

Fuller Life

90

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church
February 2016



Fuller Life is the newsletter of the
Fuller Avenue Christian
Reformed Church

1239 Fuller Avenue, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506



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Barb Straatsma, editor
Connie Scheurwater, member in focus articles
Freda Rufli, collating, circulation and mailing.

January Council Report

By Barb Straatsma, Clerk

Ruth Van Stee opened our meeting by reading Jeremiah 9 and praying.

On December 6, 2015 our congregation unanimously passed the 2016 Budget. We received about \$5,000 over our 2015 budget as was reported in the January 3 bulletin. The Lord continues to bless our congregation with faithful giving, good staff, new staff, new ministries, new members, and willing and loving volunteers. Alone we could not do all we do but together with God's help we can and also we "can give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because we know that our labor in the Lord is not in vain" (I Corinthians 15:58).

There are new guidelines and timetable for reconstituting Council. Pastor Nate and

Pastor Morris revised the process. Basically, there is more importance placed on the nomination. Please read Pastor Morris' article on page 3 to find out why these changes were made. You will still be able to submit possible nominees for elder and deacon and you will be able to affirm the final slate. Look for a letter at the end of January. Please give careful and prayerful consideration when completing your list.

Staff reviews will take place from February 1 – April 30.

In December we said goodbye to Sue Hollemans. We thank her for all that she has done to contribute to the ministry of Fuller. We wish her well in her retirement.

There are 15 mentors in place for Kids Hope USA. There was a tree in the basement with ornaments with written wishes from the teachers. Thank you to those of you who fulfilled those wishes. Each mentored student received a fruit basket. The staff at Campus received a small Christmas treat. We helped the principal collect gifts for their store. Any parent who has attended conferences, Math and Science Night and one parent meeting may shop at the store for free. Since many of their families live below the poverty level, this is a big help for them.

December was overall a wonderful month for Pastor Nate. He visited a number of our members. He and Sam received a home visit from Ken Bratt and Ruth Van Stee. The month was full of administration meetings and was a heavy preaching month. Starting January 10, he begins a new 5-week series on Ephesians.

Pastor Morris led 2 pm worship services in December. He and Pastor Nate lead the Raybrook Christmas Service where they celebrated communion with the residents. It was well attended. He and Ed Stuursma attended Sherman Street CRC on behalf of Classis to evaluate candidate Mark Vander Werf's sermon. Their evaluation will be presented to Classis.

Susie is leading a 6-week series called *Comfy Baggage*. She also hosted an ornament decorating night that was attended by 60+ people. She continues to mentor her student at Campus Elementary and is getting to know the teachers. She is meeting and having conversations with church members and neighborhood people and continues her prayer walks around the neighborhood.

Pastor Nate led us through chapters 10, 11, and 12 of the book, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level, What got You Here, Won't get You there*.

Church growth does not take place in a smooth line or curve but rather a series of plateaus or stair steps. Normally churches in the U.S. cluster at 10 plateau levels. There are 5 church categories descriptions contained in chapters 11-15.

Generally 80% of all churches are in the relational church category. The factor that ties them together is their focus on relationships. We are a relational church because we average less than 200 worshippers. Organizational changes are necessary at each level to bring it to the next level but that can be a challenge.

Improvements in our Process of Selecting Elders and Deacons

By Morris Greidanus

Council recently adopted some changes in our selection procedures. It is not that we do not receive a fine group of elders and deacons each year, but the process was cumbersome. Most importantly, the previous process did not emphasize enough that the offices of elder and deacon are a **calling** -- a calling by the congregation and finally by the Lord of the church.

A major change is that your **nomination** of a sister or brother has a crucial place in

this calling. It is **your first vote** for that person. You could compare it to the primary vote in a political election; it sorts out, from all the possible nominees, those whom you consider ready to serve at this time.

So we would like you to take this step very thoughtfully. Consider the needs of the congregation, think about the gifts of various eligible members, discuss with friends or within your care group, pray throughout this time, and then nominate.

The next step is for the Nomination Review Committee (an elder, deacon & pastor) to apply our guidelines to the names, and to **rank** them by the number of nominations each received and by the gifts needed in council. Council will then form a final list of 3 nominees for each vacancy.

Members who have been nominated will receive a letter to ask them to consider this prospective call with prayer. It will ask for a positive response within one week.

Those members who are convinced that they are unable to serve are **asked to meet with** the Nomination Review Committee and the vice-president of Council to discuss their situation.

Council will then prepare the final list of nominees; their

names will be published in the bulletin for 2 weeks. The congregation will **vote** on these names on a ballot, affirming all they feel qualified to serve. This is most like the general election.

