Hospice chaplaincy

Emma was a real prim and proper Southern lady. Although she did not come right out and verbalize it, she was quite angry at God for the losses she suffered in life. Her husband died a little bit “before his time.” A son was killed in an accident just as his business was beginning to prosper. This son was the one Emma had picked to take over the operation of the beloved family farm. This woman was a perfectionist to the core, and nobody could do things just the way she thought they should be done. She declined chaplain services the first couple months in hospice.

Then one day I was asked by a nurse if I could deliver some medicine to Emma. Being the hospitable Southern lady that she was, she invited me in and we talked. Well, mostly, she talked. I listened. Thus, we got acquainted and slowly became friends. Our visits easily lasted an hour to an hour-and-a-half. It was a great joy for me sitting on her back porch under the cool quietness of the two big shade trees on this Southern plantation-type farm, up on a hill a ways off the noisy road. She talked about the farm and all the difficulties and troubles she had endured. She talked as the...

The DeVos Foundation makes gift to Liberian social work program

In 2006, Kuyper College began a collaboration journey with Calvin College to develop a Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) program at Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in Monrovia, Liberia. Liberia is still in the recovery process from years of a brutal civil war, and like some other countries in Africa, suffers from a rapid spread of HIV-AIDS throughout its population. This summer, the first 30 Liberian Bachelor of Social Work students are scheduled to graduate from the four-year program, which has a concentration in the areas of HIV-AIDS and post-civil war traumatized women.

Recently, the program received a generous gift of $60,000 from the Richard and Helen DeVos foundation to help “the continuing partnership between Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in Liberia and the Social Work departments of Kuyper College and Calvin College.”

Commenting on the impact of the gift, Dr. Judi Ravenhorst Meerman, professor of social work at Kuyper, said: “We are very grateful to the DeVos foundation for their generosity. Their gift will make it possible to continue the work with Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in the further development of the BSW program in Liberia.”

Basketball from freshman to senior years

Note: The Kuyper News sat down for an interview with class of 2011 Emily Wittenbach, Justin Christensen and Megan Ritsema—the first three players who’ve played intercollegiate basketball for Kuyper during their four years at the school.

KN: What was it like to join the Kuyper basketball team in the school’s first year of intercollegiate competition?

Justin: When I look back to the first year of Kuyper College basketball, I think of our fans who would pack out the student section. I remember the atmosphere and running out of the locker room against Grace Bible and just thinking, “This is it. I can’t believe I’m doing this. I can’t believe...
The mission statement of Kuyper College has a line in it that says “…equip students…to serve effectively Christ’s church…” The word effectively has always given me pause—what, exactly, does effective service truly mean? What criteria do we use to define and measure what is effective against that which is nonproductive? Perhaps it is a more subjective, “You’ll know it when you see it,” type of understanding that we associate with effectiveness. After I had read the draft of the stories for this issue of the news, I was left with that impression: “I see it here. This is effectiveness. It is in the lives of our students as they engage the world.”

I never cease to be amazed, humbled and inspired by how I see the Spirit of Christ come through in the lives of our students and graduates. We teach, test and measure students in the context of our curriculum, but it is in their campus life interaction, their internships and their post-graduate professions, that we come to see the evidence that what we promote through our mission statement is, indeed, what students leave here ready to do and be. This is very exciting! We—including you who support the mission of Kuyper College—have the privilege to train and encourage God-gifted and called people to impact and influence the world for the sake of Christ.

Our responsibility to equip students well is one we take very seriously. Year after year we strive to enhance the depth and quality of our academic and student life programs so that our students are the best-equipped for engaging in ministry and service vocations. The affirmation and regard the College has received from those who further engage or employ our graduates show that the results of the “Kuyper experience” have reached new levels of respect and appreciation. A prime example of that is in the Accelerated Pre-Seminary Studies program you will read about in this issue. I am greatly encouraged to see that the College itself—along with our students—is considered to be effective in the work we carry out.

Your role as a supporter of Kuyper College has been instrumental in moving us to this point. Thank you! I am grateful for your care and generosity as you help us respond well to the needs we see in this world and to the opportunities God is placing before us. Please keep us in your prayers as we strive to continue to serve well Christ’s church and His world.

