

Shepherd's Staff

January 2013

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

Looking Back to See Ahead

At this time of the year we often will look back at the year that has drawn to a close. We remember the important events, reflect on what we have done and could have done. Sometimes we even wish we could have a "do over" for parts of our life and yet we know that is not possible. It makes us more conscious of our actions in the future, or at least we hope that is the results. Still I thought a quick look back at the past year might be a good way to close the page for 2012. I will not be listing names for fear of "missing" someone but listing the events that have taken place.

In 2012 we had a number of families that said farewell to family members as they were promoted to glory. We can find solace in the fact that while we miss them, they are now with the One they served, no longer being stricken with the trials of this life. We also live on with the joyous hope of seeing them again when we all gather in the presence of our Savior.

We also have witnessed the exchanging of vows in marriage for some from our congregation. As lives changed, we here too needed to wish friends (and family) good-bye as they departed our area to live in the new relationship here on earth and yet promising to stop in for visits and remaining in contact from time to time. A sign of the changing times in life as we continue in the care of God.

There have been struggles in life for some. Many have had health issues that were met with power through the prayer efforts of many of our church family. Some of these concerns were taken away while for others the difficulty remains to be solved or lived with for a time to come.

Not all the news was painful though as we were able to celebrate growth in our church. New members joined through transferring memberships. We also grew through the professions of faith as believers stood up to declare their faith and trust in God. Part of our growth was seen in a two-fold way. We were able to celebrate the inclusion into the Covenant of God's children who were born this year but also older children who entered the Covenant of Grace. We can praise God for the joys he has given to us as we strive to be the fruit bearing church He desires us to be.

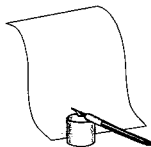
As a church we have also continued to be more reachable. We have completed our first year of using the Faith Promise program for Missionary support. The response was encouraging as we exceeded our conservative hopes and yet met all our obligations. We also expanded our own reach through the design and development of a web site. We can now be reached at parkersburg-crc.org where bulletins, newsletters, and now even an audio offer of worship can be found. If you have not gone to the site for a while it would be well worth the effort to see the growth that has taken place.

Even though we can see we have much to be thankful for as seen above, we must not live in the past. We are encouraged to do what Paul tells us he did in Philippians 3:13b-14, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." There is still much that we must do as we also press on to win the prize. Whatever challenges we may find in the coming year we can march on in the confidence that we never go alone.

So encourage one another as we continue the journey to reach our final home. Trust that God will never leave us nor give us more than we can take in our life spent with Him. Walk with the knowledge that we are the body of Christ, protected in this life so we can complete the tasks given to us. Then with boldness let us draw on the mercies of God as we live for Him. Take every opportunity to let our lights shine for all the world to see as we seek Him every day throughout the new year!

Missionary Letter Writing Schedule

	Larry & Ann Vanderaa C/O CRWM 2850 Kalamazoo Ave SE Grand Rapids, MI 49560	Michael & Victoria VanDerDyke C/O CRWM 2850 Kalamazoo Ave SE Grand Rapids, MI 49560
Week of:		
1/6	Frances Frieling	Madeline Geiken
1/13	Irvin Haan Family	Paul Haan Family
1/20	Henry Heeren Family	Sylvia Jansen
1/27	Larry Johnson Family	Clarence Karsjens Family



When writing to Missionaries, do not ask about their work (do that when they come here) or mention missionary because it could put their lives in danger. Tell them about yourself, your family, our town and that you (we) are praying for them, etc.

Bible Emergency Numbers

When in sorrow, call John 14
 When men fail you, call Psalm 27
 When you have sinned, call Psalm 51
 When you worry, call Matthew 6:19-34
 When you are in danger, call Psalm 91
 When God seems far away, call Psalm 139
 When your faith needs stirring, call Hebrew 11
 When you are lonely and fearful, call Psalm 23
 When you grow bitter and critical, call 1 Cor. 13
 When you feel down and out, call Romans 8:31-39
 When you want peace and rest, call Matthew 11:25-30
 When the world seems bigger than God, call Psalm 90
 When you want Christian assurance, call Romans 8:1-30
 When you leave home for labor or travel, call Psalm 121
 When your prayers grow narrow or selfish, call Psalm 67
 When you want courage for a task, call Joshua 1
 When you think of investments/returns, call Mark 10
 How to get along with fellow men, call Romans 12
 For great invention/opportunity, call Isaiah 55
 For Paul's secret to happiness, call Col. 3:12-17
 For idea of Christianity, call 1 Cor 5:15-19
 If you are depressed, call Psalm 27
 If you want to be fruitful, call John 15
 If your pocketbook is empty, call Psalm 37
 If you're losing confidence in people, call 1 Cor. 13
 If people seem unkind, call John 15
 If discouraged about your work, call Psalm 126
 If you find the world growing small, and you great, call Psalm 19



What Lies on the Other Side?

