“As we started up the mountain trail, I felt sorry for myself and considered how I, a 57-year-old American from a little town in Michigan, wound up at that moment carrying a bag of groceries up a mountain in India for an old Garhwali woman.”

Just as quickly as these thoughts of self-pity filled Dave Smith’s mind, so did a Bible verse—Matthew 25:40: “…whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

There, in the beautiful forested valley of Deolsari, Smith, a 1981 Kuyper College graduate, experienced a powerful moment of worship and revelation. “It was as if Jesus spoke to me and said, ‘This is not just Harikor the widow walking with you. I am here.’” In that instant, Smith said he realized the privilege that he, of all people, had been granted—the opportunity to glorify God, in the greatest way possible, by serving “the least of these.” “Within that barefoot and slowly walking 80-year-old woman at my side, bent over and smelling of urine, I saw Jesus. The same Jesus I had first come to know at the age of 16.”

Smith grew up in Whitehall, Michigan, in a loving family of eight that brought together two different cultures and religions. His mother’s side of the family was Polish Catholic while his father’s side was Protestant with no real ethnic identity. As a family, the Smiths always prayed before meals and bedtime. They attended an Episcopal church every Sunday although, according to Smith, “They were just things…"
Have you ever seen or read accounts of those experiments psychology professors will do with their class where they test the public’s reaction to something? Perhaps it may be someone posing as an elderly person struggling to cross the street and seeing how many offers of help people provide. A prof might dress up as a homeless person and have students interview passers-by who did or did not drop money into his hat. Or, for those of us old enough to have enjoyed this era in TV, how about all those “Candid Camera” set-ups to catch people’s funny reactions or conforming behavior? Always the question remains, “What would you do? How would you react?”

This edition of the Kuyper News draws our attention to such behaviors. For us this is much more a Good Samaritan exercise and the question remaining is more one of “Who is my neighbor?” All-the-same, the nature of the reactions and responses you read about are going to be more inspirational than humorous, more real-life than experimental. This is something quite unique about Kuyper and those who are part of the student body or part of the staff team: we like to engage in real-time with real people, with real needs. Our “experiments” are really opportunities that involve direct engagement in the world, confronting actual challenges and developing true opportunities. We know them here as “service opportunities and internships.” And this community engages them wholeheartedly!

Now, you are reading this issue of the Kuyper News not to be amused but to be informed and, most of all, to be encouraged and inspired. As you go through the various articles, you may wish to ask yourself, “What would I do in a similar situation?” If your heart and mind and spirit resonate with how the person in the article responds, you may feel encouraged. You may see the individual or situation that person is interacting with as “your neighbor” too and so appreciate the nature of response.

Some of you (and I have to admit that I am not infrequently in this category myself) would read an article and just be grateful there is someone out there doing what you haven’t felt called to do at this point. “I could never do that!” is not an unusual response I hear from folks when they learn of what many of our staff and students do. But, don’t feel bad about your reaction; rather, be encouraged—you simply have a different “neighbor” in this storyline: she or he is the student you are reading about and supporting through your prayers and gifts.

Whether you see yourself more in this previous paragraph or in the one above it, you are embracing the fullness of the neighbor concept: you are coming alongside the one being helped and the one who is helping through your participation in Kuyper College. In fact, you are furthering the reach of Christ’s church by enabling others to reach into corners of the world and corners of the soul where you can’t. Here at Kuyper College this is no experiment—this is real life. Thank you for being with us in this ministry!

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President
IN MY WORDS

My grandmother’s gift
Joel Huizinga
Custodian

When I turned 12, I received a special birthday gift from my grandmother. The present was my own personal Bible. I was rather proud of this gift. The Bible had a soft, leather-bound cover, an attached bookmark, and a zipper along its side to keep any loose papers I would put in there from falling out.

The Bible was a red letter study Revised Standard Version. (The NIV didn’t exist yet.) To top it all off my grandmother had my full name printed in gold lettering on the cover. On the inside page my grandmother wrote the words of Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.”

