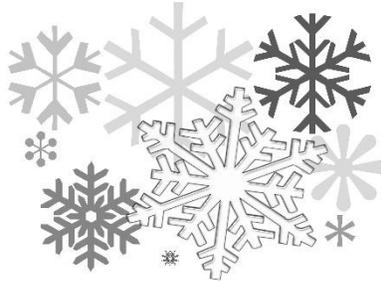


First's Edition



January

2019

February

Winter Wonder

by Cheryl Schaefer

As I watch the snowflakes swirling towards the ground, I realize the same thing is happening in my head. Hundreds, thousands of unique tidbits are floating about my brain. From my vantage point at the dining room table, I can't see the snowflakes piling on the ground, I can only see the endless swirling, some drifting left, some drifting right, some seeming to catch updrafts while others seem propelled by downward forces, but all moving, all in motion, nothing stagnant.

Chris just finished a funeral. Our twin granddaughters are hooked to tubes and monitors – but alive! A friend texted this morning to say please pray – her son's friend took his own life. Another friend texted with health concerns. A.J. started his last semester of high school. Numerous tasks await me in the office. There are still two piles of laundry in the basement. Dishes on the counter. I never did get the bathrooms cleaned. Expense reports. Tax returns. Programs to prep. Grocery run. What can I make for dinner?

It's the perfect time to pray.

Because really, what can I do about any of this anyway?

My devotions this morning were from Hebrews 12. Discipline. God's discipline of us, His children. Discipline is actually one of my strengths, but lately, I've been lazy. Didn't get up to run this morning. Zero degrees? What if my car won't start when I'm done? I'd have to walk home. That wouldn't be good. Maybe I'll skip this one.

I am blessed. I know I am. Blessed in abundance. So that's where I must start. Thank You, Lord! Thank You for life – little lives, well-lived lives, lives that touch mine every day, lives that touch mine only occasionally but bless me when they do, lives that were difficult but still touched many others – and now have left many lives hurting.

My heart feels heavy with care, but You speak to me from Your Word: Discipline.

Discipline is about goals, setting goals, reaching goals, and overcoming obstacles that keep us from our goals. Hebrews 12:10 says that God “disciplines us in a way that provides genuine benefit to us and enables us to share in his holiness.” Is holiness my goal? Is it? Do I really want holiness more than I want to look holy? Discipline can be painful. Gaining holiness will cost me – it will cost me my pride, for sure. It may very well cost me my control over life, too. Handing over the keys, handing over the mirror, handing over my reputation, handing over all that makes me feel good about myself – so that God can break me and trim me and re-fashion me to look and act and love and speak and give like He does. Am I a willing daughter? Will I submit to my Father’s discipline?

Only because I know Him. Only because I know He is love. Only because I know He is good. Only because I know His plan is to prosper me and not to harm me. Only because He promises He will never leave me and never forsake me, and because I know He always keeps His promises.

Hebrews 12:12 says, “So strengthen your drooping arms, and steady your tottering knees; and make a level path for your feet; so that what has been injured will not get wrenched out of joint but rather will be healed.” In other words, get over yourself and how you feel. Determine to live by truth and only truth. Gravity pulls snowflakes downward, toward its center, the earth’s core. Winds cause it to change direction, even pushing it back upward for a time. But only for a time. Gravity always wins and pulls it down to the ground eventually. Our emotions and feelings are like the wind and can keep our thoughts and decisions swirling in our heads. But when we pray, we grab hold of truth, and the truth, like gravity, pulls us to our center – Jesus, God, our Savior, our Lord, the Spirit, the Sovereign of the universe, the Author of salvation, the Lover of our souls.

The next verse in Hebrews 12 (verse 14) says, “Keep pursuing *shalom* [God’s salvation peace] with everyone and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” I can’t see the Lord without holiness? Apparently not. All those snowflakes swirling about get in the way. But when I sit with the Lord and let gravity, truth, do its work, the snowflakes settle; all the bits and pieces of life fall into their proper places. And I can see. I can see that God was there all along. He never left. He never let go. He never changed what He was doing. He was, as always, ever-present, perfect love, King of kings, Almighty God.

