



SECOND THOUGHTS

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FROM THE DESK OF

REV. ANDY RIENSTRA



When You Feel You Don't Count

Recently I had a conversation with a young pastor who felt very discouraged about his life and witness. He was dejected because he saw no measurable growth either in the number of worshippers or in the ministry life of his congregation. As he put it, he was "just about ready to pack it in". He even mentioned another pastor who recently left her pulpit because of similar feelings.

Afterward reflecting on our conversation I remembered a story in Scott Peck's book: "Further Along the Road Less Traveled." A minister shaking hands following worship was told by a person who only occasionally attended that his sermon meant much to him that day. He praised the minister because something he said revolutionized his life. He now had a chance to begin a whole new life. He was so very grateful.

The exceedingly pleased minister wanted to know just what it was that he said, so he asked the man. His response was almost comical. "Well, you remember, you began your sermon by saying that you wanted to talk to us about two things this morning, and then in the middle you said, 'That completes this first part of what I wanted to tell you and now it's time I moved on to the second part of my sermon.' At that moment I realized I had come to the end of the first part of my life, and it was high time that I got on to the second part. Thank you, Reverend, thank you, very much."

That must have taken the wind out of the preacher's sails. Like most preachers he undoubtedly worked diligently to fine tune every point he wanted to make, and here this fellow came along and felt his life was changed because of some clumsy transitional speech construction. The preacher must have been taken aback in realizing again that there was "Some One Else" working in that preaching event, even as he had always been taught, but seldom acknowledged. There are times we think we have done something outstanding and then we fortunately discover to our amazement that it wasn't what we did, but what God did through us and we were not aware. Then there are those like that young preacher who feel they are failing miserably and need to be reminded that God is always at work in and through us. God frequently uses all of us in spite of our selves.

Henry Nouwen wrote these words in his book "Living Reminder" I had them posted for years in a place in my study where I could see them every day.

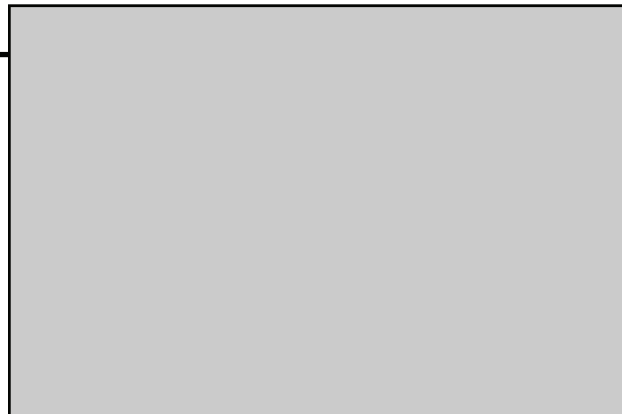
"In recent years I have become more and more aware of my own tendency to think that the value of my presence depends on what I say or do. And yet it is becoming clearer to me every day that this preoccupation with performing in fact prevents me from letting God speak through me in any way he wants, and so keeps me from making connections prior to any special word or deed."

Peck in his book, also relates how he came to be a Christian through Zen. The powerful teaching of paradox in Zen led him to see how Christianity was the religion he needed for his life. God had used people and a philosophy that many Christians would be afraid to investigate to bring him to knowledge of God in Christ.

The bottom line is that none of us should ever dismiss ourselves, or our experiences as insignificant. There is a design and purpose for our lives that may seem an empty mystery at some points along life's journey, but we need to keep our eyes and minds open to catch that vision of God always at work in us. Our lives and actions are not worthless or even insignificant. In and through us God is working.

