



Southern Heights

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Southern Heights Christian Reformed Church - April 2010; Vol. LXX, No. 4

1 Peter 1:3-5 (NIV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

From Pastor Dan

I am delighted that spring is coming. More daylight, birds singing, trees and grass will begin to sprout and turn green. A feeling of hope and renewal is in the air.

It gets me thinking and wondering about what new thing God wants to be doing in our midst. Recently Jeff Baas and I were talking about the past twenty years or so at Southern Heights. We might describe the 1990s as the decade of being Intentional—changing the focus of our ministry and worship to be intentionally welcoming to others. Bring, Include and Grow was the theme. God blessed that.

We might describe the decade of the 2000s as the decade of being God Centered—developing our Passion for God (early in the decade) and being serious about Getting Connected with Jesus (late in the decade). We cannot thrive and do well without a very strong and deep God-connection. God is blessing this focus.

What about this new decade? We of course continue to be welcoming and hospitable, intentionally welcoming others to be part of our church. We absolutely must continue to be God centered and to develop our connection with Jesus. In this new decade of the 2010s, I wonder if the focus is to be on going outward in the supernatural power of God.

We have already been led by God to focus on the person and work of the Holy Spirit as our 2010-11 Theme of the Year. If you read about the Holy Spirit in Acts, the Spirit came upon the church to give the church power to go out and share the good news of Jesus. There were miraculous signs and wonders that accompanied the movement of the Spirit.

I am very excited about developing this theme in the coming year and being aware and alert to what God wants to be doing in our midst. How will the Spirit guide us? Where will the Spirit send us? We cannot plan these things. But we can be receptive and ready, in a posture of humility to receive and respond to what the Spirit does. That makes for an exciting life and an exciting ministry. Many question marks come with that. We say we value the “?” around here; we don’t know what God wants to do, but we know he is working and leading and guiding. Let’s listen, wait, and follow. Come, Holy Spirit.



Treasurer's Report

Jeff Baas

General Fund

Total Budget for year	\$363,248.71
Pro-Rated Budget 2 and 1/2 months	\$75,676.83
Contributions for Jan-Feb-Mar (1/2 month)	\$70,018.59
Expenses for same period	\$69,963.85

Comments:

We are right on track. If the budget were a straight line we should be at \$75,676.83. Our contributions are about \$5000 below that, but our expenses are right in line with contributions. Praise God!

Building Fund

Mortgage Balance	\$107,659.61
Fund total	\$10,901.99
Monthly auto payment	\$4,057.87

Contributions	
February '10	\$693.00
January '10	\$1,236.00
December '09	\$1,741.00
November '09	\$3,500.00

Comments:

Contributions to the building fund are very low. Don't forget about the building fund when considering your contributions to Southern Heights. We have paid off over 90% of our mortgage on the addition. Only a little more and we can be debt free. Encourage each other in this area.

Ministry Shares

Ministry Shares is money that our church pays to the CRC denomination so that they can support local and worldwide projects for the entire denomination. Each year the CRC gives a suggested total per member. The CRC has also stated that a church should not sacrifice its ministry to pay these shares, but has not laid out what exactly that means for each

church. Each Council is to make that decision.

Ministry Shares is usually about 10% of our total budget. It is basically a tithe to the denomination. For the last 2 years, Southern Heights has not paid full Ministry Shares but we desire to do so. In order to move to pay full Ministry Shares the Council, at its most recent meeting, decided on a plan. In 2011 we will pay a minimum of 6% of our total budget to Ministry Shares, in 2012 it will be 8% and in 2013 we will pay the tithe of 10% toward Ministry Shares. That will most likely be full payment of Ministry Shares.

To follow the Synod's suggestion that Ministry Shares not hurt the church, we will keep our Ministry Shares payments to a tithe (10%) of our total budget. In plentiful years where Ministry Shares is less than 10% we will have the option of paying more than 100% to the denomination. In leaner years, we will still tithe to the denomination and because it is 10% of total budget, we will not be negatively impacted in those years.

It is our desire that our tithe to the denomination will continue to bless the work that the CRC denomination does all around the world and in our community as well. If you have any questions about Ministry Shares, feel free to ask any Council Member or Jeff.



Deacons' Corner

In Case You Were Wondering:

Deacon potlucks are under construction. Watch for a new and improved event in the spring!

Want to stretch your budget? Would a visit to the CARE Closet help?