My grandmother emphasized this Bible passage in order for me to use “trust in the Lord” as a motto throughout my life. As I reflect on my twenty years of service at Kuyper College, I have seen this motto practiced many times among the faculty, staff and students.

Just as my grandmother showed me in my youth, I have also seen the faculty and staff at Kuyper College not only trust daily in the Lord, but also acknowledge Him in many ways. They do so in part to pass along their great wisdom and life experiences to the students so that they learn the importance of Proverbs 3:5-6 as a lifelong endeavor. It is fun to watch students as they first arrive at the College and then slowly see, over a period of time, how they become transformed into future leaders of the church.

When I reflect on my grandmother’s life, I realize that the greatest gift that she ever gave me was not that Bible when I was a boy. It was that she shared her faith in Jesus Christ with me and always reminded me to trust in the Lord. Today, I can acknowledge that, by having Christ in my life, Jesus has and will always make straight my paths. I hope that, through my example, many at Kuyper College will see my trust in God and that they too will trust in and acknowledge Him.

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

A new cross for Vos Chapel’s steeple

February 27 marked a significant time in the history of Kuyper College: the installation of a new cross on the Vos Chapel steeple.

The importance of this moment is linked to the original building of the chapel 22 years ago, a gift to the College by the Dan Vos Construction Company. The gift celebrated the 100th church built by the West Michigan based company. Today, the Vos Chapel stands as the focal point of the Kuyper Campus.

The new gold-clad cross, also presented as a gift to the College, fulfills two purposes—first to honor the memory of Dan Vos, who passed away in 2012, and second, to celebrate Kuyper’s upcoming 75th Anniversary—1939-2014.

When the chapel was originally built, it was the intention of Dan Vos that the cross would be the highest point on the Kuyper campus. It still is, serving as a daily reminder of the centrality of God and the Kuyper family’s dedication to Him through obedience and service.

A simple, but meaningful dedication service, attended by students, faculty, staff, board members, and representatives from the Dan Vos Construction Company, preceded the installation. After an introduction from Kuyper College President, Nick Kroeze, and words of commemoration by Gary Vos, CEO of Dan Vos Construction Company, and son of Dan Vos, all were invited to gather around the cross during a prayer led by Reverend Henry Admiraal, chair of the Kuyper Board of Trustees. The ceremony came to a close after a dedication liturgy led by Alexa Turner, President of Kuyper College Student Government.
we did. We never doubted that there was a God. He just wasn’t very visible.”

During his teen years, Smith tried very hard to get something out of his religious roots. He participated in Sunday service activities and even attended the youth group and Episcopal teen retreats, but still, he found these things to be nominal experiences spiritually. Yet according to him, everything changed quite suddenly when, at the age of 16, God “interrupted” his life. It happened at Explo 72, a weeklong student conference on Evangelism in Dallas, Texas. Smith paid for it, including his flight, from money he had saved while working a summer job. He remembers sitting in the Cotton Bowl on the first night with nearly 100,000 other people as Bill Bright spoke about “the incomparable Christ”—suggesting that there was someone in the audience that did not truly know Christ yet. According to Smith, he could not help but feel like Bright was speaking directly to him. “During that moment, God moved,” he said. “At 2:00 a.m., in the early hours of a new day, I met my Lord and Savior—Jesus Christ.” He recalls feeling helpless. “It was as if conversion had been put upon me rather than of my own choosing,” he said. But he did not resist. He accepted and embraced God’s presence in his life.

When Smith returned home from the conference, he read the Bible every day. He was teased and ridiculed by friends who had heard he “got saved.” For the next year or so, until one good friend also chose to give his life to Christ, Smith had only Jesus to lean on. By the second semester of his senior year, Smith, his friend and a teacher at their high school started getting together on Thursday nights to pray and read the Bible. Within two months, over one hundred other students had joined their Bible study. Back then, they had no idea that these Thursday night Bible studies would continue for over twenty years.

