



Southern Heights

s-heights.org

Heights Happenings - Southern Heights CRC - February 2012; Vol. LXXII, No. 2

Outreach Emphasis Sunday is Coming! Sandy Kromminga

So, what exactly is "outreach"? Is it sending money to those in far-off lands who have dedicated their lives to spreading the gospel to non-churched "pagans" or others who are underprivileged? Is it talking to your neighbor or work- or school-mate or helping in a community activity? The answer is a powerful "YES!!" to both questions. Outreach of both kinds will be celebrated at the annual Outreach Emphasis Sunday on February 26 this year.

Both the Outreach Committee and CAST (Community Action Service Team) will present the latest scoop on their plans for 2012. The Outreach Committee makes decisions on the best use of their portion of the First Fruits budget. Some of those monies are sent to support our

"missionaries," and some of it is used right here in Kalamazoo — Kalamazoo Deacons Conference, Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, Open Doors, Vineyard Outreach — to name a few agencies who receive help from Southern Heights.

CAST is in the business of "making us known" in the community as a group of people who cares deeply for our neighbors and others. Lend-A-Hand, the neighborhood picnic, and the Car Clinic are just three of the projects in the works right now, with more to come.

Be sure to save Sunday, February 26, for a special service with Curt DeVries as our speaker, AND, don't forget the free brunch to follow. Remember those yummy cinnamon and sugared churros from the past few years? They're now a staple on the menu for the Outreach Emphasis Sunday brunch. Be there!



College Care Packages

It is time for our annual college care package collection.

We have 8 students away at college this year and would like them to know their church family is thinking of them. We will be collecting non-perishable food items (i.e. candy, gum, granola bars) on Feb. 12th and 19th, AND homemade baked goods on the 19th, so they are fresh. The packages will go out the 20th. Please have baked goods individually wrapped.

You can also donate money to pay for shipping costs and the deacons can shop for items if needed.

Cards or letters are also very appreciated by the "kids".

Contact Karen VanderLugt, Karen Merchant, or Chris Jones with questions.

**Chronicles of Council
Tom Bos**

Wow, do you realize all that's going on around Southern Heights?

We finished 2011 financially secure, started daily prayer for where God is sending us both individually and as a church, sent Pastor Dan away on a Sabbatical, are starting the "Treasure Your Marriage" program and reading through the gospels. We've received back our latest Barnabas survey results, are building up our "Building Fund", beginning to see CAST's effect on our community – plus asking you to "be the church wherever you are". Does that seem like a lot?

I know some of you have said, "Why can't we just focus on one thing and stick with it?" Trouble being, all of these things are interconnected. To be real disciples of Jesus Christ we cannot just focus on one area and say we've got it covered. To be a true disciple means listening to God, studying his word, looking for ways to share the gospel, strengthening our marriages and being good stewards of our resources, plus so much more. Whew – this Jesus thing is tough!

But Jesus tells us that his "Yoke is easy and burden is light". Does that sound like a contradiction to what you're experiencing? Maybe the answer lies in the fact that we try and do so much on our own and all at the same time. Maybe the listening to God part will help you see where God wants you to place your energies right this minute and maybe somewhere else next week. Remember the passage that says, "He remembers our frame and knows that we are dust" God knows our frailties, when you are worn out, tired and up to your ears in life. All He asks is that you do what you can for Him at that minute, using the energy He gives and let His Spirit accomplish things through you. I pray that you are able to do that.

We are blessed as a church that while Pastor Dan is away we have a great staff and structure in place to cover the needs of our church. The biggest problem I see is that we don't always want to share our struggles with each other; our problems at work, problems with our marriages, and financial, mental and spiritual problems. Even the most caring people and best structure cannot help if we don't voice our issues. So many times people come to the church for help as their last resort, and sometimes it's just too late and too much damage has been done. If you find yourself in something that seems overwhelming please turn early in the process to your district Elder or Deacon, our Caring Director (Deb Bos), your eGroup or someone you know here at Southern Heights. At the very least, come forward after church and share your concerns with our Prayer Team. They are always available in the front of the auditorium immediately after our morning service. They would love to pray with you. Besides our Staff, District teams, eGroups and Prayer Team, we also have two local pastors who know our church well and have committed to come alongside us if the need arises.

