

LIFE@central

October 2015

Central Baptist Church, Pretoria





PASTOR'S CORNER

by Charles de Kiewit [Senior Pastor]

Pastor Charles' Time in the UK

Dear Friends

Carol and I were privileged to have two months break from regular ministry here at Central; and we were away in June and July. This kind of break is known as “long leave” or “sabbatical leave”. The practice at Central has been to allocate this leave to their full time pastors on completion of a five year work cycle. When taking our long leave we had been serving at Central for 16 and a half years. This then was our third opportunity of “long leave”.

Our long leave started with me attempting to run the 90th Comrades marathon. I was really looking forward to this event hoping to complete it running alongside of my eldest son, Josh. Weeks before the race I was plagued with a foot injury and in spite of attempts to treat my ageing frame, I only managed 62km; feeling very sorry for myself having to get a ride back to Pietermaritzburg on the “bailers’ bus”.

Three days later I boarded a plane for London, UK. A colleague picked me up from the airport and helped me settle in at Tyndale house in Cambridge. Here I spent three and a bit weeks reading and writing. I had decided to give some attention to my understanding of an aspect of ecclesiology that impacts, in my opinion, members’ loyalty to and participation in the church. Having focused time to reflect on the nature of the believer’s connectedness to Christ proved to be very helpful to me and I trust of value in my future teaching programme.

Carol joined me after three and a half weeks. We attended the Evangelical ministry assembly in London. The theme of the conference was “Identity crisis”. It was an excellent and inspiring time with the teachers including: Christopher Ash, Bruce Ware, John Wyatt and Tim Keller.

After the conference we spent some leisure time resting and reconnecting with some old friends from our Scottsville Baptist ministry days and then also some time with my sister who lives in the UK. We were able to visit some tourist sites like Stonehenge, Arundel Castle and lots and lots of old church buildings.

The remainder of our time was back in Cambridge staying in a friend’s home. I continued to read and write while we were there as well as having some days where we explored the rich Christian heritage of Cambridge.

At the risk of boring you with our time away I resist sharing too much information of our time away. I do however end this report with some impressions of what we experienced.

A vibrant church in one generation does not guarantee a vibrant church in succeeding generations. So much of reformation history is connected to England and yet so many church buildings now serve as tourist attractions and museums. There are still some pockets of

evangelical witness but by and large the English nation has abandoned living faith in Christ. This has left me feeling challenged regarding the importance of the depth of discipleship. We cannot presume the next generation will pick up the baton of faith without present faithful discipling and vibrant faith.

Friends and family are a gift from God and should not be taken for granted. Carol and I have been blessed to meet and get to know many people in the course of pastoral ministry. It was a real joy to reconnect with some old friends and family appreciating the gift of these relationships.

More than ever I am convinced that our walk of faith requires continued nurture. This means ongoing time in the Word with the help of the Holy Spirit. There is also great value in standing on the shoulders of other saints who can teach and lead us and feed our souls.

We never know what God will do with someone who passes under our influence. A highlight of our time in Cambridge was to reconnect with and see how God is using a young man who God

brought into our lives 20 years ago in our Scottsville ministry. Back then he was disillusioned with liberalism that was rife in the YFC movement and wanted to throw in the towel. Today he is being used of God in pastoring, evangelical academic writing, teaching and conference speaking. Praise God for what He does in spite of us.

Having an opportunity to visit a number of churches inspired us in seeing that God is at work building his church in a context where humanly speaking it does not seem feasible. It was encouraging to see both young and old exalting Christ and embracing the gospel to the glory of God.

Finally, I did rest from my running for a month. But then I put the "tekkies" back on again and enjoyed running in the beautiful English villages and countryside. I may try the 91st Comrades down run next year, DV.

Both Carol and I do appreciate the leave allocated to us and trust that what we have gained will have some benefit in the life and ministry of Central.

Charles

HOW GOOD IS THE GOD WE ADORE

Words by Joseph Hart, 1759

How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend!
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end!

'Tis Jesus the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall Guide us safe home,
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come.

CARING MINISTRY

by Lukie Dercksen [Care Pastor]



Perfect Effort: Are You Giving It?

I recently saw a movie where the coach told his football team, “We’re not asking you to be perfect on every play. What we’re asking you is to give a perfect effort on every play from snap to whistle.”

When I heard that, I thought, “So many people live mediocre Christian lives. Always reminding others and themselves that the reason for this is that they simply aren’t perfect.” Of course the truth is, we certainly aren’t perfect (Rom 3:23) but that doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t do our best to live holy, God glorifying lives.

God expects a perfect effort from us. Sure we’ll fail and make mistakes along the way. Although we aren’t able to live perfect lives we are able to give a perfect effort. Like Paul in Colossians 1:29 (***“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”***) we must put in maximum effort (toiling and struggling) and we do it dependant on God’s energy trusting that He will powerfully work within us. Human effort through divine enablement.

We should remember 2 Peter 1:5-8, ***“(5) For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, (6) and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, (7) and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (8) For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”.***

Note how both 2 Peter 1:5 and Colossians 1:29 starts with: ***“For this very reason”*** and ***“For this I toil”***. Why then should we give a perfect effort? To honour God by becoming more like Jesus and helping others do the same.

The question is, is your effort perfect?

Lukie

The *Life at Central* Magazine

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition! Any articles or contributions for the next edition can be emailed to life@central.org.za.

Download the magazine in pdf format (colour) from the Central website: <http://www.central.org.za>

Previous editions (2006 to 2014) are also available.

Articles for *Women's Value* compiled by Natasha Dercksen. Edited by Wambui Gititu and Daniel Salzwedel.

