



# The Echoes

June 2023

A monthly publication of the  
East Martin Christian Reformed Church



## A View from the Pew

### Death of a Dream

Disappointment. We *all* know *all* about this. Who of us never experienced the death of a dream? Little children beg for a puppy but instead receive a goldfish. Likewise, kids put certain gifts on a birthday or Christmas list, but never receive them. What about the death of a pet? Again, it's Valentine's Day at school when classmates exchange cards and candy hearts, or friend "Billy" invites me to his birthday party. Then the stomach flu strikes, and I miss out on these festivities. **Death of a dream.**

As we advance to "teendom," we study hard for a test, expecting a good grade, and things turn out poorly instead. Then there's that audition for a part in a play or musical program; the role we set our hearts on goes to someone else. Or, she has a crush on him, but he asks another girl to the junior-senior. He thinks he's going steady. After all, she wears his class ring. But... **Death of a dream.**

Then comes an engagement, and before the wedding ceremony, either the bride or the groom calls it off. Or maybe they do marry, decide to start a family, and pregnancy never happens, or it ends in a miscarriage or stillbirth. **Dreams dashed,** struck down in an instant.

Graduation leads to job hunting. S/he goes for that interview for that "perfect" job—but it's offered to a different applicant. Perhaps downsizing leads to layoff. How about that "dream vacation"? Or, finances become tight, and we live paycheck to paycheck. The home we set our hearts on goes to another buyer. For some, divorce destroys "and they lived happily ever after." **Death of a dream.**

In the senior years, couples worry about retirement, adequate pensions, health. And at any age, death, serious illness, and injury certainly disrupt life. Insert your **death of a dream** at the appropriate point.

Lest this sound pessimistic, gloomy, dreadful, let's consider God's perspective and some biblical examples. While God certainly *promises*, fulfillment might not occur immediately. For instance, Jehovah comes to Abraham, declaring that he will become a father of nations, with descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Nothing happens. **Death of a dream.** In the end, it takes *twenty-five years* before Sarah gives birth to Isaac, the child of promise!

Perhaps the biggest dreamer in scripture is Joseph. He envisions not once, but twice, that all of his brothers, plus his parents, will bow down to him. First he dreams about eleven bundles of grain (representing his

eleven brothers) bowing down to his sheaf. To put it mildly, this goes over “like a lead balloon.” In his second dream, Joseph sees the sun (father), moon (mother), and eleven stars (brothers) bowing down before him. Now his brothers really hate him! They plot to kill him, but a cooler head prevails, and they sell him into slavery instead. **Death of a dream.** *Thirteen years later*, (after enduring an undeserved jail time) Joseph becomes second in command in Egypt, and he ultimately experiences the exact components of his dreams.

God provides us with yet a third example, the shepherd boy, David. Nearly *fifteen years* elapse from the time Samuel anoints him king (followed by repeated death threats, battles, various difficulties) until he actually ascends the throne. **Death of a dream.** Sometimes we grouse—(that’s another way to say “grumble”)—over a fifteen *minute* delay. Most of us don’t “do patience” very well. We embrace a dream, and we want it yesterday. Well, don’t we?

But, you counter, these all come from the Old Testament. What evidence is there from the New? Consider Paul. He longs to go to Rome, to preach the good news there; and early on the Holy Spirit affirms that he will. But it will not be easy, (Angry opponents chase him out of town, try to stone him.) and *many years* pass. **Death of a dream.** When he finally arrives, it is as a prisoner, in chains. He prays for a safe trip, and he indeed arrives safely, but only after being arrested, slapped in the face, shipwrecked, and bitten by a poisonous snake. All of this persecution takes place over another *three years*, from the time he goes to Jerusalem until he begins living under house arrest in Rome.

Yet, before we become distraught, let’s “Be still and know that I am God.” In these words from Psalm 46, the command does not mean to sit down quietly for a few minutes and think things over. “Be still” *literally means* “Enough already! Stop this very moment and submit yourself to the Lord’s sovereignty. Don’t take another step!” The Lord halts us in our tracks and tells us in no uncertain terms to allow Him to control. Why? Because, “At just the right time, I, [God] hear you. On the day of salvation, I help you. [II Corinthians 6:2] My timing is perfect.”

Through each of these four biblical accounts, the Lord executes His plan of salvation. We might not sit in that exact position of Abraham, Joseph, David, or Paul, but, when we experience the death of a dream, let’s remember truly to rely on Him, for “He does all things well,” and in *His* time. That’s a truth that excites us, or should excite us, beyond all dreaming!