Mission
Kuyper College equips students with a biblical, Reformed worldview to serve effectively Christ’s church and His world.

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President
There is a compelling scene in the classic children’s tale Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. Young Alice comes to a fork in the road and asks the Cheshire Cat which direction she should take. “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you walk,” said the Cat.

Do you ever feel like Alice? Do you ever get overwhelmed with life’s decisions and forks in the road? Some decisions are simple and made out of habit: Which socks should I wear? Should I button the shirt from the top down or from the bottom up? Other decisions take time to think about: What sounds good for lunch? Which voice mail needs to be answered first? Then there are major life decisions that cause many of us to struggle: What is God’s will for my life and family? Are my retirement savings on track? Is it time to update my will or estate plan for the benefit of my family and ministries I care about?

So how do we make major life decisions that honor God? We need wisdom that comes from above that is “…first pure; then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17).

This wisdom that comes from above is given to us through four primary avenues—God’s Word, God’s Spirit, God’s providence and God’s people. To form good decision-making habits, we must be people whose minds are, first of all, being renewed consistently by God’s Word. We must also be people who walk in step with the Spirit of God, paying attention to His promptings and leadings. We must watch carefully and understand how God works providentially in our circumstances. And finally, we must live in community with other faithful believers. Making life decisions in this way not only honors God, but also helps us experience the “…peace that surpasses all understanding.” (Phil. 4:7)

Making decisions that honor God

There is a compelling scene in the classic children’s tale Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. Young Alice comes to a fork in the road and asks the Cheshire Cat which direction she should take. “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you walk,” said the Cat.

Do you ever feel like Alice? Do you ever get overwhelmed with life’s decisions and forks in the road?

Some decisions are simple and made out of habit: Which socks should I wear? Should I button the shirt from the top down or from the bottom up? Other decisions take time to think about: What sounds good for lunch? Which voice mail needs to be answered first? Then there are major life decisions that cause many of us to struggle: What is God’s will for my life and family? Are my retirement savings on track? Is it time to update my will or estate plan for the benefit of my family and ministries I care about?

So how do we make major life decisions that honor God? We need wisdom that comes from above that is “…first pure; then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17).

This wisdom that comes from above is given to us through four primary avenues—God’s Word, God’s Spirit, God’s providence and God’s people. To form good decision-making habits, we must be people whose minds are, first of all, being renewed consistently by God’s Word. We must also be people who walk in step with the Spirit of God, paying attention to His promptings and leadings. We must watch carefully and understand how God works providentially in our circumstances. And finally, we must live in community with other faithful believers. Making life decisions in this way not only honors God, but also helps us experience the “…peace that surpasses all understanding.” (Phil. 4:7)

For a FREE copy of a short article, “Biblical Wisdom for 6 Major Life Decisions,” contact Kari Sterk at 616.988.3620 or e-mail ksterk@kuyper.edu.

Selected concepts of the above content generated by www.bible.org.
Hospice
continued from cover

hummingbirds flitted about our heads going back and forth to the feeders nearby. She told me she loved the sunshine. She just hated dull, gray, rainy days. Emma’s greatest consolation was the sunny days and her pet donkey in the corral beside the barn. I brought her a CD of John Denver’s song, “Sunshine on My Shoulders.” The family played that song at her funeral, which I conducted. Emma changed before she died. She went from being angry with God to looking forward to our times of praying, reading His Word, and slowly accepting His promises of loving care.

Emma’s is just one of the hundreds of lives touched by the ministry of hospice chaplain Jim Baldwin, class of 1982. He serves as a chaplain with Hospice Care Plus, located on the edge of the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky, meeting the needs of individuals with life-limiting illnesses. As a chaplain, Baldwin helps hospice patients to live the highest quality of life possible with compassion, hope and dignity.