God Filled My Emptiness

A Personal Testimony

by Camé le Roux

I am going to talk about a tree, and that tree represents me and my spiritual life. Like in Mark 4 with the parable of the sower, seed was sown into my life as I was raised in a Christian home. I am Afrikaans and it is part of our culture for everyone to think and say that they are Christians. I was in the Voortrekkers which is almost like Scouts. In grade 11, I went to a test camp, where they asked questions on Christianity and our spiritual walk. A lot of the people said that they had to pretend, but I couldn't, and I am glad I didn't because it was the first time I was honest and real with others, and mostly with myself. At the test camp I was asked if I was a Christian and I said, "I don't know", then one lady asked if I loved Jesus and I said, "I don't know" - I was a good person but a Christian, I didn't know.

I was a people pleaser and in my first year of university it became difficult. I had a boyfriend and I was living for the relationship. Every weekend when I went home I felt like I had to spend time with everyone to keep them happy. It drained me and I didn't feel happy at all. One evening on my way home from my boyfriend's, I started crying and I didn't even know why. I guess I felt like I wasn't making anybody happy, not even myself.

I drove to my best friend's house and after I told her what was going on, she asked me if she could pray for me and there and then we knelt and prayed. While we were praying the emptiness in my chest that was starting to fill, it was literally like a hole that was incomplete and painful. I only became aware of the pain once the hole started to close. That was amazing, I don't even know how to describe it, but it was out of this world. I believe that the seed of my

tree was sown into good soil and was filled and made complete with the living water of Jesus Christ, and through that, God accepted me completely.

A verse that really stands out for me is ***Ephesians 2:8-9***, "***for it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works that no one can boast.***" This verse stands out because it is not about good deeds or pleasing someone. It is the free gift that God gives us, we must only be willing to receive it and He will do the rest.

A while after I experienced that gap being filled, I became involved with Campus Outreach and I really feel that the Lord sent the people on my path to prune this young tree and draw me closer to Him and I am so grateful for that. Pruning is a difficult process, I became aware of how sinful I really am and how much I need the Lord. Bearing good fruit is difficult, I am still working on anchoring my roots in the good soil and learning to love the Lord with everything, getting to know Him and bearing good fruit.

Although it is difficult it is totally worth it. What really stands out for me is that the Lord wants YOU; just as you are. And during difficult times we don't always see the Lord, but afterwards when we look back we can see how He carried us through those difficult times.

I want to be baptized because I feel like I am ready and nothing is holding me back anymore, I have repented of my sin, and I want to show the world that I have died to self and I am now walking with the Lord and living for Him.

Hypercritical or loving God?

by Patrick Kennedy

In 2013, a lesbian pastor in Cape Town took the Methodist Church to court for unfair dismissal after she told her congregation that she plans to marry her female partner. You can read an online article on this by doing a Google search for: IOL Lesbian pastor vs Church.

When you as a Christian hear this report, you will invariably be shaking your head at this news, but the shaking of Christian heads will vary greatly in cause and intensity, this due to the very wide variety of convictions in the church today.

You may be shaking your head because:

- A.** You cannot believe how unloving and graceless the Methodist Church is in dismissing this minister of God.
- B.** You cannot believe that this lesbian minister would even associate herself with a church that frowns upon gay marriage.
- C.** You cannot believe that a church would allow openly gay members and ministers in the church, but won't allow them to get married.
- D.** You cannot believe that a minister would take the church to court as it clearly goes against Biblically prescribed church conduct. (*1 Corinthians 6:1-8*)
- E.** You cannot believe that any church would ordain a lesbian minister to begin with. (*1 Timothy 3:1-7*)
- F.** You cannot believe that any church would ordain a female minister to begin with. (*1 Timothy 2:12a*)
- G.** You cannot believe that any church would give membership status to a person who has no intention of resisting and repenting from their gay lifestyle. (*1 Corinthians 5:9-13*)
- H.** You might also, like me, be shaking your head at the fact that there is just too many things wrong with this picture to even begin debating it.

How much Biblical instruction must one church compromise in order to get to this point?

When you hear news like this, do you realise that no matter how far that denomination or congregation is from you; you as a Christian, carrying the name of Christ, cannot be untouched by this. It is the name of your Lord that is being smeared in public when a so-called Christian makes these kind of headlines. It is the kind of thing that makes you want to explain to the world that that is not Biblical Christianity; that it is not representative of the church of Christ; that it is not what the followers of Jesus look like at all. But we do not have the voice of the media. By the time that such an article hits the public, it is already far too late for the church to respond.

The church does not have time to continuously explain itself to the world and correct a Christ-dishonouring picture painted of the church by non-believers that call themselves Christians. It is never supposed to get to that point in the first place.

So how do churches get themselves into these situations? Isn't it purely by small and incremental compromises, mostly influenced by giving the world what the world wants in their church, instead of giving Christ what He wants in His church? I am convinced it is. Large compromise, like we see in the example of the lesbian minister in the Methodist Church, does not just simply appear overnight. The different permutations of these incremental compromises are as vast as Satan is cunning, and therefore too extensive to explain in a writing like this, or even in a large volume of books. The church has neither the time nor the authority to debate what it should or shouldn't allow when it comes to issues that are clearly addressed by God himself.

Unfortunately, when what is clear in Scripture is conveyed in the church by those who are truly concerned about the church's well-being, they are increasingly marked as being hypercritical and graceless. Being the one who is writing this, I am of course one of those often marked as being hypercritical and without grace. This shunning by fellow Christians has been in the past, and is still at present a great cause of incapacitating sadness for me personally. Still, I find that there remains a burden inside me for the Biblical church, a burden that cannot be ascribed to my natural inclinations. My nature wants human acceptance. I want the easy road. I want to speak to please. Yet I find myself returning again and again to pointing out deviation from Scripture in the church. Is this hypercriticism or a love for God? I do believe the latter.

