Born in a small African village in the high mountains of Zambia's Northern Province, Lloyd Ng’ambi, class of 2010, struggled to survive the early years of his life. By the time he was five, his mother and his siblings had all died. He found little sympathy under the severe, sometimes abusive discipline of his polygamist father’s other wife, who had eight children of her own. Lloyd often went hungry, sometimes managing to eat only one meal a day. However, a break came when his uncle (his mother’s brother) decided to take Lloyd to live with him. “During the stay at my uncle’s, I came to know the value of education,” said Ng’ambi. “I saw the difference between the lives we lived working the fields and how my uncle, who was a teacher, lived. This made me realize that if I wanted to amount to anything, I needed to go to school. Unfortunately, I did not stay long with my uncle and had to come back to live with my father and stepmother because my father did not want me to grow up somewhere else.”

A group of scholars from both the United States and Europe recently met to begin discussions on the establishment of the Kuyper Translation Society. “The vision for the formation of the Kuyper Translation Society was formulated by Dr. Rimmer DeVries, a longtime friend of Kuyper and many other Christian institutions,” said Dr. Mel Flikkema, Kuyper College’s provost. “During our meeting this past fall at Calvin Theological Seminary, Dr. DeVries shared some of his ideas,” added Dr. Flikkema. “A summary of which included the following thoughts”:

• First, Kuyper College has enthusiastically embraced the responsibility of administering it. Kuyper College fits the Kuyperian emphasis on Christian service in all fields of human activity. If Abraham Kuyper were to visit Grand Rapids today, he most likely would hang this top hat at Kuyper College.

• Second, Kuyper College has a strong working relationship with the senior staff of the Acton Institute which has similar goals and also has many important facilities and contacts.

• Third, this month the long-awaited annotated bibliography of all of the works of Abraham Kuyper has become available. This will be an invaluable resource for any research performed pertaining to Kuyper’s work and his ideas.

The Kuyper Translation Society

Square Inch Series

Dr. Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, helped launch the Square Inch Series of lectures at Kuyper College. The series derives its name from the well-known Abraham Kuyper quote, “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: ‘Mine!’” According to Dr. Branson Parler, professor at the College, the goal of the series is to help all believers to be thoroughly cognizant of God’s world and thus better and more intimately know God in and through the works of His hands. Mouw drew many of his comments from his recently published book, Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction. At the core of Mouw’s lecture was God’s love for multiplicity and His celebration of good in humanity—stressing the duty of Christians to align with God’s will and to make an impact on all spheres of our lives in His name.
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

When C.S. Lewis titled the 15th chapter of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe “Deeper Magic from Before the Dawn of Time,” he knew he was hitting the reader with words full of intrigue, wonder and curiosity. Baited with that title, most readers eagerly delve into the content of the chapter to discover what mysteries would lay beyond the tragic death of Aslan. That sense of “something deeper” is exactly how I feel about the accounts in this issue of The Kuyper News.

There are many deeper things going on in—or in the background of—the lives of the people associated with the College. When I discover these things, I learn how much more deeply they are experiencing the hand of God in their lives than I had ever been aware of. Becoming more aware and appreciative of their spiritual journeys, I am motivated to make a point of looking deeper into the lives of others to see what more I can learn about them and about God. Inevitably, what I learn encourages and instructs me in my own spiritual journey.

This tendency to go deeper and to care more deeply has been characteristic of the students of this College since its founding in 1939. Those who have employed our alumni universally note there is “something special” about these people and the college they came out of. Our students are loved and affirmed because of this and they are sought out by ministries and other employers because of the special spirit they bring into their work and in serving others.

Now, we who know the Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit know that none of this is a mystery—we have been privileged to know what a blessing His indwelling is. But how true too that when people see that Spirit alive in the attitude of the heart, the dedication of the hands and the life in the eyes, they see something that draws them into “reading the chapter” and discovering the truth—not the magic—that has been there all the time. This is our spiritual witness.

I am glad you are reading these stories in The Kuyper News and I trust you too will gain from what you note others have discovered as they have gone deeper in their walk with God. For those of you who support Kuyper and our students, thank you for your part in keeping and promoting the spirit, the witness and the unique characteristic of this college as seen through the lives of our students.