Baldwin came to Kuyper in the fall of 1978. “We came—I, my wife, Dorreen, and our three children, Gregg, 14; Lisa, 8; and Eric, 6. It took a little while to adjust to city life since we lived out in the country where our nearest neighbor was a quarter mile away,” he said. And while his story sounds like a neatly and tidily wrapped package with no lose ends—he married his high school sweetheart, while raising a family the Lord called him to preach the Word, and after graduating from the College, he has been used to bring God’s grace to the Emma’s and the lost of this world—there is more to the story. There is a life filled with intersections where God called and Baldwin obeyed the call. The latter, according to him, has made all the difference.

Baldwin was the seventh of 11 children in a family that knew the value of hard work. “My father was an electrician and school bus driver, as well as a farmer on our small 40-acre farm,” he said. “My mother worked in a factory for a brief period but was mostly a housewife. My dad suffered with TB and then emphysema in his 40s and died at the young age of 56. With Dad’s illness and disability we were poor but had enough to eat because of the garden and farm animals.”

Being raised on a small farm, Baldwin said that he and his siblings all learned the value of hard work, responsibility and cooperation. “My oldest brother had a larger farm, and I worked for him during harvest times, picking beans, cucumbers, potatoes, and helping put up hay and silage as well as helping milk cows from time to time,” said Baldwin. He also worked for another brother cutting logs for pulp wood on weekends and summers of his junior and senior years of high school. “As a preteen, and later as a teenager, several family members and I would go to Traverse City, MI, at harvest time and work picking cherries alongside migrant workers. This is how we earned money to buy our school clothes,” he added.

According to Baldwin, Sunday in his family life was a day of rest but not a day to attend church. “Mom always cooked a big dinner and everyone who could come gathered around the big table,” he said. “My parents were good, moral, hard-working people, but indifferent and uninvolved with any church. They willingly allowed us kids to go to any Sunday school that would pick us up.

Therefore, I attended VBS and went to Sunday school sporadically throughout childhood. I even attended a camp when I was 12 years old,” Baldwin said. Looking back, he says that those were times God was laying a foundation for his salvation.

Baldwin moved from Lake City to Grand Rapids after his high school graduation to find factory work. The following fall he married his high school sweetheart, Dorreen Gilde, and settled into an apartment in Hudsonville. In the apartment next door lived a Grand Rapids Baptist College Seminary student—Ernie—who also had a job in Grand Rapids.

“To save money we rode to work together,” said Baldwin. “Have you ever been trapped in a car for 45 minutes twice a day with a Baptist minister-to-be? If the providence of God was not strong enough to save me, this man’s determination was,” said Baldwin with a smile. He accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior sitting in the front seat of Ernie’s light blue 1962 Ford Falcon at about 1 o’clock in the morning after working the swing shift. After almost two years in Grand Rapids, the Baldwins and their young son moved back to Lake City.

As the years passed Baldwin and his wife became very active in the Lake City CRC, where they served as Sunday school teachers and in various other leadership positions. “Soon after building our dream house and feeling we had our lives figured and planned out, the Lord urged us to step out in faith and go where He was leading,”
How well prepared are Kuyper graduates? Beyond their academic knowledge, what other intrinsic qualities do Kuyper graduates have that make seminaries seek after them? According to Dr. David Rylaarsdam, academic vice president of Calvin Theological Seminary, Kuyper graduates make great seminary students. “They are not only knowledgeable, but they seek to understand, making them very teachable,” he said. “However, academics is only one component of the total Kuyper student,” he continued. “Their character and passion for the church and serving others, and their master's-level experience in cross-cultural communications, make them leaders here at CTS.”

Echoing Rylaarsdam’s words, Dr. John F. VerBerkmoes, vice president and academic dean at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, said: “Kuyper graduates come to GRTS with solid biblical and theological foundations, and they are serious about using their gifts to serve Christ's church. They demonstrate proven educational capability, ministry competency, theological perspective and character.”