John 14:23: *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.*

John 14:24: *"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.*

These are not the only verses in the Bible that correlates loving God with keeping His word. I believe that Biblical love of God is never apart from doing what He says. What God has said, he said with finality in His son Jesus, testified to and explained completely in a single book, the Bible. It is what we have been given, and it is all we have to follow. By this, I am not excluding the work of the Holy Spirit, for it is indeed only through the Holy Spirit that a believer (and only a believer) can perceive the kingdom of God at all.

Once a believer has seen and perceived the spiritual treasures of God, how can he allow those precious things to be reduced to fleshly amenities to draw the interest of the world? It would be casting the proverbial pearls to the pigs. It is the kind of small compromises that force the creation of counterfeit Christianity in order to accommodate the world. It is what welcomes the world into our churches, considers them

Christians on non-Biblical terms, tells them that they are saved while they're not, grants them membership and ministry positions, considers their opinions in spiritual matters, satisfies their itching ears with needs-oriented sermons, helps them with self-improvement programs and make them feel at home with a variety interest groups called ministries, while in fact the only Biblical ministry towards non-believers should be the preaching of the gospel, which includes the command from God to repent and believe in Christ.

If deviation from Scripture in churches keeps reaching the magnitudes we witness today, then it is inevitable for Biblical correction to seem hypercritical. When we see these things happening in our churches and it does not bother us, we have great cause to be worried about the state of our own hearts toward God. It is better to be called hypercritical in your continuous struggle against these things than be swept along with the enormous flow of counterfeit Christianity, which is today the greatest cause of dishonouring of the very name that it is supposed to represent.

Contrary to the world's opinion, we know that love is not all that is happy and without judgement. God himself is love, but His loving nature necessitates His hate for things outside of that nature, like sin. God is love, but He judges, He disciplines and even punishes with death. If we love God, we are bothered by unrighteousness and misrepresentation of Him, even to the point of seeming hypercritical.

Even non-critical people would be more than willing to criticize the remote Methodist Church in Cape Town for their un-Biblical practices, but they will hardly dare to be unpopular in their local church by pointing out any error. It is my challenge to all Christians to firstly realise that compromise is continually at our church doors, wanting to take us to places that we cannot return from. Secondly, to realise that there is no one else but us to bring correction. Jesus maintains his church, but there are plenty of instructions for us to watch our doctrine and contend for the faith. Let's be faithful to God rather than men.

DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLESHIP

by AJ Meiring

*"Whoever disregards discipline comes to poverty and shame,
but whoever heeds correction is honored".*

Proverbs 13:18

In recent weeks the youth leadership realized that we need to start thinking more seriously about discipline at our Friday night activities. There has been an explosion of growth in our Friday programs at Arcadia, praise God! However, along with the growth comes a new set of challenges. Youth hiding in dark corners, disrespect, children running through all areas of the church, disruptions during the teaching time, people leaving after games and not staying for the teaching, disobedience and now recently some teens entering the premises under the influence of alcohol. Praise God for a mission field, but God protect us from becoming ineffective, chaotic and disorganized. For this reason I believe it is time to communicate and follow through with firm but loving discipline. Not only because it is needed, but also because it is Biblical. My intention is to establish a system of discipline, working with all our leaders, to ensure a spiritual, safe and fun environment for our young people. Think of this as a kind of discipline policy for Friday nights :)

Level 1: Preventative maintenance

It is always better to persuade an ally than to pound an enemy. Most of our youth leaders are non-confrontational so this should be a strength. The idea here is to help young people see their potential for positive influence in the group. Let me give a scenario: Dennis the menace makes jokes during the teaching time. A leader responds after the meeting: "Hey Dennis, do you see how the others laugh at you when you make jokes? That means you have influence! Can I

ask that you use your influence in helping everyone pay attention? Don't you think God is honoured when you use your influence for good?". This is a good place to start with discipline that disciplines, giving a young person some vision and direction for his/her energy.

Level 2: Discipline system

Any form of discipline always includes three main principles: 1 - decide on a consequence for bad behaviour, 2 - communicate it clearly, 3 - follow through. All of these must be included for any discipline system to work. As discipline is enforced there should be a flow or progression in behaviour/consequence. The worse the bad behaviour, the stronger or more severe the consequence should be. I would like to give a sample of what this would look like on a Friday night.

Step 1 - Point out the disruption in front of everybody. Not simply shouting at the group, but naming the individual/s who are being disruptive.

Step 2 - Pull the child aside. This is where a leader will pull the child outside and give a strong talk about their bad behaviour.

Step 3 - One on one. A youth leaders' visit with the difficult child outside of the normal meeting time to talk about the disruptiveness.

Step 4 - Contact parents/suspension. If the problem persists parents should be told about

the bad behaviour of the child. Often parents have no idea of how their children behave at church. Leaders must communicate to parents about the difficulty they are experiencing with the child and ask them to talk with them. A two week suspension from youth will also help to communicate the seriousness of the offence.

Step 5 - Removal. If no steps are helping then last resort will be to tell the child that he/she is no longer welcome to be at youth. Hopefully the previous steps will prevent this last resort but we cannot be passive about persistent bad behaviour which disrupts our intention of sharing the gospel and instructing young people in the Word of God.

Final thoughts

Discipline is never a nice thing but it is absolutely necessary and I am realizing this more and more. Of course we do want our young people to have fun and of course we

understand there are times to be silly and loud but there are also times to be respectful and obedient. Pray for our youth leadership as we seek to put our hands to this task. The context is tough, society is broken, sin is rampant but Jesus is King. Pray as we make some adjustments and please know that everything we do is done out of a desire to honour God's name and to see young people grow into maturity. And on the topic of maturity, I understand that some of our young people come from stable Christian homes and are disillusioned over the Friday night context. I would say this: WE NEED YOU! I know it is a sacrifice but God can use you to be a missionary to our Friday night mission field. How cool is that? Consider changing your perspective on Friday nights and help us as we seek to glorify Jesus through our testimony.

