



Care & Share

REAL CHURCH & REAL CHRISTIANITY

*Based on Carey Nieuwhof's article
"Succeeding As A Real Church"*

We live in an information age. Anything we want to know about is only a click away and we can do that anonymously. No one ever has to know who we are or what we are searching for. Combine that with the cynicism of our era and our distrust of authority and our disbelief of what others have to say and you have an entire generation of people who barely feel how disconnected they are becoming or have become. It should come as no surprise then that people are hungering for a more 'personal' connection with something beyond us, something that is more than just us and our puny pursuits in life. It should come as no surprise that more information, no matter how true, just doesn't cut it anymore. Information is everywhere. Transformation is scarce.

Likewise, too many people who have been to church know all about God. Not enough know God. Having lots of information about God is one thing but knowing Him and experiencing Him is another. When people come to check out a church these days, fewer are looking for information **about** God; they're looking for an experience **with** God. There is a growing hunger in today's world for a transcendent touch, something beyond our superficial experiences, something that can be transforming.

People today are hungry for true community, deeper experiences, and authentic transcendence. Which is why churches that are growing are focusing more and more on creating experiences that engage more than just the head on a Sunday. Their Sunday experience is more geared to engage the heart and relationship. In short, people don't just want to know what's true, they want to know what's real. And what's real is deeper than just an idea—it's something that can be experienced. Churches that live in the past end up dying to the future, and churches who love their method more than the mission will die.

Real Church and Real Christianity has always been about transformation and the churches today that are providing that are sensitive to what is happening in our current culture and doing something to help address it.

SOME IMPLICATIONS

Transformation vs Information

- More and more people are looking for connection.
 - They are more likely to begin moving from mega churches with programs and production to communities that provide a sense of belonging.
 - They are moving away from engaging the head with correct doctrine to the engagement of the heart.
 - *And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come*

with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2:1,2)

- Doctrine and information does nothing until one meets Jesus anyway.
 - *The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:14)*
- That also means we should be safe harbors for those tossed about on life's storms and who find themselves swamped with doubt.
- If everything your church does in the future feels downloadable, probably all you'll get is a lot of downloads, not a lot of gathered people. If what your church does touches the soul, people will continue to gather.
 - People are coming to church expecting to meet God. Don't let them settle for meeting you or something they could half-listen to while working out. If people feel like they missed nothing when they missed church, they'll keep missing church.

Sunday Mornings

- Churches focused on being more "real" today look to do more than offer 'three songs and a message'. They will seek to be intentional about inspiring more passionate expressions of worship, and providing additional space during the service for prayer and personal response.
 - Churches concerned with sharing 'real Christianity', will put more thought into their worship and fellowship so that others will sense a real desire for connection with God and each other and be more than, "hey we're excited you're here" (a nice welcome and upbeat music) and "here's something to think about" (the message).
 - The best future churches will have content that leans toward being—practical, helpful and digestible. And will leave worshippers with a sense that you had to be there to experience what happened.

The Foyer Has Moved

- Nowadays people who are interested in Christianity or your church have already checked you out. They will know whether you have a completely amazing online experience, a killer website and an on-point social media presence, or whether you have a website from 2008. If you have sermons online they have heard some of them. And if they have spiritual questions, they've googled their way to spiritual answer (good or bad answers) long before they set foot in your door. All of which means...the foyer moved.
 - That means when a seeker shows up at your church now, they're likely to want a little more than they did a decade or two ago when their first visit was truly their first exposure to your church or to Christianity. They're ready to go a little further somewhat faster because they've already taken their first step.
 - Will you still end up with some people at the back with the arms crossed wanting to hide out in the dark? Of course. But you likely have more who want to sample something real, who want to experience something different, who are ready to engage faster. That doesn't mean you should bring them into a complete insider experience that's impossible to understand or access. But it does mean they're likely hungrier for more than they were a decade ago.

Passion Always Beats Polish.

- If you've been around church world for the last few decades, it's easy to think that you need polish to pull off effective ministry. To be sure, charismatic churches have some amazing production. But if you're sitting there thinking that you need a better soundboard, some new

L.E.D's and a much better band to reach people, think again.

