

# THE CROWN

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## Lamenting Las Vegas An Alternate Approach to Tragedy



KRISTEN BORG DORFF  
REPORTER

**Lament:** [luh-ment]

NOUN

“a passionate expression of grief or sorrow”

VERB

“to mourn”

“About five feet from me, you could see a guy with a bullet wound right in his neck, motionless, from there on . . . people just started dropping like flies,” Taylor Benge reported to Fox 4 News as a witness of the shooting in Las Vegas on October 1st.

That evening, 58 people were killed and 546 injured when a lone gunman opened fire on Jason Aldean concertgoers at a country music festival on the Las Vegas Strip.

After hearing the news of this devastating shooting, I found myself feeling frustrated and helpless. What can I, a student at Redeemer University, do to make a difference in an event like the Las Vegas Shooting? Would my prayers actually change anything? What more can I do? Where was God in this event?

Sitting down with Dr. Naaman Wood, a professor in Redeemer's Media and Communications department, proved to be a helpful start in seeking answers to these bigger questions.

One of the first things Dr. Wood said after I expressed my feelings was this: “It's okay to feel helpless and powerless . . . generally speaking, [we've] been trained to think about the world as filled with problems that we can solve. There are these things that are bigger than us . . . when you stare into it you just don't know what to do because it's so overwhelming.

The good news, as Christians, is what the crucifixion is for us: it's the gaping abyss at the center of history where God says, ‘I'm going to enter into this.’ Every other abyss that we look into, God is already present and in the center of it.”

Many people respond to an event like the Las Vegas shooting by saying that we should all pray. “The bad thing [about this response],” explains Dr. Wood, “is it turns prayer into a band-aid. *Just put this band-aid on it and everything will be fine.* No. There are dead bodies in the

street. A band-aid is not going to fix that. Prayer as a band-aid is a part of the imagination that says that all problems are fixable, that all you need is a little bit of prayer and everything will be fine.”

Next came the idea of prayer as a positive response, specifically when we pray from a position of lament. “I think one of the things that I've been persuaded of is that Christians, white Christians by far, have lost our ability to lament.

“Lamentation is not foreign to the Christian experience,” says Dr. Wood, “but most of us haven't been taught or trained to pray laments. For a lot of people, a lament feels like heresy. God, why have you abandoned me? Well, I [feel like I] can't pray that because God can't abandon me. But what if you feel like God has actually abandoned you? What do you do then? God already knows that you are going to experience that, and He's given a slew of prayers to voice that.”

Psalm 22 is an example of this, where the psalmist writes, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?” (Ps 22:1).

“Part of that helplessness you feel,” Dr. Wood proposes, “is because no one's given you the equipment to deal with that helplessness, and the laments are part of the equipment that God gives us to deal with that sense of helplessness. One of the first things to do is prayer, but not prayer as a band-aid — maybe one of the first things you need to do is just lament.

**“And the reason we can sit with the powerlessness for a while is because we believe in a God who's eventually going to put everything to right.”**

“If we've been trained to think that we can solve every problem that we encounter, the idea of lamenting for a period of time without coming to a solution seems wrong. It's okay to lament for a while on that. It's probably a really good thing to do, to just sit with the powerlessness for a while.

“And the reason we can sit with the powerlessness for a while is because we believe in a God who's eventually going

to put everything to right. We may not see that putting to rights on this side of the veil — it may be after — but that's why we have hope. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus.” Part of the problem may be the commonly held expectation of finding a solution in the here and now. Elaborating on this idea, Wood entailed how the history of Western progress — the fact that humans have achieved so much in such a short amount of time — often tells us that we, as humans, are capable to solve our own problems. However, this is not a reality we should accept. “Sin and brokenness are just that powerful; they cannot be overcome by us,” we're reminded. “God needs to overcome them.”

Two of the things we should keep in mind as we live in this tension and press into the many problems of our world are these: “Number one, you might not be able to fix it. Number two, your solution might actually make things worse.”

At one point in the interview, a comment was made that initially raised red flags in my head. When asked where we can find God in this situation, Dr. Wood replied, “Jesus is a number among the dead . . . Jesus identifies with the weak and the poor.”

After hearing this, I voiced my unease. As Christians, we proclaim Jesus' resurrection and that He is alive. Doesn't numbering Him among the dead therefore contradict this core belief?

Dr. Wood agreed that, yes, this often does make us uncomfortable. “I do think that God is a God of the living, not of the dead,” he clarifies. “Again, the thing that plagues us is that we want the resurrection without the crucifixion. So death and life you could say are contradictory. But part of what I think imaginatively holds things together is what we are constantly called to do. So we have to hold together crucifixion and resurrection. Because if you just hold the resurrection, then you've kind of lost the entire point of being a Christian — both of those things must be held together.”

When a tragic event such as the Las Vegas Shooting occurs, it can leave many of us feeling helpless and frustrated. We live in a society where we are taught that we can fix any problem that we encounter, when realistically, we need to recognize a world of sin that will only be wholly “solved” when Jesus returns. One thing we can do until then is turn our helplessness to prayers of lament, and discover in our powerlessness the constant need for God.



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## Elise's Piece A Letter from the Editor

I know I wasn't alone in my struggle to take legible, let alone cohesive notes in a dark auditorium last Thursday night. Staged that evening was *Love, Henri*, a simple production welcoming us into the goings-on of the mind and heart of a man gifted in "seeing, and making people feel understood," as put by Henri Nouwen's archivist, Gabrielle Earnshaw.

I encourage you to read Emma Roorda's account on page 4 for a true picture of the event, but let me whet your appetite with a few remarks of my own.

Earnshaw did not downplay the difficulty of her responsibility to whittle Nouwen's 5,000 outgoing letters down to 250 for their publication in a book last year. The task itself is a remarkable one, to be sure, but so is the question she shared which guided the task: "What do people need to hear right now?"

Speaking for the Crown team, this is the same question we hope informs each publication, and I'd argue it can be asked in more ways than one. Who can we ask to share their wisdom with us? Which recent initiatives deserve our attention? How do we respond to tragic headlines as prayerful, hopeful, and overwhelmed people? What is something we ought we be asking ourselves, each other, or God more often?

A separate quote, pulled from one of Nouwen's letters, sums up part of my reaction: "There are so many things to write about, it seems hopeless to give it a start."

But we try to offer you just that — a start; an initial spark and space to think more deeply about your world, at every scale, and to dare to notice the thread of God's workmanship throughout it. This sort of sight and surrender, too, is a difficult task, but Nouwen reminds us that though "life will not be easier . . . it will be a lot more real, a lot more vital."