In Christ

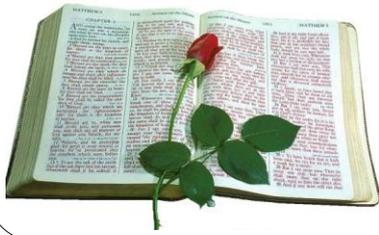
AJ

This has happened to me...

by Val Nowlan

For some time now I've had a longing to sing the old hymns. I find that even though I enter into and appreciate the songs up on the screen in the services on Sunday, I'm not remembering the words. And so I decided to put together a collection of the hymns I know. Within a very short time the idea took off. The more hymns I copied out, the more there seemed to be that I knew. After two months of copying, the collection reached 250! What a surprise! But then I remembered I've been a Christian for 70 or more years and have sung hymns and some choruses from earliest childhood ... in small fellowships; large churches here and overseas; camps; Sunday School; school assemblies; open air meetings – you name it, I've been there. So it is not really surprising when I say that hymns have in fact formed an integral part of my spiritual life.

But something else has emerged in this journey. I read again Paul's injunctions to the Ephesians in chapter 5:19 to speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. To the Colossians in chapter 3:16 to let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another....as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.



WOMEN'S VALUE

Compiled by Natasha Dercksen

A letter from Carol

Hello friends

As you are aware I write a weekly letter to our missionaries and a couple of other folk who request a weekly "newsletter" from the office each Friday.

When we returned from our sabbatical, I wrote my weekly letter telling our missionaries a little about our time in England. Charles then suggested I submit the letter as my Life@Central article. So here goes ... hope it doesn't bore you to death.

Our long leave was a wonderful experience, although it started with a huge learning curve for Charles who, as you have probably heard, didn't finish his first and much trained for Comrades marathon. Because of his injury he began experiencing extreme pain in his leg and felt very nauseous at the 42km mark. He encouraged Josh to continue running without him, and was about to give up at that stage. However, he persevered for another 20km when he was forced to throw in the towel and get in the ambulance bus.



There he joined many other very dejected runners in a very silent bus, with nobody saying a word, all just sitting there; Ag foeitog, what a sad day that was for us. He had worked and trained so hard, but really should not have even started

running after having been in a moon boot for 10 days just before the race.

When Charles left for the UK a couple of days later, he felt extremely depressed for what he thought was a failure on his part. Nothing anybody said could convince him that he did really well by even completing 62km. This was really the learning curve for him as he spent the next few weeks on his own reflecting and coming to terms with his experience. Ask him now how he feels and he will tell you that he is out on the road again, training for the 2016 down race. Crazy I say.

Charles arrived in Cambridge and stayed at Tyndale House which is a study centre. His little room was above the library where he was allocated a desk while he studied there. This was a really good time for him. He not only read, wrote, learned and enjoyed the books in the library, but he also met some very interesting people and learned from them and their diverse ministries. His writing went well and in fact he achieved far more than he set out to do.

He missed the family terribly though, he discovered what it is like to be on your own and without a family around for 24 hours a day 7 days a week. But this was probably the reason he did so much work because he could read and write day and night. For his breaks he would climb on his ancient old bicycle and cycle around Cambridge or to the shops to buy his pork sausages (that's all the man could afford to eat).

Charles then attended the "Covenant Conference" with his friend Jonny Gibson, where

again he came into contact with different men and pastors from various denominations and diverse backgrounds.



I joined him in London where we attended the Evangelical Ministry Assembly 2015, there were over 1350 people at

the conference. It was a real privilege for us to attend. Our speakers included Christopher Ash (Director of the Cornhill Training Course), Tim Keller (Pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York), Andrew Reid (Pastor at Holy Trinity Doncaster), Vaughan Roberts (Minister at St Ebbe's Church), Bruce Ware (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) and John Wyatt (Professor of ethics, University College of London). These are world class speakers and so we were tremendously blessed.

The theme of the conference was "Human Dignity" or "Identity Crisis, Preaching to a confused world". All the sessions were excellent. One that particularly stood out was the one presented by John Wyatt on "Beginning and end of life issues", probably because abortion and euthanasia are such real issues which the church is facing today.

After being fed spiritually with such huge meals, and with lots to digest, we visited some friends in Plymouth, who took leave from work and so generously drove us all around to places like Stonehenge and Arundel Castle.



We then went to Charles' sister in Knutsford near Manchester. It was lovely just spending a whole week with them, catching up and sharing with them. They took us to Llundudno in Wales which is such a beautiful part of the UK.



From there we went back to Cambridge where we spent 2 weeks on our own in a friend's home. They had gone away on holiday and gave us the use of their home and their bicycles. It was absolutely fantastic being able to re-connect and touch base with each other, spending 24 hours a day together for 2 weeks. What a treat.



Our trip was a good break and a real blessing. We do thank the Lord for the opportunity we had of going but realise this was an opportunity of a life time and more than likely won't happen again.

While we were away our Labrador had 6 beautiful pups. So our family was added to and brought much excitement into the home. This distracted the girls a little and made our being away more bearable.



Charles and I are excited about ministry ahead and continue to trust God for His hand and His Spirit to guide and lead in the direction we should follow. May you too know clearly His way as you seek to find it and walk in it.

Proverbs 20:24

"A man's steps are directed by the LORD. How then can anyone understand his own way?"