Our CARE closet is fully stocked and your deacon would love to help you take advantage of this resource. Some of the items in the closet are: Nonperishable food, paper products, hygiene products, house cleaning products, laundry soap, vitamins, first aid products, and over-the-counter medicines...Call them today!

Watch for:

"Free money" information table coming to the lobby April 18.

Don't forget:

The "change a life with your change" bus in the lobby. The bus tokens we purchase with your change go directly to KDC to help people change their lives!



Women's Ministry

Kathy Meert

We have completed our study from Beth Moore on the book of Esther, shared crafts and treats with the Gems, hosted our 2nd Annual Chili-Cook-off, and are moving quickly into our new 6 week study by Bill Hybels on *The Fruit of the Spirit*. We have been blessed with a consistent group of 20 or so women faithfully studying God's word together every Wednesday night since September. We are growing together as Women in Christ and encouraging each other to remain "daily in the Word".

As our year comes to a close we will be hosting a Women's Mini-Retreat at Southern Heights on April 23rd-24th. The event will begin Friday evening at 5:30 at Southern Heights Church and go until 9:00pm where we will enjoy a catered dinner and the offering of several "classes" on such topics as self-defense, de-cluttering and simplifying with kids, plus we will offer sessions on reflexology, crafts, and more. On Saturday we will

have the opportunity to join other Women in Christ at Center Point Church (formerly Third Reformed) for a simulcast from Beth Moore on the topic "So Long Insecurity". This begins at 9:00am and ends at 2:00pm.

The mini-retreat is available to all Church women and the cost is \$5 for Friday and/or \$20 for Saturday. You will see a sign-up sheet in the Lobby and can sign up for either or both days. Please consider joining in on the fun!



Chronicles of Council

Bruce Krogel

Now that the cold weather has pretty much left us and spring is in full effect, I can't help but think about the growth that has been taking place around Southern Heights over the last several months.

We've all had several months of learning about the "Gardener and the Vine". I, for one, have really enjoyed studying about how our Heavenly Father works in our lives to bear fruit and further His kingdom. I've been amazed by the workings of God over this past year and I would encourage each of you to keep your eyes open for what my family refers to as "God sightings". I would also challenge each believer to be bold in sharing the workings of God with our non-Christian friends and family.

Speaking of God working, the Alpha course is well underway and I've heard about and witnessed the Holy Spirit working on hearts. That's always an exciting thing to be a part of. Our partnership with Westwood CRC has been great and there's been some excellent discussions taking place as people seek to better understand the Christian walk.

Part of that walk should be sharing our faith. Not only the message of salvation

but also the daily struggles we face and how our faith impacts those struggles. Scripture tells us to be salt and light to the world. But how many of us are prepared and willing to share our struggle with the stranger God brings across our path? Many of our senior high students spent a weekend away learning to do just that. They attended a Dare-2-Share conference where real-world evangelism skills were not only taught but also practiced. We often take the story of our Christian journey for granted, but isn't that one of the many gifts God has given us? Shouldn't we be sharing it?

Finally, I feel like our eGroups have continued to evolve into what God wants them to be. Andy Schreuder has agreed to serve as our "eGroup Director" (for lack of a better term) and I believe he has a strong vision for what God can accomplish through small groups. If you are not in an eGroup I would encourage you to get plugged into one. If you are already in an eGroup but are not being challenged spiritually, I would suggest you check out one of the other small groups we have in place. My personal belief is that substantial growth will occur if we are willing to invest ourselves in the lives of others. Isn't that what Jesus did? I know he did (and does) it for me.



50 Year Party

Jeff Baas



Some of you may have seen this picture before. Many of you may be wondering right now what it is. Any guesses? Look closely...

This is a picture of the first worship service of Southern Heights on March 19, 1961. These are the people who started Southern Heights Church. They met together in the Christian School building that is now the Middle School right near here on Westnedge, in their gymnasium. At that time they called themselves the "Kilgore Area CRC".

Why bring this up now? Well, I'm glad you asked. ☺ If you noticed the date of 1961 and did a bit of addition you saw that March 19 of 2011 will be the 50th Anniversary of Southern Heights! That's kind of a big deal and we think it would be a good idea to celebrate what God has done through the people of Southern Heights for 50 years!

So recently, the Council passed a proposal to have a party! *(Some Council decisions can be fun like that.)*

We will be assembling a party planning team, selecting a date as close to March 19, 2011 as possible and planning a big party, inviting previous pastors, members, and anyone remotely connected to Southern Heights in the last 50 years. We pray that this will be a memorable celebration of what God has done and a look ahead to what He will do.

