

Note from the Elders...

Dear brothers and sisters of the congregation, now that we are without a pastor for a time, the Worship Committee and the Council are working hard to ensure that we continue to be led well in worship. For example, we will be drawing on a list of Council members and other members of the congregation to introduce the service, conduct appropriate litanies and transitions, and lead the sharing of joys and concerns each Sunday morning.

Concerning the Lord's Table, we hope to continue to celebrate communion once a month in the morning (Lord willing, the second Sunday) and every other month in the evening as we are able (Lord willing, the fourth Sunday). Our classis is providing preachers through

classical appointment those weeks while we are without a pastor.

We are celebrating Thanksgiving Day together with First Christian Reformed Church here in town on Wednesday evening, November 22, at 7:00 PM. (See invitation below.) We will not have a service at Covenant on Thanksgiving Day, November 23.

-Sanneke Kok

On behalf of the elders at First CRC of Sioux Center, we cordially invite your congregation to join us on Wednesday, November 22, at 7:00 PM for our Thanksgiving worship service, led by Dr. Jason Lief. An offering will be taken for various causes designated by our members. Refreshments will be served following the service.

Thank You!

We've recently received these notes of appreciation from ministries that we support.



Thank you, for sharing your offering with Siouxland Habitat for Humanity. We are thankful for your congregation's financial and volunteer support in helping families in need of housing experience God's love. We praise God for your faith in action and your partnership in His Kingdom.

Autumn is a time of transition with leaves changing color, cooler temperatures, and children returning to school. The changing seasons are a reminder that we serve a faithful God. That same God has been faithful to the Luke Society for more than 50 years and Covenant CRC has played an important role in that. Thank you for your recent gift and for your continued support which enables the Gospel message to go out through Christian doctors and nurses around the world.





Becca's Back in School

I began working at Covenant about three years ago as the worship coordinator. Prior to that, I taught for three years at Unity Christian High School, worked at the Fruited Plain for three years, and taught in Maryland for three years.

Uh, I probably shouldn't say that. It looks like I'm about to announce my resignation. I'm not!

What I want to announce is that I've gone back to school, sort of. In August, Jill Friend, who is employed by Faith Formation Ministries of the Christian Reformed Church, was asked by the **CRC's director of Worship Ministries for recommendations of individuals to participate in a CRC cohort working towards a free online certificate in worship leadership through Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama.** She gave them my name, I applied, and just finished my **first course, entitled "Introduction to Worship Leadership."** Next up: **"Designing Creative Worship."**

This certificate is a nine-month commitment of about 8-10 hours of work per week and includes participants from across the US and Canada from diverse backgrounds and denominations. We have textbooks, listen to online lectures, participate in online discussions, and complete some more formal assessment. In addition, the CRC cohort will meet via video after each course for discussion focused on the CRC context. This cohort idea is a pilot program funded by Worship Ministries of the CRC.

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The weather was a bit cool and drizzly for the Big Apple Press on October 14, but it was still a day full of fun, great fellowship while working together, and gallons of delicious, freshly-pressed apple cider.

Becca's Back in School

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The CRC was particularly looking for volunteers and part-time staff who have a significant role in the planning of worship in a CRC worshiping community and have not had the opportunity to take any formal worship classes. To be honest, since the first Sunday after I started working at Covenant (it was a bilingual service with Amistad), I knew I wanted and needed to learn more about the theology of worship and worship leadership. **But as they say, Sunday's keep on coming, and I tend to spend more time and energy on what needs to get done for the next Sunday as opposed to taking a step back and digging deeper—especially if I have to do that on my own. So I've been so grateful for the mentoring and accountability that has accompanied the first course and will no doubt continue.**

I'm so thankful to Jill for recommending me, to the deacons for the initial funding and to Worship Ministries of the CRC for the opportunity and for funding it (once completed).

Here's a quote, from among so many that I've read or heard in the lectures, that keeps me wanting to learn and read and talk more about worship. This one is from Constance M. Cherry in *The Worship Architect*:

“ . . . perhaps this truthful story of God that is enacted in our worship is one of the most critical needs in our postmodern world. We live in a time when there are many stories vying for meaning. As Webber so directly asks, ‘Who gets to narrate the world?’ The very idea that there is a metanarrative (a major rendition of truth that is generally acknowledged and accepted by culture) is

all but gone... Instead, ‘Today, as in the ancient era, the church is confronted by a host of master narratives that contradict and compete with the gospel. The pressing question is: **Who gets to narrate the world?**’ When we tell the story of God by the sequence of worship movements, we seize the opportunity to narrate the world. People **may not explicitly recognize God's story in the pattern of our worship, but in time there is the opportunity for the truth to be caught as well as taught. Proclamation is not only verbal. God's narrative is proclaimed when biblical worship unfolds.**”

I am excited to see how we as the congregation of Covenant, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, can continue to narrate the world together in worship and then go out to proclaim the gospel each week.