The APSS program
Because of these and many other attributes of its graduates, Kuyper College is in the process of finalizing a curricular agreement with both Calvin Theological Seminary and Grand Rapids Theological Seminary that will allow Kuyper graduates to complete a Bachelor of Science degree at Kuyper and a Master of Divinity at either CTS or GRTS in as little as six years—thus eliminating the need for the extra seventh year of studies associated with traditional programs. The structure of Kuyper's APSS program benefits students not only by shortening the duration of the

Advanced Standing continued on page 2

New Majors English & Business

Kuyper offers two new study programs
Kuyper College is offering two new programs—English Professional Studies and Business Leadership. Both will prepare students for careers in a variety of fields. Each has been designed to be praxis-oriented program—helping students move from the knowledge gained in the classroom to engaging, applying and actively fulfilling that knowledge in real-world settings. In essence, the programs couple knowledge with application so students will be able to show what they can do, not just what they know.

English Professional Studies
The English Professional Studies (EPS) program helps students develop effective skills to clearly and effectively communicate with others—a critical foundation for any profession. Through the study of literature and language, students learn to better understand the world and the human condition, gaining the skills to understand and empathize with others. Graduates of the EPS program will have the reading, research, analytical thinking and writing skills necessary to thrive in today's global society. English Professional Studies graduates will be prepared to pursue graduate studies or work anywhere in the world in fields such as business, government, publishing, advertising, education, journalism and nonprofit administration.

Program Highlights
• Expert faculty with writing and publishing experience
• Customized senior internships to fit student interests and career goals
• Off-Campus study partnerships in Great Britain—Oxford and York, and Washington, D.C.

• Intensive study options, such as spiritual writing, world literature and the works of C.S. Lewis
• On-campus employment opportunities in the Writing Center
• Broad range of applied learning experiences creating business documents and reports, marketing and advertising materials, church newsletters, devotionals and blogs, or newspaper and magazine articles

New Majors continued on page 2

Kuyper College equips students with a biblical, Reformed worldview to serve effectively Christ’s church and His world.
advanced standing
continued from cover

Academic journey, but also by helping to reduce the overall cost of their education.

“Student debt is becoming a real problem in higher education,” said Kuyper Provost Dr. Mel Flikkema. “This program goes a long way to ensuring that students can graduate from seminary with smaller student loans.” Rylaarsdam agrees: “We want seminary graduates to begin their ministries as soon as possible. Often that is delayed because of the debt accumulated by students.”

The Process

Because of the rigorous academic program that graduates go through during their time at Kuyper, Rylaarsdam and VerBerkmoes said that many of the courses that Kuyper graduates have already taken at the College are seminary-level courses. Both seminaries will, therefore, allow Kuyper graduates to take final exams for each of those seminary courses for up to 30 credits (one academic year).

According to VerBerkmoes, additional tuition help may be available to Kuyper graduates through Grand Rapids Theological Seminary’s Kern Scholars Program. The program will allow GRTS to provide substantial tuition scholarships to roughly 40 Master of Divinity students on an ongoing basis. “These scholarships will be granted to select candidates who meet certain criteria—call and commitment to senior pastoral ministry, a 3.25 cumulative grade point average, and a demonstration of eight core character qualities,” said VerBerkmoes. “GRTS intends to pursue Kuyper faculty and administration on an annual basis to seek recommendations for the best and brightest Kuyper students meeting the scholarship criteria.”

Flikkema sees the whole educational experience at Kuyper not just in terms of credits earned, but also in terms of competencies needed to function in the pastoral ministry. “Those competencies are defined in terms of knowledge—what our students need to know; character—that will help sustain our students through the rigors of pastoral ministry over the decades; and practiced skills—which will help them put together and preach a sermon, as well as ably carry on the many other responsibilities of the pastorate,” said Flikkema. “At Kuyper we do all of that. We equip our students to exhibit knowledge, character and skills.”

New Majors
continued from cover

Business Leadership

Kuyper College’s innovative Business Leadership program equips students to succeed in today’s global business environment. Using competency-based learning, students not only study business theory, but apply the principles to real-life business experiences. Through simulations, robust internships and case studies, students demonstrate competencies in communication; the application of ethics, leadership, finance and economics; strategic thinking and intercultural intelligence.

In addition, our model of biblical stewardship permeates all facets of the program, preparing students to be engaged responsibly, ethically and with integrity in all areas of business. Because the focus is on business as a calling, students learn to combine their strengths and gifts with leadership and worldview development to make a difference in God’s world.