May this month's issue play a role in that vitality, with articles exploring a variety of issues and ideas. Student writers explore the devastation of the Las Vegas shooting, the place of childhood in the work of a guest poet, the importance of peace in the Jewish faith, and a call to be vulnerable in an increasingly hurtful world.

If we remain open, our journey through these thoughts and the countless others we encounter daily just might unite us with Nouwen in one of his truest endeavours: "I try," he reveals to a friend in one of his exchanges, "to make reading, writing, and prayer one thing."



**The Crown** is Redeemer University's campus newspaper, published monthly. As a platform for the student voice, it provides space for questions, insight, challenges and discoveries concerning our school, city, and world — all in relation to our real and growing faith in Jesus.

The opinions expressed in *The Crown* are not necessarily those of Redeemer University College's student body, faculty, or administration.

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## Common Characters

### A Message from your MICOS Rep.



ZACHARIAH CHESTER  
MICOS REPRESENTATIVE

One of my favorite places at Redeemer is the Commons. I appreciate that if you are running late for a class, you have to make a careful choice — avoiding the Commons or not. You know that at any random time you can enter into a casual conversation about school or a deep life-changing one in this place. When I got my first tour of Redeemer, it was in the Commons that I felt the Holy Spirit tug on my heart. I felt I was to come to Redeemer because there were some people I needed to talk to and some people who needed to talk to me.

My first month as a student senator at Redeemer has been full of those conversations, ranging in topic from social concerns to academic ventures. I like being able to care not just about my story, but also about the stories of others, whether we are mature, international, commuter, or off-campus students. I am amazed at how we have all become recurring characters in each other's stories, those stories that form chapters of our lives that are being written as we speak. That is something to be thankful for. We have a place to spend a set time in our lives in which we build relationships and develop our own characters, preparing to take our stories to all corners of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Thessalonians 4:6 says, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." That is a hard thing to do. How am I supposed to feel thankful when I am alone, heartbroken, and

overwhelmed with school? Well, I think that's the cool thing about being in a relationship with Jesus. Our relationship with Christ allows us to give thanks through all circumstances because we can be thankful for the love found in Him. Senate has given me an opportunity to give thanks for stories I never knew existed at Redeemer. I hear about the commuter who drives almost two hours each day to come to school. Hearing about international students' reasons for coming to Redeemer often challenges my educational view. Such encouraging and inspiring stories are plentiful at our school.

I am grateful for the chance to be at least a minor character in the stories here at Redeemer University College, and even more thankful for the opportunity to be in a position of influence through which I can encourage others to recognize the opportunity they have to be a character in this community. Finally, I am thankful for the opportunity that Senate gives me to break down barriers that prevent students from being part of the overarching story of Redeemer University College.

I know that we are looking forward to a productive school year full of conversations that are not just surface level, but have depth and meaning behind them — be it about life choices, politics, movies, worldview, family, inside jokes, or faith. I look forward to the stories not just written, but lived.

## WE'RE HIRING!

*Have a knack for writing, basic web-design, and networking?  
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**Interested in writing for us?**  
Email [thecrown@redeemer.ca](mailto:thecrown@redeemer.ca)

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## Love, Henri

### The Letters on the Spiritual Life



Photos provided by Redeemer's Marketing Dept.



Actor Joe Abby-Colborne as Henri Nouwen

EMMA ROORDA  
REPORTER

Henri Nouwen, in the words of Professor Ken Herfst, is a man who showed the importance of the human “need to love and be loved ... in a way that gives genuine hope.” It is because of Nouwen’s deep love and passion for God, others, and society that the *The Henry Nouwen Society* has made it their aim to extend Nouwen’s legacy, helping to broadly share and promote his deeply spiritual writings.

Last Tuesday, October 17, Redeemer’s Religion and Theology Department brilliantly teamed up with the *Henry Nouwen Society* to present a very moving and dramatic performance based on the archive collection of Nouwen’s personally written letters, accessed by historian Gabrielle Earnshaw.

Earnshaw, a highly acclaimed archivist, has dedicated the last 16 years of her life to “finding the gold nuggets” of Nouwen’s ideas in order to share them with others. Through dialogue and reflection on her published conglomerative book of Nouwen’s 205 letters, Earnshaw gives light to Henri Nouwen’s main ideologies and theological insights.

Last week, Redeemer students were able to witness these reflections, paired with a stunningly emotional drama presented by actor Joe Abby-Colborne, who brought the fascinating sentimentality and wisdom of the late Henri Nouwen to new levels. In addition to the insightful presentation, talented pianist and vocalist Krystyna Higgins accompanied the dialogue with her personal musical expression of Nouwen’s letters. The overall result was spectacular.

Prior to diving headfirst into dramatic readings of the letters, written throughout Nouwen’s 64 years, Earnshaw provided the full auditorium with a concise overview of his life.

This was a helpful addition to the drama-focused schedule for the evening, especially for the many young university students in attendance — an age group who would not have been alive at the time Nouwen’s writings were originally produced.

Earnshaw briefly explained that Nouwen was a Catholic priest, born and raised in the Netherlands, who, after obtaining a doctoral degree in Holland, officially began his professional career by teaching at various Ivy League schools including Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard University.

Later, he selflessly abandoned his life as a prestigious professor to work alongside a group of physically and mentally handicapped individuals through a program called L’Arche, located in Richmond Hill, Ontario. Throughout his life, Nouwen used both his professional training and unique life experiences to witness to people through emotionally heartfelt writings and intelligent rhetoric.

Out of the 205 letters that Earnshaw accessed in her research, five specific letters were chosen to be highlighted in the presentation. These letters were those which she thought accurately outlined Nouwen’s main beliefs, lifestyle, and ideologies. Aforementioned, these letters were theatrically presented by Joe Abby-Colborne. The following five excerpts from these spoken letters only begin to give positive testament to Nouwen’s character and compelling life story that, as Earnshaw described, give his readers “new life, inner peace and freedom.”

**Letter 1: The Letter to Richard** — “The many hours for prayer and meditation, the chance to read, study and write without interruptions [...] it all has been very revealing to me and made me aware that being a priest is what I really want to be in an authentic way and that in the deepening and strengthening of that vocation I find real power and joy.”

**Letter 2: The Letter to Jim** — “The first and most important task we have is to keep our eyes on God and Him alone. We will never overcome the demons by analyzing them, but only by forgetting them in our all-consuming love for God [...] demons like to be analyzed, because that keeps our attention directed to them. God wants to be loved. I am more and more convinced that the first commandment indeed needs to be first: to love God with our heart, all our soul, and our entire mind.”

