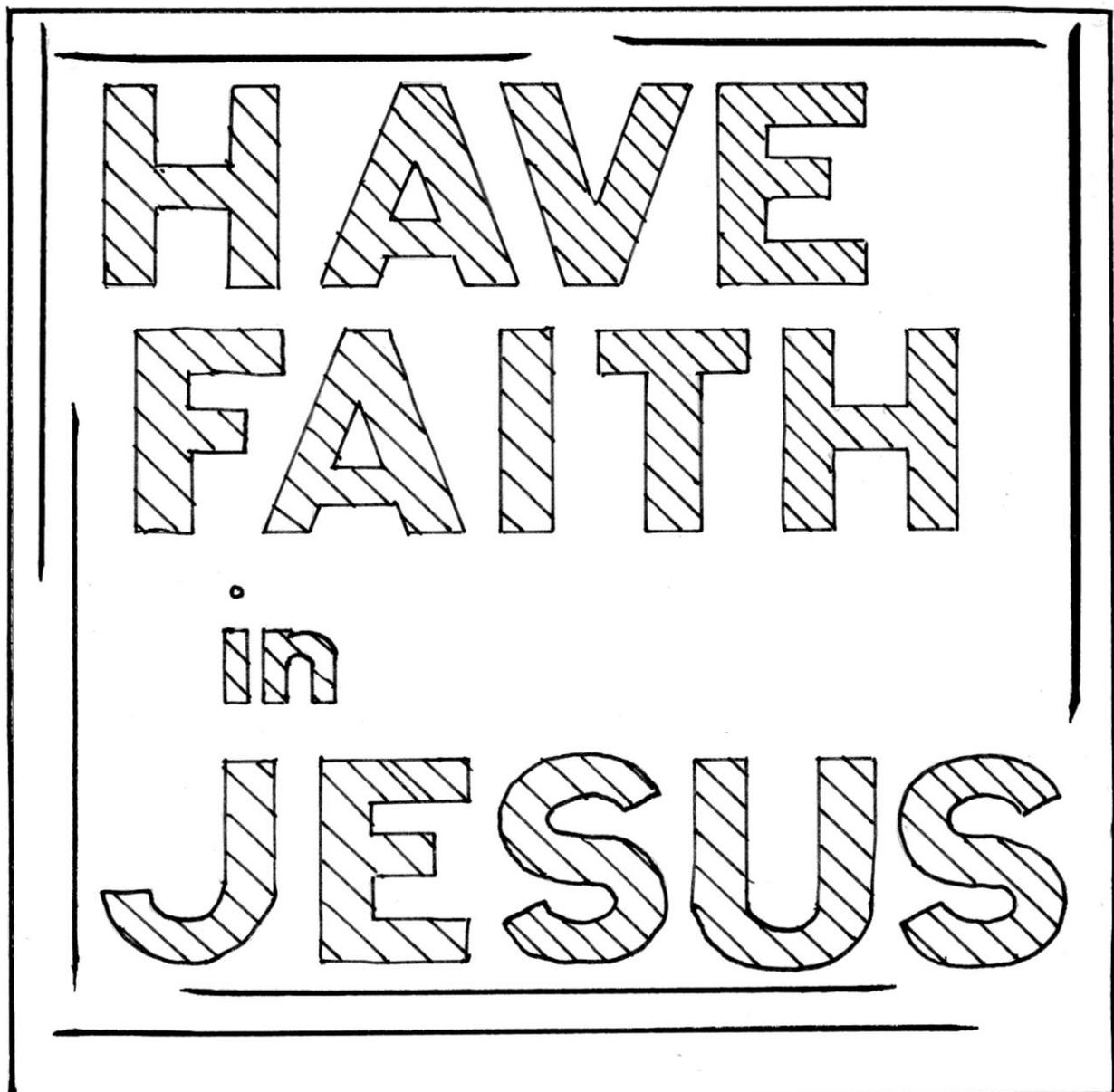


Fuller Life

Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church

MAY 2014



Fuller Life is the newsletter of the Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church

**1239 Fuller Avenue, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506**

Published monthly, except July

**Barb Straatsma, editor
Connie Scheurwater, member in focus articles
Freda Ruffli, collating, circulation and mailing.**

April Council Meeting Report

By Barb Straatsma, Clerk

Lyle opened the meeting with prayer.