Shalom, the peace of God that comes with His salvation. There is no other real peace. Pursue *shalom*. Pursue *shalom* with everyone. Not “pursue peace” but “pursue *shalom*”. Pursue God’s salvation peace, the peace that comes only from Jesus, only in surrender to His lordship and salvation. So, *shalom* and truth come together, pulling people together, too. Snow and ground meeting, the one covering the other, lending her beauty.

Father, Thank You, again! Not just for life, but for Your life! Broken and poured out so that I can have life, real life, abundant life – *shalom*. And that I can have *shalom* with others. Updrafts and down drafts and right and left drafts cannot separate us from the gravity, the truth, of *shalom* that will pull us together, all toward the Center, Jesus, as we sit in His presence and let His truth do its work in our souls.

Amen.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February

- 01 Leila Hartmann
Michael Prinsen
Madalyn Navis
- 04 Seth DeHaai
Gracin Reed
- 05 Ashley Navis
Marion Prinsen 89
- 06 Lynn DeMaster
Tracy Spriggs
- 07 Ana Mae Berend
Jon Risseeuw
- 08 Kathy Bruggink
Logan Navis
- 09 **JoAnn TenPas 86**
- 10 Caitlin Soerens
Owen Teunissen
- 13 Andrea Scholten
- 14 **Lorraine**
Huibregtse 90
- 16 John Prinsen
Jeff Starr
Carl TenPas 87
- 17 Eric Veldhorst

- 18 Nic Gilbertson
- 20 Gene Dana
- 26 Dan Hartmann
Jack Krause
- 27 Tim Bruggink
Nathan DeMaster
Lowell Kappers 83
- 28 Cheryl Reha

- 11 Jody Kaat
- 12 Matthew Rubsam
Eric Sanders
- 14 Ashley Hinze
John Poplar
- 15 Greg Navis
Roger TeStroete
- 17 Malachi Lukens
- 23 Michael Villarreal
- 24 Rosemary DeMaster
Jeremy Spriggs
- 25 Ivy Ray
Matthew Risch
Jerry Schwartz 83
- 28 Lisa Claussen
- 31 Tessa Krause
Jamie Prinsen



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March

- 01 Reese Hinze
- 02 **Shirley Claussen**
Marilyn Sandee
- 03 Alyssa Nicole Geib
Bria Hopeman
Ellie Kaat
Brandon Wieberdink
- 05 Jaiden Jones
- 06 **Erwin Claussen**
- 08 **Henry Neerhof 97**
- 09 Darlene TeStroete
Gloria TeStroete 92
- 10 Stacey Soerens



GREETERS SCHEDULE

February

- 03 Dennis & Cheryl Reha
- 10 Eric & Joan Chvosta-Sanders
- 17 Jeremy & Tracy Spriggs family
- 24 Bob & Elaine Scholl

March

- 03 Rich & Debbie Stapelkamp
- 10 Jackie & Larry TenPas
- 17 Roy & Gloria Teunissen
- 24 Dale & Betsy Theune
- 31 Dale & Jody VanEss

April

- 07 Dave & Helena Villarreal
- 14 Dan & Julie Wieberdink
- 21 Don & LuAnn Teunissen
- 28 Gene & Joan Dana

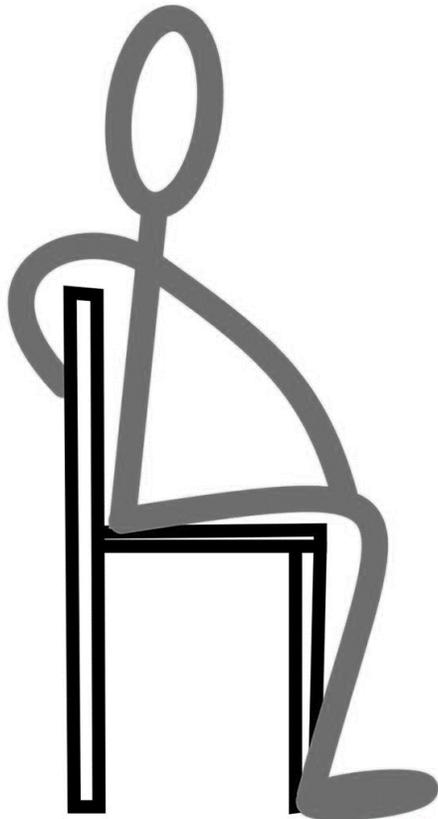


“Keep It Moving”

It is hard to believe that our first sitting down stretching exercise started on March 19, 2018 . . . and we “Kept It Moving” ever since!