**Letter 3: The Letter to Mark** — “When I think about my life and my work, I think about it more as a way of being present to people with all I have. I have always felt that the center of our faith is not that God came to take our pains away, but that He came to share them and I have always tried to manifest this divine solidarity by trying to be as present to people in their struggle as possible. It is most important to be with people where joy and pain are experienced and to have them become aware of God’s unlimited love in the midst of our limited abilities to help each other [...] To witness for Christ means to me to witness for Him with what I have seen with my own eyes, heard with my own ears and touched with my own hands.”

**Letter 4: The Letter to Marcus** — “Once I stood looking at the Grand Canyon, and when I saw the billions of years carved in stone in front of me, I felt as if the heaviness of

heart left me. Somehow, I felt very small and insignificant at the same time my introspection in my own pain turned to adoration.”

**Letter 5: The Letter to Mr. Chisholm** — “The book [Return of the Prodigal Son] could have never been written if I had not been part of a community of handicapped people. Although life in that community is not always easy, it continues to be a great source of energy and vision.”

Following the fervent enactment of these five letters, along with the heartfelt corresponding musical numbers, Karen Pascal, director of the *Henry Nouwen Society*, shared a few final thoughts regarding her appreciation for the fact that Redeemer had chosen to partner with their association. Not only was this evening an opportunity to share the message of Henri’s collective writings with a wide audience, it was particularly a way through which young university scholars could relate to Nouwen’s works — a chance for the “next generation of seekers” to benefit from his wisdom. One such student, Sydney Sequillion, stated afterward that the performance was “very powerful.” She continued on to say, “I was able to relate to Henri Nouwen in a way that I can’t even relate to with my own friends.”

Johanna Benjamins, Student Body President, found the presentation refreshing: “Nouwen brings a personal and emotional view of faith, which we need more of.”

Throughout the performance, there was an obvious intrigue from Christian students and elders alike, both learning to appreciate the wisdom of this famous educated Christian thinker. The evening’s loving, intergenerational atmosphere was one in which Henri Nouwen himself would surely have been pleased to partake.

For more information about the *Henry Nouwen Society* or insight from any of the Henri Nouwen collections, please visit [henrinouwen.org](http://henrinouwen.org).



Archivist Gabrielle Earnshaw

## Meet Poet Tonja Gunvaldsen-Klaassen

JOSHUA VOTH  
MANAGING EDITOR

Arriving in Ancaster by camper van, Tonja Gunvaldsen Klaassen, a Canadian poet from Halifax, graced Redeemer University College with her gentle presence, beautiful children, and spectacular poetry on October 19 for Redeemer's monthly poetry reading. Poetry readings at Redeemer are fun events, chock-full of dramatic readings and hearty communion. They afford us, the audience, the opportunity for a rare glimpse on the life of a Canadian poet, all while enjoying hot coffee and refreshments.

Poetry readings are more than just a "meet-and-greet." They provide students, faculty, and other attendees with a unique opportunity to listen to poems read by their writers — an experience which may be second to none. Poetry readings also encourage questions. Having attended many poetry readings throughout my time at Redeemer, questions which are helpful to the audience always come up, allowing them to learn more about the poet and their work. This is particularly valuable for those embarking on their own writing adventures.

Born in Saskatoon, Gunvaldsen Klaassen now lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia with her husband James and their three children. She won the Saskatchewan Book Award for Poetry with her first collection, titled *Clay Birds*. In 2004, her second collection, *Ör*, was shortlisted for the Pat Lowther Award and in 2005, she was awarded a CBC Literary Award for Poetry for her series *August: An Anniversary Suite*.

Much of Gunvaldsen Klaassen's work is influenced by her childhood years passed in a rural setting, an experience

that weaves itself throughout her poetry. For her, poetry is a visual art as well. Her poems are rich, honest, and involve memories of visceral experiences. One of the poems she read uncovers a scene where she accidentally witnesses the butchering of farm animals — the use of visual language in this poem generates a powerful reaction. Gunvaldsen Klaassen also spoke about her experience of becoming and being a parent and the influence it has had on her writing. She elaborated, comparing her role as a parent to the act of writing poetry — both are "a useful tool" of repetition and experience.

While her experiences play an important role in informing her imaginative poems, Gunvaldsen Klaassen reminded us that at the same time, part of the fun of poetry lies in "what goes on in behind." This is most evident in her works where subtle homages are dropped to famous folktales such as the *Three Blind Mice* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*. In regards to these folktales, Gunvaldsen Klaassen spoke about the importance of integrating storytelling into her poetry. For her, various folktales are recalled and penned in her poems because of their influence on her as a child — these were stories read to her by family members when she was quite young. Due to the connection between these tales and her childhood, memory is recalled throughout her work. Looking back can be both cathartic and painful — growing up on the farmland of Saskatchewan was hard, often filled with vice and pain — but these memories serve as a focus for her artistry.

Gunvaldsen Klaassen spoke about the importance of pursuing fear in writing in her life and in the lives of other poets around her. Through her poems and personal anecdotes, she was able to encourage her audience in sharing that

she has learned over time to take pleasure in finding fragments. She spoke about an artistic initiative she took part in which artists pass their work on to another artist. What this second artist received would inform what they would then create. Tonja had brought along her piece from this project — an old storm window with six panes of glass, each with cracks and fissures which ran their way through the glass of the old window. Poetry adorns each pane, printed on a transparent film and adhered to the window. It was a powerful, visual image of fracture and fragment but at the same time a picture of reconciliation of the past.

It was an honour to participate in this poetry reading and absorb Tonja's carefully chosen words which share her unique perspective on life. Her poetry is full of life, wisdom, intention, and mastery of craft. When read aloud, her poems are transformed, and I was wholly captured by them during this month's poetry reading.



## Recognizing Religions: Judaism in North America Become an Informed Christian by Learning about Other Faiths

EMMA ROORDA  
REPORTER

As you probably already know, Redeemer University College is a Christian educational institution. We believe in the Trinity and that Christ died on the cross, wiping away our sins and reconciling all things to Himself — this knowledge is engrained into the minds of most Redeemer students. Even though we abide in this truth, our faith in God should not limit our curiosity of what others may choose to believe. Both locally and internationally, the human race is made up of people who walk intersecting paths of differing religious faiths. Most importantly, evangelism is strengthened with knowledge of other religions. Our world is becoming a globalized planet, and I believe that it is our Christian duty to be informed of other cultures and their religious beliefs. This is why I have taken some time to look at various unique religions from all around the world. This month's 'Recognizing Religion' is Judaism.

Although the current Jewish population is relatively small in size, this significant religion has played a major role in the course of religious history. In fact, today, only about 0.2% of the world population identify as Jewish. Yet the Jewish culture and religion has paved the way for two of the most populous world religions in our current era: Christianity and Islam. It is important that scholars do not belittle the foundational effects that Judaism has had on modern monotheistic religion as a whole, and thus it is vital for researchers (like myself!) to take a closer look at what it means to be a Jewish person worshipping in a synagogue today.