The congregation approved the proposal for the lower level remodel at its March 30, 2014 Congregational Meeting. The general contractor has indicated that the work would begin in late spring/early summer taking approximately 2-3 months from start to finish. Jerry Van Veen and Terry Idema will act as liaisons between the general contractor and the church.

Staff evaluations are in process. Parts of the Council Handbook continue to be looked at and updated and hopefully will be finished by June. The February receipts are behind budget which is typical for February but we have a healthy fund balance. Paul Feyen will try to

complete our 2013 audit in April.

All council members received the Ministry Report for the month of March. Pastor Nate continues to make contact with members of the congregation. He and Pastor Morris, Kate Miller, and Marci Phelps are working on establishing a Deacons' Assistant position as explained by Pastor Morris at our March 30 Congregational Meeting. He met with leaders of the church to get to know them. He is involved in a monthly coaching relationship with Peter Holwerda. He is working with Cathy Winterhalter exploring new and creative ways to include the congregation in our worship services to make our worship God glorifying, uplifting, and welcoming. He continues to meet with Josh on a regular basis and has begun discussing the summer youth program. He is also engaged in outreach through relationship building at the Hall Street Bakery, attended the Bakers' Open House, and anticipates more relationship building within our community this summer.

Pastor Morris continues to provide pastoral care to our members. He and Nate meet regularly for mentoring.

Josh and the Youth Group are working their way through the book of Luke during their Sunday night gatherings. All

of the students received a packet containing information on their summer mission trip, Impact Kalamazoo, which will take place on July 6-12. They will be doing two fundraisers – a breakfast and a car wash. An offering will be taken on April 13. Please keep Josh, Jessie, David, Miki, and the youth group in your prayers as they grow in Christ, have fun together, and participate in discipleship/mentorship.

Sue reported on our past and future Adult Education sessions. 80 people attended the Bakers' Open House, ending another great year. You can see the girls' happy faces on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Room. Please remember to pray for these girls over the spring and summer months. Women's Bible Study is led by Martheen Griffioen. They are studying the book of I Samuel. It is the story of the people of Israel who reject the Lord their God but God does not reject or forsake them but listened to them and rescues them time after time. Tuesday Family Nights are in the planning stage with 5 nights scheduled.

The reconstitution of council is in progress. 58 members received a nomination letter for elder, elder or deacon, or deacon. 9 members let their name stand. We are in need of 4 deacons and 3 elders.

A study group was formed to look into our social media church presence and effectiveness. They reviewed what other churches in the area are doing and concluded that Fuller Avenue Church could be well-served with an active social media presence, beginning with Facebook and an updated website and later consider other media options. To be effective, it will take effort and organization and require a coherent strategy. They proposed funding a new part-time titled position with bulletin announcements for two weeks in early May and hire by June 1, 2014. Our current website is 7 years old and in need of a major overhaul to make it more user-friendly, have the ability for church leaders to post information, photographs, and videos about our ministries, and post podcasts of our worship services which will lead to a better church presence that supports our congregational mission and vision. This information will be presented at our May 4 Congregational Meeting and a vote taken.

Pastor Nate will not present any changes in 2014 but will focus on developing trust. He wants to boost morale and bring our ministry programs to the congregation through our Ministry Moment in the worship service. He will bathe all this in intentional prayer.

Our mutual censure topic was the recommendation from the Transition Committee regarding our evening service from their report to Council. They “recommend that the Council adopt a Sunday Ministry Plan that has traditional preaching services only in the morning. In addition, the Council should appoint a committee to propose an alternate, distinctly different, evening program of activities” (this section applicable only). There was support for the motion and discussion followed. The Council approved a motion to appoint a committee to propose an alternate evening program of activities with a mandate to recommend a format(s) for evening services to council by July 1, 2014. A variety of people were recommended to be on this committee.

