

*S*PLENDOR AND MAJESTY  
ARE BEFORE HIM;  
STRENGTH AND GLORY  
ARE IN HIS SANCTUARY.

PSALM 96:6, NIV

ROCK VALLEY  
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH  
NEWSLETTER - WINTER, 2015



## *Let's Stop and Think!*

### **“No One Stops to Think”**

This is a direct quote from the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 44:19 (NIV). Isaiah is lamenting the fact that those who make and worship idols do not stop and think about the foolishness of using one section of a tree trunk to heat your house and cook your food, and then using another section of the very same tree trunk to fashion an idol and then bow down to it and pray. The ESV reads this way: *“No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, ‘Half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat and have eaten. And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?’”*. So here we have the chide and the encouragement to be a thinking people. Surely the people of the Living God should be a thinking people.

### **“Think About What it is You Think About”**

One of the most wonderful abilities we have as Image Bearers of God is to think about what we are thinking about. As God's Image Bearers we can think about the past, we can think about the present, we can think about the future. As we think about all three of these here and now, we can decide what we are going to think: to dwell on, to meditate on, to concentrate on, to consider, to conclude! Our thinking can be negative, bitter, and resentful; or our thinking can be positive, thankful, and hopeful. The Apostle Paul has this to say about “thinking”: *“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things”* (Philippians 4:8). What we think soon defines what we say, what we do, who we are, and what our witness is before the world. It will tell others what we *‘think about the Christ’* (Matthew 22:42). The Apostle Peter puts it this way: *“I have written....as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking!”* (2 Peter 3:1 NIV).

Let's stop and think!

*Pastor Joel Vander Kooi*



# In Christian Sympathy



We express our Christian Sympathy to the family of Walter, who was called to his heavenly home on Saturday, January 3, 2015, after suffering a stroke earlier in the week. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, January 7, here at the Rock Valley United Reformed Church, with Rev. Vander Kooi officiating. Because of severely cold weather, the graveside service was held in the foyer of RVURC.

Walt was a Korean War Veteran. After coming home from Korea, he married Alta Mae, and together they farmed north of Rock Valley. Walt and Alta raised a family of four children. Walt also sold feed and fertilizer. Through the years he served on the Christian Education Chapter, was a deacon, and volunteered many hours at Hope Haven.

Walt is survived by his wife, Alta; son Dennis and his wife Joan; son Bob and his wife Cherie (of RVURC); daughter Laura and her husband Greg; daughter Gail and her husband Henry (also of RVURC); 11 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren; 1 sister and 3 brothers, including Albert and his wife Joanne of RVURC. May the Lord tenderly comfort all those who mourn with the rich promises of the gospel.



On the evening of Tuesday, September 16 we gathered together for a grocery bridal shower for Amber, who was married to Nathan on Friday, August 1. We played some games together, and we had to test ourselves to see if we could pass the test of being “a good wife” by 1950’s standards. Wow, times have changed in the last 60 years, for sure, but we agreed that whether it



is 1954 or 2014, “unless the Lord builds the house, the laborers labor in vain.” Gifts were given for the new bride, followed by a light lunch. We pray for the Lord’s richest blessings for Amber and her husband as they establish a strong, Christian home.







Thanksgiving Day began with our Youth Group treating us to a delicious breakfast before our worship service.

What a great way to begin a special day of thanks!



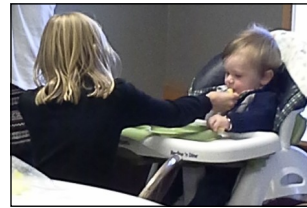
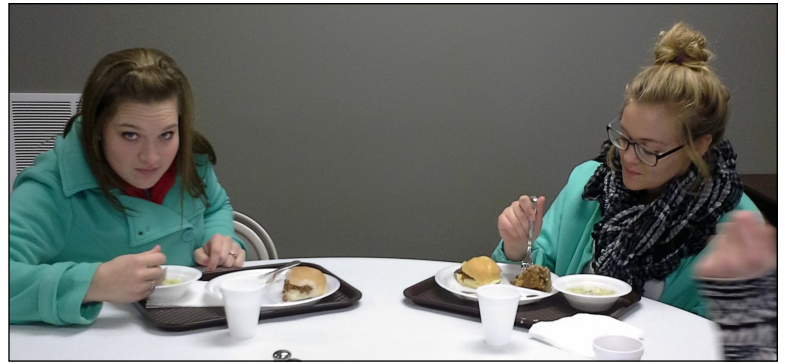
A good Hollander lets nothing go to waste, not even the yogurt stuck to the top of the lid, right Hank? (And, yes, we ALL do it!)