One of the most well-known places of Jewish worship in North America is the Temple Emanuel located in Texas. Upon my research of Western Reformed Judaism, I came across a website ([synagogues360.org](http://synagogues360.org)) which allows online visitors to take a virtual tour of this synagogue. After studying the sacred nuances of the synagogue culture, I discovered that its spiritual significance is largely affected by the mood of the spaces of worship, the structural design of the building, and the historical artifacts that define religious practices. In recounting my online experience, I'd like to tell you a bit about what I've learned.

Upon first glance of the inside of the main area of worship, the overall mood of the sanctuary seemed to have a very calm and serene undertone. The dimmed lights and yellow glowing candles made for a very peaceful, reverent atmosphere. The intricacy of the windows allowed for a colourful, natural luminescence. The temple seemed like a place where one could quietly reflect and humbly worship God.

***Greeting someone with a genuine "shalom" implies the longer phrase "shalom aleichem," meaning "peace unto you." In fact, much of Jewish faith is centred on the idea of peace.***

The peaceful mood found inside the synagogue did not come as a shock to me as this kind of relaxed sentiment matched my prior research of this long standing monotheistic religion, especially in regards to the many occasions where I encountered the word "shalom." Shalom is a word most commonly used as a greeting, and is often mistaken for the Jewish form of "hello." Rather, this warm address translates into the English vernacular as "peace." Greeting someone with a genuine "shalom" implies the longer phrase "shalom aleichem," meaning "peace unto you." In fact, much of Jewish faith is centred on the idea of peace. Jews believe that they are God's chosen people; therefore, they are ordered to strictly uphold the Jewish law and to promote both peace and restoration across the earth.

A second notable observation during the online synagogue tour was the structural design of the building. Upon my travels, I have visited many different types of churches, yet most of these churches have been rooted in Protestantism or Catholicism. However, I unexpectedly noticed that the physical structure of the Jewish temple was similar to many Christian churches that I have visited. Although Temple Emanuel had an architectural framework of a circular dome (which was unique compared to other types of churches that I have visited), the rows of chairs, stage design, and arrangement of the stained glass windows

looked very similar to most Christian places of worship. My educated assumption is that the simplicity of this particular synagogue has much to do with the fact that it is a temple of Reformed Judaism. Much like a Catholic Christian church may be more structurally intricate juxtaposed to a Reformed Christian church, other Jewish synagogues of different denominations may have more architectural detail than Temple Emanuel.

Finally, I found it very interesting to observe that there were a number of distinct artifacts shown on the Temple Emanuel synagogue site. One artifact that caught my eye was the white drapes that hung at the very front of the sanctuary. This beautiful, four-sided group of white curtains is called a "chuppah." The chuppah is the canopy under which couples are married. Its shape symbolizes the uniting love of the wedded couple and the home they are about to begin building together. Secondly, upon each wall a line of candles — menorahs — were visible. These seven-branched candelabras are lit at the commencement of each service and radiate a dim light to the outer ring of the sanctuary. The menorah has become a very recognizable symbol of the Jewish faith. Among many others, artifacts like the menorah and the chuppah signify common Jewish rituals and cause the Jewish faith to stand out as unique among other monotheistic religions.

Although I've described many aspects of what I have seen through this eye-opening online experience, I would encourage you to take a virtual tour of this synagogue and see it for yourself! After you have taken a closer look, ask yourself these questions:

How does this change the way I view my own faith? What can I learn about Jesus from Jewish culture? How can I recognize my newfound knowledge of the Jewish religion in a valid way, ultimately using it for the glory of God?



## Humans of Redeemer

EMMA ROORDA  
REPORTER

In 2010, a man by the name of Brandon Stanton began a photographic project in New York City that would grow to become a #1 New York Times bestseller and photo blog boasting over 15 million followers worldwide. Initially, Stanton set out to create what he calls “an exhaustive catalogue of New York City’s inhabitants,” comprised of 10,000 photos plotted across a city map.

The concept took on a different form, however, as he began collecting pieces of conversation had with those he photographed. Photo captions would soon become as vital as the shots themselves, and, together, make for a captivating stream of stories, he entitled, ‘Humans of New York.’

Highlighting 6-8 Redeemer Students and Faculty each month, the Crown seeks to mimic Stanton’s idea on campus by asking a thoughtful or fun question, followed by taking a candid photo of the student, staff or faculty member included in each issue. We know that stories are powerful, so the goal here is to further uncover our own.

Scripture tells us to rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn, share the word of our testimony, and give glory to God in every season. This column is simply another means to do so and remind ourselves that our King, Jesus, is the ultimate author and finisher of our faith.

### Who is someone you are thankful for at Redeemer?



I’m thankful for Jess Schmalz. I live with her and she’s pretty awesome. At the end of the day, whether you had time to do your dishes or not, she takes them for you and cleans them and puts them all away. She just cleans up after everyone and doesn’t ever have any fuss about it, or doesn’t ever get upset about it when people don’t have time to do their chore. She takes care of us. She’s kinda like the mom... she’s awesome!



I am thankful for the environmental group here at Redeemer, SEEDS. People are really beginning to understand how beautiful the world is and that it truly needs work, but also that the work is part of the fun. For two years now people have been coming out the garden to help harvest. I am thankful for anyone willing to cooperate, really. It is great to see that people in the dorms are composting, choosing to put something in the paper bin instead of the trash, using one less plastic bag... yeah, I am thankful that through the SEEDS team, we have come a long way.



I am thankful for my friends in apartment 104, Andrew Martin and Joshua Howell. I am just appreciative of their friend support and moral support, through midterms especially. Whenever I am down or I need to talk to someone, they’re always there to lend an ear.



I am very thankful for Dr. Wood because he makes an effort not just to teach us content, but to apply it to our lives in a very meaningful way. It’s not just about passing tests and that kind of thing. It’s about living out our lives as Christians in the world that we live in. I am very thankful for teaching like that.



I’m thankful for Graham Vanderwoerd and Kyle Goforth, the two RAs I have. Ever since I got here, they have done everything they can to try and make me feel accepted and welcomed. They are really good people, fun to hang out with... they’re just nice guys.



This is a loaded question... well, I am really grateful for my dorm last year (dorm 8 with Colin Wouda and Noah Van Brenk) and into this year too. I think I feel even more grateful because this past summer I went and worked in Banff and just had terrible roommates—it was completely NOT religious. So this made me even more grateful for the really awesome community that we have as a dorm and the relationships that we’ve built together. I’m especially grateful for that.



I am a big fan of the whole Crown team. They work very hard to put together an insightful student newspaper each month. I think it is very important for any university to have a well crafted newspaper, so that’s why I am going to give a thankfulness shoutout to the newspaper team here at RUC! They’re some of the coolest kids on campus, I must say.