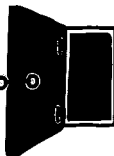
A sick man turned to his doctor, as he was leaving the room after paying a visit, and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side."

Very quietly the doctor said, "I don't know."

"You don't know? You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door, on the other side of which came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing: I know my Master is there, and that is enough. And when the door opens, I shall pass through with no fear, but with gladness."



A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

January Birthdays/Anniversaries

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Happy Birthday

1/4	Jessica Cordes
1/6	Lila Reints
1/7	Harold Kalkwarf
1/11	Dennis Mennen
1/11	Lisa Meether
1/16	Gerald Haan
1/17	Ryan Meester
1/20	Ellen Hanna
1/22	Levi Hay
1/24	Arnie Swanson
1/28	Mary Boersma

Happy Anniversary

1/13	Larry & Mary Johnson
1/16	Dale & Mary Vry



Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

CRC Service Schedule

	Greeters	Ushers	Coffee*
		Mark Kramer	Paul & Gerald
1/6	Pat & Deb (N)		
	Henry & Kathy (S)	Clarence Karsjens	Sylvia & Mary Vry
1/13	Mark & Lanae (N)		
	Delbert & Sharon (S)	Gerald Haan	Kevin & Shelly
1/20	Pastor Rus & Mary (N)		
	John & Karen (S)	Delbert Cordes	Dennis & Lois
1/27	Jean Trey (N)		
	Ken & Rhonda (S)		

*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

Music Has a Way of Touching One's Soul

It Is Well with My Soul (1873)

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. Psalm 34:19

When the great Chicago fire consumed the Windy City in 1871, Horatio G. Spafford, an attorney heavily invested in real estate, lost a fortune. About that time, his only son, age 4, succumbed to scarlet fever. Horatio drowned his grief in work, pouring himself into rebuilding the city and assisting the 100,000 who had been left homeless.

In November of 1873, he decided to take his wife and daughters to Europe. Horatio was close to D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey, and he wanted to visit their evangelistic meetings in England, then enjoy a vacation.

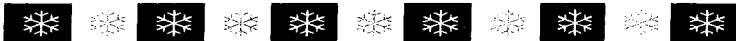
When an urgent matter detained Horatio in New York, he decided to send his wife, Anna, and their four daughters, Maggie, Tanetta, Annie, and Bessie, on ahead. As he saw them settled into a cabin aboard the luxurious French liner *Ville du Havre*, an unease filled his mind, and he moved them to a room closer to the bow of the ship. Then he said good-bye, promising to join them soon.

During the small hours of November 22, 1873, as the *Ville du Havre* glided over smooth seas, the passengers were jolted from their bunks. The ship had collided with an iron sailing vessel, and water poured in like Niagara. The *Ville du Havre* tilted dangerously. Screams, prayers, and oaths merged into a nightmare of unmeasured terror. Passengers clung to posts, tumbled through darkness, and were swept away by powerful currents of icy ocean. Loved ones fell from each other's grasp and disappeared into foaming blackness. Within two hours, the mighty ship vanished beneath the waters. The 226 fatalities included Maggie, Tanetta, Annie, and Bessie. Mrs. Spafford was found nearly unconscious, clinging to a piece of the wreckage. When the 47 survivors landed in Cardiff, Wales, she cabled her husband: "Saved Alone."

Horatio immediately booked passage to join his wife. En route, on a cold December night, the captain called him aside and said, "I believe we are now passing over the place where the *Ville du Havre* went down." Spafford went to his cabin but found it hard to sleep. He said to himself, "It is well; the will of God be done."

He later wrote his famous hymn based on those words.

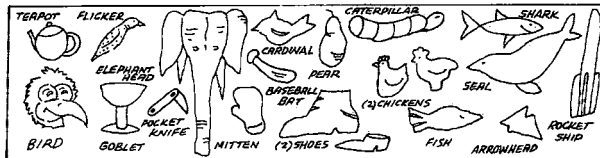
Quoted from *Then Sings My Soul: 150 of the World's Greatest Hymn Stories* by Robert J. Morgan



No matter what, no matter where, it's always home if God's love lives there.



How Many Hidden Items Can You Find?



Hidden Picture by Liz Ball