Lyle closed the meeting in prayer and then the care group elders and deacons met to discuss their care groups.

March - \$35,231.59
YTD Receipts - \$80,671.59
YTD Budget - \$110,330.25

Global Outreach News

By Jay Van Bruggen

As this is being written on "Good Friday" it is impossible not to think of the cross as a

symbol of Christianity. Yet for many parts of the world in which the Eastern Orthodox Church is dominant the symbol of Christianity is not the cross, but the open and empty sepulcher. Both are, without a doubt, symbols of the message of Christianity. We all grow up with certain ideas that seem to be absolute, but sometimes are not really absolute at all, but simply ideas and behaviors that are part of what we learned as we grew up. Pastor Morris once reminded us of the time when adults were only allowed to wade up to their knees at the Christian Reformed Conference Grounds.

The Global Outreach committee supports representatives in Africa, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and Seattle, among other places. It is not always an easy task for these people to adjust to what are the indifferent things and hold firm to the essentials. Zach and Sharon recently wrote about the servant ministry that Jesus spoke of. A Haitian pastor assured him that in Haiti a pastor was not a servant and that part of Jesus teaching could not possibly apply in Haiti. Eric and Penny Schering in Papua New Guinea recently wrote about the difficulty a native pastor was having in negotiating a bride price with his wife's family. A friend from China knew that when eating soup a lot of noise would tell the host that it was very good; he

learned that in the United States not making noise was not an insult to the host.

Global Outreach is thankful that many of the people we support have been in a foreign country for a long time and have been able to adjust to the indifferent things but are successful in following the last command that Jesus gave when he was physically present on this earth: "Make disciples of all nations." Even though some nations may seem far away, today no nation is more than twenty four hours away.



Gluten-Free Communion Bread

By John Chapin

You may have noticed that the bread used for our April communion services was just a little different than you've been used to. And if you were really observant you noticed that there were no crackers in little cups in the middle of the bread trays. All of the bread being served was gluten-free bread from local bakeries.

Why have things changed?
There are two factors driving

this change. One is practical, the other pastoral based on a precedent set many years ago when we made the change from wine to grape juice for communion.

On the practical side, it's very important to avoid any trace of cross-contamination of the gluten-free bread with crumbs from the wheat bread. For those with celiac disease or severe gluten sensitivity, even a crumb of bread can cause a strong allergic or auto-immune reaction. This was always a danger in serving both options in a single tray. And serving the gluten-free option in a separate tray is awkward and draws uncomfortable attention to those who must pass up one tray waiting for the other one to reach them. Keeping the gluten-free bread safe simply wasn't very practical or effective.

On the pastoral side, serving only gluten-free bread for communion reinforces the fact that in Christ we are all one body. Many years ago, Council was asked to provide grape juice for those who had to avoid alcohol. After experimenting briefly with trays that contained some cups of wine and some of juice, Council decided that the unity of the congregation was more important than the preference of some to continue using wine for communion. This bit of Fuller history factored into the Worship Committee's

decision to make this change. We all drink the same cup and we all eat the same bread.

Deciding what sort of gluten-free bread to serve is a bit more complicated than the choice of a grape juice. Bread without gluten doesn't hold together as well as wheat bread, and generally isn't well-suited for a liturgy where we tear pieces from the loaf for intinction. There are numerous gluten-free breads available in Grand Rapids, and so far we've tried two or three options. The Worship Committee may do more experimenting before settling on a consistent source for our communion services.

From those of us who must avoid wheat and gluten, thank you for accepting a change that makes the Lord's Supper an inclusive celebration of the sacrament for all of us.

"Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ may be one in him.... And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf and these grapes from many hills into one cup, grant, O Lord, that your whole church may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom...."

Listening to Sermons on the Fuller Website

By John Chapin

Did you know that the sermons from our services are posted on the church website every week? You can listen to them on your computer or smart phone.

Depending on the browser you're using and your computer's settings, you may be able stream the sermon file and listen within your browser or you may need to download the MP3 file and listen to it with a media player.