I would say that I am most thankful for my roommate, Nicole. We have established a good relationship and we have a lot of trust and acceptance with each other. It’s nice to be able to go home after a hard day or even a really good day at school and just be able to tell each other anything that we have going on, not worrying about us judging one another. So I’m really thankful for her because it has made transitioning better.

## Redeemer's Got Talent First Annual Event a Success



Photos provided by Redeemer's Marketing Dept.

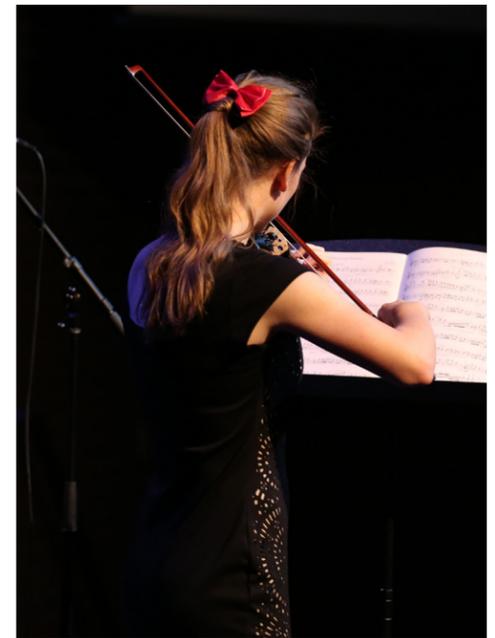


**JEREMY THUDIAN**  
ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

The Activities Committee of Student Senate had the privilege to host Redeemer's Got Talent for the first time at Redeemer University College. The event turnout was beyond our expectations! We had a variety of performance by Redeemer students, who astounded the audience and judges with their amazing talents.

For the first go, we could not have asked for better judges or performers. It was a great representation of the talents and abilities of the Redeemer student body. The performers were not expecting such a vast number of audience members. Anna Bailey, the winner, blew everyone away with her incredible piano skills. Because of the amount of interest, it is likely that Redeemer's Got Talent will be hosted next year. We thank all the judges, participants, and everyone who came out to support the event!

Follow Student Senate on Facebook and Instagram for the latest news on on-campus events.



# The Saving Power of Vulnerability

## Reflections on a Newsreport



NOAH VAN BRENK,  
STUDENT

I think it's fair to say that watching the news this past summer felt akin to being forced to ride a very fast roller coaster in complete darkness against my will. Twists and turns seemed to materialize out of thin air, and at times the news coming from the United States seemed almost too bizarre to be remotely true.

And yet, despite the plethora of media attention devoted to unpredictable matters south of the border, there is a singular image which has remained in my mind from the summer's events, and it might not be what you expect. In my attempts to keep up with world events, I stumbled across a VICE News video reporting on the campaign to liberate the Iraqi city of Mosul from ISIS control.

The last shot of the video, the shot which continues to lap at my thoughts, was of a man crouched against the wall of a cemetery, almost hidden from view by large mounds of dirt. He was weeping. He had just buried both his uncle and his father who were both killed when a mortar strike landed in their backyard, and was preparing to cross treacherous territory to return to and care for his family.

This scene suddenly and horrifyingly seemed to embody for me the stark report of Genesis 6:11 that "the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence." The Hebrew word translated here as "corrupt" literally means "destroyed" – in other words, the earth and all its inhabitants are so wicked that we render ourselves *self-destroyed*. Viewed through this lens, it was as if that man was weeping not only for his slain relatives, but also for all of humankind. What image of human self-destruction is more apt than a graveyard where people exterminated by other people are buried in droves? His tears seemed to whisper, *what have we done?* What do we continue to do?

**What image of human self-destruction is more apt than a graveyard where people exterminated by other people are buried in droves? His tears seemed to whisper, what have we done? What do we continue to do?**

Moved, and more than a little disturbed, I began to reflect on the gravity of our wickedness as humans and how our inherent self-destructions manifest themselves. I thought

of Yehiel De-Nur, an Auschwitz survivor called to testify at the trial of Adolf Eichmann, who broke down when he saw Eichmann in court.

When asked why he fell apart, Yehiel replied, "When I walked in and saw him I suddenly realized he was no demon or superman, he was an ordinary human being exactly like me. And I suddenly became terrified about myself, I saw that I am capable of the very same things." How often are we afraid of ourselves, of what we're capable of? How often, when we feel threatened, do we turn on those around us, violating others with our words and actions in order to protect ourselves? Worse yet, how can we ever expect to break our cycles of self-destruction?

***The non-vulnerability of self-seeking violence guarantees destruction, while the risk of destruction in vulnerability can very well lead to restoration and healing.***

And yet, in the midst of all of these difficult reflections, I am reminded that the person of Christ presents the solution to our despair, albeit a counter-intuitive one: vulnerability. His willingness to make Himself helpless for our sakes is what ultimately saves us from our fallen conditions.

What's more, the cross demonstrates that the Lord's vulnerability is both limitless and completely effective in its purpose – He was willing to subject himself to torture, humiliation, death, and even separation from Himself in order that we might be reconciled to Him and freed from our self-destruction and self-contradictions. What could be more vulnerable than such a sacrifice? What could be a better triumph?

It seems to me that if we are to have any chance of living life to the full as Jesus promises, we must follow His example by working to be vulnerable with each other and with God. I will admit, I find this as sobering and daunting as anyone, and perhaps even more so – to be vulnerable is to risk being wounded, and possibly even destroyed. Crucially, however, this destruction is by no means inevitable; Genesis 6 makes it clear that the non-vulnerability of self-seeking violence guarantees destruction, while the risk of destruction in vulnerability can very well lead to restoration and healing.

Thus I am becoming increasingly convinced of the utter essentiality of vulnerability for living, a conviction that is ever so slowly overcoming my fear.

We live in an age where angry rhetoric has reached intense heights, and violence of all kinds erupts across racial, intellectual, and social lines. It is brutally difficult to be vulnerable. Yet I am comforted by the thought that Christ was raised wounded, meaning that He continues to suffer and be vulnerable on behalf of the world. Just as He fulfills our human side of the covenant agreement for us, so too is He vulnerable on our behalf when we can't be. The psalmist recounts how the Lord collects each of our tears in a bottle and records them in his book (Ps 56:8) – plainly our vulnerability is precious to him.

So as you continue on in your studies or work this semester, I encourage you to make attempts to be vulnerable with God, with yourself, and with others, even if it seems impossible or incredibly perilous. I have no clear idea what this kind of vulnerability looks like for each of us. We certainly do not need to submit to crucifixion – Christ has already done that – but I have some sense that it involves sharing the depths of our hurts with each other instead of lashing out in anger and self-protection.