After graduating, Smith says that, although he had decided to serve God, he was convinced that it not be as a missionary. However, while working at a print shop printing Bibles for missionaries, he quickly learned that working with the printing press was not his gift. He decided he wanted to become a missionary after all.

After checking out a school that had “a lot of rules,” Smith and two friends heard about Kuyper and made an appointment to speak with Dr. George Kroeze. He remembers asking him if Kuyper had any rules, and after a moment of hesitation, he heard Dr. Kroeze say, “Yes, we have rules—you can’t drink or smoke on campus.” “That sealed it for us,” said Smith. “While none of us wanted to smoke or drink, on or off campus, we appreciated a school that let the Holy Spirit direct its students.”

During his years at Kuyper, Smith says he always felt “biblically challenged compared to my peers who had mostly grown up in Calvinistic homes. Yet, having given my life to Jesus alone at a stranger’s home in Texas instead of making my confession of faith before a board of elders gave me a sense of relationship with Jesus that many around me seemed to miss.

Nevertheless,” he continued, “through my four years at Kuyper, I came to believe that God brought students there to receive what each needed from Him. I was privileged to study under Katie Gunnink, Lubbertous Oostendorp, Dudley Woodbury, Roger Greenway, and a great professor of Greek—Paul Bremer.” Smith says he received much from Kuyper—including the gift of his wife, Daphne, whom he met at the College.

Daphne grew up in a boarding school for Anglo-Indian orphans in Kalimpong, India. She worked for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Nepal taking care of children. She gave her life to Jesus as a result of persistent dinnertime prayers of the children she cared for. When Wycliffe was asked to leave Nepal, she came to the United States and attended Kuyper.

After their marriage, the Smiths wanted to serve God in missions. Providentially, those doors closed. “God had other plans for us, so we put down roots in Grand Rapids,” he said. He worked at Pine Rest while Daphne found employment at Clark Home and later Blodgett Hospital.

Though the Smiths and their three adopted children were happy with life in Grand Rapids, they realized time was flying by. “Six years had passed, and we were nearly 30 years old,” he said. “We began to wonder if we would ever do anything
important for God.” At the time, they had no idea how He would use them over the next two decades.

In 1990, God led the Smiths to Kathmandu, Nepal. They joined Pioneers who were forming a team to go to the Sherpas, the people of Mt. Everest, or “Chumalungma” as they call themselves. “Unlike the Tibetan Buddhist, with hearts hardened by tradition and idol worship, the Sherpas in Kathmandu were looking for change,” said Smith. “These were the Sherpas that God had prepared to start his Nepalese church.”

In order to minister to the Sherpas, Smith had to learn the Nepali language and design a plan for planting the church there. He says he was surprised by how smooth everything went. “God had prepared these Sherpas ahead of time. They were already interested in the gospel and some already went to church! It took less than two years to build a fellowship there,” he said. “I remember thinking that it was too easy—I thought why, if missions are like this, don’t more people flock to the field?” However, it is not always so easy, as the Smiths were quickly going to find out.

The Sherpa Fellowship continued to grow, and the Smiths realized that it was in the hands of godly leadership. Now a family of seven after the adoption of two Nepali children, they moved to the North India Himalayan valley of Deolsari and up to the village of the Garhwal people.

Work with the Garhwalis was not like with the Sherpas. The Garhwalis had never heard of Christ and did not welcome change. While the Sherpas’ fellowship was formed in only two years, it was ten before even one Garhwali came to faith. The Garhwali Fellowship took twelve long years to start. Today, nearly all the believers are under 20 years of age—which means most of them were less than 8 years old when the Smiths started visiting their villages.

Rakesh is one of the Garhwalis the Smiths met while ministering in North India. He was 10 years old when the Smiths gave him a Bible. Six years later Rakesh came looking for the Smiths with two friends asking what he had to do to become a Christian. “That was three years ago,” said Smith. “Today, almost all of the new Christians in Deolsari are a result of Rakesh’s evangelism.”