- It's not that polish is bad (I'm all for great environments and seeing people fully use their gifts to create amazing experiences) but I think polish falls flat unless accompanied by a raw passion that exudes from leaders who love connecting people with God. One caveat: don't fake passion—people can smell fake from a mile away. And don't exaggerate it. But if yours has faded, rekindle it. Pray about. Evoke what's in there, and bring it to church. In an age where nothing seems real anymore, people are looking for an authentic Church.

Having said all this, it's also good to remember that living our lives in a real relationship with Jesus is always a challenge. Consider Mary and Joseph. They had all the info about their Messiah. They knew he'd come from the line of David – their family line. But their lives were irrevocably altered when they were told that they would have to welcome the Messiah into their own family, that they would have to develop a **REAL RELATIONSHIP** with the Messiah. Things became very real very fast for Joseph and Mary. In many ways the challenge before them is the challenge before us. The **REAL** work of being Jesus' family began after his birth. Our **REAL** work begins after being Born again.

One of your major concerns right now is of course your future as a church and your future pastor. But the truth is - that future is a moot point until the **REAL RELATIONSHIP** we have with Jesus takes first place in our own lives, the lives of our families and the lives of our friends. May your Christmas and your future this coming year be filled with the power of Christ and an overwhelming sense of his love and grace.

TRUST IN HIM AND HE WILL MAKE YOU TO BE THE REAL DEAL.

PK

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Going through a folder of poems and other paper clippings collected by my mom throughout the years, I came across a poem from Trudy Joldersma (mother-in-law of Grace Veldhuisen Joldersma) wherein she expresses her concern about her lack of enthusiasm during a church service. I am sure we all can relate to that. There are many Sundays that I go home realizing how little I can remember about the message even though some things did get my attention. Last Sunday, I thought if I had known some of this information before, I would have handled a visit from a Jehovah Witness much better. In a message a few weeks ago the pastor said something that stayed with me though I can't remember exactly how he worded it but I understood it to mean that we should make it our aim to make it known to each other that we are winners being rooted in the faith that Jesus is our hope of victory. The following is a passage from a Table Talk magazine, "In response to the certainty of victory for Christ the Lord, the angelic army sang, 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased' and this praise should fill every heart. Evil threatens on every side, but we know the good news that victory is sure. Christ our victorious warrior has been born."

On Sunday, the 17th, we were privileged to witness the baptism of Reid Daniel, son of Dan & Kayle Veldhuisen, always a reason for thankfulness.

The Stamppot supper on the 15th of November was well attended and from what I observed, much enjoyed. For the Dorcas ladies, it was a real successful fundraiser; thanks to your generosity we can send enough money to the World Renew - Free A Family Program, freeing at least four families.

Also, a huge thank you for giving so generously for the deserts we provided for our congregational meeting.

Last Sunday, the 24th, was pretty special too as we had John Esselink with us in the Fellowship hall to celebrate his 95th birthday. I believe some of us had not seen him for almost two months.

That and the 40th wedding anniversary of Nico & Jeannette Veldhuisen made for quite a joy filled time of fellowship.

From John & Linda Esselink:

A big thankyou to our church family for your prayers and support shown to us over the past few months. We thank you for the visits, flowers, cards, meals and baking. We are thankful John could celebrate his 95th birthday and are very grateful and thankful to have a caring church family.

We praise God with Feitze & Andrea Van Zwol in the birth of Haiko Norman John, born by C-section, early this past Tuesday morning, in Winnipeg. 7 pounds, 9 ounces. Congratulations, Feitze & Andrea and grandparents, Jan & Sietske!

Congratulations and best wishes to all celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in December.

The more senior ones celebrating this event are: Janice Wiersema who has a birthday on the 4th, Hilda Schryvershof on the 7th, Eltjo Wiersema on the 7th, Peter Van Heyst on the 12th and Darlene Byma on the 30th.

Henry & Thea Kaemingh will celebrate their 61st wedding anniversary on the 19th and Louis & Darlene Byma, their 45th on the 27th.

May God bless you all in a very special way.