-Rebecca DeVries



Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!



Pete and Betty Vander Plaats announce the birth of Aaron Ryan Vander Plaats, son of Ryan and Rebecca Vander Plaats of Athens, GA. He weighed 10lb 6oz and was 23 ½ inches long. Coming from Georgia, they suspect he will be a Bull dawg instead of a Defender.

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Jan B	16	Lauren VP	26	Georgina Gracia Kate H David T
2	Jeananne Kuiper	20	Verne M Kellan T		
3	Troy Bierma Natalie B Mary P		Duane & Jan B Paul & Ruth C	27	Bella D Tim K Ryan Z
4	Austen G	21	Cambri Z Alejandro & Isabel C Erik & Robin I		Phil & Marilyn M Jerry & Shonna P
7	Jan V			28	Neil Collins MC Doug & Marge DB
8	Rebecca DS	23	Bob DS Sadie L Ryan & Tiffany P	29	Laremy DV Hannah L Jasper & Phyllis L
12	Priya Bierma	24	Louisa DV		
14	Mark C Nancy VB	25	Cara H	30	Esteban Gracia Jocelyn Z Ed & Mary D
15	Teo Crull				



Offering Schedule

November 5
 AM General/Building Fund
 PM World Renew: World Hunger Campaign

November 12
 AM Christian Education Fund,
 Compassion Fund
 PM The Bridge

November 19
 AM Missions Fund
 PM Calvin Seminary

November 26
 AM Thanksgiving Offering
 PM Tuition Assistance

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Pastoral Group Dinner Schedule



October 29 Friend/Bajema
 November 5 Kok/Christians
 November 12 Schelhaas/Mellema
 November 19 Holtrop/Oostra

Worship Schedule

November 5 Teaching Service
 November 12 Teaching Service
 November 19 Teaching Service
 November 22 Joint Thanksgiving Service
 with First CRC (7:00 PM)
 November 26 No evening service

November Assignments

Here are the assignments for members to “practice hospitality” this month...
Remember to wear your name badges!



Nursery

Parents of the month: Tom & Ruth C

November 5

AM INF Doug & Marge DB, Robin F
TODDLER Ryan & Angela H, Adam F
PM Dave & Jan V, Lee R

November 12

AM INF Ruth C, Laura Janssen
TODDLER Paul C, Eldon & Marcia W
PM Jake & Trena VW, Pam & Dennis DJ

November 19

AM INF Alejandro & Isabel C, Megan H
TODDLER Ron & Carol O, Rob H
PM Ryan & Val Z, Bob & Rebecca DS

November 26

AM INF Nick B, Rachel L
TODDLER Jenni B, Andy L

December 3

AM INF Erik H, Lisa C
TODDLER Barb H, Mark C
PM Don & Sherri TN, Lee & Jenni M

** Please note the article about nursery scheduling on page 7!*

Do you consider yourself a snowbird?
Are you planning on taking off for a month or two or for most of the winter? Please notify the office **with the dates you'll be gone and I will avoid scheduling you during that time!**



Coffee Servers

Wil A, Tina D, Sharon D,
George F, John K, Merrill MC,



Greeters

AM Ed B, Dane H, Zoe H
PM Luanne G, Sherri TN, John Z



Ushers

AM Erik H, Shirley T, Dave V
PM Bernie DW, Marv W

Substitutes

If you are unable to serve on your assigned date for coffee, usher, or greeter, contact

Mark C, Rin G, Cheri H,
Andy L, Verne M, Lee R

Courier Copy—It's up to you!

The *Courier* is issued monthly at Covenant church. If you have copy that you wish to be included, send it to the church office. Each issue is distributed on the last Sunday of the month. Copy deadline is Monday, November 20 for the December issue.

Notes from the Deacons

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.” (Romans 12:11)

If anyone has ever had an opportunity to have a house visit with Dave Schelhaas as their elder, then they’ve probably heard these words read by him at one time or another. Serving as a deacon in our pastoral group with Dave Schelhaas has been a great experience for me in the past year and a half. I’ve heard the words of Romans 12 read numerous times in our house visits. Yet, each time this scripture is read in a house visit, we ask what jumps out to those who were listening and nearly every time a different verse is chosen.