Now here's the best looking table of the morning...  
Jon, Lindsay, Jon and Brooke.







Anna seems to love babies, and Owen gets lots of her attention at church.

# Food & Fellowship



Isaac demonstrates the ability to do what little brothers are famous for - pestering their big sisters!



Following our morning worship service on December 21 we enjoyed a Christmas Hymn Sing. We sang favorite Christmas carols together, heard the familiar but beloved account of Jesus' birth from Scripture, and we enjoyed the RVURC Choir and students singing "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear", "The First Noel", "Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow", and "Come Let Us Worship the King". Following our Hymn Sing we gathered for a Congregational Luncheon in the Youth Room. At a time of year when we all get together with our individual families, it's very special to get together as a Church Family as well, and to celebrate together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

# Winter Get Aways

## Five Facts about the Heynen Family's Florida Trip(s)

By Karen

The Heynens took a trip to Florida over the Christmas Holiday break, and here are a few highlights of their recent trip and some additional information about how these trips to the "Sunshine State" came to be...

1. The first year that Craig was the track coach at Dordt College, the track team took a spring break trip to Orlando, Florida. The team rented very nice and affordable homes for their week's stay. This was when the seed for a Heynen family Florida trip was planted.
2. In the past, the Heynen family use to only take trips to Iowa or to Washington and the purpose of these trips was to visit family. When the Heynen's lived in Washington they took trips to Iowa and then when they moved to Iowa, they began to take trips to Washington. Four years ago, when Josh was a freshman in high school, Craig and Karen began to realize that their days as a family unit were numbered. This is when the Heynen Florida trip seed that had been planted came to fruition.
3. The decision was made to take a One-Time-Only trip to Orlando, Florida for the 2011 Christmas Holiday break. (A Christmas trip was decided because when you live in Iowa going somewhere warm in the winter is very appealing.)
4. The trip was wonderful, so wonderful that the family went back again the next Christmas. (They did not include Disney in their first trip, so they thought they would return ONE more time, and this time they would spend a day or two at "The Happiest Place on Earth".)
5. The Heynen family does appear to be a little "hooked" on going somewhere warm for the Holidays and their days as a family are still numbered, so it was decided to return, yet again, for a final (?) Christmas trip to Orlando, Florida. This Florida trip, like all the previous Florida trips, included a drive across numerous states. Once in Florida, the family enjoyed visiting St. Augustine, the oldest city in the United States. They had three separate excursions to ocean beaches- Clearwater Beach, Cocoa Beach, and Paradise Beach. (As a result of growing up in a coastal state, Karen is especially fond of the ocean and beaches.) They took an airboat ride through a Florida swamp and the Heynens were able to spot 6 alligators in their swampy habitat. The family went to Aquatica- a water park associated with Sea World. (Anna was able to see a couple dolphins there, which made her very happy.) The family spent their last day in Florida at Disney World- a highlight for the Heynen kids. The weather was exceptionally warm throughout their whole stay in Orlando. The temps were in the 70's and 80's. The Heynens think that this may have been the best trip to Florida, yet. They are saying this is their last family trip to Florida, but only time will tell.



Alligators  
in the  
swamp!



Josh, Joel and  
Anna enjoying the  
waves of the  
Atlantic Ocean



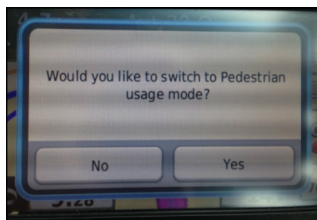


# From Eastern Canada to the Hawaiian Islands

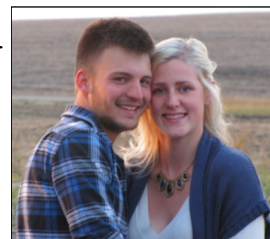
VANDER KOOI'S VOYAGES OF 2014...