## In Contact With Council



1. The meeting of June 13 was opened with devotions and prayer by Bruce Tiemeyer. Bruce read from Isaiah 26:3,4,7.
2. New members were welcomed. Don Wubben was absent.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.
4. Election of officers resulted in the following: President: Bruce Tiemeyer, Vice President: Tom Rook, and Clerk: Dave Mejeur.
5. Pulpit supply is covered through August 27. The Search committee is still looking at other possibilities. Discussion on Ryan Poelman. It was suggested that an evening service sermon could be from one of Ryan Poelman’s tapes.
6. Outreach: Playground parts were separated. Work nights were Wednesday and Thursday to load the container going to Guatemala.
7. Committee liasons: Evangelism—Scott Tuinstra, Building & Grounds—Bruce Tiemeyer. Finance—Tim Westendorp, Church Security—Scott Tuinstra. Search Committee—Wayne Leep.

8. Minutes of the congregational meeting were read. Approved.
9. Deacons' report: Offering schedule was made, supported, passed.
10. Council visits made: 5
11. Motion was made to adjourn. Supported. Scott Tuinstra had closing prayer and will have devotions next month.

In March, we held our annual Pinewood Derby. The ladies were the big winners for the night! Congratulations to Halle VanderHeide, Addison Tuinstra, Ayla Dove and Kylie Sheaffer.



GEMS is open to girls in 1st-8th grade. We meet the 1st and the 3rd Wednesday of the month, during the school year, from 6:00 - 8:00 pm in the church basement.

Our theme this year was Unshakeable, based on Psalm 62:2. "Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken."

Thank you to everyone who helped, made donations, attended events, prayed and supported our GEMS program. Thanks to you our year was a huge success!



Throughout the year we had 20 girls and 4 leaders attend our meetings. A BIG thank you to Amy Kalkman, Jen Tuinstra, Rebekah Westendorp and Sara Denzel for being GEMS leaders.

We wrapped up our 2022-2023 year with a GEMS/Cadet trip to Craig's Cruisers on June 7.

The ladies are encouraged to work on badges over the summer and to memorize the Books of the Bible.

Our 2023-2024 GEMS season will kick-off on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 from 6-8. Have a blessed summer!



**Check out  
the new books in  
our library**

IN LOVES TIME—KATE BRESLIN  
 THE BARK OF ZORRO—KATHLEEN  
 Y'BARBO (Gone to the Dogs # 4)  
 REMEMBER ME—TRACIE PETERSON  
 (Pictures of the Heart # 1)  
 FORGED IN LOVE—MARY CONNEALY  
 (Wyoming Sunrise #1)  
 COLD LIGHT OF DAY—ELIZABETH  
 GODDARD (Missing in Alaska # 1)  
 26 BELOW—KIMBERLY WOODHOUSE  
 (Alaskan Cyber Hunters # 1)  
 THE BEIRUT PROTOCOL—JOEL  
 C.ROSENBERG (Marcus Ryker Novel)

A BRIGHTER DAWN—LESLIE GOULD  
(Amish Memories # 1)  
LETTERS OF TRUST—WANDA E.  
BRUNSTETTER (Friendship Letters # 1)  
AFTER THE SHADOWS—AMANDA CABOT  
(Sweetwater Crossings # 1)



## MARC

When grocery shopping please remember Martin Area Resource Center. In August they need condiments:

Ketchup, mustard, mayo/salad dressing, dressings (French, Ranch, etc), pickles, olives.

Thanks in advance for helping those in our community who are in need.



The Bible League Conference for men and women will be held on Friday, September 8, at Friendship CRC in Byron Center from 9 to 3.

Our featured speaker will be Carol Kent. Carol and Gene's only child is serving a life sentence for first-degree murder. How do you come out on the other side when life sends its worst?

Join us as best-selling author Carol Kent shares from God's Word and her family's life experience in growing an enduring faith and impacting the world for Christ.

## Pasta Salad

(served at Young at Heart in May)

1 (16 oz) box of tri-color rotini pasta noodles  
1 head of broccoli cut up in bite-sized pieces  
1 head of cauliflower, cut up in bite-sized pieces  
1 small onion, diced  
cucumbers, diced  
colorful peppers cut up and diced  
black olives, sliced  
Add other of your favorite vegetables  
1 bottle of Marzetti (sweet Italian dressing)

Cook pasta according to directions, Drain and cool or rinse with cold water.