To find the list of available sermons, click on the "Sermon Archive" link under the tab labeled "Seeking God."



This will take you to the Sermon Archive page where you can find this year's Sunday morning sermons listed, beginning with the most recent. Simply click on the title of the sermon you'd like to hear.

Sermon Archive

Welcome to our Sermon Archive! If you'd like to hear a sermon by Pastor Nate DeJong McCarron, just click on an MP3 file or listen with a media player.

Please remember that the pastor retains copyright of the sermons. If you should be contacted for permission to reuse any material, please contact the church office. No quotation in another work.

2014 Sunday Morning Sermon Archive

Apr 17	I Am the Gate (Maundy Thursday)	John 10:1-10
Apr 13	I Am the Way	John 14:1-12
Apr 6	A Vibrant Connection	Is. 5:1-7; 6:1-6
Mar 30	I Am the Bread of Life	John 6:24-35
Mar 23	I Am the Good Shepherd	John 10:1-10
Mar 16	I Am the Light of the World	John 8:12-18
Mar 9	Discovering Jesus	John 8:45-58
Mar 2	Stayed on Jesus	Is. 16:1-6
Feb 23	A Promised Restoration	Philippians 1:1-11
Feb 16	A Call to Love: Neighbor	Luke 10:25-37
Feb 9	A Call to Love: Self	I John 2:2-17

On the right side of the page you'll find links to a page that lists Sunday evening sermons and a link to a page that lists all of the sermons in Pastor Nate's Belgic Confession series.

So far this archive has been tested in Windows Internet Explorer, Google's Chrome browser, and on the Android (cell phone) operating system. If you encounter any problems accessing a sermon file, please contact the church office. Marci will pass the information on to the Technology Task Force to resolve.

The deadline for the June issue of the *Fuller Life* is Sunday, May 18, 2014.



Member in Focus – Arlene Van Bruggen

By Jay Van Bruggen

Many of the people who read this will not have known Arlene Carlett Van Bruggen very well. She spent most of her life away from Grand Rapids and Fuller Avenue CRC. She was born in a farmhouse at the edge of Youngsville, a small town in Northwestern Pennsylvania, on May 27 1930, the last of five children. Her father died after a stroke when she was three years old and this meant a serious change in family financial circumstances. The home in town was sold and her mother and the children moved in with her maternal grandparents. Arlene's grandfather, a Swedish immigrant, owned a small dairy farm and sold the milk on a regular route with a dairy wagon pulled by a horse. He often told the family what a great country this was for it welcomed him and permitted him to own a farm and make a living. Arlene walked to school in Youngsville, and was a good student, but no one in that time was expected to do more than go to work locally. The family was poor, her grandparents had died and

she was living with her mother. She graduated on Friday and went to work on Monday morning at the New Process Company, now called Blair after the name of the founder.

She soon had a boyfriend and became engaged while he was a draftee in the Army. They were married and she moved with him to Washington, D.C. where he was stationed. She soon found work in the payroll department, and soon had a high security clearance because she knew where President Eisenhower was, for she paid the pilot of his plane. They then returned to Warren and she had a position in the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters. While there she was responsible for all of the equipment purchases for the Chapman Dam State Park construction.

After her husband's unexpected death of a heart attack while they were on a Sunday afternoon walk, she decided to go on to college and moved into a mobile home in a mobile home park in Clarion, Pennsylvania. It was there that she met a young new faculty member at Clarion State College who had moved his trailer to another space two lots away. She claimed that he volunteered to help walk her large Boxer dog and he never contradicted the story even when he had some doubts. They were married a

few months later. In reality, during this period of time we found agreement on many important things. She was a serious Christian and loved God and we agreed on the value of a Christian family life.