***Just as [Jesus] fulfills our human side of the covenant agreement for us, so too is He vulnerable on our behalf when we can't be.***

Christ promises that if we lay down our lives for Him, if we make ourselves vulnerable, we will find our lives more liberating and filled with joy than we could ever imagine. It's because He has been so limitlessly vulnerable for us that we can begin to be vulnerable with ourselves and each other, and in doing so experience and enjoy abundant life. Let's attempt to be vulnerable – what do we have to lose?

Redeemer University College is crowded with globally-minded citizens. Over the years, many students have taken a leap of faith and spent time visiting or living among an unfamiliar culture. Throughout the 2017-2018 academic school year, the Crown will be checking in with some of these courageous students who have chosen to follow the call to a new place. So come, learn from these God-fearing individuals, and join them as they discover the beautiful diversity here on planet earth.

## Laura and Cam Phillips Alumni YWAM-ing in Winnipeg

KRISTEN BORGDORFF  
REPORTER

Seeing alumni using their Redeemer degrees to further the work of God's Kingdom is incredibly encouraging and inspiring. Two such alumni are Laura and Cam Phillips, married in September 2016. The couple recently made the move to Winnipeg as a response to Jesus calling them to a life of serving and learning together. As a community, we can be thankful for people like Laura and Cam, who are examples and role models for current students to look up to. This month, the Crown has contacted Laura and Cam to ask them for an update on their service. They pointed us towards this recently published blog post. If you would like to continue following Laura and Cam on their adventures, you can read their blog at [cam-laura.tumblr.com](http://cam-laura.tumblr.com). There is also a link on their website if you would like to financially support them.



### 2 WEEKS IN WINNIPEG & LOTS TO THINK ABOUT CAM ('14) AND LAURA ('15) PHILLIPS

After almost two weeks of joining the YWAM School of Peace & Justice (SOPJ) here in Winnipeg, it's time for me to share my first blog post of my experiences. This [blog] will be a space where I reflect on classroom sessions, my project and book reports, our weekly outreaches to inner city kids, our experiences living in Chiara House (an affordable apartment building for people from low-income backgrounds and mental illnesses), and what I feel God is showing and teaching me through all of these experiences. I hope this can be a dialogue with fellow students and staff of the SOPJ, people I'm getting to know here in Winnipeg, and friends and family around the world.

When Laura and I first settled into the Spence neighbourhood in the West End of Winnipeg, we marvelled at how beautiful it is. Large, leafy trees seem to line almost every residential street. We noticed the cultural diversity in our neighbours and the number of unique restaurants within walking distance. It wasn't until our first guided walk around the neighbourhood that we began to notice the pain and struggle evident in the streets of the community. We noticed discarded syringes and condoms on the sidewalk. We saw many buildings with boarded up windows. We noticed that there were at least three pawn shops within a block of each other. We noticed that an apartment building down the street had been in the news recently for a case of sex trafficking. We saw a young First Nations man sleeping in the lawn of the church next to our apartment. We saw another man carrying his entire life possessions in a shopping cart.

Poverty is hell, and seeing it firsthand is hard. It can be easy to become numb to it, or think of yourself as superior because of your wealth and privilege. It's easy to see wealthier, prosperous people and think "they have it together."

And yet I am reminded that this brokenness and pain is also prevalent in our society's middle and upper classes — it just takes different forms. We can obsess over making as much money as possible, only to miss out on important and intimate moments with friends and family. We can put our hope and trust in the latest gadgets, only to let them collect dust in our closets and basements. We can move to quiet, gated communities, only to grow isolated, detached, and unaware of who are next door neighbours even are. We can make our country, our weapons, our Prime Ministers and Presidents to be the last great hope in the world. We can be quick to judge each other based on ethnicity, profession, and physical appearance. We can be quick to think that we aren't as bad as that politician, or that criminal, or that guy on the corner asking for change.

I am learning that we are all mutually broken and have missed the mark in some way. I am learning that the people in this neighbourhood have a lot to teach me about my own brokenness and sin. I am learning to see Jesus in neighbourhood kids, in the eyes of the man asking for change outside of the 7-Eleven, and in my neighbours of Chiara House. I am learning to see the Gospel not just as our souls being saved from Hell, but our bodies and our lives being changed here and now.

I'm also learning to see different ways of doing church, and that the word "church" certainly does not mean a physical building. Little Flowers Community is a house church planted by Jamie and Kim, connected to YWAM and Mennonite Church Manitoba. It was a privilege to get to eat, worship, and learn alongside people from the neighbourhood. This experience at Little Flowers Community was an important introduction to the topics we would go on to learn about in the week.

In the classroom (a.k.a. Kim and Jamie's living room), I've been reminded through Jamie's teaching on God's Shalom that Jesus didn't just come to die for us. He also came to teach us how to live. Jesus has come to restore our relationship with God, with ourselves, with each other, and with creation. His death and resurrection show us through the Good News that another way of living is possible, and that the Kingdom of Heaven is both now and not yet.

And how do we express this Good News? One way I've learned this week is through radical hospitality. Jamie taught us that hospitality was once central to the ecclesiology of the church. Welcoming all people in for food and rest was of great importance to the early Christians, but has been lost due to nominal beliefs and the institutionalization of hotels, etc. I was also very challenged through watching the film *Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story*. Her story of starting the Catholic Worker Movement with Peter Maurin can often be idealized and romanticized. The film showed us how much sacrifice was made by her and other Christians to care for the poor and marginalized in New York during the Great Depression.

I felt like her life story was the perfect segue into Kim's talk on gender inequality. Kim shared her passion for women's equality and her own personal struggle of being a woman in ministry. She shared that it wasn't through any feminist literature or movements that made her long for equality, but through Jesus himself. For it was Jesus who so often broke traditional, societal bounds to show women that they were loved. Heck, the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection were women! This would have been such a scandal in that culture, and it still can be today. I am thankful to have Kim leading this school and for her passion and insight on topics like this.

With these teachings in mind, we headed into our first week of getting more involved in the neighbourhood. Our first day of volunteering with kids in the neighbourhood was tiring and frustrating, but also life giving and incredibly eye opening. They loved to run around, play basketball, and sometimes get into fights with us and each other.

It was easy to get frustrated and overwhelmed, but a small moment making crafts with some of them reminded me of the peace and grace I needed to show them. During craft time I was lifting a stack of paper off of a table to give to a particularly fidgety and loud little boy. When he turned around and saw my arms in the air, his immediate reaction was to cower and protect his face. My heart immediately broke. Was this a reality for him at home? Were adult hands raised in the air a symbol of danger or hurt for him? It is little moments like these that remind me of the hospitality and grace I need to show to people, no matter how difficult they can be.