OUR TIME IN GUATEMALA

On November 11, Tom Peterman, Carina Mack and myself, Elaine Mack, journeyed to Guatemala with a group of 11 other people from the district along with Mark Mast. Our flight took off from Winnipeg at 4 pm and we landed in Guatemala City approximately 10:30 am the next morning. Gratefully, we did not have to begin building houses that same day. We headed to the mission house to unpack and get settled and rested for the week ahead. Every morning begins with a time of worship in song and with a message given by one of the participants. It is a powerful time of worship and we all look forward to it. The day starts early with breakfast at 6:30 most days. On Wednesday, Mark split us into groups to build houses and work on the school, Innovating Dreamers School. Every day is a new adventure and every house has its challenges, whether it be lot size or location, the heat, the language barrier between us and the home owner, or the tools we use having dead batteries etc. Despite the challenges, the houses get built with a lot of laughter and fun, and the prospective home owner is delighted and ever so grateful. What we needed to keep in mind is that many of them had torn down their existing home in faith that we would come and build them a better house. That is a huge leap of faith on their part because as small and pieced together with scraps of tin and cardboard as their existing home was, it provided shelter and it was better than nothing. Thankfully, we were able to build all 12 houses that were planned.

There was also a group working on the school everyday getting the school ready for a third level. Lots of rebar work needed to be done and three of the girls on our team found out that cutting, twisting and shaping the ties that go around the rebar could be a lot of fun and very satisfying! While we certainly did a lot of work, we also participated in VBS with Mark, attended church services and ran a Carnival day with games for the families who attend the church at the school. We visited Antigua for a few hours so we could shop in the market and on the last day we visited the site of a town that had been wiped out by a volcano last year. Before starting house building one day, we went to the local dump which is always a sobering time when you see people rummaging through the dump looking for anything that can be recycled and resold. We did not go to see the people rummage, but to hold a brief church service before another very small team from the US handed out food. The ironic thing is, while you may think you are blessing the Guatemalan people, they are in fact blessing you by their smiles, by their openness, by their hugs, by their gratefulness that you would come all that way to help them and share their lives with them even if only for a brief moment in time.

There are so many images that come to mind as I reflect on my time in Guatemala, but one moment completely took me by surprise and I will end with that. I was standing on a street corner waiting for instructions of some kind, when a group of women walked by, probably heading out to shop for the day and a young girl in the group, perhaps 15, randomly reached out and hugged me. Nobody in her group told her to do that. So why? I hadn't done anything in particular for her. She didn't know me and I didn't know her. We were complete strangers. And yet by the color of my skin and the clothes I was wearing she knew I was here to do something for her people. And for that I can only conclude she was grateful. And that humbled me. I am no hero. Coming to Guatemala is always exhausting, physically and emotionally. I can get grumpy. And yet, God uses us. He uses me. Sinner that I am. Warts and all. To bless his people in Guatemala and through that to be blessed as well. That to me is God's grace!

Hi friends and family!

I hope all is well. Since coming to Dordt University, I have been given many opportunities to use the talents that God has given me. I also didn't realize the many ways that he is continually making me and working in my heart.

In June, I became a Registered Nurse, and now I am completing my Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Dordt. It has been incredible to see God's faithfulness through it all.

I have committed to be part of a group at Dordt called *AMOR (A Mission Outreach)*. This year, our group will be going to Tanzania in Africa during Christmas break, leaving December 27th and returning January 7th. For nearly two decades, Dordt has participated in international vision/mission projects throughout the world.

For this trip, we will be partnering with STEMM, a local US non-profit agency that ministers in areas of medical and educational needs from a decidedly Christian viewpoint. I will be providing medical care in government run hospitals, medical clinics in small villages, and pop-up tents in the bush of Africa.

Each member of the team needs to raise approximately \$3,800 to cover costs related to travel, food, and medical materials to be used at the work sites. We are writing our friends and family to ask for your assistance in a couple of ways. First, please pray for us as we prepare for this project, for the ministry that we will assist, and for safety in travel. Secondly, if you are able and willing to contribute financially to this ministry, I would be very grateful.



Cheques can be made out to Dordt University and sent to the address below. Recognition and thanks of your contribution will be recognized via Student Services upon receipt; and for donations in excess of \$250, the Business Office of Dordt University will send you a separate charitable contributions receipt.