After a week or so, again at a congregational meeting, names will be **selected** for each vacancy, and those selected will be installed later in that month.

Summarizing, the basics of our calling process are **unchanged**:

- Members nominate.
- Members vote on the slate of nominees.
- We select finally, rather than elect.

Changes:

- Increased emphasis on the nomination by members.
- A better forum to discuss reasons for inability to serve.
- A clear message throughout the process that a church office is a call.

Council trusts that these changes will be improvements, and that they will help elders and deacons to serve joyfully where they are called and affirmed. Any of us, and particularly the vice-president and the pastors, are glad, of course, to answer your questions and to explain further.



The Holy Catholic Church

By Jay Van Bruggen

We regularly listen to or together in unison repeat the Apostles Creed in our church. Recently we have sometimes done the same with the Nicene Creed. Both affirm our belief in the universal church; the only difference between the two is that the Nicene Creed adds the word “One Holy Catholic Church.” We join with Christians all over the world and for more than a thousand years in affirming our faith in that universal church.

The dictionaries of the English language may not agree wholly on the meaning of the word “Catholic” meaning of catholic, but they all agree that a useful definition is universal, broad based, diversified. Certainly the church we believe in is diversified in its liturgical forms. Some meet in wonderful buildings, some meet in private homes. Some are subject to persecution, some meet openly. Some Christians are a small fragment of the population; some are in a majority in their country or area. We support these churches at Fuller Avenue when we give to the Global Outreach ministry. We

believe in the church in Sri Lanka by supporting Charles Jansz, where a few months ago the nation was threatening their ability to gather together for a church service. We support the Schering family in Papua, New Guinea as they struggle with church development in a country where most people have never heard of the church. We support the Segar-King family as they struggle to let people know about Christianity.

Remember that even though the globe may seem huge, there is no place on earth that is more than twenty four hours from Grand Rapids

carrying out primarily administrative duties. While in Pensacola she met her husband, also a member of the navy. They married and had their first child while serving there.

Following their navy service, Susie and her husband moved to Lansing, Michigan, her husband’s home town. Susie attended Lansing Community College full time and her husband worked as a photographer for Channel 10. They had their second child while living in Lansing. Eventually they moved to Grand Rapids where Susie finished her Bachelor’s Degree program at Davenport University and her husband worked for WZZM. After their third child was born, Susie spent her time mostly at home, homeschooling her three boys. They settled in Caledonia, where they became members of St Paul’s Lutheran Church. Susie became very active in the youth ministry of the church, and even had youth meetings in her home.

Introducing Susie Dixon

By Connie Scheurwater

During the past summer, Susie Dixon was appointed as Director of Outreach at Fuller Avenue Church, replacing Sue Hollemans, who had held that position for twelve years. We welcome Susie to our church, and pray that she will experience many blessings as we fellowship together.

Susie was born in New York City, and attended an all-girl private Catholic high school in Queens. Following high school she joined the United States Navy. She spent four years in Pensacola, Florida,

As time went on, Susie felt that God was calling her to attend seminary for more training. She enrolled at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. While there, she served a one-year residency at Madison Square Christian Reformed Church. She finished her program at GRTS, and graduated in 2015.

Susie worked for a time at Baxter Community Center, and was instrumental in bringing the WIC program to Baxter. She also worked with a church plant program in the northern part of Grand Rapids that met at Kent Hills Elementary School.

Susie began her duties at Fuller Avenue Church in October 2015. One of the programs she is introducing to Fuller members is Comfy Baggage, a six-week Journey for Ladies. She is also involved with the Adams Park Apartments ministry.

On a personal level, Susie enjoys walking on the beach, reading, and spending time with her family. Since 1998 her husband has worked for the Grand Rapids Police Department as a public information officer. Son Vincent, 25, recently built the Dunes Harbor Family Campground; son Justin, 22, is a pre-med student at Grand Valley State University; son Matthew, 16, attends high school.

The deadline for the March issue of the Fuller Life is Sunday, February 21, 2016

(The following article was written by Brad Zwiers, grandson of Bob and Carolyn Zwiers and Jackie Folgers is the sister of Carolyn and one of our members. Brad graduated from Calvin College in 2012 and Western Theological Seminary in 2015. He is the chaplain at Calvin Christian High School. On February 21 he will be preaching at Fuller. He gave us permission to reprint this article and the photograph of Jackie. It was originally published on December 27, 2015 for the post calvin. The post calvin is a collection of articles written by Calvin College graduates.)



Aunt Jackie

By Brad Zwiers

Aunt Jackie loves doctors and pastors.