We also had a chance to get involved in the neighbourhood through the 7th annual March for Peace in the West End organized by various neighbourhood associations and organizations. This march, originally inspired by the levels of violence in the neighbourhood, seeks to end the culture of violence and hostility today. It was beautiful to see such a diverse group of people coming together in the name of peace. I was encouraged to see so many of the kids we were volunteering with join us in the march. I was also encouraged to see the First Nations women in leadership who organized and led the event.

I'm looking forward to these next months of learning, living, and growing in this community. I look forward to the joys and challenges that lie ahead, and to truly learn what it means to live justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

OCTOBER 2017 // thecrown.ca

## Restless Spirit Haunts Redeemer A Spooky Satire

NICK OVERGAAUW  
STUDENT

Redeemer campus is on somewhat-higher-than-normal alert after the appearance of a ghost late at night on the sixteenth of October. The Ghostbusters were immediately contacted, but as Redeemer's resident paranormal expert — and their cheapest option — I took it upon myself to investigate these strange happenings myself and report on my findings.

Initial contact with the ghost took place in the library. Two students, who wished to remain anonymous, relayed the events to me. While studying quietly, the temperature suddenly dropped and a rattling of office equipment was heard. "We went to the front desk to complain, but there was no one there," says one of the witnesses. "We went looking for them, but only found a glowing dude looking through old yearbooks. I think he was humming 'In Christ Alone.'" The person manning the front desk was found five minutes later exiting the washroom, but it's the former half of this account that interested me. I now had a location in which to contact the ghost.

Generally, when attempting to talk to spirits, one uses a Ouija board. Unfortunately, I could not find one at all on Redeemer's campus (strangely enough, while asking around I had many people tell me they'd be praying for me). Being pressed for time (Crown articles had to be in by the twentieth), I was forced to use my Scrabble board instead. I set it up in the library, near where the two students had seen the ghost, and waited for it to appear. Thankfully, it did not take long.

The ghost appeared across the board from me and began to

remove letter tiles from the bag. I took this as a good time to start my interview. "Who are you?" I asked the spirit using my best reporter/fortune-teller voice. The ghost began to move tiles onto the board. It used eight letters instead of seven, but I decided to let the blatant cheating slide. When it was done, the word read KRYGSMAN. A good word, 113 points on the double and triple word score.

Now, for those of you who don't know, "Krygsman" refers to the most recent president of Redeemer who left early last year. I was shocked to see the ghost identify as him, mostly because Dr. Hubert Krygsman is still alive. I asked the ghost if he knew that he was a little, well, early. After all, ghosts normally come after a person's death. The ghost, however, seemed more interested in playing Scrabble, leaving me to wonder if he was actually declaring himself to be Dr. Krygsman or if he just had a really good idea for a word. The ghost's next word, "narwhals" (also on a triple word score), contributed to my befuddlement (another word he used later on, racking up even more points). Needless to say, I lost that Scrabble game.

That same night, I attempted to contact Dr. Krygsman personally to determine if he was actually alive. Thankfully, he was, although he didn't seem to be too pleased about my calling him at two in the morning.

This was when I started to formulate theories about the ghost. My first was that Dr. Krygsman is a time-traveller who died in the past, leaving his ghost to exist concurrently with himself. This is, admittedly, slightly farfetched. My second theory was that the ghost isn't actually Dr. Krygsman. But if so, then whose spirit mournfully roams the twilight corridors of Redeemer?



At the end of the day, I had to admit that I didn't know what to do about the ghost. Restless spirits usually have unfinished business to attend to before moving on. In Dr. Krygsman's case, I believe this business is the vengeful murder of any future president. However, since it's starting to seem like we won't be getting a new president for another decade or so, I think it's safe to leave the ghost be. Whether it's Dr. Krygsman or not, the ghost is peaceful for now and far be it from me to end a poor lost soul's afterlife. Not to mention that I would need to burn the spirit's earthly remains in order to get rid of it. It could get awkward if I tried that on Dr. Krygsman.

Unfortunately, neither my research nor my final conclusion impressed Redeemer's Board or Student Senate. Ultimately, they decided not to pay me for my services.

— Signing out, Nick OverGHOUL

## #INKtober Students take on the Instagram Challenge

EMMA ROORDA  
REPORTER



Bethany Boville (@beth.b.artist)

I call this "The Huntsman" — I've been following a series of fantasy character inspiration prompts this October. For this piece, I was thinking a lot about what a huntsman looks like in different magical works, but also the Canadian hunter. So in the end I have this sort of mythological Canadian huntsman who carries magic wands and wears an oxygen tank. The prompts are always hard because I want to create a new way of interpreting classical characters. Working in black in white was also a challenge because it really changes how you make a composition.

Eight years ago, a man by the name of Jake Parker challenged himself to draw using ink as his sole medium for the month of October. This challenge has now become a worldwide fad, changing the face of artisans distributing their work in the media world today. Three highly skilled students here at RUC (Bethany Boville, Jocelyn Boville, and Emma Vanderploeg) have followed in the footsteps of Jake Parker and hopped on board the INKtober initiative this month.

*"You can do it daily, or go the half-marathon route and post every other day, or just do the 5K and post once a week. Whatever you decide, just be consistent with it. INKtober is about growing and improving and forming positive habits, so the more you're consistent the better. That's it! Now go make something beautiful" (Jake Parker).*



Emma Vanderploeg (@emmascreative)

I like to call this drawing "The Happy Hipster" because really, what hipster isn't happy with a fancy cup of coffee? I found the biggest struggle with this drawing was where to place the coffee and the hands. That's really why I'm doing the INKtober challenge, so I can work on improving my drawing composition skills. It's not to try to draw every day, I already do enough of that on my notes during class!



Jocelyn Boville (@penofjocelynboville)

This year I followed a set of prompt words from #mosseryinktober and the word for the day was "write." I wanted to illustrate how writing can bring life, growth, and flourishing. One of the hardest parts about drawing with pen is that the artwork can feel very flat, so I am trying to push myself this year to add depth to my work. I've also been thinking a lot more about the meaning of the daily prompt words and striving to create interesting and thought provoking artwork.

# Athlete Spotlight

## Get to know your Royals!

KRISTEN BORG DORFF  
REPORTER

Every month, since 2011, the Redeemer Athletics Department chooses one male and one female athlete that have shown exceptional skill, sportsmanlike attitude, and have all around earned a place in the spotlight. We had the opportunity to sit down with this month's athletes a few questions to allow you to get to know our Redeemer Royals in a different light.



RACHEL HOEKSTRA

**When did you start running?**

Ever since I was little. The first time I had an opportunity to run a cross country race, I ran. So it's always been a thing in my life.