Dordt University
Att'n: Student Services - AMOR
700 7th St. NE
Stoupe Center, IA 51250

(If writing a cheque, please include my name in the memo line so they know it's for me!)

You can also give online by visiting www.dordt.edu and then clicking on the "give a gift" tab at the top right of the homepage. Then, halfway down the giving page there is an option of what you want to give your gift toward. If you click "other" one more window will pop up. When it does, please type: "AMOR: Tianna Veldhuisen." Your gift will go directly toward my personal fund raising.

If you have any questions or would like to know more, please feel free to contact me by email or phone: (712) 441-6200; tiannaveldhuisen@gmail.com

Thank you so much for your prayers and your support. I will be sure to share pictures when I return!

Blessings,
Tianna

An email was received from Laura Hickey:

CHAD ASSIGNMENT!

Much has happened in the last two weeks! Winter weather came suddenly bringing lots of snow and cold. The temperature went down to -21 C the other day. The lake froze at the end of October, earlier than usual.

I packed up many boxes and furniture and moved out of the condo in Melfort to my sister and brother-in-law's place at Stoney Lake Bible camp. I am grateful to them for helping with my move and for storing my household goods once again. While here I have been preparing for my upcoming assignment in the Republic of Chad.

On Thursday, November 21st I will board West Jet to begin my journey from Saskatoon SK to N'Djamena where I expect to arrive at 10:40 p.m. Friday, November 22nd Chad time. Where I am going is 7 hours ahead of Saskatchewan time. I have my visa in hand and a good start on packing my bags. There are still a few days to finalize other bits and pieces. I expect to return to Canada in August 2020.

I will be in a support ministry, working in our AIM office while the lady who normally works there takes her Home Assignment. Chad has many unreached people groups and a number of personnel in a variety of ministries on the front line who need administrative help in order to carry out their work and live where they do. There is also a Missionary Kids school named Wellspring Academy. I will be doing the books for both Mission business as well as the School.

I worked in Chad back in 2002 through 2008 so although there have been many changes I do know some people and am somewhat familiar with what it is like there. Chad (Africa) is very hot country on the edge of the Sahara Desert. French and Chadian Arabic are the main languages. I studied some Arabic while there but can't really say much in that language although I recall some words.

I will sent another letter after arriving to let you know how things are going.

Thank for your prayers and support. I am happy for the opportunity to serve there for a few months.

Pray for good travels and that I will settle well into the work and life there. Pray for God's provision in every way and that I'll be a blessing to both missionaries and Chadians.

In Christ,

Laura Hickey

ADDRESS in Chad: Laura Hickey B.P. 127 N'Djamena Tchad

Addresses to note:

Email address: laura.hickey@aimint.org

Telephone in Canada: 1-306-921 3573 (Cell phone) (Until November 20th)

WhatsApp: 1-306-921 3573

Sister's mailing address: Box 3717 Melfort SK S0E 1A0

Mission Addresses:

Africa Inland Mission International Canada: 1641 Victoria Park Avenue Scarborough ON M1R 1P8; Tel: (416) 751-6077;

AIM US: P.O. Box 3611 Peachtree City, GA 30269-7611 USA

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:10)

Fall/Winter 2019

“We’re In This Together”

It has been another amazing year of ministry, and we are thankful to the Lord for all the ways He has undertaken to fulfill His purpose and to accomplish His work! Vacations Bible Schools, Bible Camp, Wilderness Canoe Trip, Bible Clubs, SCAP High School Trip to Kentucky and Chicago, Preaching, Evangelism, Bible Teaching, Discipleship Programs, Pikangikum First Nation, Guatemala Outreach “GO!” and daily opportunities to make Jesus known have been just a few of the ways this has happened. Thank you for joining us in being a “good steward” “serving” with a “special gift” and demonstrating the “manifold grace of God”. It is so awesome!! If you have access to Facebook, please visit our homepage and celebrate what the Lord has done in 2019! <https://www.facebook.com/masts> “Mark Tina Mast”

“Why We Do What We Do”

We are often blessed to receive encouraging notes from people that we have served: Thanks for your patience and honest, firm “guidance” when I needed it. You have always been one of my role models, and you’ve influenced me more than you’ll ever know – to be a godly leader and father who takes the high road of leadership. May I always be that faith-walker who shuts up and follows where God sends me. Keep fighting the good fight – it’s a wonderful life, George Bailey, even in Rainy River. In His Grip, DM

Guatemala Outreach - “GO!”