But that's not all...

Along with the party we noticed something else. We are in the final stages of paying off our church's mortgage through the "Building Fund". Wouldn't it be great if we could be debt free by the party date!

We have a bit over \$80k left to pay off and about a full year to do it. This is very "do-able". We believe that if we all pitch in and contribute to the building fund that we, as a church family, could have a

double celebration... We could have a "mortgage burning" party at the same time.

Imagine what we could accomplish if we all join together. If the children's ministry were to sell cookies, if the students were to do projects for contributions, if eGroups were to raise funds and we all contributed to the building fund in our own ways we could wipe out our debt and start the next 50 years with no mortgage and ready to minister to our community in new and better ways.

This next year promises to be very exciting as we prepare for this event. Please give us your thoughts and ideas. We want this party to be a way to praise God for all he has done for us and through us. 50 years may seem long to some, but with God, we're just beginning to experience all that He has for us.

Psalm 145:7 - *They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.*



April Usher Schedule

Sue Kopta

April 4:

Mike Fitzgerald
Al Hoffman
Doug Staunton
Mark McLain

April 11/18:

Scott Altermatt
Karen Merchant
Karen Hulet
Scott Huigbretse

April 25/May 2:

Cheryl Kemink
Larry Kopta
Sue Kopta
Joan Odehnal

New in the Library

Ann McLain

Kids' Books

The Tallest of Smalls by Max Lucado

Ollie is the smallest of the Too Smalls who live in Stiltsville. He longs to fit in by being one of the people who is picked to wear the stilts. After much pleading, he is awarded a pair of stilts but they don't make him feel any different. Only when he tumbles and falls and the stilts are taken from him, does Ollie learn the lesson that he has always mattered to Jesus.

Kids' DVDs

Unleash Heaven – Angel Wars: The Messengers

In the latest in this action adventure series, Kira and Eli are still not full Guardian Angels of the human race, but they are working on gaining their wings. Kira and Eli learn that they must work together to defeat the forces of evil and deliver hope to humans.

The Flo Show Creates a Buzz – Hermie & Friends

Flo the Fly likes to talk so she uses her gifts to start her very own talk show in the garden. She is concerned with what to wear, who to invite, and what to say. Unfortunately, she is thinking only about herself and not about other people. When she ends up insulting every single one of her friends that she invites on the show, Flo learns that the most powerful words you can say to someone you've hurt are "I'm sorry".

Adult DVDs

Jesus – Fact or Fiction?

Through Her Eyes – Magdalena

The Story of Jesus for Children

All three of these DVDs were donated to our church by the Tsugawas on Outreach Emphasis Sunday and are great tools to present the Gospel. Jesus – Fact or

Fiction is geared toward adults and has two parts: the first part is the feature film "Jesus" from the Jesus Film Project and the second part contains answers from experts for the tough questions that nonbelievers have. Through Her Eyes – Magdalena uses footage from the feature film "Jesus" and is geared toward women. The Story of Jesus for Children also uses footage from the feature film "Jesus" and is written especially for children.

Faith Like Potatoes

This DVD is based on the life of Angus Buchan, a farmer of Scottish descent who was born in Africa. Because of his inability to make a living from his farm in Zambia and increasing violence in Zambia, Angus leaves his farm with his pregnant wife, three children, and little more than some farm equipment to start over in South Africa. Angus is determined to rely on his own strength, but becomes angry and frustrated as his workload increases. His life undergoes drastic changes when his wife drags him to church and Angus gives his life to Christ. Challenged by the pastor to tell three people what he's done, Angus discovers a passion for evangelism. During a time of drought in South Africa, Angus hears God's calling to fill Kings Stadium with black and white farmers to pray for healing in South Africa. Amidst the drought, and against the advice of other farmers, Angus decides to plant his farm with potatoes with trust that God will provide a bountiful harvest from a crop that requires an abundance of rain. Parental warning: Movie contains one graphic accident scene. Included on the DVD is an inspiring documentary about Angus Buchan. It shows how God has richly blessed Angus' efforts to bring the Gospel to Africa and includes stories and footage of miraculous healings God has performed.

Adult Fiction

Burn by Ted Dekker with Erin Healy
This is the second book Dekker co-authored with Erin Healy. I much prefer this book to Kiss. It deals heavily with

choices you make and where you end up because of them. (Reviewed by Tom Jones.)

