

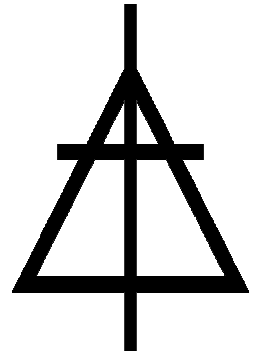
The Echoes

January, 2012

A monthly publication of the
East Martin Christian Reformed Church



Our Pastor's Perspective



Worms

I've got worms in my basement. No, it's not an infestation. I got them on purpose and I have them in control. At least they are in a large Rubbermaid container and as long as I keep them fed they will stay in the container. I bought some worms (red wigglers) to eat our compost (actually they don't eat it so much as process it, turning it into rich soil). I started this a couple months ago when the weather started turning cold and the garden was all tilled under. I didn't want to have to take our kitchen scraps out to the garden during the winter any more.

I've usually saved our organic wastes from the kitchen in a bucket under the sink. Coffee grounds, apple peelings and cores, potato peelings, and anything else that we trim off vegetables goes into the bucket and when the bucket is full I would bury them in the garden. It's kind of a lazy man's way to compost. Just dig a hole in the garden and dump the bucket of kitchen scraps into the hole and let whatever is in the garden soil break it down on its own. The organic material is good for the soil and the red worms in the soil help break it down. Worm castings make good fertilizer and the worms themselves help aerate the ground.

But this year I thought I'd try taking care of the kitchen scraps in a different manner. I read a book on worms written by someone right from our area, Kalamazoo. I bought some worms to get started, and now have been feeding them our kitchen scraps. It's a little early to tell how well they are turning it into compost, but I've started seeing some little worms, so they have begun to reproduce and that is a good thing. I've dug down into the center of the pile and found good healthy worms wriggling away.

God has made a great many things in this world and worms are just part of that. Not everyone has to embrace worm composting, but it can be an enjoyable way to deal with something that we would throw away otherwise, or from which we would not get any use. If nothing

else it is good to be aware of God's provisions and be part of his greater plan, seeing the way that all his creatures complement his purpose. None is too lowly or unworthy of his great plan. That is why he made it and upholds the world he has made.



The Beauty of the Snowflake

In the beauty of a snowflake,
falling softly on the land,
is the mystery and the miracle
of God's great, creative hand.
For what better answers are there
to prove His Holy being
than the wonders all around us
that are ours for just the seeing!

In Contact With Council



Bruce Aukema began the meeting of January 10 reading from Matthew 25:40 and opening with prayer.

Minutes of the December meeting were read and approved.

Communications:

Agenda for Classis was distributed

Pastor's report: 10 visits made (home visits, office meetings, attended meetings)

Deacon's report: offering schedule approved as presented.

Committee reports:

Worship: no meeting

Education: second half of the Sunday school/catechism season started; also second half teachers.

Evangelism committee:

- a. Recommended that Eric and Jana Schlukebier be added to Faith Promise – motion approved.
- b. Young at Heart needs additional helper
- c. Directory update being reviewed

Building & Grounds: no report

Finance: Kevin DeKoekkoek and Dean VanDerMeulen approved as new members

Executive committee: meets next month

Fourteen Council visits were made

Old business: church profile needs to be started.

New business:

Classis meets January 24 at Westwood CRC

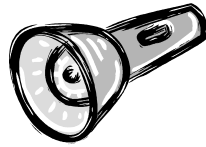
Ralph Suk to be Classis delegate to Synod in Canada in June pending his time off from work

Motion to overture Classis not to support Belhar Confession – motion passed.

Rev. John Witvliet retiring January 15. Motion to send congratulatory note and flowers – motion passed.

Keith Smit closed in prayer.