By Janet

As most of you know, we went back to Canada in October. Initially we were planning on visiting our children and our recently born grand-daughter, Leah, but mere days before our departure, we were informed of Janet's immigration interview in Montreal, Quebec. Planning a visit with our children in Alberta and taking a detour to Montreal is like planning a trip to Phoenix and being detoured to NYC! We adjusted our schedule and RVURC graciously granted us additional time for our immigration proceedings. Since the process required two separate interview dates- (a medical portion and one physical presence part, which required the results of the medical report), we had to stay in the greater Montreal area. Since we were handed a "lemon" of a situation, we made the most of it and made lemonade! We were able to tour Old Quebec City, Mont Tremblant and arrange a visit with friends who lived near Ottawa, Ontario. We were also able to take in the International Organ Concert Competition in downtown Montreal, which included participants from Germany, Britain, Russia and the United States to name a few. Montreal is a BIG city with lots of traffic (see GPS photo) and despite the language difference, Korrie's borrowed GPS is actually quite talented in pronouncing French towns and street names! Knowing which streets were one way, is an altogether other matter! The scenery was spectacular and it was delightful to enjoy another part of God's creation and His handiwork in the autumnal colors. Our trip back to Canada was successful and Janet received approval on October 23, 2014. Exactly two months later, December 23, her official "Green Card" arrived in the mailbox- what a nice way to close out the year!



Once back in Alberta, we were able to visit with our kids and grand-kids and assist our daughter Ariana and Gerrit in some of their wedding preparations. When they announced their engagement, we advised them to plan in such a way that would combine a trip for us to attend their wedding and Andrew's college graduation on June 6 of this year. We are happy to report they are planning a May 29, 2015 wedding in Alberta. We look forward to both those days of celebration for our family.



Gerrit & Ariana



The Grace URC Kauai - a little bit hard to see, since it's in the back of a building.



In December we were privileged to meet up with some of our kids on Kauai, Hawaii. Because of the impending immigration proceedings, we intentionally delayed our 30th anniversary celebrations till things were settled in that department. It was a marvelous time to once again see family and we were witness to God's magnificent handiwork in the sandy beaches, rolling surf, steep rugged cliffs and frequent rainbows. Additionally, we met with College and Seminary friends: Rev. Derrick and Deb - URCNA church planters who reside and work on the island. The church has about 20 official members but many visitors and it seeks to be a Reformed witness on the Island where none exists. While there, Derrick had a cancer follow-up appointment in Honolulu, Oahu and so Joel preached one service for him. We are thankful to report that Derrick received excellent news and that he is cancer free one year later.



We enjoyed several visits with the family and Derrick the boys went on an ocean fishing excursion- you'll have to ask Ben how that went!! It seems the *Fisher's of Men* were the only successful fishers of fish on that trip- Derrick and Joel were the ones who caught the Ahi (Yellow Fin Tuna).

## Gone Fishin

2014 will always be remembered as a unique year in our family's memory and will not likely be repeated in the foreseeable future, but we are thankful for the Providential care of our Father in heaven who provided abundantly for us in our unique travels this year and for the gracious kindness that our church family here in Rock Valley has extended to us.



# More Congregational Life... In Pictures



RVURC Choir, under the direction of our friend and brother in Christ, Mr. T.J. Thanks so much, TJ!



After a fun time of Christmas Caroling in Rock Valley on December 22, our group enjoyed hot chocolate, apple cider, and goodies. (Korrie joined us as well, but he volunteered to take the picture.)



Getting ready to conquer the corn maze!



It was wall to wall sub sandwiches in the kitchen of RVURC, and the project was a great success.

The Youth Group tackled that mountain of cold cuts...with smiles on their faces!

Thanks for your support!



Christmas babies Lora and Joanne are all smiles for the camera on their Christmas Day birthday, December 25, 2014.

Working with the Youth Group at Hope Haven International to box up 590 quilts for shipment to Guatemala.





# Place the Face!



Take a good look at these two little guys...do they look familiar?

They both have blonde hair...does that help?

They both work in Rock Valley...any clue?