In a large bowl combine the pasta and all the vegetables. Pour dressing over mixture. Mix well and it's ready to eat.



The annual Summer Celebration will be held in Archbold, Ohio on August 4 & 5. It will include:

### Friday, August 4

Tour of Rufenacht Farms  
Burger Bash  
Overview of Growing Hope Globally  
Magic Show

### Saturday, August 5

Summer Celebration with worship, fellowship and update from local and global partners

Join in celebrating lasting solutions to hunger!

Check with Adrian if you would like additional details.



## May Tithes and Offerings

General Fund	\$ 7,229.00
Ministry Shares	2,294.00
Faith Promise	
East Martin Missions	100.00
Shaarda	202.00
Smit	222.00
Tiemeyer	97.00
Walker	192.00
Guatemala Orphanage	272.00
Benevolence	15.00
East Martin Christian School	2,514.00
Kalamazoo Christian High School	20.00
World Renew—DRS	285.00
Martin Resource Center	25.00
Forgotten Man Ministries	329.00
Pine Rest	268.00
Wycliffe Bible Translators	228.00
Total	\$ 14,292.00

General Fund	8% behind
Ministry Shares	27% behind

## Offering Schedule for July

July 2: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares;  
PM—Luke Society  
July 9: AM—Martin Resource Center; PM—  
Heritage Christian School  
July 16: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares;  
PM—Kalamazoo Christian Schools  
July 23: AM—East Martin Christian School;  
PM—Bible League  
July 30: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares;  
PM—Back to God Ministries

## Library

July 2: Ida Westendorp  
July 9: Rena Lynema  
July 16: Nancy Tuinstra  
July 23: Carolyn VanderMeulen  
July 30: Linda DeYoung

## Greeters

July 2: AM—Joel & Jennifer DeYoung, Wayne Leep; PM—Keith & Deb Smit  
July 9: AM—Vern & Joanne Klaasen, Dean Wubben; PM—Wes & Darlene Leep  
July 16: AM—Joe DeKoekkoek, Harold Wykstra, Don Wubben; PM: Bruce & Renee Aukema  
July 23: AM—Joan Kammeraad, Nancy Minegar, Tim Westendorp; PM—Cameron & Kristie Tuinstra  
July 30: AM—Wayne & Denise Leep, Jonathan Kalkman; PM—Bill & Bonnie Snook

## Ushers

July 2: Earl Wykstra, Jared Westendorp, Dave Misner  
July 9: Tom Westendorp, Wes Leep, Kevin Bouman  
July 16: Joe DeKoekkoek, Kevin DeKoekkoek, Glenn Leep  
July 23: Bruce Mejeur, Les Lynema, Roger Anderson  
July 30: Trayton Tuinstra, Sam DeYoung, Dennis DeYoung

## Nursery

July 2: Hailey and Kylee Tuinstra  
July 9: Riley and Addison Tuinstra  
July 16: Rebekah Westendorp  
July 23: Jen, Violet and Willow Tuinstra  
July 30: Laura DeMaagd



## Sacred Moment

John and Merrie Beth Den Boer

January 30, 2023

A day we eagerly anticipated finally arrived! John and I set out from Cape Coral, our Florida winter home, and headed for Miami and our Park 'n' Fly Ramada Hotel. We would stay overnight, and the next morning board our flight to Sint Maarten in the Caribbean. The three-hour drive took us on I-75, from the west to east side of the state, across what is known as Alligator Alley, an 80-mile straight shot through the Everglades.

As we happily zoomed along the Interstate, we not only reminisced but also talked about anticipated activities in the sun and sand of Sint Maarten. Along this route, two rest area possibilities awaited. We generally used the more easterly, and John asked which one I preferred. I suggested the usual, but he overruled, saying we would stop at the earlier one. Neither of us had any idea how critical that would become. The Lord put us on His schedule, with a wonderful, blessed, God-moment ahead.

About ten minutes before that intended stop, the East Martin Christian Reformed Church Prayer Line chimed on John's cell phone. I held my breath, not knowing what to expect. To our dismay, the news came that Jen Tuinstra, feeling poorly for some time, went to ER, and test results suggested lymphoma. Not only were we shocked and stunned, but John felt guilty because the previous week she had asked him to recommend a good doctor. (This all turned out beautifully in God's timing, however, because Jen's ER visit resulted in immediate referral for treatment, whereas signing up as a new patient would have taken much longer.) Now we felt devastated as we learned that this young mother of four, along with Scott, her husband, confronted with the news, would need to come to grips with a very scary diagnosis, and a visit with an oncologist the following week.