I actually look forward to having Pastor Dan gone for a while (in a good way) because it gives us a chance to be the church for each other without putting it all on the Pastor to solve our problems and be "the man". Church is meant to be a body of people who work, play, cry, laugh and work through this life together; sharing our joys and cares, our burdens and successes. I hope you see Southern Heights in this light and better yet, take part in sharing life with each other. It only works if you are willing to step up and "Be the Church"; helping others and being helped.



Women's Ministry Kathy Meert

In December our ministry put together small bags of supplies to keep in our cars and hand out to people along the street that we pass and often wonder if we should be doing something for them. It is our hope to "Be the Church Wherever We Are". Be watching for our stories in future *Heights Happenings*.

Coming on **February 12th** will be the 4th annual Chili Cook-Off. This is our annual fund raiser to help support Women's Ministry in furnishing child care for our Moms attending Bible study on Wednesday nights and to meet other needs of our ladies as they come up.

Women's Ministry is already well underway for our So Long Insecurity series and we are working to become the most SECURE women we can be - looking to speak truth and strength to each other and be mirrors of God's love and grace.

From our study:

Jeremiah 17:7-8

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence.

They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep in the water.

Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought, Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit.

Our hope and confidence and our trust is in the LORD. We are blessed.



Treasure Your Marriage Jillayne Krogel

Marriage is a covenant – a sacred vow between one man and one woman with Almighty God, for a lifetime. We know marriage is hard at best and there are times when couples reach a point where prayer, support and counsel are needed. But do you know where to turn when your marriage reaches a breaking point? To provide husbands and wives support, Southern Heights has developed the "Treasure Your Marriage" ministry. The purpose of this ministry is to encourage couples to focus on their marriage, to provide them ways to fulfill their commitment to each other and to offer options if professional help is needed.

On **February 11th** we will be kicking off the "Treasure Your Marriage" Ministry. Please join us from **6:30-8:30** for a very exciting game night! We will also have the privilege of hearing from a marriage speaker and couples will be given the opportunity to make a commitment to "Treasure Their Marriage". More information regarding the ministry and what this commitment entails will be provided that evening. We hope to see you all there!



Children and Family Ministries: From an Education Hour Teacher Tom Jager

It was a summer day in 2009. I was sitting in church minding my own business. Tami Koning got up to make an announcement. I assumed whatever she was going to talk about was not going to involve me so I was only half listening as she started.

She mentioned that the Sunday school season was just around the corner and that they needed additional teachers. I am sure I had heard similar announcements

many times in the past but on this occasion as she spoke, suddenly all I could think about was the promise we as a congregation make at baptism to help guide and train those who are baptized. By the time the service ended I knew I needed to volunteer. (I guess I felt sent.)

I was teamed with veteran Sunday school teacher, Laura VanZoest, and assigned to the 4th-5th grade class. I will admit it was a little intimidating at first. I learned a lot working alongside Laura and also with the help of Tami and Margo.

It turns out that teaching involves a lot of learning. Things I have learned include:

- We have great 4th and 5th graders at our church. They are kind to each other and they are eager to learn.
- Teaching has given me an opportunity to get to know the kids and also their parents and siblings. I feel more connected to my church family as a teacher.
- I really look forward to seeing my class each week. Sometimes I feel like I am a good teacher and sometimes I feel like the lesson flopped. Either way the kids are kind to me. Maybe the biggest lesson is not in my words but in my actions.

It is a great privilege to work with the 4th and 5th graders. Hopefully my teaching skills continue to improve. Fortunately, the students are patient with me as I learn.



**The Family of Southern Heights
Tami Koning**

Calvin Voss made Profession of Faith on December 11, 2011. Calvin is the son of Jaime and Bonnie Voss and brother to Emily. He is in 7th grade at Paramount

Charter Academy. Calvin enjoys playing sports and collecting cards. He has an aptitude for math and technology. Regarding Southern Heights, Calvin says, "Everyone is friendly and SMASH is fun!" Praise God for Calvin and his decision to follow in Christ's footsteps!

Congratulations to **Javonte` Lofton and Chelsea Peterson**, who are engaged to be married on May 6, 2012. May God bless you as you prepare for this special day and a lifetime together!