Another young Garhwali they have influenced during their time in India is Pauja. Having been baptized last summer, she told the Smiths she had visited her cousins in a nearby town to share the Truth with them. “I decided to use the story of how Abraham set out to sacrifice his son Isaac, but at just the right moment, God provided a sacrifice in his place,” Pauja said. “I told them that in the same way, at just the right time in history, God provided a sacrifice for us, too, and His name is Jesus. They asked me, ‘How do you know this? Tell us more!’” Pauja turned 11 this year.

For more than 20 years, Dave and Daphne Smith have worked on two church plants—Nepal and India. Today, they continue thinking of ways to share the gospel and give to others. Their latest project involves plans to manufacture a simple washing machine for the poor—from a system developed by Smith. “Most people in the world tediously kneel on the ground to wash clothes, using too much water, soap, effort and time,” said Smith. According to him, this washing machine will create an ideal context within which missionaries and other Christians can bless the poor worldwide by lifting them off of the floor and off of their knees. “The idea also creates opportunity to meet the poor in friendship and thereby spread the love of Christ to them. This washing machine might be the spark that may cause many poor people to start projects that will improve their lives as well as the lives of others,” he said.

And so today, Dave and Daphne Smith look back on their lives with gratitude for what God has allowed them to do. And they look to the future knowing that there is still more work to be done. “God chose us for His work,” said Smith. “We could not have done it on our own. There is only one King of Kings. We are all his servants—privileged to serve others through and for Him.”

“It was as if Jesus spoke to me and said, ‘This is not just Harikor the widow walking with you. I am here.’”

—Dave Smith, Class of 1981
God’s love in Romania

“Kuyper has made me more aware of how I treat others and how the world around us really needs the love of Christ. It has also made me a lot stronger in my faith and in my desire to serve others.” Shelby Wellman’s (class of 2014) awareness was put to the test while completing her internship in Romania. Together with recent Kuyper graduate Amy Walvoort, she spent three months in Romania this spring. “During my internship I learned that walking everywhere rather than riding in a car is not a bad thing,” added Shelby. “I also learned that being in a new culture can be tough at times.” Amy agreed and said that after her time in Sighisoara, she is more thankful for what she has. She explained: “In Romania, unlike America, the little they have is treasured and valued. I used to think I did not take things for granted, but when my comfortable life was put on hold for three months, I realized that I did.”

Amy and Shelby chose the Romanian Studies Program (RSP) because it enabled them not only to learn about a different culture, but also to live and work with people of that culture. Living with a host family, they worked under the supervision of Veritas, a social work agency which serves people of all ages, but especially the Roma (Romanian Gypsies), who are discriminated against on many levels—political, medical and social. The Roma are Romania’s poorest people.

Both Amy and Shelby were stretched in many ways during their time in Sighisoara. As a youth ministry major, Shelby worked with youth. “On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., I helped lead the Adolescent Club in their lessons, which included an icebreaker, a discussion and an activity,” said Shelby. “I developed lesson plans, interacted with the students, and helped with other tasks. Training to the test, co-teaching twice a week in a beginner English class open to anyone in the community. In addition, she taught English to members of the Adolescent Club and the Special Needs Club. The latter, according to her, being one of the most rewarding parts of her time in Romania, so much so that she served the Special Needs Club beyond the classroom. “Every week I spent a whole day with them—three hours of gym, almost two hours of pottery class, followed by a three-hour group meeting,” she said. “The gym class allowed the Club members to be more active, while the pottery class was a good way for them to work with their hands in a therapeutic way. After that, we would all meet and share a meal, then have a lesson and play a game. Every week, I looked forward to serving them!”