Program Highlights

• Extensive internships with local, regional and international businesses and organizations
• Off-campus study partnerships in Great Britain, China, Costa Rica, Chicago and Washington, D.C.
• Distinctive classes, such as Nonprofit Management, Strategic Project Management, and the Business Leadership Capstone: Society, Economics and Values
• Relevant business program built around marketing, finance and management
• Strategic connections to leading businesses, nonprofits and think-tanks

Campus Visits

There’s no better way to get a real feel for Kuyper College than coming for a visit. Kuyper hosts a number of all-day preview events for prospective students and their families, including Kuyper Experience Days, Kuyper Cougar Athletic Days, Music and Worship Experience Days, Leadership Experience Days and Homeschool Experience Days.

Go to kuyper.edu/visit, e-mail visit@kuyper.edu or call 616-988-3631 to speak with our visit coordinator and set up a visit.
Exceptional Value

Kuyper’s high-quality education is very affordable. Tuition costs are significantly lower than comparable Christian colleges—an average of 30 percent less per year. In addition, Kuyper offers dozens of scholarship opportunities, one of these being the $8,000 Trustee Scholarship.

While all students who are accepted to Kuyper College are evaluated based on their commitment to academic, spiritual and social development, there have always been applicants who have shown exceptional understanding of these matters. Outstanding students who are chosen to receive a Presidential Honors Kuyper Achievement Award scholarship are also eligible to participate in the Trustee Scholarship competition at Kuyper College. The competition takes place over a two-day period and includes meeting with many Kuyper College faculty members and staff, taking tours of the campus and of downtown Grand Rapids, participating in group discussions on a variety of topics, and writing essays. Applicants are judged on several factors, including interpersonal skills, Christian commitment, academic achievement and leadership potential.

This year’s competition included 17 well-qualified students from Michigan, Wisconsin and Colorado, with Stephanie Helder from Jenison, MI, and Eleanor Jefferson from Oconomowoc, WI, becoming the 2011 Trustee Scholarship winners.

Financial Aid

$4,500,000
awarded in financial aid each year
95% of Kuyper students receive financial aid

$13,000 average financial aid package

98% of recent graduates are employed or in graduate school

Annual Expenses (2011-2012)

Tuition & Fees.......................$17,506
Room & Board (15 meals).............$6,280

Scholarships

Academic, cultural, ministry and leadership scholarships up to $8,000 per year

Outcomes—a critical component of a Kuyper education

Over the years, a lot has been written by the staff and faculty about the merits of Kuyper College. However, what if the student body, as one voice, had the opportunity to tell others about Kuyper? Well, they’ve had the opportunity. In a recently published national report they expressed their thoughts and what they think about the College.

Once a year, a major research study—The Noel-Levitz* Student Satisfaction Inventory—is conducted nationally among students attending private four-year colleges throughout the United States. This two-step study first asks students to rate the importance of 89 factors in their college education. Once students complete the Importance Factor portion of the study, they are then asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their college’s attainment of each of those factors. Noel-Levitz compares Kuyper’s rankings to colleges in two national groups—private colleges in general and private colleges that are members of the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). Rating factors range from “Instructional effectiveness” to “Most students feel a sense of belonging here.”

Below is a chart showing ten areas of great importance to Kuyper students (Importance Factor) and their Level of Satisfaction rating of Kuyper—in those areas. The Kuyper scores are compared against all private colleges—including ABHE schools, and schools belonging only to ABHE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>KUYPER Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>ABHE ONLY Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>ALL PRIVATE Satisfaction Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Effectiveness</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Centeredness</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for the Individual</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Climate</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Financial Aid</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>4.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Excellence</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Support Services</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Noel-Levitz conducts annual studies in more than 2,800 Colleges and Universities in North America.
Areas of Study

