reflect on where they saw God during the day, and it was mostly in the people and children. It was both refreshing and sobering to experience a culture not so focused on materialism and privacy as our own North American culture; but which finds joy and satisfaction in other things—family, community and God.

If you missed the annual church picnic this year, you missed out on a lot of fun!

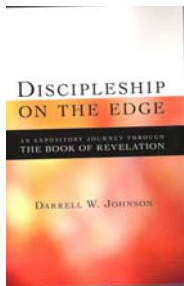


Passing the (wet) sponge

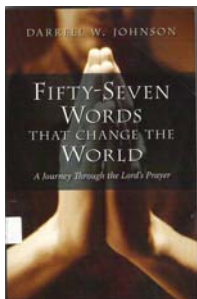


How far can you kick your shoe?

Check It Out



Revelation is probably the most read, but least understood book of the Bible. In *Discipleship on the Edge*, Darrell Johnson drives home the challenging and practical message of Revelation in thirty carefully crated sermons. Paying careful attention to the circumstances surrounding its composition, Johnson shows that the book is not a “crystal ball” but rather a “discipleship manual.” Thoroughly researched and accessible, this collection of sermons is a helpful resource for pastors and small group leaders who are looking for models to help them preach and teach from Revelation in a time when there is so much confusion about the future.



Nowhere is Jesus' brilliance more manifest than in the prayer he taught his disciples to pray, the prayer that has come to be known as the "Lord's Prayer." A mere fifty-seven words in the original Greek, the Lord's Prayer gathers up all of life and brings it before God. In eight stirring meditations, Darrell Johnson shows how the Lord's Prayer sums up the essence of Christian faith and, when prayed in faith, draws us into the Triune God's work of transforming the world.

(Darrell Johnson from Regent College was here for Pastor Willemina's ordination.)

Congratulations to another graduate:

Christopher Broad graduated from MacMaster University with an Honours B.A. in Economics. He is presently working for Trow Associates.

Friends in the DR