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President

The Yoder Index

The Yoder Index, a scholarly project led by Kuyper College professor Dr. Branson Parler, was officially launched recently. Working with Dr. Parler to develop the Index is John C. Nugents, Old Testament professor at Great Lakes Christian College.

Partially funded by Shalom Publications, the Index, found at www.yoderindex.com, is dedicated to writings of John Howard Yoder. An internationally known Mennonite scholar, Yoder studied and wrote hundreds of works on ethics, biblical studies and theology.

Not only is the Index a helpful tool for Kuyper College students, but according to Parler, it is one of the many ways that academic research at Kuyper College continues to be on the cutting edge of the scholarly world.

Editor’s Note: For those who may be interested in learning more about Yoder, Dr. Parler suggests reading some of his works, including: He Came Preaching Peace, Discipleship as Political Responsibility, The Original Revolution, and The Christian Witness to the State.

Kuyper hosts local youth pastors

Kuyper College is sponsoring a series of ministry luncheons for youth pastors from the West Michigan area where they can meet and exchange information on the different programs they lead as well as methodologies to improve those programs. The youth ministry luncheons also present the opportunity to familiarize attendees with Kuyper and the various programs it offers. “Kuyper’s youth ministry program is not a cookie-cutter ministry degree with a youth ministry label,” said Professor Brian Telzerow, co-host of the lunch series and Kuyper’s youth ministry program director. “The program also provides for integration with

Youth Pastors continued on page 7
As a new year begins, it may be a very good time to go over the details concerning the precious resources God has entrusted to us to bless our families and ministries that are close to our hearts! One of the most important ways we can do that is to make sure we have an up-to-date will. Here is an estate plan checklist to help you do that:

Does my will reflect what's important to me and my family?
What kind of legacy do you want to leave for your children? For example, if you feel it is important for children to work for things, does your estate plan reflect that? Finally, prayerful consideration should be given to how much you want to leave to your heirs. This requires answering the question: How much is enough?

Is my will up-to-date with current tax laws?
Tax laws are constantly changing and can have a significant impact on your estate plan. For example, if you wanted to leave a certain amount to your children, the formula for calculating your estate tax may have changed after your existing plan was put together. Consequently, more may go to your heirs than intended, or perhaps nothing would go to your favorite charities.

Does my will appropriately provide for my children?
When it comes to providing for children, there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Consequently, it is wise to look at the specific needs of your children and the unique dynamics in your family. For example, do your children handle money wisely? Should they have an outright distribution or would it be better if they received money over time? How old are your children now? Are there grandchildren to consider?

Are executor-trustees named still valid?
A key consideration in your estate plan is who will actually implement the plan. As circumstances change, the person(s) you may have previously named to implement your plan may no longer be the right choice. Could any of your children now serve in these capacities? Are there geographical factors to consider?

Does my will include my favorite ministry organizations?
Your will or trust provides a wonderful opportunity to remember the ministries that are close to your heart.

For more information on wills and estate planning contact Ken Capisciolto at Kuyper College at 616.988.3676 or kcapisciolto@kuyper.edu.

This is a story about...

“In My Words” is a feature of The Kuyper College News highlighting first-person stories by Kuyper College faculty and staff.

Andrea Smith
Student Life Coordinator

“Where are the footprints of God in my life?”¹

I have been asking myself this question a lot lately. In September I joined a women’s group which is going through a study called Spiritual Autobiography: Discovering and Sharing Your Spiritual Story.

Writing my spiritual autobiography has been no easy task, but it has prompted me to think about God’s presence in my life in a new light. Some approach the telling of their spiritual autobiography by sharing it in a chronological fashion. Fascinatingly, God’s footprints have surfaced in the form of themes for me.

Have you ever noticed a theme echoing through a particular period of your life? It could be a span of a few weeks, months or a year. I’m not talking about those times when you noticed your clothes didn’t fit like they used to, or you were sleep deprived because of that new little bundle of joy. I’m talking about those times when a random assortment of conversations, devotions, events, sermons, etc. center on a particular lesson God seems to be working into you.