Accounting  General Studies  Psychology
Audio Production  Greek  Public Relations
Bible & Theology  History  Religious Education
Biblical Studies  Intercultural Studies  Secondary Education
Business Leadership  Interdisciplinary Studies  Social Sciences
Child Development  International Development  Social Work
Christian Foundations  Journalism  Spanish
Christian Ministry  Literature  Sports Ministry Management
Church Planting  Marketing  Teaching English to Speakers of
Communication Studies  Media  Other Languages (TESOL)
Dance & Worship Studies  Missions  Theatre
Elementary Education  Music & Worship Studies  Video
English Professional Studies  News-Editorial  Visual Communication
Executive Office Administration  Philosophy  Writing
Exercise Science  Pre-Nursing  Youth Ministry
Film  Pre-Seminary Studies

Some Kuyper College programs are offered in collaboration with Cornerstone University, Calvin College, and Grand Rapids Community College. For detailed program information, please see the College Catalog online at www.kuyper.edu.

Kuyper College

Kuyper College is a ministry-focused Christian leadership college that educates and trains students for ministry and service. Through the integration of rigorous academics and Reformed worldview, Kuyper provides a well-rounded college experience where students are prepared to see, understand, and live all of life through the lens of Scripture. Within a community that welcomes a diversity of races, nationalities and denominations, Kuyper students acquire a unique level of academic & biblical knowledge which is then tested and sharpened by real-life internship experiences. This process equips graduates for lives of service as they exercise transformational influence as educators, pastors, social workers, missionaries, physicians, chaplains, business professionals and in dozens of other professions throughout the world. Kuyper is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Association for Biblical Higher Education. The Social Work Program is also accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

For more information on Kuyper College and its academic and financial aid offerings, contact Kari Sterk at 1-877-229-0940 or e-mail ksterk@kuyper.edu.
“When a person hears their doctor say, ‘There is nothing more I can do for you. I am referring you to hospice,’ fear, questions and doubts fill their minds and hearts.”

—Jim Baldwin

said Baldwin. “After counseling with the Rev. Bill VandenBosch, our pastor, we decided to enroll at Kuyper. It was a good decision. Kuyper included and supported our family during the next four years there, and soon all of us made new friends and life got back to normal.”

According to Baldwin, Kuyper proved to be a good fit. He explained: “Friendly professors, staff and students helped me make the transition back to studying after being out of high school for 16 years. All the professors were well prepared for class and encouraged debate and interaction, and were very approachable after class and always willing to help in any way they could. I came away from Kuyper much more confident in myself, my faith and my calling. And the six-week summer internship at Appalachia Reach Out Ministries (ARO) between my junior and senior year really confirmed my calling and assured me that my education at Kuyper was preparing me for the work God had in store for us.”

Shortly after graduation, a position opened up for Baldwin as assistant director of Christian Appalachian Homes, located in Inez, eastern Kentucky. “We spent two years there,” said Baldwin. “Dorreen worked in the office as well as helping mentor the young ladies we ministered to while they were staying at the home. Those were formative years, filled with intense counseling, heartache and some victories as the Lord was preparing us for His next call—the directorship of Appalachia Reach Out Ministries.”

Appalachia Reach Out Ministries is a benevolent ministry reaching out mostly to the elderly and low income peoples of the hills and hollows of Martin County, Kentucky. The Baldwins were responsible for managing a second-hand store stocked with clothing and miscellaneous household items, screening clients needing benevolence assistance, conducting children’s worship services and Sunday school, as well as mid-week after school Bible clubs, plus home visitation. In addition, they organized and conducted six weeks of VBS each year, and using volunteers from Michigan, they did home repairs for county residents in the summer. “All of these activities provided great opportunities for us to share the Gospel and show God’s love to those in our community. Through these activities and programs we eventually were able to plant a local church in 1990 which has grown and is now led by a pastor born and raised in the community,” said Baldwin.

After 15 years in Kentucky, Baldwin answered the call to be the pastor of both Community CRC in East Grand Forks and First Church CRC in Crookstown, Minnesota. “A devastating flood in 1997 destroyed many of the homes, businesses and churches in the community,” said Baldwin. “As a result of Dorreen’s complications from diabetes we decided to move back to Berea, Kentucky, to be closer to our grown children and young grandchildren,” said Baldwin. “Ministry opportunities looked pretty slim at the time. So I took a position as volunteer coordinator at Hospice Care Plus.” Four months after starting at HCP, Baldwin was asked if he would be interested in an open position as chaplain. “I did not have to think about it very long,” he said. “Again I praised the Lord for opening doors for me to continue in His ministry.”

