



## ***Getting Your Faith Dirty by Becoming Jesus' Hands and Feet***

By MIKE GOTHARD

Columnist

Sunday, April 22, 2007

How many of you consider yourselves handymen, fixer-uppers, weekend warriors, remodelers, gadget guys, and tool freaks? In the words of Tim "The Toolman" Taylor, "Oogghh oogghh oogghh."

My Dad, while he doesn't have many tools, is fearless when it comes to home, auto, and yard maintenance. Give him a screwdriver, a can of WD-40, a pair of pliers, a hammer, and some duct tape and he can repair the Space Shuttle. No leaky roof, broken pipe, clogged toilet, or temperamental thermostat is too intimidating for my Dad.

If he doesn't have the right tool he'll simply improvise \u2013 a length of wire, a block of wood, a piece of cardboard, a ballpoint pen spring, or anything else within easy reach.

I've got another friend, however, who is the exact opposite of my Dad. This guy has more tools than a Super Lowes.

Shiny polished chrome wrenches in both standard and metric hang like stalactites from his pegboard. Drill bits ranging from the radius of a human hair to the girth of a small tree adorn his bit case. He has power saws, power drills, power sanders, power routers, and every other power tool known to mankind.

His workbench is the size of a small country, with shelves and drawers and hooks and pegs and outlets and a coffee machine. You can look all you want for a speck of sawdust, runaway nail, grease spot, or paint splatter in his workshop but your search will be in vain. Norm Abrams, eat your heart out!

But the funny thing is I've never seen my friend actually repair anything, fix anything, remodel anything, or build anything. I've never seen him actually use his arsenal of tools in his house, on his car, or around his yard.

As someone who has a handful of tools and is equally dangerous with them all, I'm slowly coming to the realization that there is a huge difference between tool collectors and tool users.

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An integral part of following Jesus involves using our "tools" to serve others on his behalf. A large part of what it means to be a Christ follower is becoming Jesus' hands and feet to those around us.

Jesus didn't come into the world to show us how to have the perfect Monday morning devotion time. He didn't come into the world to give us something to do between 11 and 12 on Sunday mornings. He didn't even come into the world just to deal with our sin problem.

The three clearest statements in the Bible as to why Jesus left the right hand of the Father and became one of us are found in the Gospels. Jesus reveals in John 6:39, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me." In Luke 19:10 he says, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." And in Matthew 20:28 he clarifies his purpose by saying, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

This is why in the New Testament alone there are over 100 "one another" commands — accept one another, forgive one another, pray for one another, love one another, be hospitable to one another, be at peace with one another, bear one another's burdens, spur on one another, encourage one another, care for one another, be humble toward one another, serve one another — and the list just keeps on going and going.

Authentic, biblical Christianity can only be lived out in community with one another. This is why God gives us spiritual gifts, this is why Christ calls us to live in close proximity with other people, and this is why so much of Jesus' earthly ministry involved serving those around him.

One of the subtlest temptations we face as we work out our salvation is believing we've become a servant merely by learning about servanthood. The reality is we only become servants when we serve.

We can read about serving, think about serving, pray about serving, talk to one another about serving, and even make plans to serve, but until we actually roll up our sleeves and get our faith dirty by serving those around us we will not have become like Jesus. There are no shortcuts to serving, no magic pill, no fast track, no accelerated, turbocharged way to become a servant after God's own heart. We only become servants when we serve.

Toward this end, what are your tools? What do you have, what can you do, what resources are at your disposal that you can use to serve and minister to those around you?

Can you give an hour of your time to someone who needs you? Can you write a note of encouragement to someone who is down? Can you offer a hug of affirmation to someone who is hurting? Can you visit someone who is laid aside? Can you prepare a meal for someone who is overextended? Can you speak a word of compassion to someone who has just experienced a loss? Can you speak a word of truth to someone who needs to be confronted? Can you do a deed of kindness for someone whose head is barely above water? Can you give a pat on the back to someone who is easily overlooked?

**Cont....**

How many tools do you have to collect before you get on with the job of serving? How much information do you need to know before you jump in and help out? How much money do you have to accumulate before you take God seriously enough to begin giving back to him? How much prompting from the Spirit, challenge from your church, and commands from the Bible are necessary before you're willing to get in the game and get to work being Jesus' hands and feet?

Gothard is senior pastor of

New Community Church

100 Kathryn Court, Elizabeth City, NC 27909

What tools do you have?

And do you use them?

## **Notes from the Executive Ministry Team**

We are excited to welcome the Rev. Chris DeGraaf as our new pastor. Chris and his wife, Betsy, are originally from West Michigan, but have been living in Fonda, NY for the last 7 years where Chris has served as the senior pastor of the Fonda Reformed Church. They have 3 daughters, Natalie – 8, Olivia – 6, and Zoe – 2.

Chris will complete his ministry in Fonda on September 6 and they will move to Holland shortly thereafter. You may see them around Holland and Trinity throughout September, but Chris will formally begin his time at Trinity on Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, and he will begin preaching on Sunday, October 4. Invite a friend to join you in worship on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Let's welcome the DeGraaf's with a church overflowing with worshippers, and please remember to bring your gifts cards to the church office.

As Chris reminded us in his acceptance letter, God has amazing plans for Trinity. *For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord. Plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11*

We are excited about God's plans and are grateful that God has called Chris to help lead them. To God be the Glory!

## **CONSISTORY CONNECTIONS**

At the August bi-monthly consistory meeting we had the privilege of meeting and talking to Chris and Betsy DeGraaf before their appearance at church on August 9 and 10. We were indeed impressed with them - their personalities, approach to the pastorate, philosophy, warmth and smiles. We were very positive in our feelings for them being called to Trinity Church.