In Our Spotlight



Don and Nancy Smith and family

Don was born and raised in Byron Center and graduated from South Christian High school. Nancy was born in Utah, and after living all over the country settled back in Michigan, where Nancy and Don met. After dating for a year, we were engaged and married in October of '89. We settled into a little farmhouse that we restored in Moline, MI. We then had Travis, Lacey and Tony, and with another one on the way we decided to try and build near Wayland. Tanner was born that year. We now had Travis going into kindergarten and had chosen to send him to EMCS. We loved the families and teachers and soon joined EM-CRC as well. Our life went on and in 2004, we were blessed with as our pediatrician called him - the "caboose on our train," Toby.

Now Don is still driving for West Side as a delivery driver. Nancy has her cleaning business as well as working at Tri-Unity Christian School. We spend what time we can in the summer up north camping and visiting the "Pinegrove Tent Church". So if you can't find us in the summer, you will know where we are. We keep busy attending kids sporting events, gardening, dirt bike riding and boating. The kids are now anxiously awaiting the arrival of snow for snowboarding at Bittersweet.

Travis now 20 is in his 2nd year at Grace Bible College in the Youth Ministry Program. He still plays soccer and is enjoying playing at college level. He travels a lot with the team from August through November and also keeps busy with jobs and social life.

Lacey (19) had a wonderful senior year and is now attending college at Cornerstone University, majoring in Elementary Education with a minor in Spanish. She loves college life and is also the assistant girls Varsity basketball coach this year at Tri-Unity Christian, which she is enjoying as well.

Tony (16) is a junior this year at Tri-Unity. It is his first year driving, and he bought his first car. He just finished his 3rd year on the Varsity soccer team at Tri-Unity. He loves snowboarding and hanging out with friends.

Tanner (14) is a freshman at Tri-Unity. He is our outdoorsman, and filled our freezer this fall, which we appreciate with all these growing boys. He was able to get 2 bucks this season, some pheasant, ducks, and a few geese, and lots of fish. On most any given day you will find him outside with his 2 best buds, his yellow labs, Daisy and Marley.

Toby (7) is in first grade at Tri-Unity and likes recess the best. He loves coloring, playing board games and playing with the puppy. He spends a lot of his time going to his siblings games and can't wait for summer to go swimming again.

Nicole and Corey Wright are celebrating the birth of their son, Landon Michael. He was born on January 12 at 1:25 a.m. He weighed in at 9 lbs. 5 oz and was 22 inches long.



The proud grandparents are Bob and Kim Haveman; the proud great grandparents are Carl and Mina Haveman.

Year in Review

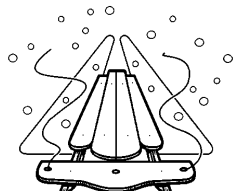
Some years bring us many changes in membership. This past year brought us only a few.

New members added to our number by transfer were the VanDyke family: Mike and Bobbi and their children, Emily and Ethan. The membership of George and Ruth Fennema was transferred to the Baldwin Street Christian Reformed Church.

Jessie Leep was married to Ryan Tucker. We lost one member, Harold Tuinstra, to death.

Cadets - Activities

On January 21 the Cadets attended a Calvin College basketball game. The Snowderby is planned for February 4 and the Pinewood Derby is scheduled for March 28.



The Cadets and GEMS have pooled resources and purchased a new pinewood derby track. Anyone interested in racing in an open class can get a car from Geri. Winners from the open class and the Cadet/GEMS competition will race to decide the actual "World Champion".

The Cadets wish to thank the congregation for their support. It is very much appreciated.

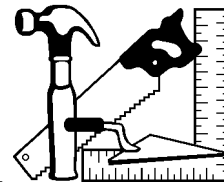


Honeywell

If you are an Internet user and have not yet registered as a user on the Honeywell Instant Alert system, you are encouraged to do so. This will allow you to choose how you wish to receive messages and on what devices; i.e., cell phone, email etc. If you set Honeywell up to have messages also go to your email then if your phone is busy when a call comes from Honeywell, you will be able to read it as an email message. Also, if you are eliminating your land line, please be sure to change your profile in Honeywell to reflect how you wish to receive your messages.

