

THUONG NGUYEN (MRS. BEN)

As we approach the fall season it becomes more noticeable how time races by. It will soon be one year since Thuong Nguyen (Mrs. Ben) moved from her home to live with her daughter in Byron Center. She wants you to know that she misses you all dearly and she also desires to go back to her home and live with her husband again. To ease that transition we have continued our routine grocery shopping at Meijers (now shopping in Grand Rapids). The trips may be every two to four weeks depending on our schedules but the shopping is followed with lunch and it becomes a day to which we look forward while also remembering the past.

She wants you to know that she would like to say "Hello" to each of you in person. Her health has been good but she is not as active as when she lived in Parchment where her house and yard were in meticulous condition due to her daily attention.

Several of her children recently traveled to Vietnam. They had a great trip. On that trip her son Chuck discussed with his relatives about the fact that the people were very interested in organic farming. Their access to organic supplies was limited as was their knowledge base. Chuck asked Steve for information on organic supplies and Steve provided him with a simple pamphlet that we receive in the mail regularly. Chuck researched the company and the organic supplies. He relentlessly pressed the company for a distributorship for Vietnam. Finally they took notice of him and after hard work, negotiations and persistence he now has the sole distributorship for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia with the Wilbur-Ellis Company. He says that the government of Vietnam rolled out the red carpet to him and there was an impressive ceremony in Vietnam incorporating the Secretary of Agriculture, Governor of the Region and many local officials as well as the executives from the company itself.

Chuck's wife, Jenny, has a bridal shop and alteration business on Kalamazoo Avenue just south of Highway 6 in Grand Rapids and their home is nearby the shop. It is only about 3 miles from Mrs. Ben. Also, Mrs. Ben has another son who also lives in that area. His name is Vince and he commutes to Kalamazoo every day to work with Kay Triemstra at least he did until Kay retired.

Mrs. Ben now says she will come and see you all soon. And again "Hello" from Thuong.



STARTING TO SEE WHERE WE NEED TO FOCUS OUR ATTENTION AND PRAYERS

As we continue to think and talk together about where the congregation can most profitably work to prepare for its new chapter of ministry with its next pastor, we are still seeing the future and our next steps into it through the fog of the unpredictable and the unknown. But some things are starting to emerge from this fog as goals and steps that appear to be important going forward.

On a "big picture" level, it seems that we could benefit greatly by taking major steps to strengthen the INREACH of the congregation. Healthy, effective congregations not only reach UP to God in worship and prayer, they also must reach IN as the members of the congregation come together in personal interactions that help everyone reach UP to God throughout the week, and which equip them to reach OUT to non-members in ways that encourage and enable them to grow closer to God in Christ with us. It is becoming increasingly clear to many of us that INREACH is the leg in this three-legged stool that most needs lengthening and reinforcement at this point in time.

INreach is often described as *Discipleship*, and more recently by the newer term, *Faith Formation*. It includes those parts of our congregational life which serve to foster personal growth toward Christ-likeness among all the members. It includes youth ministries, pastoral care, fellowship, catechesis (teaching), service (diaconal ministries), and other ways in which we come together to grow spiritually.

The Council and other leaders in the congregation are thinking and praying about specific steps we might take in the next year to strengthen our INreach. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will lead and guide them as they seek to know how to lead the congregation. And don't hesitate to speak to them regarding your own thoughts and feelings about these matters.

For my part, I want to start talking more to people in the congregation whom I haven't heard from yet, and to keep experimenting with specific ways to learn and grow together.

Keep praying for God's leading and empowerment!