Allow me to share some of the themes God has used to ground me in Him over the last year. While they may seem basic, I have been experiencing them in a fresh, new way.

**God is Sovereign.** These days life seems to be one big decision after another for my husband and me as we together pursue his calling to teach theology. I take great comfort that we don’t have to strategize our way through this process because GOD IS SOVEREIGN and HE has a plan for our lives.

**God is Faithful.** I have recounted the words of Proverbs 3:5-6 many times. It is so reassuring to remember GOD IS FAITHFUL and HE will make my paths straight if I submit to Him.

**God is my Source of Strength.** “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:26). There were times this past year where this verse was my lifeblood—my prayer to God, and HE was my SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

“Everyone has a story to tell.”² I encourage you to reflect on the ebb and flow of your own life. It is only when you back up and reflect that you realize the story God has given you, a unique story—a story worth sharing with believers and non-believers alike.

² ibid., p. 87.
Even though the value of an education was not seen as anything worthwhile among most of the families in his village, Ng’ambi’s dream of getting an education never stopped. So at the age of 12 he enrolled in Musanta Primary School—a three-hour walk from his village. “The idea of starting school was not welcomed by most of my family members,” he said. “But I was determined. It was not easy because of school fees and the long walk to and from school each day.” Starting at 4:00 a.m., a barefoot Ng’ambi would walk along a rocky footpath and cross three rivers in order to get to school. He would spend the day at school without breakfast or lunch, getting back home by 6:00 p.m. “The walk to school was even worse in winter when the temperature would drop to the high thirties,” said Ng’ambi. “To stay warm, I would run.” He also spent every spare moment working other people’s fields, making baskets or doing manual labor so he could pay the school fees. Seven years later, by the age of 19, Ng’ambi had finished primary school and received a scholarship to one of Zambia’s best secondary schools, the David Kuanda Technical School in Lusaka, Zambia’s capital.

“Being brought up in a village without electricity, I was stunned when I first arrived at the school in Lusaka and saw all the tall buildings and the busy life—it was a totally different environment,” said Ng’ambi. “When I arrived, it was also very clear to my schoolmates that I was very poor since my clothes were old and worn, and I had no shoes. Some students laughed at me, but others were kind and gave me shoes and clothing.” During the first six months at the school, Ng’ambi acknowledges he suffered from “cultural shock,” feeling lonely and finding it hard to adapt to the rich food and city life. But after six months came a major turning point in his life—he was introduced to his school’s Scripture Union, where, according to him, he found good friends who introduced him to Christ. “I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal savior, and dedicated my life to serving Him from then on,” said Ng’ambi. “From that moment the call of God came to me without ceasing. I had such a desire to serve the Lord and was so zealous for the cause of Christ that my fellow students nicknamed me ‘The Bishop.’”

Ng’ambi excelled at David Kuanda Technical School, and after graduating, he was accepted at Palabana Dairy Institute Agriculture College, from where he graduated three years later with a degree in dairy farming. “Even though I became a manager of a farming operation after graduation, my passion for the ministry did not die away, and so two years later, I enrolled in Zomba Theological Seminary, a school of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Synod of Zambia,” he said. After graduation and ordination, Ng’ambi became a pastor serving as a youth synod convener. A few years later he began working with Rev. Jim Lont, the secretary for Youth and Christian Nurture of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC), headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan. “After meeting Rev. Lont I began to be exposed for the first time in my life to what youth ministry was all about,” said Ng’ambi. “Jim Lont encouraged me to receive formal training in youth ministry so that I could serve as a full-time youth worker. He even sent me application forms from Kuyper College.”

Ng’ambi enrolled at Kuyper in 2007 seeking a bachelor’s degree in youth ministry. He graduated in 2010. While he studied in the States, his wife, Annah, and their three children remained in Zambia. He only saw them once during that entire time, during a return trip to Zambia. “The Kuyper community is a true...
“Through this long journey, my Christian faith has grown, and I have learned to put my complete trust in God during times of difficulty.”

Lloyd Ng’ambi—Class of 2010

Ng’ambi also singled out for praise Kuyper College Professors Telzerow and White. “They motivated me and helped me to clearly see what youth ministry could be in Africa,” he said. “They were also instrumental in transforming my personal Christian life.”