Because I was a member of the Cadillac Christian Reformed Church at that time, she agreed to be married in the Cadillac CRC. It was six weeks before the fall term began, and we put a mattress in a lean-to tent on top of her car and headed west for a thirteen thousand mile honeymoon, that included a visit to the Seattle World's Fair and a brief visit to some friends in Lynden and a walk into Canada; then down the coast to a friend of hers in the Los Angeles area. We talked about going to Mexico, but the weather by the end of July was hot and so we spent some time in the mountains outside L. A. before heading back to Pennsylvania where we settled into a new rented home a few miles outside Clarion. A year later our first child, Sara Johanna, was born and four years later she was followed by her brother, Jonathan Jay.

Arlene had a remarkable artistic talent, she was very aware of color and could match color perfectly; when shopping she would pick a garment or piece of material that matched something she already owned and when we arrived home it was a perfect

match. I learned quickly that if she told me a tie or shirt was not correct, I should change it immediately. I learned through her guidance that the beauty and architecture of a church building was important as well as the sermon. She headed the bi-county artists association in the area and supervised the juried art exhibit in the public library during the annual Autumn Leaf Festival which attracted many visitors during the week as they came for color tours and the food stands, auto shows, and parade as the University celebrated homecoming week. She dabbled in art and had a few paintings in the art show. She was also a leader in the faculty wives club and served as President of that group for two terms. She also presided at church dinners in our home where we could seat twenty four people around the dining room table. A gracious hostess, we also had frequent holiday meals with friends who were as far away from family as we were.

When the children were both in school she went to classes in real estate and passed the state examination and became a real estate agent and had an office in Clarion for clients to visit, although she also spent a lot of time visiting property and searching property records in the Court House.

When the University offered a small bonus if long term

employees would retire almost immediately, she agreed with me that the time had come for me to leave the University. I took a position heading an outplacement office in Chicago, but soon found that it did not fit me. She then called me and told of an advertisement for teachers in China and I applied to the English Language Institute - China (ELIC). We moved from Pennsylvania to Grand Rapids that summer and left for China in August. She looked forward to the adventure as well as I did. She taught a few classes the first year we were in China, but a slight stroke and a serious fall convinced her that she should not do it again.

While in China she was able to prepare good meals for us even though the single hot plate was in the bathroom, the refrigerator was downstairs and in the next building and the toaster oven was in our living room. Besides all that, there were no grocery stores in Kaifeng and so she negotiated with a helpful Chinese friend to buy chicken and pork, and everything else was purchased from street vendors. We were able to buy steamed buns each day just outside the University walls, but eating in a restaurant was not easy unless we were hosting a Chinese friend who could read and interpret the menu. She thrived and enjoyed it immensely. She learned to negotiate chop sticks as well

as the natives. We returned home for the last time in 2002. Arlene's health was failing by that time and it was time to face the realities of old age.

She was diagnosed with cancer in December, 2010. There were drugs available to keep that cancer at bay, but in the spring of 2013 when she was diagnosed with a second form of cancer she entered Faith hospice. She remained at home and succumbed to the end promised in the garden of Eden on February 5, 2014

As her daughter writes: I experienced my mother as a model of the fruits of the spirit. She taught me how to have patience, forgiveness, grace, and joy. Mom was a role model of these virtues as well as providing me with guidance when I stepped outside of these values. Mom was my model of how a Christian woman should behave and I hope that my life reflects all that she taught me.

Update from Lee & Pat Koning

Dear Family and Friends,
We have taken a three month break from CarePage updates. With our doctor's encouragement Lee was given a break in his chemo treatments and we took the opportunity to go to Florida. We had a wonderful time. Our

family visited us there and we continued to make memories as a family. Lee felt very good while we were there and thoroughly enjoyed the beauty and warmth of Florida.

Now that we are back in Michigan, Lee faces CT scans, blood transfusions, doctor's appointments and chemo once again. Last week was a CT scan, yesterday an appointment with the oncologist to get the results, and tomorrow Lee will have a blood transfusion. We are uncertain yet when chemo will begin.

The CT scan showed that the tumor has grown about 10% since January. It continues to impact the pancreas, spleen, kidney, and lymph nodes. We pray with hope that the chemo treatments will once again be effective in reducing the size of the tumor.