Log on to the following: <https://instantalert.honeywell.com> On the Honeywell home page, select "school staff". Randy and Mary Bouman would enter their first name as "Randy and Mary"; and their last name as "Bouman". Follow that example to set up your profile.

Alabama Work Trip



There is an opportunity approaching for anyone interested in participating in a disaster relief work trip to Alabama in February. The dates are Feb 18 – 25 and we are planning to do new and reconstruction work on homes damaged and destroyed by tornados recently in DeKalb and Jackson counties in northern Alabama near Huntsville.

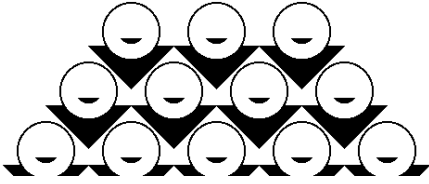
We will be working through CRWRC in conjunction with Charles and Judy Dillon, directors of The Carpenter's House, a reconstruction ministry started after Hurricane Katrina. We have worked with Charles before in New Orleans a couple of years ago and are looking forward to another great experience. Last time we did our regular repairs and reconstruction projects and Charles always had some extra-curricular activities for us to do like handing out free loaves of bread on the street, serving a hot meal to the homeless, grilling and serving hamburgers for the community around the ministry center, and other activities to get us out of our comfort zones and into the community to interact with as many different groups of people as possible.

Our plan is to stay in one of two churches in the area that are equipped for volunteers with kitchens, bedrooms and showers. We will be doing our own cooking and are looking for some food donations for both our group and to supply an area food bank with what we can bring with us.

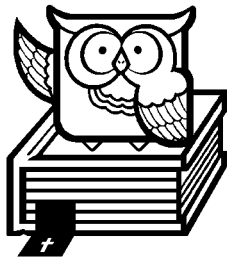
We currently have 12 to 15 people going from East Martin CRC and Martin Reformed as well as other churches but we would welcome anyone who has the heart, flexibility, and a willingness to participate in this adventure of faith and service.

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Ephesians 2:10

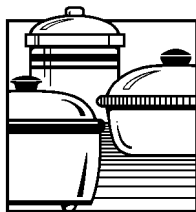


The High School youth group collects pop cans throughout the year as a fundraiser. This past year they recycled 728 cans for a profit of \$72.80. If you have pop cans collecting in your garage, they would be glad to pick them up for you. Contact any of the youth or their leaders.



Geography Bee Champion Crowned

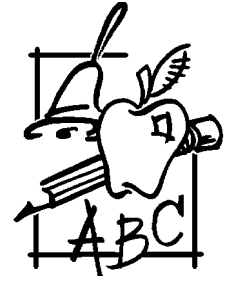
It was a Van Elderen affair. Congratulations to Lily Van Elderen, the EMCS Geography Bee champion. Lily will take a written test to see if she qualifies for the state bee. Our runner-up was Dean Van Elderen. Congratulations to both of you!



Upcoming Events at EMCS:

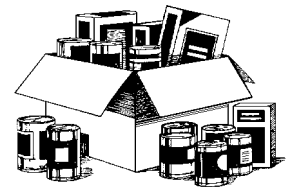
Soup Supper -- February 8 from 4:30 to 7 p.m.
Wild Game Dinner -- February 18 at 5 p.m.

Kindergarten Round-Up



Kindergarten Round-Up at EMCS is scheduled for Saturday, March 24. Prospective students must be age 5 before September 1, 2012. If you wish to register your child for the round-up or know of someone who might be interested in a Christ-centered education for their child, please contact the school office before March 2.

Labels for Education – what to save for EMCS:



- BIC
- Campbells
- Dannon (kid's yogurts)
- Emerald nuts
- Franco-American gravies
- Glad (food storage bags, containers, plastic wrap)
- Healthy Request soups
- Pace
- Pepperidge Farm
- Pop Secret
- Post cereals and treats
- Prego
- Spaghetti's
- Swanson
- V-8
- Scott toilet paper and paper towels
- Kleenex
- Wolfgang Puck
- Magazines (All YOU, Cooking Light, Health, People, Real Simple, Southern Living, TIME)

A container is available in the narthex for your labels.