Her memory warps her past so that any hospital visit she's had in the last years actually happened last week, and the highlight of her week almost always includes the sermon on Sunday, no matter who stands in the pulpit or what they say.

But it's more than that. For her birthday a few years ago, we went out to eat at Golden Corral, that bastion of

American excess. As we pile-driven mounds of mashed potatoes and swirled ice cream two feet high on cake cones, my dad asked Aunt Jackie what she did for her birthday earlier in the week. She told us about a dinner with her sister (my grandma) and brother-in-law (my grandpa). And her favorite moment of the dinner?

"When Bob prayed."

Or Christmas day. Any Christmas day, really, not necessarily this year. We're all gathered in my grandparents' living room, and Grandpa hands out a litany he wrote to prayerfully enter into the festivities. Aunt Jackie's assigned reading is Luke 2, and she reads through the passage at a lightning pace and she's crying. The litany ends and we sing a few carols. Aunt Jackie sings the loudest and there's a kind of hope pulling at the corner of her voice that makes you think that everything, all of it, is true.

Sometimes when we're together, Aunt Jackie is asked to pray. I don't remember a prayer where her voice doesn't crack when she says the name "Jesus." Always when we're together, there's a small pause in conversation, and Aunt Jackie looks at someone and says, "I love you." This year, as she climbed out of a recliner, hips failing and feet shuffling, she looked at her

mother (my great-grandmother) and said “Can I have a hug? I love you.”

Aunt Jackie loves so much. She loves our dog Rocket (“I love his fur; it’s so soft!”), dolls, trips to the hospital (“I went to the hospital! I had pneumonia!”), sermons, pastors, deacons, prayers, chocolates, coffee, her sister. She loves little things in big ways. She loves God. She reads her Bible, prays, sings.

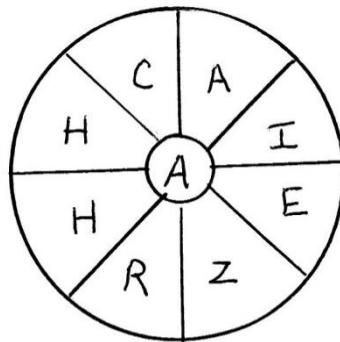
I don’t love anything or anyone the way Aunt Jackie loves. She loves with precision and specificity, with faithfulness, power, pain, strength, hope, and eagerness. She loves full-bore.

There are a lot of things in this world that go unnoticed, and they slip silently away. I’m writing this because Aunt Jackie lets nothing slip away; the world is all right in front of her, full and bright. I’m writing this because I can’t let Aunt Jackie slip away, not even for a moment. She teaches me how to see the world and live in it. She teaches me how to love.

Book Wheel

Find the name of a book in the Bible using all the letters in the wheel. How many other words can you find using the central letter “A” in every word but not

using a letter more than once?



Test Your Scripture Knowledge

1. Although not specifically named in the New Testament, what was the name of the wife of Pontius Pilate?

2. What is the ninth of the Ten Commandments?

3. Which relative of Jesus lived on locusts and wild honey?

4. Who was the father of the apostles James and John?

5. What is the first word in Genesis?

6. Which book of the Bible follows Deuteronomy?

7. How many books are in the New Testament: 17, 27, 37, or 47?

8. The 12 tribes of Israel were named after the 12 sons of whom?

9. In which river did John the Baptist carry out his baptisms of repentant Jews?

10. Which city came to be known as ‘David’s City’?

Answers:

10. Jerusalem

9. River Jordan

8. Jacob

7. 27

6. Joshua

5. In

4. Zebedee

3. John the Baptist

neighboor

witnesses against your

2. Thou shalt not bear false

1. Claudia Procula

ZECHARIAH.

The Bible book is

February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7 pm: Cadets	2 6:45 pm: Comfy Baggage	3 7:30 pm: Choir	4 7 pm: Council	5	6
7 10 am: SECOM & Faith Promise Offerings 6 pm: Prayer Service	8 7 pm: Cadets	9 1:30 pm: Staff Meeting 6:45 pm: Comfy Baggage	10 7:30 pm: Choir	11	12	13 7 pm: Pinochle
14	15 7 pm: Cadets	16 6:45 pm: Comfy Baggage	17 7:30 pm: Choir	18 6:30 pm: Bakers	19	20
21 6 pm: Kids Hope USA worship service w/Calvin CRC @ Fuller	22 7 pm: Cadets	23 1:30 pm: Staff Meeting	24 7:30 pm: Choir	25 3:00 pm: Admin Committee 6:30 pm: Bakers	26 6:00 pm: 4 th Friday Food & Fun	27
28 6 pm: Lessons & Songs Service	29 7 pm: Cadets					

FROM

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TO