This kind of exercise is an exercise that targets the senior population, (I like to call them that because I don't feel they are old!) and also to the not so “seniors” that have physical problems. When we first started some came to hopefully help their balance. Those exercises require you to stand. The first thing we tell people if you have something that hurts don't do more. You are the one that needs to learn to know your body. Don't use what hurts and go on with the next exercise.

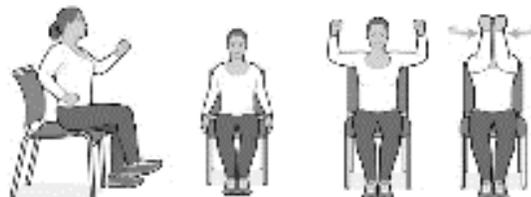
We are very pleased to say we started with about 12, now we have 23. And yes we have 8 men there! (Hear that guys?) Remember too that it gets you out of the house. It's free and you don't need to be there every day. AND you don't have to live in Cedar Grove. We have 8 Oostburgers, husband & wives, a car load of friends! This is special, never would I have ever thought a group like this would form such a special bond. The only way I can say it is we are a family of close friends who care for each other. And you are welcome to join Judy DenBoer and myself at 9:30am Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays. We are done by 10:00am.



Judy and I would like an extra person to be a stand-by if it would happen Judy or I can't be there. Come and check it out. It's not that hard, AND trust me, I might make a few errors too. But that's what's fun. Talk to me about it. We will take ladies or men – young or older.

920-668-6937 Mary Prinsen

**OH, I HAVE ONE RULE:
PLEASE DO NOT MOVE THE CHAIR!**



Thank you to all of our church family for the prayers, cards, calls, and food given to me during my recent illness and surgery.

Jerry Hilbelink

Thank you so much friends at First Reformed Church for all the Christmas cards and messages. From time to time I go through them all. Also, for the lovely Poinsettia. It is still very radiant!

Carolyn Kappers

Thank you for the poinsettia and the many Christmas cards. Visitors are always appreciated.

Pearl Hilbelink

THANKS
from the
HEART

Thank you to everyone who rang the bell and donated for the Salvation Army at the Piggly Wiggly. The funds raised will be used for the Plymouth Salvation Army projects in the county.

Thanks

Thank you to my church family for the poinsettia cards and prayers during this Christmas season. They were much appreciated.

Lucile LeMahieu



Thank you to everyone who sent Christmas cards to Colin and his soldier buddies.

Your encouraging messages and holiday greetings were very much appreciated.

Rich & Kenda Kettenhoven

Thank you to the congregation for the beautiful poinsettia and all the nice cards I received for Christmas. I read them often to enjoy all the nice messages in them.

Lillian Veldboom

The family of Marilyn Prinsen thanks you for your kind expression of sympathy.



Notes of **THANKS**

MOTIVATED MISSIONARIES

As part of our New Year's resolution as a congregation, we believe we are to individually and collectively examine our efforts to be "motivated missionaries". Our congregation has a long history of supporting mission groups financially and prayerfully. As part of a newly formed subcommittee that is set up to expand on our communication with our current missionary groups/individuals, we hope to highlight the work that each mission group is doing and briefly summarize the history behind their efforts.

Currently most of the missionaries/programs we support send us periodic letters highlighting their successes and needs. You may have noticed regular mention of our missionaries in the bulletin, in the pastor's prayers and posted at the information desk and bulletin board. Our committee is working on ways that we can connect with these groups/individuals beyond just our financial support. If you are currently in contact with our missionaries or have ideas please contact any of our members.

THE MISSION SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE:

MARIE HEINEN JUDY O'CONNELL DARLENE TE STROETE LINDA WALWOORD

PLEASE KEEP READING the first two summarizes below:

ADULLAM

Location	3033 North 30 th St Milwaukee, WI 53210
Contact	Jamon Lewis 1-414-322-0035 James Lewis 1-414-322-6595
Support for 2019	\$6700.00

Adullam was founded in 2010 in an old wood mill shop. Their outreach program works with organizations and churches in central Milwaukee and surrounding areas.