Currently, Ng’ambi is the parish minister of Chilenje Church in a suburb of Lusaka. He is also the full-time synod youth coordinator for the CCAP in Zambia, training youth leaders and developing youth programs to address the challenges facing the youth of Zambia. “I travel the country training youth leaders within and outside the boundaries of my denomination, helping them to see that to reach and help our youth we must develop relationships so we can share the gospel with them,” he said.

“Rev. Jim Lont taught me a key principle regarding youth ministry. He would often say: ‘Youth ministry is about the heart one has for young people—caring and loving them unconditionally, just like Jesus Christ.’” Ng’ambi added that he was also taught throughout his studies at Kuyper the importance of fostering relationships among youth and how the young are looking for caring people who will love them. “Young people don’t just want to be seen in the church; they want to be welcomed as contributing members,” he said. “I want to develop youth programs in Zambia that address the needs of our young people holistically, spiritually, physically and emotionally, equipping them with the Word of God so that together we can become effective servants of our Lord Jesus Christ in this world.” Ng’ambi explained that he has never thought for one moment that this can be achieved by himself. “Therefore, my main task is to identify capable men and women and share with them the vision God has put in my heart and equip them with the necessary skills to carry out God’s work. That is why we are spending most of our time in developing effective youth leaders throughout the country. As a result, it is exciting to see the lives of our young people in Zambia being transformed holistically,” he said.

Asked about victories and failures in his ministry, Ng’ambi responded that he is humbled that God has used him in pastoral and youth work for so many years. “In both positions what has been my greatest joy is when people’s lives are transformed by the power of the gospel,” he said. “As far as failures, I’ve experienced some, especially when I have walked on my own and not humbly in the way of Christ.” He added that God has used those times as teaching moments to help him not to think too highly of himself.

According to Ng’ambi the future looks bright for youth ministry in the CCAP. “We see the lives of young people being changed as they witness the love of Christ,” he said. “In addition, through several partnerships with youth ministry organizations in the United States and Chile, we have been able to develop youth leadership programs and seminars in many parts of Zambia.” Ng’ambi points to a recent Organizing Youth Leadership Seminar held in the city of Livingstone, which is the tourism center for the famed Victoria Falls. “Kuyper College student Janice Reitsma, who spent her internship with us, participated in the planning and implementation of all the programs we presented during the seminar,” he said.

Reminiscing on the many years since those three-hour barefoot treks to and from primary school, Ng’ambi acknowledges and gives God all the credit for the grace he has received which helped to both sustain and encourage him. “Through this long journey, my Christian faith has grown, and I have learned to put my complete trust in God during times of difficulty,” he said. “I have also discovered that hardships and discouragements cannot be avoided. However, when answering God’s call, we will receive God’s daily provision of strength and courage to help us make His call come true.”
Orphans no more

Hosted each fall in Grand Rapids, Michigan, ArtPrize® is part arts festival and part international arts competition whose winner receives the world’s largest art prize—$250,000. During the 2011 competition, office lobbies, restaurants, courtyards, sidewalks and city parks served as art galleries for the work of 1,582 artists from 43 states and 36 countries, helping to turn three square miles of downtown Grand Rapids into the largest art venue in the world.

Among this year’s entries was “Orphans No More,” a 15-foot-high by 12-foot-wide mural made up of the actual hand- and footprints of young people from Uganda, East Africa and residents of West Michigan. The mural was created by Tim Sliedrecht (class of 2000) to call attention to the plight and journey of the young people in Uganda. Together with his wife, Angie, and their three adopted children, he ministers in Uganda with International Teams—Team Beyond®—in partnership with Christian Reformed World Missions. Their role as team leaders, according to Sliedrecht, centers on visioning, strategizing, developing ministry areas, and serving a team of five married couples and three single individuals who work as mobilizers in a variety of ministries focused on health care, orphans, pastoral care, children, local business development and youth.