Luv & laughter

Carol

Centralites

meet Michelle Geurink

One of the things we like to do in Life@Central is occasionally profile some of our church members because we think there is a lot we can learn from each other and people are interesting. In this edition we would like to feature Michelle Geurink, who attends church at Centra's Hill campus and works as the logistics manager at Glenhaven and Haven Village Retirement Centres. Michelle first came to South Africa in 2001 on mission with Bethesda. She first heard about Central, "I visited Central many times but officially joined Central after the Hill campus was started". Since joining Central in 2013, she is now part of the Kings Rubies leadership team and also serves in the screen ministry, a job she describes as daunting, though she finds the welcome desk less daunting.

Life@Central asked her what she has learnt about life having worked at Glenhaven and Haven Village and true to her humour, she said "most of us will be quite deaf by the time we reach old age (whatever that is). There is a wealth of knowledge, life experience and amazing stories hidden away in those who have paved the way for us younger folks". Therefore Michelle says we should listen to them "even if you have already heard it all before, maybe this time it will finally sink in".

According to Michelle, "when you are old and a bit senile, the way you have lived your life in your youth often becomes clear to those around you in your words and actions. **Luke 6:45:** *"The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produced evil, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."* My actions need to be true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control must be my way of life, so that it is so ingrained in me that it will flow out of me even when my mind and willpower have left me. (It's a good thing I am not old yet as God clearly still has lots of work to do in my life!)"

Having lived in South Africa for now, 14 years, has changed her, "I now speak so funny that I am misunderstood in both my countries of residence". Michelle loves taking her dogs for a walk. She recently got a puppy whose name kept changing: first it was 'Bear' for seven and a half weeks, then he became 'Levi' for five minutes and so far he is 'Diesel'. When we last checked, 'Diesel' is still 'Diesel', "though he is sometimes referred to as 'Unleaded 95', or when wildly crazy, 'Turbo Diesel'. I suppose that when he is in trouble he will be called by his full name 'Diesel de Kiewit'; though I haven't had to shout at him yet" she adds.



Loving God through my Teens

meet Hilde Turkstra



There are many other places a teenager living in Pretoria would rather be on a Friday night or Sunday for that matter; I bet you that church wouldn't rank high on the list. Well for Hilde Turkstra, a friendly 17 year old who goes to school at Menlo High, church is one place she has found what the world cannot offer her. Hilde would like to become a doctor or nurse though she says "still, the future belongs to God and His will be done His way". Life@Central caught up with this young girl who loves 'Mercy Me' and has 'Soul Surfer' as one of her best movies to find out about her walk with God...

What is it like being a Christian teen?

Awesome! You get to start walking on God's path early enough, your life is guided in the choices you are faced with and you learn as you get moulded by God rather than the world.

In what ways has being a Christian helped you in school?

Being a Christian in school gives purpose to it, I don't study hard to beat my peers, but rather to offer my very best to God. I do not encourage others to impress them, but rather to express the love I have received. School does not feel like such a waste of time, but rather an endless opportunity to shine.

What do your peers think about your decision to be a Christian?

I am very privileged to have a group of close friends that are all strong Christians themselves. That is really encouraging because I have 24/7 accountability, encouragement and support from peers. My classmates know I am a Christian and will sometimes ask hard questions or chat about it, which challenges me in why I believe what I believe.

What are some of the things that your peers are struggling with in school?

The most common struggle for teen girls is the issue of worth... Am I beautiful enough? Will I ever be popular/ smart enough? Aspiring to be the "perfect girl" then finding it impossible and feeling discouraged. Teens in general struggle a lot with the questions of what lies ahead, trying to figure out what would be the ideal, most rewarding career and how to pursue that. Spiritually, I find my peers really confused over religion, what it requires, what it offers, if it is really necessary and whether or not it is something personal.

How can Central best serve teens?

Central is a teen-friendly church. Recently I received a letter from a teen girl in our church, telling me what an amazing impact the other teens and the caring body of our church had had on her life, it almost had me in tears. It was such a blessing to hear that our church is used in God's Kingdom to support teenagers in our journey! Most teens also really like contemporary music, as it expresses our worship to God in a beautiful way.

Hilde loves to experiment with her cookery, baking and painting. She is also running a girls devotional group at Menlo High which is such an opportunity. Here in Central, Hilde is involved in youth, crosswalk, Kings Rubies, the crèche at the Arcadia campus as well as the welcoming committee.

and finally ...

meet some of our youngest members

This time Life@Central is featuring some of our youngest members who are quite happy to tell us about themselves and why they love to come to church.



Hannah Philip

Hannah Philip is 6 years old and loves ice cream. She attends Sunday School at the Arcadia campus and “God is good to me” is her favourite worship song; she learnt this action song at Sunday School in Arcadia.



Tannah Potgieter

Tannah Potgieter is 9 years old, she loves Sunday School and the eats after the church service at the Hill. “I love listening to the sermon, it’s fun, I love Blast Off, I won’t miss it” she says. What she likes most about church is Sunday School and the worksheets she completes there. She also loves Aunty Clarry.



Shannon Pretorius

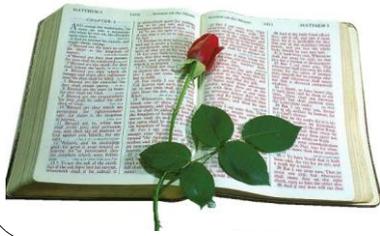
Shannon Pretorius is 7 years old and likes to go to church to sing songs and learn about Jesus. She likes the “new” church, the Hill, and she loves her friends at church. What Shannon likes most about Central is youth on Friday nights. “What a friend I have in Jesus” is her favourite worship song. Her favourite sweets are Jelly Tots.

