

Restoring Dignity through Photography

While living on the streets of Tshwane, South Africa, David was mistreated, misjudged and ignored by others.

“So often we withhold dignity from people enduring homelessness,” said Megan Ribbens, who serves with Christian Reformed World Missions.

Now Ribbens is working alongside David and others to restore that dignity.

Ribbens teamed up with Blake Woodhams, a professional photographer, to offer photography classes to David and 11 others. These lessons allowed participants to tell their own stories rather than having their stories told for them.

After a few lessons, Ribbens and Woodhams found themselves engag- »



David shares his story with television crews at the homelessness summit.

Knocking at the Door in Nanaimo

Certified Fishing Guide and Registered Chaplain.”

This is the text featured on Andrew Turkstra’s business card. Turkstra is the owner of Reel Time Fishing Charters in Nanaimo, B.C., as well as a pastor who recently began Breakthrough Ministries.

Breakthrough is a bivocational evangelistic and discipleship ministry currently funded by Christian Reformed Home Missions.

As part of his ministry, Turkstra knocks on the doors of local businesses throughout Nanaimo. The idea is to establish relationships and share the gospel through deed but also through word when the opportunity presents itself.

On the first visit, Turkstra introduces himself and finds out as much as he can about

the business owners, managers, and employees.

On subsequent visits, he works to deepen relationships. His ultimate goal is to launch gospel communities within these places of work.

In less than a year, Turkstra has visited nearly 400 different businesses with an over-

whelmingly positive response. About half have been open to the idea of a visiting chaplain—someone with whom to discuss personal and vocational concerns, as well as explore spiritual issues or questions.

A few months ago, Turkstra was en route to one of his

visits when he drove past an outdoor recreation shop. He felt a tug to go in, even though it was not on his list for the day.

“I had been there before but had never had spiritual conversations with anyone yet. But that all changed this time. I spoke with an employee who could not believe that I came on that day because he needed someone to talk to about his marriage and finances.

“We continued to chat for over an hour about these issues. We prayed together, and it was such a blessing.” ■

—by Rachel Ponstein,
Christian Reformed Home Missions

The boat that Andrew Turkstra uses in his business.



You add.
God multiplies.

» ing in participants' lives and sharing fellowship that showed signs of built trust.

During one of the lessons, David shared why he lives on the streets.

It turned out David had a chance to live with his mother, but he knew that she was receiving government grants, and he did not want to take advantage of that money.

These were the kinds of stories that David could share through photography.

Ribbens challenged David to use his new skills to capture snapshots of his life and invited him to display his photos at a homelessness summit.

"[The viewers] mulled over the creative perspectives, deep meanings, and raw images," said Ribbens.

Adding voices like David's to the conversation in Tshwane is an important step to transforming the city, said Mike Ribbens, Megan's husband.

"It's all about trying to transcend boundaries," he said. "We can talk about spiritual renewal, social renewal, but if we don't actually talk together, we're never going to make a long-lasting impact. That's the beautiful thing that's happening here." ■

—by Brian Clark,
*Christian Reformed
World Missions*

Longer versions of
these and other
stories are online at
[thebanner.org/
together](http://thebanner.org/together).



Joy-Elizabeth
Lawrence discusses
lively Scripture
reading.

Vivid Words

Every seat in the room was taken when Joy-Elizabeth Lawrence opened her workshop at the Day of Learning put on by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

Her topic was "Vivid Words: Scripture Reading That Captures the Imagination." But the teaser—"Don't let Scripture reading become an opportunity for your congregation to update their grocery lists"—was aimed at what happens when pastors and worship leaders read Scripture a certain way.

Lawrence, a student at Calvin Seminary, has a passion for Scripture to be read well, allowing it to form people's imaginations and bring the Word of God to life. Her calling springs from Paul's instruction to Timothy: "Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture."

She has devoted herself to using her background in both theology and theater to help churches capture and communicate the life-changing power of God's Word. In her workshop, she involved participants as volunteer actors and spoken-choir members and directed them in the ways Scripture can be presented in the context of worship services.

Her sample script repertoire included familiar stories taken verbatim from the biblical text—Jonah fleeing from Nineveh juxtaposed with the disciples caught in a violent Sea of Galilee storm.

Through simple but effective means such as positions on a stage, repetition of phrases, voice volume, cadence, and choral voices, she demonstrated how familiar stories become new.

But this not easy to do. Lawrence reminded the participants that readers need to be committed to training and to rehearsals—just like musicians and sacred dancers and excellent preachers. Giving our best requires practice, she said. ■

—by Jinny De Jong, *Calvin Theological Seminary*

Fall is for Pumpkins

What is your favorite thing about fall?