Amy and Shelby also set out to establish relationships with the young people of Sighisoara who were not attending the Adolescent Club. “We went to one of the high schools and made a presentation, which included telling a little bit about ourselves,” said Amy. “This was one of the ways we were able to make connections with the high school students, so they could get to know us better and we could invite them to events such as movies on Friday nights at Veritas. Because they don’t have a theater in Sighisoara, this is a fun activity for them. We always showed a film with a certain message, after watching the movie we would spend time having an in-depth discussion regarding the film and its theme.”

Both students speak of moments that had a special impact on them while in Romania. Shelby’s happened during a visit to a teenager’s house. “When Larissa found out I was coming over, she was very excited, but very nervous at the same time,” she said. “On the 20-minute walk to her house, she said she was embarrassed because of her living conditions. I told her that it was not her house I wanted to visit, but her. This seemed to calm her down a little bit. When we got there I could see why she didn’t want me to see it—one room where five people lived, two couches which served as beds, no heat, no water, no food, no electricity—nothing! As I sat on one bed and Larissa on the other, she told me how, if there was one thing that she could have in the world, it would be ‘one additional room so that I could clean it like all the other girls in the world.’ In other words, she just wanted a bedroom. On our return to Veritas, I thought of her words over and over again, not sure how I should feel or how I should act. Back at the Center, Larissa looked at me, smiled, ran up to me, and gave me a giant hug while saying ‘multemesc,’ which means ‘thank you.’ At that moment I realized what the visit meant to her and to me! I also realized that God has created some of the most beautiful people—like Larissa, that I need to take risks, and that I am much stronger than I thought I was.”
### News:
- Dr. Douglas Felch, professor of theological studies at Kuyper, and his wife, Dr. Susan Felch, professor of English at Calvin College, co-authored an article, “Unwilling Infertility,” in the March issue of New Horizons, the magazine of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
- Teresa Renkema, professor of intercultural communication, served as a consultant to Lakeside Community Church helping them to integrate non-English speakers into their church community.
- Greg Scott, professor of social work, made a presentation, “Social Work Ethics and Boundaries,” at the Beltline Collaborative, a coalition of the social work departments of Kuyper College, Calvin College and Cornerstone University.
- Dr. Judi Ravenhorst-Meerman, professor of social work, was a presenter at the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Conference on the subjects of “International Field Placement at Kuyper College” and “Student Response to Community Based Research.”
- Dr. Kai Ton Chau, assistant professor of music studies, Dr. Carol Hochhalter, associate professor of worship studies, Lisa Hoogeboom, assistant professor of intercultural and biblical studies, and Teresa Renkema, professor of intercultural communications, led a panel discussion at the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education on Kuyper College plans to implement cultural immersion courses as part of the required curriculum.
- Dr. Kai Ton Chau, assistant professor of music studies, is the featured keynote speaker at the August Christian Communications Worship Conference in Toronto, Canada.
- Join other Kuyper alumni in the Whole Story Hymnfest in celebration of the newest hymnal, “Lift Up Your Hearts,” published by Faith Alive Christian Resources. For details contact Hannah Schierbeek at hschierbeek@kuyper.edu or call 616-988-3648.

### Events:
- **Journey**
  - Friday, July 26, 2013, 9:00 a.m.
  - Kuyper College.
  - Saturday, August 17, 2013, 9:00 a.m.
  - Kuyper College.
- **MERGE Orientation**
  - Tuesday, August 27, 2013,
  - Kuyper College.
- **Fun Fest**
  - Friday, September 6, 2013,
  - Kuyper College.
  - Interested in being on the alumni team? Contact Hannah Schierbeek at 616-988-3648.
- **Scholarship Dinner**
  - Thursday, October 24, 2013,
  - Kuyper College.