**Children and Family Ministries
Tami Koning**

On January 5th and 6th, the Children and Family Ministries sponsored a babysitting class. Nineteen students participated in the "Safe Sitters" course and learned infant and child CPR and choking, basic first aid, the basics of babysitting and much more! This course is put on through Bronson Hospital's Family Education Program and one of the course's instructors is non-other than our own Karen VanderLugt! Among the 19 students, seven call Southern Heights their home church. Other students heard about our class from Paramount Charter Academy and Kalamazoo Christian Middle School. It was so cool seeing the group of young people take on the challenge and responsibility it takes to be a good and prepared babysitter! The final half-hour of class was a ceremony where each student was asked a question or asked to demonstrate a particular skill. Each student was then awarded with a badge and congratulated for passing the course. Congratulations to our Southern Heights Safe Sitters: Ellie Baas, Kelly Higgins, Bekah Jones, Erin Koning, Patrick Koning, Sierra Staunton, and Calvin Voss...they worked hard! Way to Go!

Adult Education News
Larry Kopta

Greetings everyone! Hope your holidays went well. Adult education classes are off to a good start for the new year. Both "Gospel in Life" (being the church wherever I am) and "Love and War" (marriage help) are well attended and feedback is positive. These classes continue through Feb 26th; there's still time to join.

On Sunday, February 5th we have a special guest coming, Ben Ingebretson, taking Dan's place as minister. Ben is a church multiplication consultant with the Reformed Church of America. Since 2003 he has personally walked alongside the startup of over 45 new church plants as a best practice coach and resource provider. He has coauthored the book "Parent Church Landmines" with Tom Nebel. As one of the ways to reach the lost that has large potential, we asked if he could speak to that topic briefly and answer some questions we might have. He graciously agreed to be available before the service from 9:30-10:15am. If this interests you, please come!

In March we begin our next classes. They are still in process, but one will be a topic from the Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University (see <http://baylor.edu/christianethics/index.php?id=14744>). Stay tuned for more information, especially in the Sunday bulletin or in our weekly email.

Remember we value your input, so if you have any suggestions for future topics, please let your adult education committee know. God bless you all and give you His Peace.

**Proverbs 30:18-19 (NLT)**

There are three things that amaze me — no, four things that I don't understand: how an eagle glides through the sky, how a snake slithers on a rock, how a ship navigates the ocean, how a man loves a woman.

February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 4pm Hang-out 6pm GEMS SMASH	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 4pm Hang-out 6pm Cadets SMASH Men's Ministry Women's Min.	9	10	11 6:30 pm Treasure Your Marriage Event
12 Chili Cook-Off	13 7pm CAST	14 7:30pm Adult Education	15 4pm Hang-out 6pm GEMS SMASH	16	17	18
19	20	21 5:30 Staff PLUS	22 Heights Happening Deadline 4pm Hang-out 6pm Cadets SMASH Men's Ministry Women's Min.	23	24	25
26 Outreach Emphasis	27	28 7 pm Elders Deacons	29 4pm Hang-out 6pm GEMS SMASH			

Staff

Pastor: Dan Sarkipato
 Director of Worship & Administration: Jeff Baas
 Director of Caring: Deb Bos
 Director of Children and Family Ministries: Tami Koning and Margo Staunton
 Director of Youth Ministries: Ken Vander Lugt
 Administrative Assistant: Tami Koning
 Custodian: Jim Brouwer

Board Chairs

Council: Tom Bos
 Deacons: Joy Veltkamp
 Outreach: Justin Kromminga
 CAST: Meghan & Andy VanLente
 Treasurer: Jeff Baas

Newsletter

Editor: Kathi Deubner
 Next Deadline: February 22, 2012

SENT Prayer Commitment

God's amazing grace saves me; God's Spirit SENDS me

- 1) I will Pray Daily from now until March 31,
 - ❖ God, where do you want to send me?
 - ❖ God, where do you want to send us?

- 2) I will listen for God's answer
- 3) I will respond in obedient faith

*ask the Lord of the harvest...to send out workers into his harvest field
 Luke 10:2*

✚ See God's glory ✚ Encounter your sin ✚ Need his grace
 ✚ Tell God: "Send me!"