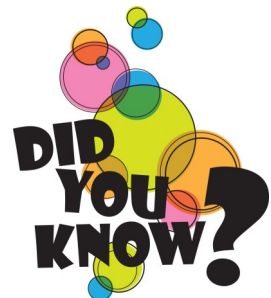
They both celebrate birthdays in February...come on, you know these guys...

If you feel the need to cheat, check your February calendars and see if you can figure out who they are!



- **This just in!! Did you know that Erin and Alan** are engaged to be married? Alan popped the question on February 9, 2015, and the answer was YES! Erin and Alan are planning an August 22, 2015 wedding. Congratulations, Erin and Alan!
- Did you know that **Mary Kate** was part of the WCHS Cross Country team that won the Lakes Conference title this year? It was the first time a Western Christian Girls Cross Country Team has ever done that. Very exciting, Mary Kate—keep up the good work!
- Did you know that many of our members are welcoming new grandchildren recently? In October **Rev. Joel and Janet** welcomed Leah, born to their son and daughter-in-law Joel and Mel of Alberta, Canada. Welcoming their first granddaughter after two grandsons are **Jay and Doris**. Autumn Michelle was born to Aaron and Kayla on November 16, and she weighed 6 pounds, 12 ounces. In December **Hank and Gail** were also thrilled to finally get a little girl into the family! Brinlee Rae was born to Dexter and Hannah on December 16, weighing 8 pounds, 1 ounce. Gail says it's exciting to finally bring "some pink" into their predominantly male household! In January **Arlin and Carla** family grew very quickly, as they added three new granddaughters in less than one week! Twin granddaughters, Blair Shalene (6 pounds, 1 ounce) and Parker Rose (6 pounds even) were born to Brittany and Dalton on January 16, and Jemma Sophia (7 pounds, 8 ounces) was born to Blake and Steph on January 21. Congratulations to all!
- By now most everyone knows that **Herm and Cheryl** have moved to 2477 300th Street, just two houses west of church, and are now next door neighbors to Bob and Cherie. But **did you know** that they had lived at their former place for over 41 years? Herm tells the story as follows: It (the home place) was just a corn field then, and we moved on a house and garage along with one other building in April of 1973. We moved into the basement in May, and in June, Father's Day night, a 5 inch rain came down and the water off of the field from the west came rushing down around the house and caved in the south wall, and then caved in the west wall at 3:00AM. By God's grace we were up at the time, hearing crashing sounds, when all of a sudden the walls came in. We were waist deep in the water before we could get up the stairs, and then we watched our belongings float out of the basement and down the creek. My billfold was found over a block away. My wife's wedding ring was never found. In 1979 we bought Russ' Sanitation business, and 35 years later we are trying to slow up a bit. So, three years ago we sold the business on a five year contract to Devin and Nathan. Now Devin and his wife Nickkie (our niece) wanted to buy our place. We suggested maybe a trade of homes could be worked out. In a matter of weeks it all happened. Who could have known when Devin and Nickkie moved their house in five years ago that God was providentially preparing a place for my wife and I to live here on earth so close to the church! The most asked question we get is "How are you going to do that, swapping places?" Our answer? "You just have to get along!" We have been working in each others houses, painting, moving little by little into rooms that have been emptied. Because of the move and the sell out of the business, much of our contact information has changed.

We thank the Lord for His provision for you, Herm and Cheryl, and hope you enjoy many years in your new home.







- **Did you know that Cornie and Wilma met Dr. Ben Carson?** Wilma writes: "On Saturday, November 22, 2014 we were invited to a Fund Raiser for The Family Leader where the main speaker was going to be Ben Carson, MD, who may possibly run for US President in 2016. He was raised by a poor single mother in Detroit and recently retired as the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Boston. Dr. Carson gained international acclaim for separating Siamese twins joined at the hip in 1987. He is known as one of the best in his field of neurosurgery for performing miraculous operations that saved many lives. He has also written several books and after the banquet he did some book signing. A lot of us had our picture taken with him. There is a movement called "Run, Ben, Run" to get him to run for President in 2016. This Fund Raiser took place in Des Moines. There were 1500 people there. The President and CEO of The Family Leader is Bob Vander Plaats. Bob is the son-in-law of Dixon, who is our son-in-law. The Family Leader is an organization that strengthens families, and is a consistent voice in the churches, in the legislature, in the media, in the courtroom, in the public square...always standing for God's truth."