On a very happy note --- on March 1, 2014, Sue and Brian moved from Rogers, Arkansas, to near Elmhurst, Illinois. Brian is in a new position still working for Walmart. They are thrilled with this transfer as it brings them so much closer to both families. They have a wonderful support group there because it is where Sue grew up. They have renewed many acquaintances both at Faith Church and at Timothy Christian School. We are so thankful for this development

and see God's hand in providing this opportunity for them.

Once again we thank you for your ongoing prayers. So many of you have told us that we are on your daily prayer lists. This is such an encouragement to us and lifts our spirits greatly. We know that God is with us. He is our helper and strength.

"I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."
Psalm 91: 2,4

Wishing you a Blessed Easter!
Love, Lee and Pat

A Spiritual Gem from Menno Simmons, 1539

The evangelical faith cannot lie dormant
- it clothes the naked
- feeds the hungry
- comforts the sorrowful
- shelters the destitute
- serves those that harm it
- binds up that which is wounded
- has become all things to all men.



- 1 Bekki Landman, Preston Slotsema, Jayne Vander Male, & Laurie Veldheer**
- 4 Emma Hunderman**
- 6 Phyllis De Jong & Emma Gabites**
- 9 Ron Ensing
Dale & Sharon Rietberg (1980)**
- 11 Ben Stout**
- 13 Greg Van Stee
Daryl & Carol Van Dyken (M)**
- 15 John Chapin & Bryce Posthumus**
- 16 Sally Stout, Marian Van Duinen & Charlotte Van Dyken (M)**
- 17 Mu Thu & Chris Van Stee**
- 19 Bill Gritter & Michael Jonker**
- 20 Linda Lotterman
Zach & Sharon Segaar-King (2000) (M)**
- 21 Steve Hollemans, Jovin Pool & Zach King (M)**
- 22 Lah Hae
Dan & Lisa Kooy (2004)
Don & Ruth Van Stee (1970)**
- 24 Eva Lehnen & Andre Kapteyn (M)**
- 25 Gordy & Joyce Van Haitsma (1973)**
- 26 Doug Stout**
- 27 Brian & Betsy Turnbull (1995) (M)**
- 28 Rose Hollemans**
- 30 Greg & Ellen Van Stee (1980)**
- 31 Gerry & Liz Rozeboom (1972)**

PROJECT NEIGHBORHOOD

Fuller House Update

Hello, Fuller Avenue CRC! Matt Postma here - Project Neighborhood mentor. It's my privilege to keep you up to date on what's happening in the house next door!



Below is a picture from one of our weekly dinners. We have two people assigned to cook this meal every week, and we rotate on a schedule to keep things new and interesting. Those who don't cook that week are responsible for clean-up. Throughout the winter we enjoyed a lot of soup - but we have seen nearly everything from stir-fry and curry to spaghetti and bruschetta. In the picture, from left to right are Jana, Tanice, Ellie, Karlene, Neil, and Anthony. We certainly like to make food, and the kitchen is a common place to gather.

This is a panoramic photo at one of our weekly dinners. We eat together, and we have fun together!

Our weekly house meal is one of the ways we “do community” in Project Neighborhood. We also gather once a week for a house business meeting. It's a meeting where we talk about the business of the house - doing chores, getting groceries, our involvement with different service learning opportunities, and how we might reach out to the community around us. It's a time to plan, a time to reflect, and a time to celebrate the ordinary things of living in community like this. Sometimes it's easy to dismiss the ordinary things of life, but Project Neighborhood tries to celebrate them and look at how God might be moving in these places.

Another way we live in community is through community devotions - or a time of Bible study. We take a little break after house dinner to clean up and gather ourselves in the living room. Through singing, praying, reading, and even some scripture memory, we have been celebrating God's presence in our midst on a regular basis throughout the year. Scheduling time like this has been more than therapeutic - it helps us hold each other up in prayer and serves as a reminder that our purpose is primarily about the glory of God's name and the advance of God's mission.