This is also true of the church. There are many ways the church has failed and we can be very hard on it at times. Regardless the Scripture informs us that we who are bound together because of faith in Christ are his presence. We are the "Body of Christ." What we do as that body is not in vain. God in time and ways we may not apprehend brings the ultimate blessing.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS



Coffee Hosts

7 —Church Coffee Hour—Volunteer *Judy Chibbaro*
 14— Linda Snyder
 21—Kathy Fisher
 28— Gail Orban



Ushers

7—Helmut Horr & Tom O'Shea
 14—Judy Chibbaro & Kathleen Williamson
 21—The Howarth Family
 28—Ellie & Walt Holz

Nursery Volunteers

7—Sam Hays
 14—William Beals
 21—Ashley Chibbaro
 28—Sam Hays

Year to Date: September 2007

Income received as of September 30, 2007:
 This Year \$169,773 Last Year: \$154,277

Expenses Incurred as of September 30, 2007:
 This Year \$149,180 Last Year: \$145,801

Pledges received as of September 30, 2007:
 This Year \$ 40,443 Last Year: \$ 39,654



Gail Orban

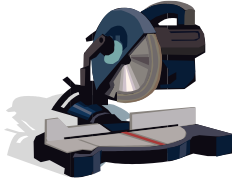
Youth Group Stuff

Trips & Bits

On **Saturday, October 27th**, the youth group will be going to Six Flags, Great Adventure for Fright Fest. If interested, please contact Taylor Hays . Anybody High School or College age is welcome to join us.



Kitchen



Task Force

The kitchen floor is completed and came out wonderful!! Thanks to the Chibbaro's for their donation of tiles and their contractor recommendation. The paint and the cabinets are the next steps. We are hoping to be finished before Christmas. Maybe a holiday unveiling?

A DRAWING OF GOD

A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's artwork. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, I'm drawing God. The teacher paused and said, "but no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

WARNING SIGN

I recently attended a small business marketing seminar at which the speaker used actual examples to reinforce her teaching points. She told a delightful story about a coffee shop that distinguished itself from the competition by prominently displaying a warning sign that read:"unattended children will be given a double espresso and a free puppy!"

Jokes Submitted by *Ellie Holz*

Guest Preachers at SRC

Rev. Rienstra is on vacation, next Sunday, October 14 & October 21. Our guest ministers will be:

Sunday, **October 14th**:
New Brunswick Seminary Student:
Linda Pepe
and

Sunday, **October 21st**:
Classis of New Brunswick Treasurer:
Rev. Fred Mold

Fall Clean up Day Saturday, November 3rd

Our Fall Clean up day will be on November 3rd starting at 9:00 am and lasting until around 12:00 noon.

We completed many overdue tasks at the Spring clean up back in April and are hoping to clean out even more garbage and needed makeovers.

If you are available to help out, we will provide the supplies and a little continental breakfast, just bring us the manpower. A sign up sheet will be on the bulletin board shortly.

If you have any questions, you may contact Kathy Fisher, Ellie Holz or Helen Pallay

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Communion 11:00 Coffee Hr 11:15 Elders Mtg 11:20 SS	8 7:00 pm Elders Meeting	9 12:00 pm Women's Lunch 7:00 pm Consistory Meeting	10 7:00 pm Finance Cmte Meeting	11	12	13
14 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hr 11:20 SS	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hr 11:20 SS	22	23	24	25	26	27 Youth Group Six Flags Trip
28 9:00 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hr 11:20 SS	29	30	31			

Reformed Church Service ~ Missions

Second Church has provided materials for 30 schools kits. These kits were assembled by our Women's group to be sent to areas in the US and around the world where disaster has depleted school and other materials. War and natural disasters have created a demand for these materials where it has reached a critical level. *Martha Palmer*

Bible Study:
 9:00 am
 Every 1st & 3rd
 Sunday

Choir Practice:
 9:00 am
 Every 2nd & 3rd
 Sunday

Search Team update

Your Search Committee is continuing its work. We are narrowing down our list of candidates, speaking with references, scheduling follow-up interviews and planning visits to hear them preach. This is a very exciting but nerve wracking time! Please pray for us that we make the right recommendation! *Tom O'Shea*

Let's Play....Do you know this Member?

How much do you REALLY know about your fellow church members?
 Each month we will be providing 3 facts. Can you guess who this month's member is?
Answer on page 4

- **Was a psychology major in college**
- **Can trace her Dutch roots back to the first Dutch settlers in**
 - **New York in the 1600's**
- **Loves to garden and collect antique china and glassware**