“The mural was designed to illustrate the transformation and Christian testimony of Ugandan youth who once were abducted by and forced to be child-soldiers of the LRA, a militant group engaged in armed rebellion, murder, abduction, mutilation, and sexual enslavement of children throughout several countries in Africa,” said Sliedrecht. “The hand- and footprints of these young Ugandans make up the cross, depicting their adoption by God the Father through Jesus Christ, and the full expression of the Father’s love—the culmination of His plan to get His children back. The mural also serves to illustrate the impact that the new life these young people now lead can have on us who live in West Michigan.” According to Sliedrecht, because of the suffering and experiences they went through as child-soldiers, these young people are better able to grasp what it means to be spiritual orphans, apart from God the Father, and thus understand and appreciate all the more what it means to be sons and daughters of the Father. “In many ways they are able to see it more clearly, sense it more deeply, and live it more freely than many of us here in West Michigan,” said Sliedrecht.

This art also symbolizes the mission and vision of the Sliedrechts and the other members of their team. “Our focus during our first couple of years in Uganda was primarily to settle in, network, and learn about the culture and worldview of the people and communities in northeastern Uganda,” said Sliedrecht. “We discovered that all of the issues in Uganda are not isolated, but linked systemic issues of poverty, slavery and spiritual blindness—symptoms of a much deeper, much more pervasive root problem—the non-Christian animistic and fatalistic worldview which permeates all areas of society and life in Uganda.”

According to Sliedrecht, out of such a warped worldview flow the values that shape the Ugandan people. “The result,” he said, “is an extreme lack of value for human life, and the using and abusing of others for individual selfish gain. We also discovered that the majority of western aid and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are just treating the symptoms, the immediate needs, without addressing the root disease. What’s more, in many cases, they are actually doing more harm than good, reinforcing the fatalistic worldview that the people hold by making and keeping them dependent on the West.”

As he continued, Sliedrecht described what he and all members of his team believe that Africa needs most. “I believe that Africa needs what the whole world needs—a complete embracing of the biblical worldview whose central core is the belief that God loves mankind and has demonstrated this love through the sacrifice of His son, Jesus Christ,” he said. “Out of such a worldview originates an extremely high value for human life, and thus an extreme love for others, which moves us to action. Embracing the biblical worldview is the only way for peace, joy, hope and love to spread not only in Africa, but throughout the world—it is the only way for real transformation to occur. And while we are thousands of miles apart, with unique hand- and footprints, names and experiences, we are united in Jesus as sons and daughters—brothers and sisters shielded by the Father’s open arms which stretch all the way from Uganda to West Michigan, gently persuading us to live out His love.”

“The rationale for the name Team Beyond: Team Beyond is a team whose members individually and corporately are totally corrupt and sinful on their own without Christ. And who BEYOND self-diagnosis and self-cure put their faith in, depend on, live for and pursue the One and Only Triune God who is BEYOND understanding and imagination in terms of His wisdom, greatness and power, peace, protection, love, faithfulness and providence, righteousness…His very essence. www.sliedrechts.wordpress.com
**NEWS AND EVENTS**

**Friday, January 13, 2012**—
Winter All-Campus Retreat.

**Tuesday, January 17, 2012**—
Blood Drive sponsored by the Student Activities Committee and Michigan Blood, in the Boonstra Fitness Center, 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Friday, February 24, 2012**—
Winter Concert at 7:30 p.m. in the Vos Chapel. Public is welcome.

**Monday, March 5**
to **Friday, March 9, 2012**—
Spring Break.

**Friday, April 13, 2012**—
Spring Concert at 7:30 p.m. in the Vos Chapel. Public is welcome.

**Men’s and Women’s Basketball Schedules** —  Visit www.kuyper.edu/athletics.

**Kuyper Experience Days**— Schedule can be found at www.kuyper.edu/visit.

**Professor Allison Backous’ “Bent to Wonder,”** a reflection on the Advent season, and **“The Full Light,” a memoir essay,** were published respectively by Duke University Divinity School’s Faith and Leadership and by St. Katherine’s Review.

**Professor Branson Parler’s “The Emperor's New Clothes,”** a critical review of Peter Leithart’s “Defending Constantine,” was published in The Other Journal.

**CLASSNOTES**

**Marriages:**

Jennifer Flieman (2011) and Brandon Visser were married on September 10, 2011.

Jessie Timmer (2010) and Eric Smickley were married on December 10, 2011.