### Class Notes

#### Marriages:
- Amanda Cooper (2011) and Craig Wheless were married on March 15, 2013.
- Laurel Ritzema (2010) and David Dykema were married on March 16, 2013.
- Jon Mulder (2011) and Rachel Christner (2013) were married on May 3, 2013.
- Jay Tucker (2011) and Rebecca Clauson (2013) were married on May 17, 2013.
- John Blom (2013) and Alyssa Vander Heide (2013) were married on May 24, 2013.
- Austin Huckfeldt (2013) and Caitlin Bechtel (2013) were married on May 25, 2013.
- Bridgette Romatz (2013) and Jonathan Mundinger were married on June 8, 2013.
- Rebecca Clauson (2011) and Jay Tucker were married on May 3, 2013.
- Jon Mulder (2010) and David Dykema were married on March 16, 2013.
- Paul and Rebecca (Veldman) Weaver (2009), together with big brother Gage, welcomed Raegan Claire into their family on March 5, 2013.
- Eric (2008) and Rosalie (Williams) Buist (2008), along with big sisters Umbriel and Zaniah, were blessed with the arrival of Hydra Aviva on March 13, 2013.
- Justin Groeneveld (2008) and his wife, Caitlyn, were blessed with the birth of Eliza Jean on March 19, 2013.
- Eric (2010) and Kristeen (Lanning) Vander Wall (2010), along with big brother Jackson, welcomed home Nora Lyn on March 26, 2013.
- Kyle (2004) and Kathryn (Lynema) Sanford (2007), along with big brother Cohen, were blessed with a baby girl, Ciana McKayla, on April 28, 2013.
- Michael Johnson (2011) and his wife, Amy, were blessed with the birth of a baby girl, Riley Isabella, on May 4, 2013.

#### Professional Developments:
- Sarah (Meekhof) Albers (2006) was ordained as a minister of the word at Plymouth Heights CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on March 17, 2013, where she now serves as the minister of congregational care.
STUDENTS TO WATCH

Kelly Oosterbroek
Hudsonville, Michigan
Class of 2014
Major: Business Leadership

My neighborhood in Hudsonville, Michigan, was the greatest place to grow up. My younger sister Ashley and I loved playing outside with kids our age. And, together with my mom and dad, we did a lot as a family. We always went camping and bike riding in the summer and snowmobiling in the winter. We were also very involved in our church.

I was 11 years old when I professed in front of my church that I wanted to live for Jesus the rest of my life. There were times after that when I doubted God and struggled, like during my senior year in high school. Even though I was a good student, worked after school, ran track, and volunteered at church and school, I still wanted to “fit in” and “enjoy.” However, I soon came to realize that the things I thought were enjoyable were not. Looking back, my faith has shaped me into the person I am and the person that God wants me to be. Now that I am older, I am looking to be baptized again. I didn’t fully understand what I did as an 11-year-old, so I want to profess once again to Christ that I am His and that I want to spread His Word.

At Kuyper I’ve also been given the opportunity to put my classroom knowledge to work—up to 25 hours a week as the facilities assistant and wedding coordinator. I love my job! I get to coordinate all the weddings that occur at our Chapel and any rentals that occur on campus, as well as supervise student workers and deal with many other administrative tasks. I am always busy, but I enjoy serving others with my gifts. I have learned to have extreme time management skills and discipline when it comes to social time and study time.

Kuyper helped show me who I really am. I am a crazy, dedicated, God-loving redhead with a bright future ahead of me. The business program has strengthened me in my faith because I am not only learning business skills and ideas, but also about ethical living, teamwork and community. And I am not afraid of failure because I know that we learn from each mistake.

I don’t know where I would be without Kuyper College and the nudges and encouragement of people here. I can say without a doubt that God is doing great things in Kuyper and at Kuyper.

My future? It is exciting. Is it normal to not be nervous, but excited and wishing it was coming sooner? After graduation (in a year!), I am hoping to get a full-time job in any business. I am not picky at all right now. I just want a place where I can use what I learned in class and at my internship to seek God’s will in my life. I am extremely confident and excited about my future because I know that no matter what, God will bless me with whatever happens. I can completely trust Him because He does good to those who seek Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.