



Remarked

Christmas, December 2016
Volume 6, Issue 4

THE BIG REVEAL... ROMANS 8:18-25

BY PASTOR BEN

There was a time I found myself regularly watching reality restoration shows on T.V. I enjoyed the element of surprise when a family left their home while it underwent a dramatic facelift. Often times the producers of these shows would define the moment the family first saw their home as the "Big Reveal." It was entertaining to see the wave of emotion sweep over the people as the changes were revealed to them. For many there were tears of joy as they saw again, for the first time, the home they had always loved.

I wonder if Christmas, the time we celebrate the birth of Christ, could be considered the "Big Reveal" for Christians today. This advent season at Jennings Creek CRC we have been journeying through a series called "Reveal." Each week we have been taking a look at how specific individuals in scripture responded when God revealed His plan to send His son to live among us. I trust that the journey has caused us all to consider again how we might respond to the good news that has been revealed to us through Jesus Christ.

Christmas is certainly a time in which we remember that God has revealed Himself to us through His son Jesus Christ, but I hesitate to call it the "Big Reveal." I believe the birth of Jesus is part of a restoration project that has not yet been fully revealed to us. Like the families on the reality T.V. shows, we are still waiting for the big reveal. The apostle Paul captures this anticipation well in Romans 8:19 "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed." Paul goes on to describe how creation, our home, has been infected by sin. Creation has become frustrated by the sin that entered through mankind and is eagerly waiting for a grand restoration project.

The joy Christians have this advent season is that we know this restoration project is well on its way. We know, as did Paul, that Jesus was the key part of that restoration plan. Jesus was the man that would free all of creation from the bondage of sin. Jesus did this as the perfect sacrifice for our sins, Jesus did this by conquering death and rising from the Cross, Jesus did this

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REMARKED: THE NEWSLETTER

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REJOICE! CHRIST IS BORN!

BY BETTY RINZEMA

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

December the last month of the year
 Meeting old friends may bring a tear
 It's nice to have family and friends together
 Because we really are birds of a feather
 The happiness and sorrow, we must take
 Because blessings really a good life make
 It's time to wish each and every one of you
 The best of the season, that's for all, not a few!

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by ascending to heaven. Jesus did this by giving us the Holy Spirit. You could say all the difficult work is done, and it is. But the greatest part of God's restoration plan is it includes his children, humanity, those He created in his image. That is why this advent season, and every advent season till Jesus returns, God continues to reveal himself to his children.

This advent may we remember that God revealed himself to us through his son Jesus but may we also be reminded that Jesus will return again someday. I believe that day, the day Christ returns, will be the "Big Reveal." For it will be on that day that we see, as for the first time, the creation we have always loved, fully restored.

BOOK REVIEW:

FIREWEED: SEEKING HOPE IN THE ASHES OF TRAGEDY

By JANET STOBIE

REVIEWED BY CORA WILMS

Somehow we tend to live with the notion that bad things only happen to other people. We deny the possibility that someday our doorbell could be ringing in the night to reveal a police officer bearing devastating news: your loved one has been in a horrible crash and not survived. "That cannot be. There must be some mistake. She was on her way home..."

There is no instruction manual to guide us in surviving the unreal, unthinkable, event that has introduced our new reality, is there? Numbness takes over. Then we might rebel against God who has done this to us. We may be tempted to blame another family member, creating distance between us. To whom shall we turn?

Fireweed is a novel that has instant appeal because it deals with the kinds of questions like those raised above. It raises these questions by walking us through the fictional experience told in the first person, alternating between two people, each transition clearly indicated. The main characters are Steve and his fifteen-year-old daughter, Renée, who must come to terms with the sudden accidental loss of wife and mother, Serena. Their front doorbell rang at eleven p.m. on May 25, just as Steve was about to dial her cell phone to find out what's been keeping her.

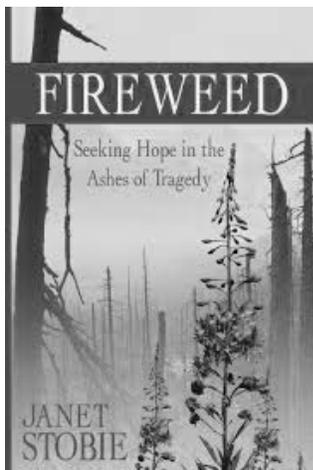
With the help of school vice-principal, Ms Hamilton, and Catalpa Creek United Church's Reverend Linda, father and daughter learn coping skills that help them gradually come to terms with their sense of loss and grief. Six months have passed since the accident. It's November already, and it takes that much time for the two family

members to acknowledge that they need help to begin taking steps toward healing.

There is conflict in the book, of course. That it is very true to life adds to its readability and appeal. On the opening page, Renée is inwardly unhappy with her mother's request for help bringing some canning jars up to the attic. She'd rather just spend time on her homework that is giving her some difficulty. This is the first thing that comes to mind that night when her mother died, leading to feelings of regret.