I just got back from the USA. I had surgery on a hernia, picked up another used vehicle, and drove down from Michigan 2700 miles. Specifically we need prayer for a number of things:

1. Healing from my surgery December 14. Yesterday I was on a trip 100 miles up into the mountains and 100 miles back. Feeling the ride yet today. But healing is coming.

2. The villages we are ministering in cover a valley which is 50 miles long and wide. We have one church group going in the area since about 5 years ago. Everyone is new to the faith during the past 10 years. So there are still many maturity issues with the congregation which meets out in a barn yard-house yard. We have some Christians living in four other villages. The area has almost no evangelical witness. There is a lot of opportunity to spread the gospel in that area and about 47 villages. Next week we will be holding the first worship service in San Gabriel and inviting many "seekers" and interested people. Pray that there will be a move of the Holy Spirit to open hearts and eyes to the gospel there. San Gabriel is one of the main towns in the area. Last night I went for one night to the yearly two week festival, which is also very religious and has a huge Catholic mass. There were probably 30,000 people on the streets in the church and plaza. About 10 of us were very likely the only Christians. So much prayer is needed.

3. Sandy is teaching at a Christian school which has the great majority of students who aren't Christians or from Christian families. This year she is teaching a class of students which may be the worst disciplined class that she has ever taught in 25 years. They are rebellious, won't obey authority, the discipline at the school is very weak and she is getting very frustrated. Pray for a change of heart in these kids.

4. Sandy especially and I to a lesser degree have had huge problems with colds, flu, and vi-

ruses this year. Sandy had her flu vaccination too. We continue to struggle with colds that last about a month or more. Pray for health so we can do our ministry effectively.

5. Thank the Lord for safety on the roads. Mexico is getting more dangerous constantly from bad roads, too many vehicles, mafia kidnappings, too many huge double semi-trucks, and bad driving (Mexicans don't need drivers education to start driving). One benefit is more toll roads now all through the country but they are very expensive to use on a regular basis. But I thank the Lord for the toll roads and for safety driving here every day. How blessed you are in the USA with the roads and traffic regulation that you have up there.

6. Please thank the Lord for my safety on the road trip down to Guadalajara from Kalamazoo, 2700 miles with no problems. No problems at the border crossing either, hardly anyone is driving into Mexico anymore due to safety issues on the roads up north of here.

7. Thank the Lord with us for the new believers here in Guadalajara area too. They are maturing very well and studying their Bibles. The youth have formed two new Christian worship teams to lead the services at the churches.

8. We are hoping to have some youth-adult construction teams come down this year from the USA to help start the construction on our family ministry camp. The camp will be used for conferences, youth and adult camping, worship services for one of the house church groups, and a place to have church parties away from the inner city gangs and problems. Please think about joining us in this effort. Wouldn't it be wonderful to fly away from the snow of the north into some of the best weather on the globe. The area will be safe for ministry and having groups come. Pray that the Lord will send us some on-fire teams to work and help in the financing. We don't use church buildings in our ministry, but this joint ministry center for all the house churches and other church groups as well will be a blessing for the ministry.

THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS.

Wayne and Sandy



From Martin Area Resource Center

Another year has passed and we once again managed to help so many families in our community! We were able to maintain all of our programs including a food pantry, clothing bank, household appliances/furniture, utility assistance, agency referrals and consultation services.

2011 was a very busy year here at MARC. We saw some changes in our volunteer staff, but still managed to keep up, even adding some new friendly faces. Our Food Bank gave away 62,426 pounds of food to 1,164 families. The Clothing Bank allowed for 632 families to receive 11,775 articles of clothing and 51 families were helped with a combined total of 309 appliances and/or basic furniture pieces. Hundreds of others were assisted with small household goods, toys, bedding, etc. Many families were aided in referral services and our utility assistance program.