- **Did you know** that if you need a little help in bringing home the trophy buck, **Brooke** may be able to give you a few pointers? Last fall **Brooke and Randy** went on a hunting trip, and here is what Brooke had to say about the experience. **Be sure to read the last line of Brooke's account!** "The week before Thanksgiving Dad and I headed out to Murdo, SD. We left on a Wednesday and returned home late Saturday afternoon. On Wednesday we arrived in Murdo just before 4. We had gotten our clothes changed at the gas station before arriving to the hunting land so we would be ready to sit in the stand as soon as we got there. So we headed right out to the stand before settling in the cabin for the night. While it was only our first night out we saw quite a bit of movement and I even was able to take my first shot at a whitetail buck. Unfortunately between a difficult shot and the buck fever kicking in, I shot just under and didn't get the kill. We sat out until dark with no more luck the first night. Thursday, then, was a new day. We headed out back to the same stand before the sun came up. It was a little foggy in the morning and there wasn't much movement, and we came back empty handed. Thursday night again we ended with the same result. No luck. Friday, though was the big day. I was getting anxious about not having shot anything yet and was worried I'd come home with nothing, but that was not the case. As we were about to call it quits for the morning dad and I walked up a hill in the cornfield and spotted a couple bucks a ways out. The bucks were out of range so I hadn't taken any shots and we walked over to where we were supposed to be picked up so we could go have breakfast. We got in the pickup and told Jeremy Hilt, married to my cousin, about what we had all seen and he was so ecstatic about it! He insisted that we drive around the section to see if the deer had made their way there yet. By the time we had gotten around the section the deer were just coming up the fence line. Perfect! We drove through the field keeping our distance as not to be seen and spook the bucks. We got out to walk and by the time we had peeked the next hill to see how far of a shot we had to take, my buck had laid down just inside the fence line. Since this was the first buck I had shot, we went back behind the hill so I could get a feel for shooting off bipods while kneeling. We tried everything out and I was ready to go. We peeked the hill again to get the deer in the scope and BOOM! I took the shot! His head fell back and I knew it was a kill shot. I looked at dad with the biggest smile on my face. What an adrenaline rush! I then turned back to look at my prize only to see his head start lifting again. But just as fast as his head came up, it went back down again. Dead. By this time we had all missed breakfast, but it was very much worth it! The rest of the trip we enjoyed time riding around to see the many herds of mule and whitetail deer. We also spent the next evening and morning sitting out in the stand to watch all the wildlife. *I had so much fun spending the week with Dad and I can't wait to go do it again!*" Good job, Brooke. And Randy, that last line from your daughter is priceless...way to go, Dad!



Brooke, Randy and  
"Brooke's Buck".  
Daddy & Daughter  
bonding time on the prairie.



- Most of us know that **Pam and her daughters** are quite fond of their kitties, but **did you know** that recently they even took one to church with them? A few weeks ago, on a Sunday evening, one of their kitties must have been stowed away *somewhere* in their van, and Pam drove the van to church like normal, unaware of their hidden guest. When the rest of the family came to church in another vehicle a few minutes later, they were quite surprised to find their pet waiting for them at the front door of church! Kitty Cat was deposited appropriately in the "Kats" van to patiently wait for the service to be over and then head for home. At RVURC you'll find several "Kats"; but welcoming "cats" might be another thing altogether...



### **Comforting Chicken Noodle Soup**

**submitted by Sarita--approved by Korrie :)**

2 qts water  
8 chicken bouillon cubes (slightly less than 1/4 cup powder)  
6 1/2 cups uncooked wide egg noodles  
2 cans (10 3/4 oz ea) cream of chicken soup  
3 cups cubed chicken (Hormel Premium Chicken Breast)  
1 cup sour cream ( or plain yogurt)

In a large sauce pan, bring water to a boil. Add bouillon cubes and noodles. Cook, uncovered, until tender, about 10 minutes. Do not drain. Add soup and chicken and heat through. Remove from heat and stir in sour cream or yogurt.