And that is where the story continues today for Jim Baldwin. “When a person hears their doctor say, ‘There is nothing more I can do for you. I am referring you to hospice,’ fear, questions and doubts fill their minds and hearts. This is the challenging situation that hospice chaplains step into with each new patient,” said Baldwin. At HCP, Baldwin’s case load ranges from 35 to 45 patients. “I am thankful for the grace of God that is available to my patients and their families. It is a great blessing to witness first hand as the angel of the Lord passes between the living family and the dying patient to take a loved one home,” he said. “Psalm 23 has taken on a much greater meaning to me as I experience people walking through the ‘valley of the shadow of death’ and realize that the Lord has met them at that very moment in the very room I am in. That thrills my heart,” added Baldwin.

“Effective, transformational leadership for the benefit of others—it is the essence of who we are at Kuyper College.”
Basketball continued from cover

I’m playing college basketball; I can’t believe I have this opportunity.” It was super exciting!

Emily: My experience was a little different from Justin’s. I remember as a freshman—especially during the first game—being very nervous. College basketball—it was big. I know it was Kuyper. I know we were small, but it was college basketball, and the gym was packed. Today, I don’t get nervous anymore, but I remember thinking back then, “What am I doing out here?”

KN: What does it take to be a student athlete at Kuyper?

Megan: You definitely have to be very responsible and organized because if you’re not, you can fall behind in your work. Therefore, time management is of the essence—you need to be able to manage time well. It is important to know when to have downtime to just relax, and also know when to use free time to do homework and get a million other things done. It is somewhat hard to be a student athlete, but it is not impossible, and it is a lot of fun, too!

Emily: Both of my parents played in college, so I feel that they, as best as they could, prepared me very well by telling me, “You’re going to be very tired, and you will have to plan and do many things ahead of time.” Being a procrastinator, doing things ahead of time is not easy for me, but keeping up with my academics and work responsibilities besides playing is very important to me. So, as Megan said, time management and organization is a must in order to be successful.

Justin: Being a student athlete is insanely hard, and if you are not organized you’d go crazy. I believe I was successful here because I knew I needed to be at Kuyper. This is where God called me. I knew I wanted to go into youth ministry. Then, basketball comes after that. Yet, during practice and during games, every single time I touch a basketball, I am going to give my all—all of us are giving it our all—because we understand that while we’re playing for the college and for the students, we’re ultimately playing to glorify God.

KN: Do you agree with Justin’s comments about playing for the glory of God?

Megan: Yes, I do. And it is good to know that others notice. There have been so many times that our coach has come into the locker room after a game and told us how spectators came up to him after the game and congratulated the team not only on how hard we played, but also on our wonderful sportsmanship and attitudes. It’s always been encouraging to know that people can see a difference and that what we’re doing on the court sets an example for them.

Emily: During a trip to Alaska we played two powerhouse state university schools. It was a long and tiring trip during which we lost every game by an average of 60 points. One of the girls asked a question out loud that was on all of our minds: “We’re so far out of our league; what are we doing here?” But after our last game—which we lost by 80 points—we invited players from the other team to meet with us. We all came together and a couple of our girls shared their testimonies. There were tears on many faces—it was a complete God moment. And the girl who earlier had wondered why we were here said: “That’s why we came here—not to have our opponent set an all-time single game scoring record, not to see Alaska; we came here to share Christ with eight girls on the other team.”

KN: What is next for each of you?

Justin: I’m planning on doing an online program to get my master’s in sports management. I’ve gotten my ministry preparation here, which I’ve loved, but now I want to get into more of the sports aspect of the ministry. That’s where I feel God calling me, and that’s where my passion is. My dream job would be as an athletic director at a high school and also teaching Bible classes and coaching basketball.

Emily: I’m presently working part time as an assistant teacher at Appletree Christian Learning Center. I plan to stay there as a full-time teacher. My goal is to be a director of an Appletree facility eventually.