We have also been enjoying the 4th Friday Food & Fun at Fuller evenings! Sue has done a wonderful job with getting us involved, and the other volunteers have been quick to get to know us. After putting on our gloves, we get right to work in helping prepare the food, set the tables, and mingle with guests. We have a lot of fun (even with washing the dishes), and we love getting to know the people of Fuller as well as the folks from the neighborhood.

The school year is wrapping up, which means final papers, projects, and exams. Most of the students are working on some form of senior thesis before graduation (which is May 24). Please continue to remember them in your prayers as they try to finish the year well and apply for jobs.

If you could also remember Neil in your prayers, specifically. He was recently involved in an accident on his bicycle. He was riding on Hall Street, and a Pit Bull

“Exams are only a few weeks away?! I have so much left to do...”

-TIRED STUDENTS

ran out from a yard. Neil thought the dog was attacking him, but it ended up running right in front of his bike. He tried to stop, but ended up hitting the dog and flew over the handlebars. The dog ran away with his tail between his legs, but Neil ended up landing on the pavement with a sizable wound in his abdomen. He went to Urgent Care and had a total of 16 stitches, also coming away with some bruises and scrapes. Neil is healing quickly and already had the stitches removed. He’s up and around - almost back to normal already. But an injury like this may require some physical therapy sometime later and certainly can be frustrating.

We continue to remember Fuller Ave CRC in our prayers, and we are grateful that we can be ministry partners with you in this neighborhood!

On behalf of the Fuller House — **Matt**



Neil and Karlene help wash dishes at the 4th Friday Food & Fun at Fuller. Neil is a little camera-shy...

May

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1 7 pm: Council	2	3
4 10 am: Youth Service, Fuller House send-off, Faith Promise & Food Offering – Adams Park 6 pm: youth group	5	6 7:30 pm: choir	7 6:45 am: Men’s Bible Study	8	9	10 7 pm: pinochle
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 9:30 am: Breakfast hosted by Youth Group – Mission Trip Fundraiser 7 pm: pinochle
18 6 pm: final youth group meeting	19 7 pm: Knitting Kneighbors @ Hall Street Bakery	20	21 6:45 am: Men’s Bible Study	22	23 6 pm: 4 th Friday Food & Fun	24
25 6 pm: Combined service @ Fuller	26 Memorial Day	27 7:30 pm: choir	28	29 6:30 pm: Admin Committee	30	31
			11			

FROM

Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church
1239 Fuller Avenue, S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506-3248

TO

Of Bowling Alleys, Golf Courses, and Pipe Organs

By Bert Wierenga

I have been able to participate in many activities that have given various degrees of satisfaction. To list them all may be too long and perhaps quite boring. However, three of them stand out as things I enjoyed immensely. Two of them I am no longer able to participate in because of physical inability and pain.

The first activity was bowling. My father introduced me to this sport when I was eight years old at the East Recreation Bowling Lanes at Norwood Avenue and Wealthy St., SE. That establishment offered an excellent “junior” program headed by Mrs. Hattie Fulgohni, who later became my personal coach. In the junior leagues my average eventually raised to the 190’s. (Now, junior bowlers all average well over 200.) When I was fourteen years old my coach entered me in a national tournament and I bowled a three game total of 623, well enough for 28th place nationally. Through the years I continued bowling on the Fuller Avenue Church team. We always had a very competitive team. In 2000, a left knee replacement caused me to discontinue bowling, sad time but many wonderful memories.

The second activity was the game of golf. This is a sport that everyone should, at least, attempt to play. It is a challenge to master this sport. It can be very frustrating; however, it can also be very rewarding. It can be healthy, the courses are in wonderful condition, the scenery can be beautiful, but some wild weather can be encountered. I started playing golf at the Indian Trails Golf Course at 28th Street and Kalamazoo Avenue, SE. I’ve played in leagues in the Grand Rapids area and scores of courses in many states. In 2013, I decided to discontinue playing golf because of arthritis in my lower back. One of my grandsons was happy to take all my golf equipment, happy for him, sad day for me.

The third activity is the pipe organ. The real reason for this article is about the pipe organ. So now you are wondering what is all the stuff about bowling and golfing? At the end you will find out. Of the three activities, the pipe organ has given more satisfaction and it is very close to my heart.