What 2 year old Paige Oliphant loves about church is playing with James and Joah; her favourite sweet is a chocolate sweetie. Like Paige, Cloë Oliphant (4) loves chocolates too; Cloë likes to come to church because she likes to learn stuff and learn about God.



Cloë and Paige Oliphant

Compiled by Natasha Dercksen



WOMEN'S VALUE

Kings Rubies

At our Kings Rubies meeting of 25 July 2015 the ladies of Central were spoiled with hot soup and fresh loaves of bread. We were blessed with a few tips on how to lose weight and we were reminded to keep our tongues tied.

The end of the year is near and sadly we only have one meeting left. Our previous meeting took place on 19 September at the Hill campus, and our last meeting for the year will take place on 17 October 2015 at 08h30 at Arcadia. During these meetings we learn how to get physically as well as spiritually fit.



Monthly Ladies Prayer Meeting at the Arcadia Campus

All ladies of all ages and colours are encouraged to join the monthly ladies prayer meeting at the Arcadia campus. The prayer meeting takes place at 10 am every third Tuesday of the month at Arcadia in the coffee bar.

Friday Night Fellowship @ THE HILL

Friday night at the Hill from six pm is a great place for the youth to be. Young people have fun learning the Word of God. You know what they say about a picture.... it tells a thousand words - so, here are many thousand 'words'.



We sing ...

We play games ...

We have puppets ...

We enjoy making our food and eating it afterwards ...





Adults Ablaze



by
Natasha Dercksen

Parents dropping off their children for the youth fellowship on Friday nights would hang around waiting for their children. With time, a group formed - Adults Ablaze. Some members of Adults Ablaze indicated that one of the reasons they love the fellowship is because it is nice to have a place to go to on a Friday night after a week of hard work, where church family can sit back and relax together. No need to rush to get the family fed before we come together - we bring and share or bring and braai.

SNOW SHOES

My grandfather was the minister of a church in Germiston for 24 years. Here is one of the stories that he told the boys and girls in June 1937, 6 months after I was born. I was too small to understand the story then, but he left it for me and I know you will like it.

John Nowlan

Have you ever seen snow? It would be quite good fun to run around wearing snow shoes, wouldn't it? I am not certain that we would need snow shoes in many places South Africa.

But have you ever heard of the rabbit that wears snow shoes? He goes about on the surface of the snow in much the same way as boys and girls in countries where snow is found go on skis. The rabbit lives in the forested regions of what the Americans call the Rocky Mountains. Twice each year he is provided with a complete change of costume.

In the summer he is clothed in brown fur, though a tinge of black shows, so that it is difficult to see him in the pine needles that carpet the ground of his woody home. But in the autumn those dark hairs begin to fall out, and new white fur grows in their place and in a short time he is quite white. While this change of colour is going on the rabbit's feet are also being prepared for winter use.

The snow shoe rabbit has large and hard feet out of all proportion to his body. The toes, which are quite long and widely spreading, are covered with coarse frisky hair. In the winter, when the mountains are covered with snow, his ungainly looking feet become the most suitable kind of snow shoes.

He does not sink into the snow as many of the other animals do, but can hop along over the surface of the snow with little difficulty, and his snow shoes also keep the feet warm, and his winter coat makes it almost impossible for a hunter to see him in the snow.

How wonderfully God cares for the snow rabbit, and how wonderfully he cares for us and provides for us. If he looks after the snow rabbit so well, we may be sure he will look after us. And yet we often grumble. Strange that it should be so, but it is. We have such a lot to be thankful for.

Do you remember Aesop's fable about the discontented donkey? This donkey in winter wished for a little warm weather and a mouthful of green grass in exchange for his dry straw and his cold stable.

In good time the warm weather and the fresh grass came on, but work for the donkey came along with it. He wished that summer would come. When the summer came he fancied that his toils increased. He got all hot and bothered and longed for autumn. But when autumn came he had to carry all the crops of apples and grapes and he wished that winter would come. The poor dissatisfied donkey just grumbled and complained through winter, spring, summer and autumn.

But you see he was only a donkey. You would never wish to be like him. Yet, you know, it is terribly easy to get into the habit of grumbling and grumbling means that we are ungrateful. We can be not grateful for all the care of our fathers and mothers for us, and ungrateful to God for all his love and rich provision.

Count your blessings, if you can, but I don't think you can. They are too many. At any rate cultivate the habit of thankfulness and be cheerful.

BOOK *review*

by Val Nowlan

Vision for God ***The story of Dr Margaret Brand***

by Dr. Margaret Brand with Dr. James Jost

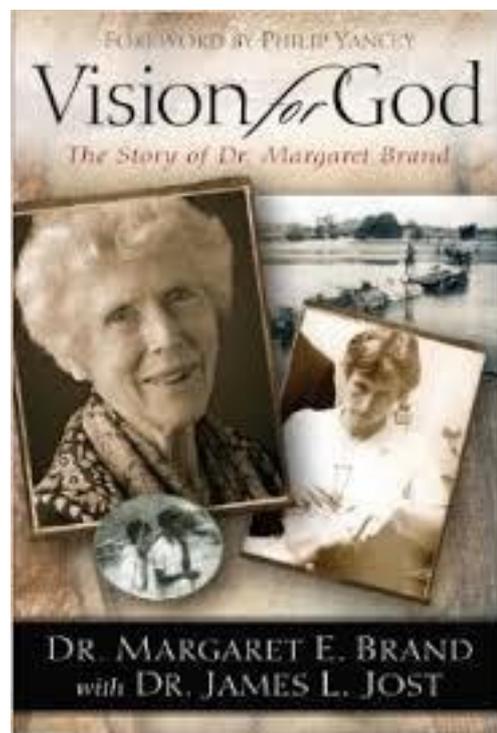
The late Dr Margaret Brand was the wife of world famous Dr Paul Brand, orthopaedic surgeon and missionary in India, especially among leprosy patients in that country.