Green by Ted Dekker

Part of the "Full Circle" series, you can begin with any of the four books in this series, but Green seems to be the best one to start with. The book says it best: "Four Novels, Two Worlds, One Story". (Reviewed by Tom Jones.)

Boo Hiss by Rene Gutteridge

The small town community of Skary, Indiana is changing: a soccer field complex seems to appear overnight, the local coffee shop starts serving high-priced drinks, and the basement of the small country church undergoes a drastic makeover for a new children's ministry program. Could "perfect" soccer mom Katelyn Downey have designs on turning Skary into hip suburbia? More personal issues involve Ainsley's inability to conceive and Melb's terrifying discovery that she's pregnant. Add to that the town's search for the missing two-headed snake, Bob and Fred, and you've got another hilarious novel about the quirky characters in Skary.

The Yada Yada Prayer Group Gets Real by Neta Jackson

Jodi Baxter's life has been busy and she's ready for some peace and quiet, a little "dull and boring" as she puts it. God has a different idea for her and for the lives of her fellow Yada Yada prayer group members. Ms. Perfect, Leslie "Stu" Stuart, moves into the upstairs of Jodi's two-flat, but at least, Bandana Woman (Becky Wallace), who held up the Yada Yada group at knifepoint is safely locked away in prison. But how far is forgiveness supposed to go, Jodi wonders, especially when Stu offers to petition the parole board for early release for Becky by offering her own apartment as a place for Becky to live? Meanwhile, Jodi continues to struggle as a teacher with how to reach the young brother of the teenage boy she killed in a car accident last year. Those Yada Yada sisters rely heavily on prayer

and sisterly support and learn that with God, life will be anything but dull and boring.

Even Now by Karen Kingsbury

A standalone by Karen Kingsbury, Even Now was a wonderful book of love and healing. It is about going back to people you hurt in the past before you can truly move on into the future. I enjoyed every bit of this book and had lots of trouble putting it down - this is a must read. (Reviewed by Chris Jones.)

The Presence by Bill Myers

In the second book in the Soul Trackers series, David Kauffman and his son Luke are part of a group of people that have been lured to a mountain retreat center to participate in a séance. David and Luke have joined the séance to debunk a world famous psychic's claims of being able to contact the dead. David and Luke are unaware the Orbolitz Group, who caused the death of David's daughter and Luke's sister, is supporting in the séance. The Orbolitz Group has managed to capture the last moments of death and first moments of the afterlife to develop a portrait of what "the Presence" is like. Subject to "the Presence", the séance participants now have their inner strengths and shortcomings exposed for all to see. As the spiritual battle wages, David and Luke must fight to cling to God's love and forgiveness.

Life Everlasting by Robert Whitlow

In the second and last book in the Santee series, Baxter Richardson is emerging from a coma following his fall from a cliff. His wife, Rena, is distraught as she is afraid the truth about the accident will be revealed. As Rena wonders who her friends and enemies are in the Richardson family, she decides that a divorce will be the best course of action. Rena's lawyer, Alexia, is trying to defend her client but is becoming suspicious of Rena's ever-changing story and sanity. In the meantime, Alexia is sorting through her own faith and her feelings for Ted, the

music minister who is trying to coax Baxter out of his coma.

Adult Nonfiction

Incompatibility Still Grounds for a Great Marriage by Chuck & Barb Snyder

Chuck and Barb admit that they are the World's Most Opposite Couple. After 40-plus years of marriage, they have learned how to work through their problems rather than trying to get out of them. Since divorce wasn't an option for them, they needed to learn how to live with that "other" person in their life. They have taken the lessons that they've learned and now pass that valuable information along in a hilarious book that will have you recognizing your own marriage in theirs.

Finding Favor with the King by Tommy Tenney

The subtitle of this book is *Preparing for Your Moment in His Presence*. Tenney delves into the Biblical story of Esther and her year-long preparation for her one night with the king. In Esther's story, we can find what Tenney calls the "Twelve Protocols of the Palace" as we seek to gain the favor of our King. This book is a great reminder of our need to seek out our King for who He is rather than what He can give us.

On Sunday, June 20, 2010, at 4 pm, a mass worship service will be held in the Van Noord Arena on the campus of Calvin College to celebrate the union of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC). This will combine 87 million members of 253 churches in 132 countries. Besides traditional Reformed churches, the new organization will be open to Presbyterian, Congregational, Waldensian, First Reformation, United and Uniting traditions. If you are interested in attending, or have any questions, please contact Tom Bos.