**Births:**

Alex Brito (2005) and Allison (Denk) Brito (2005) welcomed their son, Abel Israel, to their family on November 1, 2011.

**Professional Developments:**

Kari (Schierbeek) Sterk (2006) was promoted to account manager at Notions Marketing Corporation in Grand Rapids, MI.

Jeff Stam (1976) has been appointed international director of Set Free Ministries, and is responsible for ministry in East Africa and the Mizoram region in India.

**Youth Pastors**

Continued from page 2

other forms of ministry by allowing our students to specialize their fields of study within areas such as Contemporary Youth Culture, Relational Ministry, Leadership and Administration, Urban Ministry, Christian Camping, and Conference and Retreat Ministries.”

Telzerow further explained that beyond sound biblical doctrine and contemporary methods for relating that doctrine to the youth of today, the program places heavy emphasis on field work. “During their time here, our students gain additional hands-on ministry experience, culminating by serving their senior year internship under the supervision of an experienced youth leader, minister or pastor.”

**Translation Society**

Continued from cover

- Fourth, several important new books on Kuyper's thoughts are, or will soon be, available. In the meantime, the first fruits of the ongoing translation work of Kuyper’s Common Grace—Wisdom & Wonder, has been published by Christian's Library Press.

According to Dr. Flikkema, the group’s consensus is that the time has come to take the next step in establishing the Society by assembling an informal network of Kuyper scholars and translators. As a result, Dr. Stephen Grabill, director of programs and research scholar in theology at Acton Institute, and Dr. Flikkema are now engaged in the work of formulating a specific framework under which the Society will operate. “Much work is ahead for all of us,” said Dr. Flikkema. “However, it will be worth it as long as we always keep in mind the words of Dr. DeVries, who said: ‘Translations are not an end in themselves, but a means to be better servants in God’s world.’”
According to Brianna DeWitt, a Kuyper College senior, her childhood years were great, with devotions and bedtime prayers a daily and important part of her life. “I was blessed to be raised in a Christian home and have a family that assured me I was loved and appreciated,” she said. “I grew up going to church and attending Christian schools. I gave my life to Christ at an early age and made profession of faith when I was in middle school.”

In high school Brianna was very involved in a lot of different activities. However, drama took up the majority of her time. “I loved being on stage and making friends with fellow cast members. Rehearsals were tiring and took up a lot of time, but I enjoyed it and managed to keep my grades high,” she said.

During her time in high school the church Brianna attended had a significant turnover of youth leaders. This led her to consider majoring in youth ministry and in turn to think that Kuyper, with its known youth ministry program of studies, could be a good fit. “During my senior year of high school I visited Kuyper, and was very impressed by the friendly and welcoming students. Many came up to me after chapel and during lunch and introduced themselves. I also spent a night at the College, and the girls that lived in the dorm went out of their way to make me feel welcome. I could sense there was something unique about this community,” she said. “Although I did visit a couple of other colleges, there was never a serious doubt in my mind that Kuyper was where I was meant to be.”

Brianna entered Kuyper intending on majoring in youth ministry, but through a series of events, ended up changing her major to communication studies. “Being a people person, I love learning about the importance of communication and how to do so effectively in a variety of settings,” she said. “Communication is so crucial, and I feel like my major has prepared me well not just for a specific job, but for life.”

Over her years at Kuyper Brianna has had the opportunity to work in a variety of campus jobs. “Working for different departments has allowed me to see a different side of Kuyper that most students are probably not aware of. It has helped me realize the high degree of commitment by the staff and faculty to both students and the institution. I’ve also been able to put to good use the skills I have learned in my communication courses. In high school I was often frustrated by learning things I felt didn’t apply to me, but here, what I am learning in my communications classes I can apply in my life almost every single day,” she said.

Looking past graduation Brianna is the first to admit that she currently does not know what her next steps will be. “While being at Kuyper I have fully realized my love of writing,” she said. “And I hope to be able to use this passion in the future. Although I do not know exactly what that might look like, I am thankful that my writing courses here have helped me hone my skills. I still have a lot to learn about God, writing, and life in general, but my time at Kuyper has helped prepare me for whatever the future holds.”