### **Oreo Cheesecake Bites** **Lora**

36 Oreo Cookies, divided  
1/4 cup (4 tablespoons) butter  
4 packages (8-ounces each) cream cheese, softened  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup sour cream  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
4 large eggs  
4 ounces semisweet chocolate  
4 ounces white chocolate

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a 9×13-inch baking pan with foil, with ends extending over sides. Finely crush 24 Oreo cookies. Melt 1/4 cup butter; mix with crumbs. Press onto bottom of prepared pan.

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese and sugar with mixer until blended. Add sour cream and vanilla; mix well. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each just until blended. Chop remaining cookies. Stir into batter; pour over crust.

Bake the cheesecake for about 35-40 minutes or until the sides are set and the center is almost set. Cool completely on a wire rack in the pan.

When the cheesecake is completely cooled, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. When chilled, remove the cheesecake using the foil overhang and cut the cheesecake into bite-sized pieces. Place the cheesecake bites on a wax or parchment paper-lined baking tray. Melt the semisweet chocolate and white chocolate in separate bowls (I use the microwave on 50% power, stirring frequently). Pour the melted chocolate into a Ziploc bag, one for the semisweet chocolate, one for the white chocolate. Snip a small corner off the corner of the bag and drizzle the chocolate over the cheesecake bars. Chill the bars until ready to serve.



### **Cookie Dough Brownies** **Brenda**

1 box family-size chocolate fudge brownie mix  
1/2 C butter, softened  
1/2 C packed brown sugar  
1/4 C sugar  
2 T milk  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1 C flour  
Mini chocolate chips

Bake brownies as directed on box and cool.

In a mixing bowl cream butter and sugars. Add milk and vanilla; mix well. Beat in flour. Spread over brownies. Sprinkle with mini chocolate chips.

### **Connecticut Beef Supper** **Sarita**

2 tbsp shorting  
2 lbs beef stew meat--cut into 1 inch cubes  
2 lg onions, sliced  
1 cup water  
2 lg potatoes, pared and thinly sliced  
1 can (10 1/2 oz) condensed cream of mushroom soup  
1 cup sour cream  
1 1/4 cup milk  
1 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp pepper  
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1 1/4 cup Wheaties cereal, crushed

Melt shortening in large skillet. Cook and stir meat and onion in shortening until meat is brown and onion is tender. Add water; heat to boiling. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 50 minutes.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Pour meat mixture into ungreased 9x13x2 baking dish; arrange potatoes on meat. Stir together soup, sour cream, milk, salt, pepper; pour over potatoes. Sprinkle with cheese and cereal. Bake uncovered 1 1/2 hours or until potatoes and meat are tender. Makes 6-8 servings.

You can use 2 lbs HB and just brown with onion. It does not have to simmer 50 minutes, just put in the pan.





# POWER OF PRAYER

When life gets crazy, worry creeps in. But God tells us exactly what to do – any time and anywhere.

**Directions:** Circle the word in each group that doesn't belong. Then write those words on the numbered lines below.

**1**  
apple  
anxious  
artichoke

**2**  
every  
eagle  
emu

**3**  
purple  
pink  
prayer

**4**  
Paul  
petition  
Peter

**5**  
taste  
touch  
thanksgiving

**6**  
rest  
requests  
relax

**7**  
God  
George  
Greg

**8**  
puddle  
peace  
pond

**9**  
transcends  
train  
truck

**10**  
unusual  
unique  
understanding

**11**  
guard  
giraffe  
gorilla

**12**  
hearts  
hold  
held

**13**  
many  
minds  
more

**14**  
Philadelphia  
Pennsylvania  
Philippians

“Do not be \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> about anything, but in  
 \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> situation, by \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> and  
 \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>, with \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>,  
 present your \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup>. And  
 the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> of God, which \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup>  
 all \_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup>, will \_\_\_\_\_<sup>11</sup>  
 your \_\_\_\_\_<sup>12</sup> and your \_\_\_\_\_<sup>13</sup>  
 in Christ Jesus.” \_\_\_\_\_<sup>14</sup> 4:6-7, NIV

Answers to Place the Face: Ben Vander Kooi and Hank Blankespoor

Answers: 1. anxious, 2. every, 3. prayer, 4. petition, 5. thanksgiving,  
 6. requests, 7. God, 8. peace, 9. transcends, 10. understanding, 11. guard,  
 12. hearts, 13. minds, 14. Philippians