It has been a privilege for me to read this book as I am particularly interested in reading missionary biographies. My interest in contemporary missionary biographies has been heightened as more of these have become available on the internet. This book is co-authored by Margaret, her son-in-law, Dr James Jost and Phillip Yancy. The structure of the text in itself gives variation to style and where necessary, brevity to unnecessary detail.

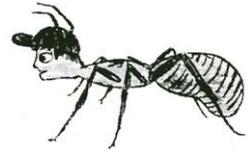
The emotions that emerged in the life of the Brand family with six children growing up in India is beautifully portrayed. The challenges that faced Margaret Brand in her role as wife, mother, and medical practitioner in ophthalmology were at times heart-stopping for me the reader. Her journey into motherhood with their six lively children is like an adventure story on its own. Amid all this she pioneered ophthalmologic procedures for

treating leprosy patients.

Oh, I did so enjoy reading some of the detail recorded by Margaret Brand in her journals, of her spiritual life as she sought to keep in step with a myriad of experiences that were every day events. All these aspects of this book, to my mind, add up to make this book a must read.



Andy the Ant



The "Andy the Ant" series of children's stories, written by Max Ansell, follows the adventures and experiences of Andy and his friends at a Mission school in Swaziland.

PERCY, THE PRAYING MANTIS

"When you pray, go to your room and close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private will reward you."

Matthew 6:6

"Percy must be a very fine Christian," said Archie to Andy as they passed a bush and saw Percy the Praying-Mantis sitting on a branch with his hands folded in front of him and his head bowed, "he is always praying."

"I hate to say it, Archie," said Andy quietly, "but with Percy it is all a fake. He likes to pretend that he is praying but actually it's all an outward show to hide a very wicked heart."

"I can't believe it Andy, are you sure?" said Archie in amazement. "I mean, he is so intent on his praying that he hasn't even seen us pass by."

"Don't be deceived Archie," Andy explained. "He saw us pass by alright,

and had you been a little gnat you might have been in his stomach right now"

"Oer!" Archie shuddered. "Do you really mean that?"

"Of course I do. Come, we'll stop and watch him for a while where he can't see us." Andy answered.

They stopped and watched.

Percy sat very quietly in the attitude of prayer, so quietly and innocently that



two little gnats landed on a branch near him.

“Percy is like a lot of humans in the world.” whispered Andy from their hiding place. He likes people to believe that he is praying when all the time his mind is thinking about other things or what others think of him.”

The two gnats slowly moved up the branch, nearer and nearer to Percy.

“As long as others think he is praying, he is satisfied. It doesn’t matter to Percy what God thinks of him. He prefers the praise of others to the praise of God.

I’m afraid he mocks God by pretending to pray.” Andy concluded sadly.

“Well, he would have bluffed me.” Archie admitted.

“Yes, we all look on the outward, but not God; God looks at the heart.” came Andy’s reply.

“What will he do to those gnats?” Archie queried?

“When they get close enough, he’ll suddenly stop pretending to pray and moving like lightning, he’ll pounce on one of them, and eat it up.” Andy explained.

The gnats were very close to Percy now and seemed quite unaware of the danger. Archie could see Percy getting

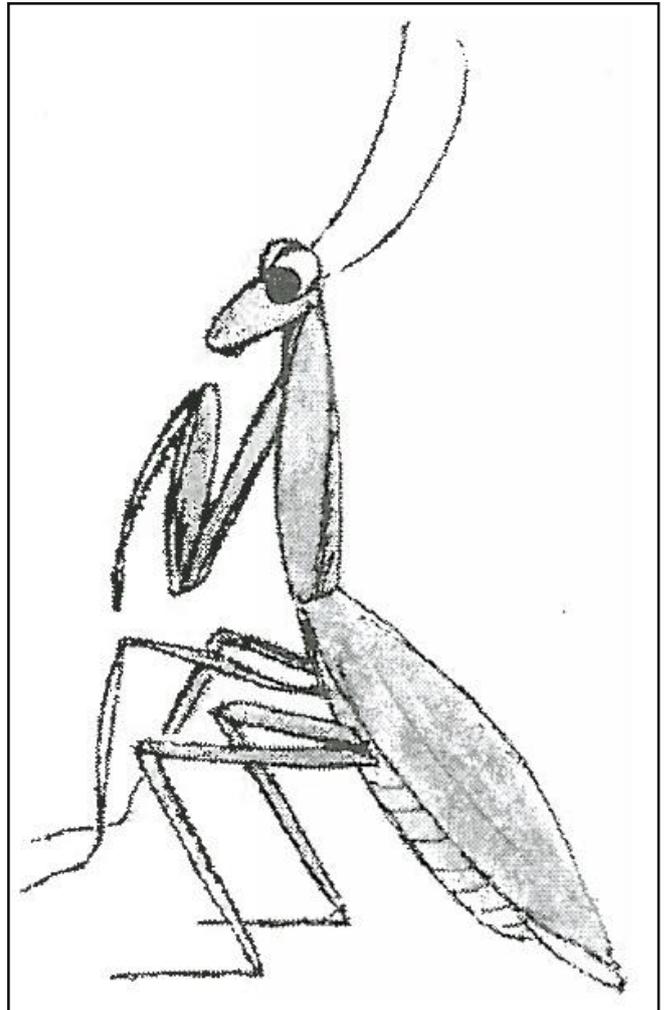
ready as the muscles in his legs stiffened for the pounce.

“Look out!” shouted Andy and Archie together so loudly that the gnats took flight and flew away.