The weather gets cooler, and in northern climates maple trees turn into a beautiful sea of golden orange, red,

and yellow. What a wonderful gift! One of the most colorful sights of autumn is a field of those bright orange squashes we call pumpkins. You'll also find them decorating porches

and doorsteps. In fact, October is the perfect time to take a trip to a pumpkin patch and choose some for cooking and decorating. Read on for some cool facts about pumpkins.



This-um Great German Pumpkin!

Fruit or Vegetable?

Is a pumpkin a fruit or a vegetable? Most people think pumpkins are vegetables because, like many kinds of veggies, they are often cooked, roasted, or boiled. But since a pumpkin has seeds, it is really a fruit! Pumpkins are part of the squash plant family called *Cucurbita pepo*. Other squash family members include fruits such as melons and cucumbers. Pumpkins first came from Central and North America—but now you can find pumpkins all over the world!



ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY

Pumpkins Need Honeybees!

Pumpkins need help from honeybees in order to grow. Honeybees buzz around the pumpkin flowers, collecting pollen on their bodies. As the bees travel from flower to flower, grains of pollen drop from the male pumpkin flower to the inside of the female pumpkin flower. (Yes, pumpkin vines have girl flowers and boy flowers!) This is called pollination. The female flowers must be pollinated in order for pumpkins to grow from the vine. Over time the female flower dies and the fruit of the pumpkin begins to grow. These pumpkins are first green and then turn orange as they grow bigger. After about three to four months of growing on the vine, pumpkins are ready to be picked.

Delicious Pumpkin Dip

What you need:

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 package cream cheese (8 oz)
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree (also called "solid pack" pumpkin)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg

What to do:

- Combine powdered sugar, cream cheese, pumpkin puree, and spices in a bowl.
- Mix ingredients with a mixer or a wooden spoon until well blended.
- Enjoy this delicious dip with gingersnaps, vanilla wafers, or graham crackers!



FuN Facts

Pumpkins are usually **orange** but are sometimes yellow, green, red, or white.

The **world's heaviest** pumpkin was grown in Mainz, Germany. It weighed 2,096.6 pounds (951 kg)!

Most pumpkins contain **hundreds of seeds**.

Native Americans introduced pumpkins to the Pilgrims who came to North America from England.

The word **pumpkin** comes from the Greek word "pepon", which means "**large melon.**"

Pumpkin flowers are **edible!**

How Pumpkins Grow

If you've ever felt the inside of a pumpkin, you know it feels slippery and kind of slimy. The insides of the pumpkin are called fibrous strands. Some people like to call them pumpkin brains! Inside all that goo are the pumpkin seeds. Like any other plant, pumpkins grow from seeds. Once the seed is planted in good soil, it sprouts into a vine. Small yellow flowers begin to grow from the vine. These flowers are the beginning of a new pumpkin!



Power Pumpkins

Pumpkins are packed with things that are good for you. Pumpkins have lots of beta carotene, which gives pumpkins their bright orange color. In your body, beta carotene turns into vitamin A. And vitamin A helps your eyesight stay sharp and clear. It also helps you see better in dim light.

Pumpkin seeds have lots of protein and fiber. Eating a handful of roasted pumpkin seeds will help you feel full longer than other foods. Fiber also helps keep your heart healthy. Even better, pumpkin seeds taste good. So they make a great snack!

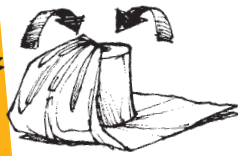
Make Your Own Pumpkin

What you need:

- School glue
- 1 roll of toilet paper
- 1 sheet of orange tissue paper
- Green construction paper
- Green pipe cleaners
- Brown construction paper

What to do:

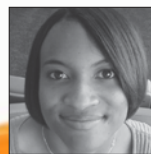
- Cover the roll of toilet paper with the orange tissue paper. First, lay the sheet flat and put the roll in the middle. Lift the tissue paper up around the toilet paper roll and tuck the extra tissue paper down into the roll's hole.
- Take one piece of brown construction paper and roll it the long way to make the pumpkin's stem. Then fold it in half and stick the stem inside the roll's hole.
- Cut leaves out of green paper and tape them inside the roll's hole. Create vines and tendrils using curled pipe cleaners (tendrils are the cool curly parts of the vine).
- If you like, cut black construction paper into shapes for eyes, a nose, and a mouth to make a face. Glue them into place. Put your pumpkin in your bathroom or another place in your house for fall decorations!



Word Fun

How many words can you make from the word *pumpkin*?

Have a contest with your family and write down as many words as you can in the spaces below.



Christin Baker is a full-time stay-at-home mom. She is a member of Resurrection Fellowship church in Grand Rapids, Mich.