Megan: As a language arts major and a math minor, I’ll be student teaching next year. After that, I’d like to teach math in an upper elementary school, or I could have a big classroom in fourth or fifth grade.

KN: Finally, what has Kuyper basketball taught you?

Megan: Being on a team, I’ve learned firsthand the importance of teamwork. We all come from different backgrounds and places, so I got to know how to get along with others, especially under trying, losing-season circumstances. It’s given me a better understanding of what it takes to work together with other people. Playing for Kuyper also helped me realize what is important in life and to work on my priorities—I’ve grown a lot in my faith.

Emily: Probably the biggest thing is...
how to overcome adversity—especially this year—as an injury-plagued season was the banner over our team. Sometimes we only had six girls suiting up for games. At times it seemed like we were in impossible situations, but looking back we found out that God knows what He’s doing. Just when we thought there was no possible way, there was a way, because God never puts us in situations that we can’t handle—with His help.

Justin: I developed mental toughness because of the roller-coaster nature of college sports. Kuyper basketball helped me to put my life into perspective because, along with the good, there were also times of frustration when things didn’t go right. If my dad said it once, he said it a hundred times: “Who are you playing for, Justin? Why are you doing this?” So the perspective, putting life into perspective, doing things for God, that’s the main thing I gained from these last four years.
“Growing up in a Christian home was something I did not appreciate until much later in life,” said Crystal Van Kooten. Looking back, the journey that has brought her to that appreciation has been a very difficult one. “Our family was very close during the first 10 or 11 years of my life. I loved music and played the saxophone and the piano. I also spent a lot of time with my dad in his shop—sanding, cutting, gluing, clamping, varnishing…we did it all,” said Crystal. However, during her teenage years Crystal entered a time she describes as “very rough and filled with great amounts of pain—from choosing the wrong friends to beginning a long battle with alcohol addiction.” She explained: “The friends and the lifestyle I chose cut out of my life the things that were important to me—my music and my faith. I became more concerned with the things of this world instead of the things of God.”

After high school, Crystal’s self-destructive lifestyle continued at a local college. At the end of her first year of college, the opportunity came to spend time in Malawi, Africa. “I knew I needed to be set free from the chains that were binding me and planted directly into the truth of God’s Word, so I decided to spend three months in Malawi,” said Crystal. “I worked at a well with women and children, just loving on them, helping them by carrying water jars on our heads. I also spent time working in a little village school. This was a very humbling experience for me. Its impact is still felt daily in my life, and I often find new things God is teaching me from my time there.”

According to Crystal, she returned to college as a completely different person, one that no longer fit in with the people she lived with. So, she spent a great deal of time at home. A few months after that, she dropped out of college. “It was during this time that my memory went back to my freshman year of high school when someone had told me about Kuyper College, and wondered if I should go there,” said Crystal. “My faith was still in complete shambles, but something about that memory drew me in. So I visited Kuyper, and was filled with peace.” Shortly after deciding to attend Kuyper, Crystal’s life took another downward spiral. “I drank the next few months of my life away,” she said. “Yet, I knew I needed to be at Kuyper and needed to turn my life around, and although it was very hard, I made it.” At Kuyper she says she began to see the Heavenly Father for who He truly is, “for His deep, deep love for me, for His deep desires for me to come home to Him. And with His help,” she said, “in March of 2010, the chains of alcohol that had held me for so long broke for good.”

At Kuyper, Crystal says that she found a community of believers and an accountability system made up of brothers and sisters who would do anything for you and go to any length to make sure each other’s needs were met. “At Kuyper I have also been changed,” she added. “I have been given the chance in all the classes I’ve taken to learn about God’s truth from knowledgeable and wise sons and daughters of the King. I have been given a chance to understand the cross for what it is, for the choice of life and death and the choice of light or darkness that was given then in order that each new day we may choose which reality we will live in now.”

As far as the future is concerned, Crystal says she has a few dreams: “Go to seminary, have a family, open my own coffee shop, love like Mother Teresa—living with the least and the lost, and serving others as though they are Christ.”