Mark is taking two groups to Guatemala from November 11-26. The teams will build homes, do extensive construction on a Christian School for impoverished children that “GO!” began to build in January, 2017 (presently 40 attend, Lord-willing another 60 in January!), minister to people scavenging at dumps, baptize people, conduct Bible Schools, preach at church services, plus so much more! One of the highlights for Mark will be taking 50 people from the El Tejar dump and providing pizza parties for them at the church/school we are constructing in San Miguel. Please also pray for the “GO!” teams that Mark is taking in February and April to continue construction on the school and conduct numerous ministry events as well. Please let us know if you would like to join us! If you are interested in following our daily schedule November 11-26, and praying for us, please let us know, and we will be delighted to send you our itinerary right away! #ForTheChildrensSake

“Pikangikum”

In October, Mark flew from Winnipeg to Pikangikum First Nation to teach Bible classes at the Eenchokay Birchstick School and serve through encouragement, preaching and teaching. It was both exhilarating and challenging to address the difficult situations that exist, but the Holy Spirit enabled Mark to effectively serve many precious souls in complicated circumstances. Pray that the Lord opens doors to return again in the new year. #PrayForPikangikum #JesusCares

“Merry Christmas!” and “Happy New Year!”

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)

May your Thanksgiving and Christmas season be filled with continuous reminders of God’s great love and grace for you!

“With heartfelt THANKSGIVING to GOD for YOU!”

Thank you so much for partnering with us in the advancement of the Gospel to the “otherwise unreached” in Canada, Guatemala and the USA! We are very grateful for your encouragement, prayers and financial support.

All for JESUS, Mark & Tina Mast

Canadian Correspondence:

Mark & Tina Mast
PO Box #100
Rainy River ON POW-1L0

USA Correspondence:

Mark & Tina Mast
PO Box #706
Baudette MN 56623-0706

Phone, FAX or email us at:

Phone: (807) 852-3202
Email address: masts@bell.net
Web site: www.onehoperrainyriver.ca



Canadian Financial Support:

One Hope Canada
#6 - 875 Gateway Rd
Winnipeg MB R2K-3L1

USA Financial Support:

One Hope International
PO Box #1223
Sault Ste. Marie MI 49783-7223

***Gifts are tax-deductible. Please designate to: “Mark & Tina Mast”

***If from Canada, please make cheques payable to: “One Hope Canada”

***If from the USA, please make checks payable to: “One Hope International”

Donate Online with a Credit Card using the following link:

www.onehopecanada.ca

Click the “Donate Now” tab on the upper right hand corner. Choose to donate from the “USA” or “Canada”.

Please be sure to indicate that your gift is for “Mark & Tina Mast” in the designation box.

“For unto you is born this day... a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord!” (Luke 2:11).



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CATECHISM	2 10:00 DORCAS	3 7:00 COUNCIL	4 Janice Wiersema 10:00 COFFEE BREAK	5 Timon Kaemingh Donna Sinninghe Alexa Veldhuisen	6 Jackson Arpin	7 Leni Kaemingh Jessica Marissen Hilda Schryvershof Eltjo Wiersema
8 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CATECHISM	9 Luke Esselink 10:00 SENIORS' CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	10 Dan Veldhuisen *Larry & Dove Stahn (30th)	11 Emma Kaemingh 10:00 COFFEE BREAK	12 Peter Van Heyst *Adam & Ashley Esselink (7th)	13 Liz Vanderveen	14
15 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL CATECHISM	16	17 7:00 CONSISTORY	18 Tina Geerdink Dwight Stang	19 Kerrilyn Esselink *Henry & Thea Kaemingh (61st)	20	21 Mel Lucas
22 10:00 WORSHIP COMMUNION CATECHISM	23	24 Paiton Veldhuisen	25  10:00 WORSHIP	26	27 Theo deGroot (Snr) *Louis & Darlene Byma (45th)	28
29 Grace Kooistra 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	30 Darlene Byma	31				