Their focus is to fulfill the physical and spiritual needs of the community with dignity and love. They run a summer program for kids where 100's youth from all over the U.S. through different programs come and work at Adullam. They offer job training skills and employment opportunities thru Custom Cottage Furniture business making custom made furniture. A warming center for up to 25 people when the temperatures get below 10 degrees through the night from 7pm to 7am. They also have a relief center where furniture and household items are offered to families in need. As we know Lloyd TerMaat and his helpers go around Sheboygan County and surrounding areas collecting furniture and household goods to take to Adullam to help with these families in need.

Prayer continues to be their backbone in following God's will for Adullam.

RCA MISSIONS

Location	Kenya
Information	RCA – Megan Razenberg – Administrative Assistant for Global Missions
Contact	Global Missions: mrazenberg@rca.org

Pastor Simon was born in the Maasai Villages in Kajiado Kedog, Kenya. He is the son of a prominent leader advisor for the Chief of our village. I am one of 12 siblings and the first of my large family to go to school. I grew up watching my father help people, and whenever someone was healed they would bring our family sheep, but out of humility my father never took any. And because of that, we grew up very poor. Something grew out of my heart after I saw my father's service to people, and I became very compassionate towards the needs of my people

Pastor Simon and Agnes have seven (7) children, two (2) girls and five (5) boys.

My Christian life started when I was arrested for cattle rustling from other communities that are not Maasai, and in prison is where I received my salvation. After coming back to our village, I started attending Bible school and from there I began to plant churches. As we speak now, I have helped plant almost 100 churches with over 8,000 members. The Maasai Land is the most growing ministry area.



First Reformed Church

Cedar Grove, WI

237 S. Main Street P.O. Box 319
Cedar Grove, WI 53013
Phone: 920-668-6261
Website: firstreformedcg.com

Chris Schaefer – Senior Pastor

Phone: 920-668-7024 / 219-863-8037 email: pastorchris220@gmail.com

Josiah Ray – Youth Director

Phone: 316-680-4781 email: josiahray40@gmail.com

Ivy Ray – Youth Director Assistant email: ivy@firstreformedcg.com

Cheryl Schaefer – Ministry Assistant email: cheryl@firstreformedcg.com

Kaye Ebbers – Office Administrator email: kaye@firstreformedcg.com

Patti Hinze – Financial Administrator email: patti@firstreformedcg.com

Church Ministry Contacts

Elders

Deacons

Administration

Andrew Lavey Jeff DeSmidt

Contact: Andrew Lavey

920-668-8302

Congregational Life

Gene Dana Dale Theune

Contact: Gene Dana

920-226-1068

(Connect & Care with Compassion)

Contact: Joan Dana

920-918-7785

Discipleship

Pastor Chris Andrew Lavey

Contact: Pastor Chris

219-863-8037

Missions

Mark Huenink Nathan Hinze

Contact: Mark Huenink

920-627-6923

Property

Mark Hopeman Kevin

Hopeman

& Ben Lukens

Contact: Kevin Hopeman

920-668-8173

Worship

Joel Ebbers Jason Krause

Contact: Joel Ebbers

Missions We Support

- Harry & Pat Miersma
RCA & Wycliffe – Dallas
- Pastor Simon Muntolol
RCA Missions – Kenya
- Todd & Darlene Voskuil
JAARS/Wycliffe – North
Carolina
 - Words of Hope
Uganda Challenge
- God's Kidz in the Hood
Milwaukee
- The Faithful Workers of
Adullam – Milwaukee
- Kelsey (TeBeest) Corpas
Athletes in Action – Spain
 - Alex Holle
- InterVarsity @ Northern IL
- Beautiful Response -Haiti
 - Camp Daniel
 - Jen DeMaster
- Mid-East Missions
 - Pastor Esperanza
Dominican Republic
- Ongoing Mission Projects
Selected by Members

Sunday Morning Worship Services
on Access Channel 20
Tuesdays and Thursdays at
10:00am / 2:30pm / 5:00pm
7:30pm / 10:00pm