Your generous support this past year has made it possible for us to continue these much needed programs. We thank you for your efforts in supporting our goals. As we enter 2012, we hope to have your support as we strive to meet the ever-growing needs of our communities.

Once again, the Martin Christmas project had a successful season! Despite some new challenges, our community came together to pull off what seemed impossible. Martin Public Schools, although unable to provide a large storage classroom this year, pulled through with a generous Band Director who let us stuff his office full of toys. They also graciously allowed our Project to assemble and distribute from their facilities again this year. Although we are no longer directly involved with Toys-for-Tots campaign, our local supporters, Meijer, Wal-Mart and even our Michigan State Police post rallied around the Martin community to supplement the needs of many deserving children!

During Christmas 2011, the Martin Christmas Project provided Christmas to many area families. Despite our tough economy, together we managed to give 70 families holiday assistance. This included a total of 170 children! We were excited to be able to give each child 4 gifts, plus stuffed animals, stocking stuffers, games and miscellaneous items. For their first gift, each child received a "wish item", something that they specifically asked Santa for. We also provided items for each family to receive bonus food items to help with the grocery needs during the school holiday break. More than 40 community members spent hours wrapping these gifts.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank you. Whether you volunteered time, donated gifts, held a toy drop, adopted a family or group, made presents, wrapped presents, or simply said a prayer, we could not have done it without you. I wish to pass on the appreciation displayed by these families when they came to gather their children's gifts. You made it possible for this wonderful program to give so much to so many in need. So thank you for all that you are, all that you give, and all that you believe. See you next year

Tracey Robrahn
Executive Director
Martin Area Resource Center

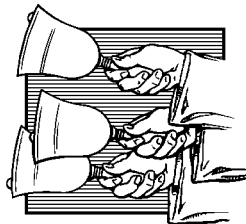
Thank you to all who remembered me with cards, phone calls and birthday wishes on my 88th birthday.

Also, many thanks for the concern shown, visits and cards received during this time of shoulder pain. Physical therapy continues. Thanks be to God the therapy is helping. God is good.

Carolyn Bouman

Thank You. Dordt College thanks the congregation for its recent offering of \$1000 for the Dordt College Fund Drive. Your support is deeply appreciated.

Dear East Martin CRC Jr.
High Youth Group,



The success of any charity can be measured by the number of volunteers and donors that are willing to invest in the mission and work of that organization.

The Salvation Army is very blessed to have so many individuals, families and organizations giving of their time and financial gifts, to make sure that those in crisis and ongoing need are cared for during the holidays and throughout the year.

Please accept our genuine thanks and gratitude for your gift of time (ringing bells at the Otsego Walmart) to continue this work in our community.

May God richly bless you in the coming year as you continue to open your heart to the needs of others.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS & BEST WISHES FOR A GREAT 2012

Craig Smith
Director of Development & Volunteers
The Salvation Army – Kalamazoo

Coke Salad

1 – 4 oz. package black cherry jello
1 – 8 oz. can crushed pineapple
1 can pitted black cherries
8 oz. room temperature Coke

Heat the juices drained from cherries and pineapple. Remove from heat and add jello. Stir until dissolved. Add fruit and Coke. Stir. Chill until set.
Double for a 9x13 pan or larger salad.

December Offerings

General Fund	\$41,291.11
Ministry Shares	16,938.56
Debt Reduction	7,197.10
Faith Promise	
DeYoung	1,645.00
Meyer	1,545.00
Shaarda	1,645.00
Nightengale	1,545.00
EM Missions	1,545.00
Benevolence	1,425.11
Education Assistance	307.73
Jr. High Youth Group	200.00
Sunday School	5.75
Christmas Tree Project	2,508.11
World Missions	2,000.00
Back to God Ministries	1,250.00
Peter Fish	18.45
CRWRC – General	8,200.00
Cadets – Denomination	190.00
EMCS	1,605.58
EMCHS	360.00
KCHS	1,100.00
Dordt College	1,000.00
Forgotten Man Ministries	1,000.00
Right to Life Ed Fund	1,410.00
Crossroads Bible Institute	1,000.00
Bible League	250.00
Focus on the Family	1,000.00
One Heart Ministries	95.25
Guatemala	180.00
Moody Bible Institute	1,000.00
Kalamazoo Gospel Mission	1,000.00
Family Life	1,000.00
Luke Society	1,000.00
Mel Trotter Mission	1,000.00
Gideons	422.00
Foods Resource Bank	1,000.00
Christian Neighbors	1,000.00
Martin Resource Center	2,000.00