Percy made a grab, but it was too late. He was as angry as could be and for a second he nearly lost his temper completely but with an effort he gained control of himself again.

“You mustn’t shout like that Andy,” he said. “You disturbed my prayers.”

With that he folded his hands again and bowed his head as if in prayer, and waited for the next gnat.



BIBLE

WORD SEARCH

Find the following Books of the Old Testament in the block below:

OBADIAH

HABAKKUK

DEUTERONOMY

RUTH

JONAH

ISAIAH

EZRA

GENESIS

NUMBERS

LEVITICUS

PSALMS

ECCLESIASTES

JEREMIAH

LAMENTATIONS

JOEL

AMOS

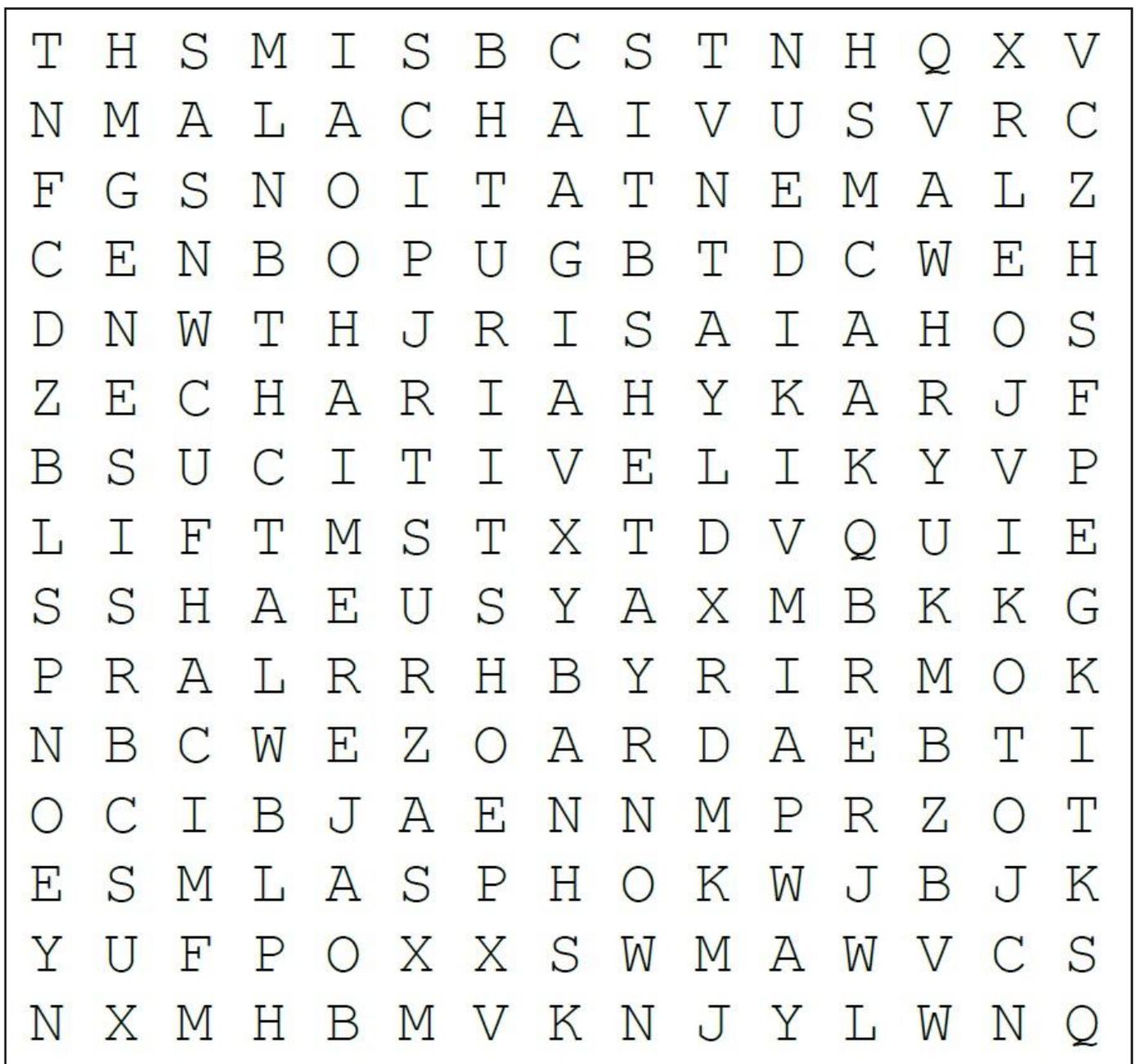
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BY CHRIST REDEEMED, IN CHRIST RESTORED

By Christ redeemed, in Christ restored,
We keep the memory adored,
And show the death of our dear Lord
Until He come.

His body broken in our stead
Is seen in this memorial bread,
And so our feeble love is fed
Until He come.

The drops of His dread agony
His life-blood shed for us, we see,
The wine shall tell the mystery
Until He come.

And thus that dark betrayal night
With the last advent we unite,
By one blest chain of loving rite,
Until He come.

Until the trump of God is heard,
Until the ancient graves be stirred,
And with the great commanding word
The Lord shall come.

O blessed hope! With this elate,
Let not our hearts be desolate,
But, strong in faith, in patience wait
Until He come.

Word by George Rawson (1807-1889)

"There are few who have contributed hymns of such exquisite beauty and rare sweetness as are to be found in his collections." Rawson was a solicitor by profession and a member of the Congregational Church. In 1853 he helped the Congregational ministers compile the Leeds hymn book for Congregational ministers. In 1858 he assisted Baptist ministers in preparing Psalms and Hymns for use in the Baptist denomination. (Information from the internet.)