Pastor Dan

GRACEFULLY BROKEN

You may have mixed feelings about social media but every once in awhile you find a gem. Evalyn Soderquist found one recently and agreed that we could share it with the Communicator. It is titled: Gracefully Broken! I was in the Dollar Tree last night and there was a lady and two kids behind me in the LONG line. One was a big kid, one was a toddler. The bigger one had a pack of glow sticks and the baby was screaming for them, so the Mom opened the pack and gave him one, which stopped his tears. He walked around with it smiling, but then the bigger boy took it and the baby started screaming again. Just as the mom was about to fuss at the older child, he bent the glow stick and handed it back to the baby. As we walked outside at the same time, the baby noticed that the stick was now glowing and his brother said "I had to break it so you could get the full effect from it". I almost ran because I could hear God saying to me, "I had to break you to show you why I created you. You had to go through it so you could fulfill your purpose". That little baby was happy just swinging that "unbroken" glow stick around in the air because he didn't understand what it was created to do....which was "glow". There are some people who will be content just "being", but some of us that God has chosen have to be "broken". We have to get sick. We have to lose a job. We go through divorce. We have to bury our spouse, parents, best friend, or our child because, in those moments of desperation, God is breaking us; but, when the breaking is done, then we will be able to see the reason for which we were created.

Birthdays

- 4 Sue Raskin
- 7 Lena VanOosterum
- 9 Jack Gano
- 14 Jan Larkin
Cherie Van
- 19 Whitney Wilkins
- 23 Malachi Hulst
- 27 Rod Linders
- 28 Cody Wilkins

Anniversaries

- 2 James & Marianne Gardner
- 10 Len & Jan Larkin
- 26 Brad & Becky Smith
- 27 John & Betty Schaap -70
years - Congratulations!!

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Comstock CRC.

Editor: Lisa Bosch

The September issue will come out on
September 9, all articles should be
submitted by Tuesday, September 4.

office@comstockcrc.org

John and Betty Schaap would like to invite
friends and family to an open house celebrating
their 70th wedding anniversary. Please join
them by stopping by on Saturday, August 18,
anytime from noon to 3pm, in the Comstock
CRC fellowship hall. Light lunch and cake pro-
vided. No gifts please.

AUGUST SCHEDULES

NURSERY

- 5 Jan Larkin & Cherie Van
- 12 Cris Westrate
- 19 Mark & Julie Smit
- 26 Todd & Karen Triemstra

OFFERINGS

- 5 Ministries/CSST Fund
- 12 Ministries/Benevolence Fund
- 19 Ministries/Ministry Shares
- 26 Ministries/Missions

COMSTOCK FOOD PANTRY

Boxed Meal Items / Mac & Cheese

WELCOME CENTER

- 5 Mark & Julie Smit
- 12 Randy & Cris Westrate
- 19 Morrie French
- 26 Mike & Karen Tiesman

FELLOWSHIP COOKIES

- 5 Jim & Tina Slager
- 12 Cris Westrate
- 19 Brad & Becky Smith
- 26 Mike & Karen Tiesman

Librarians

- 5 Kay Triemstra
- 12 Karen Tiesman
- 19 Tami Stewart
- 26 Tami Stewart

PRAISE TEAM

5 Jerry D, Dean D, Dave J, Tina A, Kay T, Grace T.

Tech: Mark T

12 Mari M, Dean D, Dave J, Jeremy S, Owen S, Leah H,
Lexi H, Randy W. Tech: Jim & Tina S

19 Mari M, Dean D, Dave J, Jeremy S, Owen S, Mark T,
Tina S, Grace T, Sammy G Tech: Mark T

26 Mari M, Dean D, Dave J, Jeremy S, Owen S, Leah H,
Lexi H, Mark T. Tech: Cris & Randy W

AUGUST 2018



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 9:30 Power in Prayer 7:00 Education Team	3	4
5 9:30 Worship	6	7 7:00 Elders	8	9 9:30 Power in Prayer	10	11
12 9:30 Worship w/ Communion	13 6:00 Hobby Night	14	15	16 9am Power in Prayer	17 Hobby Day 1-11 PM	18 Anniversary open house for John & Betty Schaap 12-3 PM
19 9:30 Worship	20	21 7:00 Council w/ Deacons after	22	23 9am Power in Prayer	24	25
26 9:30 Worship 11:00 Fellowship dinner with Sos & Kara Maletoungou	27	28	29	30	31	