Total \$107,879.75

General Fund Ideal	\$91,875.00
Actual	\$102,876.22
Over	\$11,001.22
Ministries Shares Ideal	\$39,578.00
Actual	\$41,143.12
Over	\$1,565.12

Birthdays

- 3 Caleb Tuinstra
6 Jeanne DeMann
Angela Tiemeyer
11 Vern Klaasen
12 Brice Nightingale (MK)
Rebecca Westendorp
14 Chad VanderKam
17 Ashley Double
Jessica Tucker
18 Logan DeVries
19 Brittany Jameson
Audrey Nightingale
Sena Scholten
21 Nicole DeMann
Scott Tuinstra
22 Dean VanElderen
27 Steve DeMann
Sam DeYoung
28 Tony Smith



Greeters

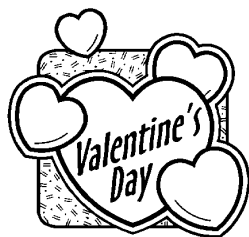
Feb. 5: a.m., Ken and Sandy DeMann, Jerry Bronkhorst; p.m., Don and Nancy Smith.
Feb. 12: a.m., Scott and Jen Tuinstra, Dennis DeYoung; p.m., Bruce and Renee Aukema.
Feb. 19: a.m., Russ and Tammy Quick, Dan Jager; p.m., Bruce and Sue Tiemeyer.
Feb. 26: a.m., Geri and Sheri Van Elderen, Joel DeYoung; p.m., Les and Rena Lynema.

Ushers

Feb. 5: Brian Westendorp, Nate Leep, Joel Westendorp.
Feb. 12: Dan Wubben, Don Wubben, Harold Wykstra.
Feb. 19: Keith Fennema, Tim Westendorp, Dean Wubben.
Feb. 26: Earl Wykstra, Chris VanDenBerg, Dan Jager.

Anniversaries

- 1 Jim and Lauri DeYoung
21 Scott and Jennifer Tuinstra
22 Jerrad and Anna Voth
23 Dean and Carolyn VanderMeulen
28 Dan and Terri Jager



Children's Worship

Feb. 5: Dawn Anderson, Ann Smit.
Feb. 12: Sheri Van Elderen; Megan Westendorp
Feb. 19: Kristie Tuinstra; Lacy Smith.
Feb. 26: Jen Tuinstra; Angie Tiemeyer.

Nursery

Feb. 5: a.m., Kate DeVries, Henri Paufler, Ally DeYoung; p.m., Megan Westendorp, Rachel Leep.
Feb. 12: a.m., Lauri DeYoung, Jen DeYoung, Lily Van Elderen; p.m., Jenny Mejeur, Kendra Leep.
Feb. 19: a.m., Jean Mejeur, Laura Westendorp, Kari Mejeur; p.m., Mina Van Elderen, Sara DeYoung.
Feb. 26: a.m., Kristie Tuinstra, Nancy Smith, Rebecca Westendorp; p.m., Jen Tuinstra, Riley Tuinstra.

Library

Feb. 5: a.m., Linda DeYoung; p.m., Angie Tiemeyer.
Feb. 12: a.m., Ida Westendorp; p.m., April Wubben.
Feb. 19: a.m., Milly VanDerMeulen; p.m., Kate Wubben.
Feb. 26: a.m., Jeanine VanderKam; p.m., Sara DeYoung.