Renée is conflicted about going to school in the fall. Mom isn't there to help with back-to-school shopping. She finds herself skipping school and going to the cemetery instead. She thinks Dad doesn't understand her. But meanwhile, Steve thinks his daughter is going to school and is blindsided by a telephone call from Ms. Hamilton who wonders how things are going. She gives Renée space to grieve and to return to school only when she feels ready.

Renée discovers that a cat has given birth to kittens in the attic when she goes up there to find canning jars and hears unfamiliar sounds. She had mixed feelings about making her mom's trademark recipe to give away as mom used to do. It feels too soon to do such a thing, and she really doesn't want to find those jars. The cat family creates an outlet for Renée's emotions; it leads to a closer relationship between the teen and her elderly next door neighbour. The kittens get named, and dad Steve thinks they should create and pin up posters to find the owners of the mother cat, but daughter Renée is resistant to the idea of parting with any of the cat family.



INTRODUCING HILLIE AND ARIS MARCUS

Hillie and her husband Aris lived in Brighton for 43 years where they ran a dry cleaning and uniform rental business. For many years now they have been retired from the business, but recently made the decision to relocate to Lindsay.

Aris has two sisters in Lindsay and Hillie comes from the musical Van Halteren clan, sister to Marg Buwalda, Gertie Ottens and Tymen Van Halteren from our fellowship. Hillie and Aris have two daughters as well as grandchildren living in the Barrie area and Whitby.

As a caregiver to Aris, Hillie is busy but likes to have a good book on the go. She is an avid reader. The three sisters, Hillie, Marg and Gertie, are now enjoying living close together with lots of opportunity for talking over a hot coffee or lunch!

We welcome Hillie and Aris to our church family.



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On the recommendation of Ms. Hamilton, father and daughter purchase electronic candles, one for each of their bedrooms, creating special places to talk to Serena. Eventually they each find more and more times that they forget about lighting the candle and talking to Serena. Renée has school-related involvements and friends. Steve has a long-time friend who invites him to play badminton, leading to other friendships being formed. With the help of a Christian counselor, Steve and Renée grow towards each other, getting better acquainted. Steve's eyes are opened to his environment, leading him to see that his office environment could be more inviting and relaxing.

By the end of the story, it's almost Christmas, and Serena's special sauce has been made and shared after all. The mother cat has been reunited with the boy whose heart had been broken by her loss. The grief is not so painful anymore.

What does *Fireweed* mean as title for this book? Fireweed is the very first plant to grow after a forest fire, but eventually it gets crowded out when the growing trees compete for the available sunlight. Because the forest re-growth starts with Fireweed, using it as the metaphor for our recovery from losses in our lives is an appropriate choice.

The author includes 'Suggestions for your Grief Journey' and 'Rev. Linda's Scripture Suggestions' at the back of the book.

Janet Stobie is a United Church pastor in Ontario who is first of all a story teller. She has written short stories for children and also this book directed toward helping young people understand how and why people grieve differently. Janet may be found via her website: janetstobie.com.

Look for *Fireweed* at the Kawartha Lakes Public Library or purchase it from your favorite vendor.

THE STAMPPOT SUPPER..... HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Looking back to the 1970s Grace VanHalteren and Cora Wilms recall that we were part of the Couples Club that existed then. Meetings were held in various homes on a monthly basis for Bible study and socializing. Today we probably would call it a small group. It was not only inwardly focused as service was part of the club. For example, fundraisers were held to finance improvements in decor to what was still a new church building. Once, the money raised was used to purchase pew Bibles and another time drapes were installed in the sanctuary windows.

Out of those fundraising efforts, a church supper was born. At that time there were no thoughts of Heritage Christian School. Yet there was a desire among some families to set up a Christian school, and the couples club grew into a Christian Education Society, it seems, as we look back. Some children were driven by bus to Knox Christian in Bowmanville and later also to Durham Christian

High School. Money was needed then, as it is now, to pay for the transportation and to subsidise the tuition.

More fundraising. More suppers. Enter the Boerenkool/Stamppot Supper to which friends invite friends and former members come for old times' sake.

Times have changed. Church building enhancements are now budget items. Heritage Christian School has been in existence for thirty-nine years. Tuition is paid directly to both Heritage and Durham. The Lindsay Christian Education Society is now a bank account that raises money to cover transportation costs for Lindsay students attending Christian high school in Bowmanville.

So come in January for the Stamppot Supper. Enjoy the buffet! Go overboard on the auction afterward. Just because we can. Just because we care.

Boerenkool



Mark your calendars for
Saturday January 28th, 2017
 for the annual Boerenkool Stamppot Supper!
 You won't want to miss this evening of fun,
 fellowship and laughter and of course enjoy the
 traditional dutch meal...*all you can eat stamppot*
 (mashed potatoes mixed with one of the following); boerenkool
 (aka kale), carrot, sauerkraut or red cabbage stamppot, smoked
 sausage, bacon, applesauce, dessert and beverages.
 It will be held in the fellowship hall, Jennings Creek CRC
 from 5:00-6:30pm with an auction to follow.
 See you there!

MILESTONES

Joelle VanOudenaren and Jesse Lambert were married November 1 in Peterborough. The couple live north of Peterborough, for now, but would consider relocating to a country where temperatures stay above 10'C.