How did this organ thing get started? Mrs. Theresa Ver Hill, from the 1st CRC (Bates Street), was my piano and organ teacher starting at age 8. I was raised in that big church at Fuller and Franklin Street, SE (1st Protestant Reformed Church). I played my first service there at age 14 (1949). We joined Fuller Avenue Church in 1962 and I have been playing organ here since then.

On February 19, 2014 I was able to play one of the most famous instruments in the world, the pipe organ in the Mormon Tabernacle at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah. Maybe the pictures will still be on the board in the Fellowship Room when this issue is printed. Barb Straatsma asked if I would write an article explaining how this came about. Jeanne and I planned to spend a week with her sister, Dorothy and family, in Ogden, Utah. Dorothy receives many requests and often takes them to Temple Square. She calls it “Indoctrination Square”. We have been there previously, however, being that close to Salt Lake I would not

miss another opportunity to visit the area. The Mormons have four organs on this property. The one in the Tabernacle is one of the largest in the world, with 11,623 pipes at 212 ranks (“Organ pipes are physically organized within the organ according to note and timbre, into sets. A set of pipes producing the same timbre for each note is called a *rank*, while each key on a pipe organ controls a *note* which may be sounded by different ranks of pipes, alone or in combination. The use of stops enables the organist to selectively turn off ("stop") certain ranks in order to produce different combinations of sounds, as opposed to hearing all sounds simultaneously. While nowadays one speaks of "drawing" a stop to select a particular rank, the earliest organs were constructed as [blockwerk](#) with all ranks 'on' by default.” from Wikipedia) on five manuals (keyboards) and pedal board. There is another five manual organ in the Conference Center Auditorium (21,000 seats), a four manual organ in the Temple and a three manual organ in the Assembly Hall. There are three full-time technicians who maintain the organs, five full-time organists and twenty five volunteer organists. Can you imagine the practice time schedule?

There is an organ concert in the Tabernacle every day at noon with the exception of Sunday. The head organist, Richard Elliot, was the organist on the day we were there. After the concert he comes down and greets people and answers questions. After everyone left I stayed and talked with him more like organist to organist. He asked if I would like to take a closer look at the console. Of course I accepted the invitation. While looking at the console and asking some more questions he asked if I would like to play the organ. Of course I accepted. Now, what do I play? Well, I played a short introduction and variation on *How Great Thou Art*. Maybe that took about 2-2 1/2 minutes. But what an experience! All this at age 78. On the way out the volunteers at the door said they could not recall someone other than their own organist playing the organ. During the rest of our time there, two other volunteers didn't believe it until we showed them the pictures on our camera. What a day!

Mr. Elliot is very familiar with Grand Rapids and our wonderful pipe organs. He knows organist and composers Larry Visser, Jonathan Tuuk, Raymond Haan, and Larry Biser. I got the feeling he didn't know me. Wonder why? We did go back the following Monday for the noon concert. Mr. Elliot was the organist again. After the concert, he said, “Thanks for coming back”. Perhaps he knows me now.

How do I feel about this experience? In bowling your goal is to roll a 300 game and a three game total of 700. I have never accomplished that feat (high game of 298, high series of 697). In golf you are always attempting to get a hole in one, get a birdie or eagle or shoot a round of golf below par. I have never had a hole in one, but many of my shots have come close. The others I have accomplished. Playing the organ at the Tabernacle in Temple Square is, by far, the most awesome experience I have had as far as my extracurricular activities are concerned, more so than ten holes in one or bowling ten 300 games or ten 700 series.

In my life I have always strived to do the best I can. However, there are limitations to our talents. I feel I know my limitations. There is a saying that goes like this: “Good, better, best. Never let them rest until your good is better and your better is best”. I know I am not the best, however, if I cannot be the best I hope to be better than most.

I never forget to thank God daily for the many venues I have enjoyed in life. May we all use the talents he has given not only for our enjoyment but also to his glory. Soli Deo Gloria!