Soon we reached the rest area exit, devoid of human habitation, in the middle of nowhere. Together we headed for the "facilities," silent and hearts heavy. I scurried to the "ladies," and, realizing that a woman walked fairly close behind me—and now I know God prompted me—I opened the door and stood back for her to enter first. "God bless you," she said. Humorously—at least to me—was what occurred next, two perfect strangers, entering adjacent stalls, talking about God.

"God is great," she uttered.

Suddenly, I remembered something we sometimes said at church. Hurting, nevertheless I repeated, "God is good." Then I said, "God is good...all the time. All the time...God is good." She concurred.

I don't know what the few other women in that bathroom must have thought, but I think it was a conversation they'd never heard before!

Going to wash her hands first, she moved to a basin at the far end. As I went to do likewise, I spotted her to my right. Then I started to leave, and I wished her "Blessings on your day," and began my exit. Almost immediately, I sensed her directly behind me, and as I passed through the doorway, she asked me if I had five minutes to talk.

Knowing that John and I were in no particular hurry, I said "yes," and the woman and I sat down on a circular, cement bench in the central, open-but-covered, area of the building.

"I would like to tell you my story," she began. The Lord told me I need to share it with you."

"My husband died of lung cancer two years ago. I was taking care of him when doctors diagnosed me with lymphoma and bone cancer."

My heart leaped to my throat! Lymphoma! Just minutes earlier we'd learned about Jen. This shook me to the core.

"The doctors told me," she continued, "that I would die before Greg. 'But, I protested. I need to take care of him!' They were certain that my husband would outlive me."

At this point, out of the corner of my eye, I spotted John, and I motioned him over.

"I'm Sue," and he responded, "John."

As I wanted John to hear what Sue already told me, I asked her to start over, and John's concern that someone was trying to sell me something, or telling a hard luck story to get money, instantly waned. Both of us needed to hear Sue's words.

With respect to her prognosis, Sue's doctors said that she would die, if not from the cancer, then from the chemo which would be awful. In-hospital treatments began, and with the third session, medical personnel knew she wouldn't make it to the next day. That night they waited for the inevitable.

And, the inevitable began. "I lay there, and I began going down this black tunnel. A white cloth floated in front of me. I knew I was dying," she continued. "I cried out to the Lord, saying that Greg needed me, that he couldn't take care of things at the house and that if He would spare me, I would tell *anyone* who would listen."

As a side note, at the time of our meeting, Sue had just recently broken up with a "boyfriend." This man had scoffed, taunting her that *nobody* would be interested in hearing *her* "story."

As the narrative continued, occasional people passed us by, looking quizzically but hearing about God's grace: Amazingly, back at the hospital, the next morning Sue remained alive, and on this day of our encounter, she was sharing her experience of the Lord's mercy, with two people who desperately needed to sense God's compassionate touch. This greatly lifted our spirits, realizing the Lord healed someone (sitting right in front of us) with terminal lymphoma.

As we conversed, we learned a bit about Sue's childhood. Even though she was raised Pentecostal, it seems she was the disfavored, rejected child, treated poorly. One time, after being put down, again, and punished unjustly—feeling particularly glum—she was washing dishes in the sink. Suddenly, she heard quiet, jubilant singing. It sounded like a choir. She asked her mother if she heard the angelic music, but she belittled Sue for even "thinking" it. Sue went outdoors, hearing the comforting sounds even more clearly, and she knew beyond doubt that she heard angel voices.

More recently, the Lord revealed to Sue that she would enter a period in her life where she would enjoy no biological family. She's there now, estranged from her mother and sister. But Sue remains faithful in telling anyone who will listen about the Lord's mercy in her life. "Keep your focus on Jesus," she counselled. We told her about Jen and the message we had received just minutes earlier. Promising she would pray for Jen, she entered the information into her phone.

Again, "The Lord told me I needed to share my story with you." And how correct she was!

Then, strangers just moments earlier, we warmly hugged each other goodbye, one in Christ, and continued on our respective journeys.

While we discovered Sue hailed originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, why she was in Florida, and where and for what reason she was headed, we never knew—except that the Lord scheduled this divine appointment with us, to minister to us, and this truly was a *sacred moment*.