We spent time discussing the ministry teams - their successes and needs. We hate to sound like the repeat button but we DO NEED people to join our teams if they are to be successful. Please continue to prayer that God will lead you to the right place.

Do you have an idea for a program that you think provides a way to advance our missional goals? Talk to someone on the consistory. We are always open to new ideas. Be sure to read the team reports so that you have an idea of what the teams are doing.

Gayle D. Scott, Clerk

# Read ME

## From The Holland Classis

**Don't miss this worship experience!** Our church, along with the other area RCA churches and the Hope College and Western Seminary communities are going to celebrate World Wide Communion together in a captivating worship service **on Sunday night, Oct 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the DeVos Fieldhouse on the campus of Hope College.** What a great opportunity to celebrate our unity in Christ!

## Building and Grounds Notes August 2009

- Thanks to some very wonderful volunteers, Steve Lundy and his crew have completed several old work orders that have been needing attention.
  - The City of Holland will be doing some major repair on the creek and storm drains in the back yard of the church. We should see activity yet in September.
  - On August 22, we had an underground power cable short out. The city was very responsive in getting us back on line in time for Sunday services. Thank you to Steve Lundy and Kevin Brower for their help in supervising and assisting the city workers.
  - The underground sprinkling system underwent many repairs this summer. Thank you to Al and Warren Kooyers for their outstanding work and support.
  - The fall start-up and check of the heating systems will take place in October.
  - Parking lot crack sealing is also being considered for this fall or, at the latest, next spring.
- Submitted by Jim Allen    Elder and Building & Grounds Team Member

## Worship Team

The worship ministry team looks forward to Pastor Chris' arrival, his first Sunday leading worship on October 4 which is Worldwide Communion Sunday, and his regular presence bringing us God's Word each week. We have been blessed by the challenges and encouragement of our guest preachers, and the richness of the service led by the Guatemala mission team. Our last group of guest preachers includes:

- September 7 – Kayla Borgman sharing about her summer mission work
- September 13 – Will Daniels
- September 20 – Rev. Susan Kingma, Western graduate and doctoral student in Christian ethics
- September 27- Kendra Van Houten, former youth director at Trinity and present seminary student at New Brunswick Seminary

# Thank you

To Bill and Barb Stehouwer for hosting the summer picnic. Thank you to everyone who helped—there are too many to name!! A good time was had by all and it was nice to get to know the DeGraaf family. God was good in providing us with a nice evening after the morning rain.

It would be great to send a note to Chris, Betsy and the kids for encouragement as they close one chapter of their ministry and start a new one with Trinity.

Their new address as of September 12, 2009 is:

Chris and Betsy DeGraaf

75 E. 14th Street, #4

Holland, MI 49423

Email- [bikingpreacher74@yahoo.com](mailto:bikingpreacher74@yahoo.com)

Chris & Betsy DeGraaf

150 Streeter Rd

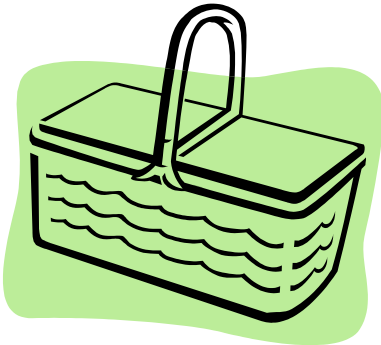
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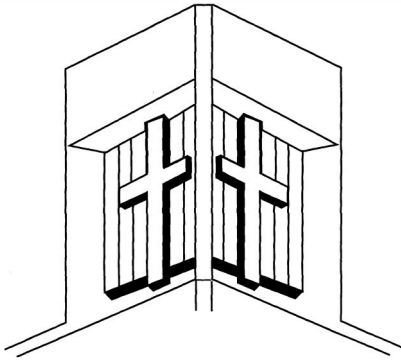
**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY!**

Audrey Behrmann	9/3
Aaron Baker	9/4
Sara Neevel	9/4
Kara Bruursema	9/5
Hailey Lundy	9/5
Connie Dykhuis	9/6
Rene Ramirez	9/6
Gen Snyder	9/9
Jack Overbeek	9/9
Kayla Borgman	9/11
Rachel Kleis	9/11
Jim Spoor	9/15
Jason Zerba	9/15
Shirley Hof	9/18

Steve Lundy	9/18
Shirley Vereeke	9/19
Teresa Harrington	9/20
Dan Vredeveld	9/20
Neil DeBoer	9/21
Loren Verburg	9/23
Marsha Myaard	9/24
Jeff Myaard	9/25
Lucille Kruithof	9/27
Mary Verburg	9/27
Beth Borgman	9/28
Judy Mulder	9/29
Andy Behrmann	9/30
Harold Dirkse	9/30

Have a safe and fun Labor Day Weekend!!





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### Our Call

God is calling Trinity Church to be transformed into an outward missional focused church that advances the Good News of God's Kingdom into the lives of people in our community and beyond.

### My Call

God is calling me as part of the Trinity Family to intentionally:

- ◆ Love God with all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- ◆ Extend His love to those at Trinity Church and those in my relational network not yet in a Family of God.
- ◆ Use my life experiences, abilities, gifts, and passion to engage with people who are not in the Family of God.

### *Your Consistory*

#### **Elders**

Jim Allen

Paul Bruursema

JoAnne Dykstra

Jeff Myaard

Ken Neevel

Barb Stehouwer

Bill VanAuken

#### **Deacons**

Rick Fisher

Lara Helmus

Del Kuipers

Steve Lundy

Bob Reed

Gayle Scott

Paul VanderStarre

*Please feel free to contact any consistory member with questions, comments or concerns*