**What's your major?**

I'm double majoring in French and Psychology.

**What's your favourite book?**

*Handle With Care* by Jodi Picoult.

**What's one thing you've crossed off your bucket list?**

Hiking along the coast of Italy.

**If you could only eat one food every day for the rest of your life, what would it be?**

Peanut butter!

**What's your favourite form of potato?**

All potatoes are great, they may be my favourite food... hash browns.

**What does it mean to you to have been chosen as the Redeemer Athlete of the Month?**

It's an honour because hard work pays off.



RYLEY CRIBBIN

**How did you start playing?**

When I was three is when I started playing soccer, Kiddie Kickers in my small town.

**What's your major?**

Phys. Ed. with a Minor in Geography.

**If you could only eat one food every day for the rest of your life what would it be?**

Chocolate ice cream.

**Cats or dogs?**

Dogs.

**What's one thing on your bucket list?**

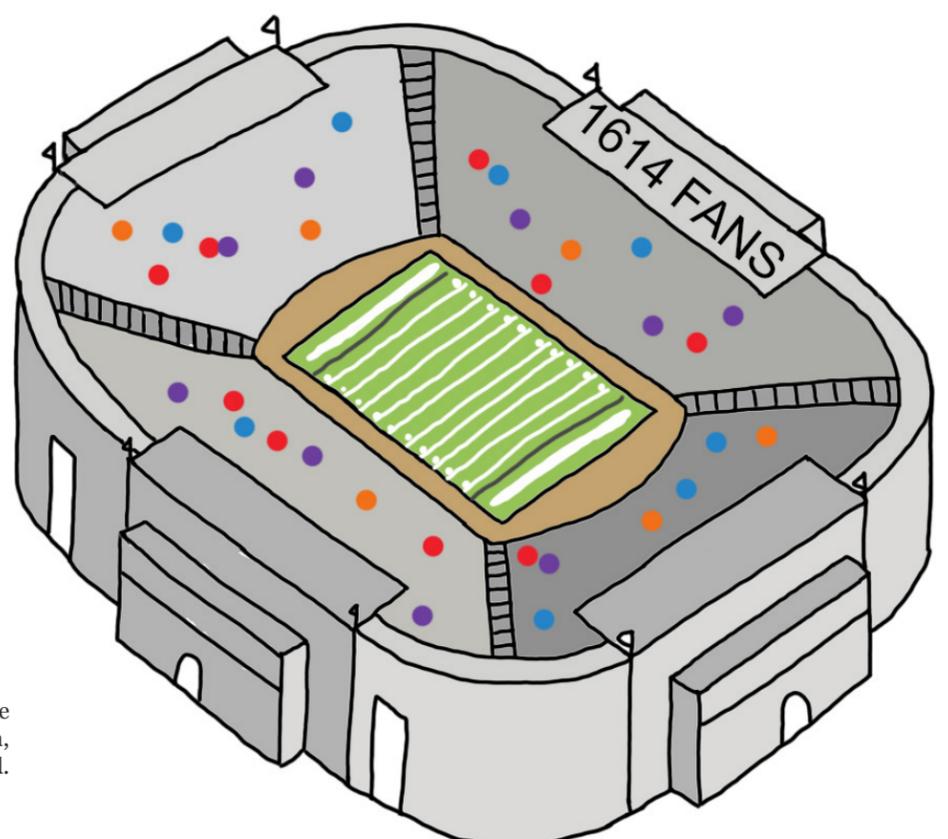
Skydiving.

**If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be? Why?**

Norway. I don't know, I've always just wanted to go to Norway... I have no idea why.

**What does it mean to you to be a Redeemer Royal?**

It gets you connected to the school and helps you make friends. Being in athletics is important to me, so it's nice.

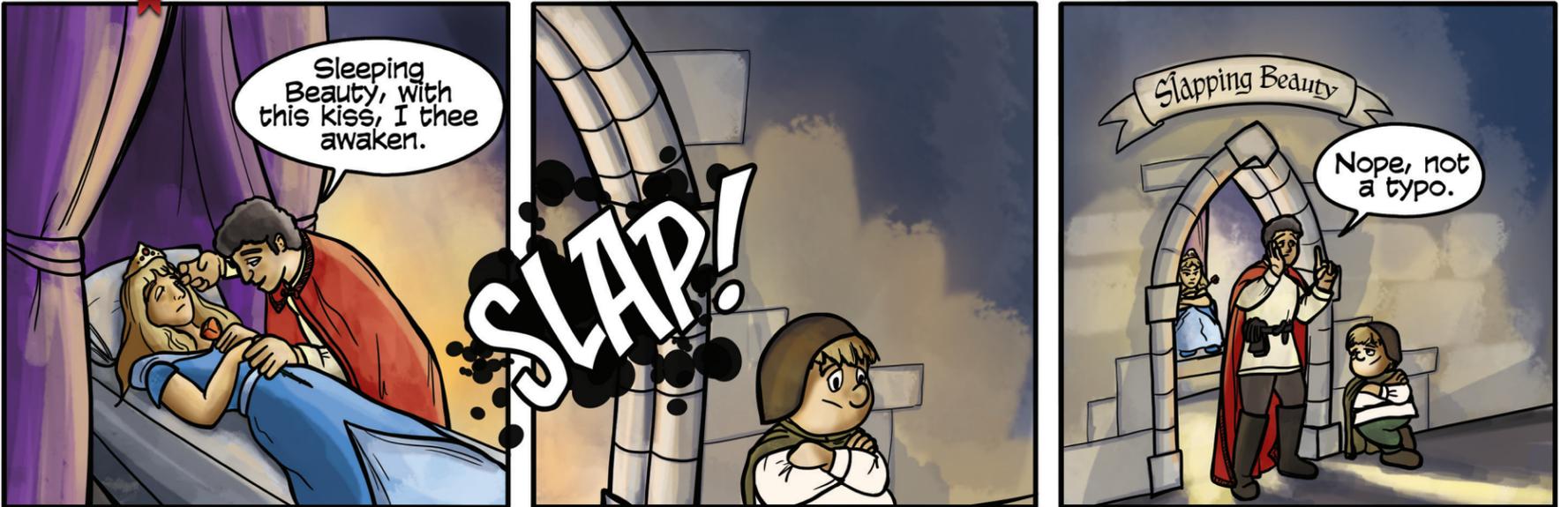


This year, The Crown will be tracking Redeemer's goal of seeing 10,000 fans come to our home games. This unique graphic tracks our fans per month. Each month, more dots (fans) will be added to the stadium, representing the goal we've reached. Go Royals GO!



By the Brothers  
**MOOGK-SOULIS**

www.PostScriptComic.com



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