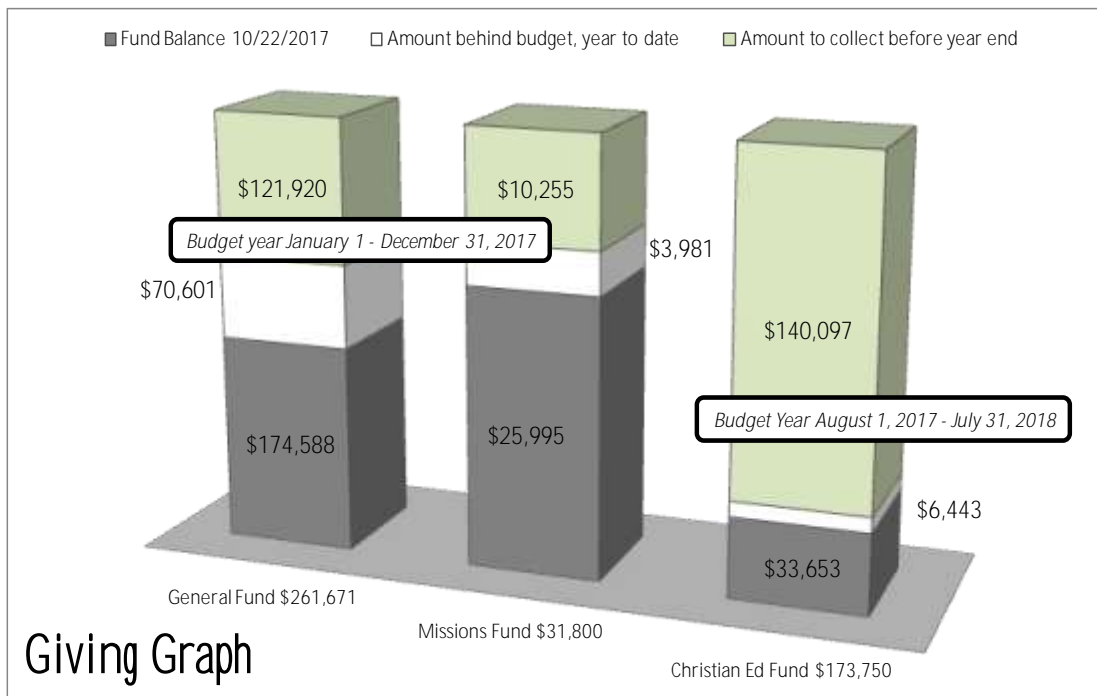
Romans 12:11 jumps out to me as my favorite from Romans 12. But, how do we keep our

spiritual fervor, serving the Lord?

As a parent I catch myself saying “no” and “don’t” many times throughout the week when talking to my children, and now as a deacon, I realize how many times I was saying “no” or “I’m not going to” to serving the Lord within our church.

Prior to the first few house visits I went on with Dave, he’d ask if I wanted to go on these house visits with him. The answer in my head was always “no,” but I would look at Dave with a smile and say, “No, Dave, I really don’t want to, but I feel this is a great opportunity for me to learn. So, yes.” Before every house visit I questioned myself, “What can I bring to the visit?” Since most of the families I’m visiting have had a family member who was an

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Notes from the Deacons

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elder or deacon at one time, I feel like I don't have a lot to offer.


It's hard to serve the Lord when sometimes we feel we are unable to contribute. Recently our congregation had the chance to serve the Lord by climbing on a roof to help shingle the **Mouw's house. Though the number of helpers** was low, each person there was serving in a different form that eventually helped finish the goal. Some were climbing on a wet roof, hoping not to fall, while others were clinging to a ladder and doing their part, even though they had a fear of heights, and others preferred to stay grounded the entire time to clean the debris left on the ground.

I think of those who were not part of the roof project and missed a chance to serve. It also makes me wonder how many opportunities my family and I have had to serve in other areas that our church provided, but that we missed. I believe that we are not only getting a chance to serve the Lord, but we can also use these times of service to build community **within our church. It's a wonderful time to build a relationship with other members, and in doing so, we're strengthening our congregation.** Not only are we providing service to others, but we are also becoming unified as a church.

On November 4, the Building Committee has asked that the congregation take some time on a Saturday morning to help clean the inside of the parsonage and outside of the church and parsonage. Yes, you might get dirty. Yes, you might have to get on your knees and pull **some weeds or scrub a floor. Yes, there's a** chance you could be a little sore the next

day, but remember that we are doing this to **serve. If you can't be a part of the cleanup** process, the deacons want to encourage everyone to come out anyway to be a part of the fellowship. Even though you think you might not be able to contribute, you are already being an example of service and are strengthening the core of our congregation by just being there.

-Lee Mellema



In an effort to use people efficiently and not schedule more helpers than are needed (but still **honor our church's** Safe Church Policy), we are going to try scheduling one less family in the morning nursery when there are families scheduled with children old enough to be helpful in caring for our kids. The nursery committee will continue to monitor this to make sure we have enough workers to adequately care for our young ones. If you have feedback, **feel free to talk to one of them, and if you'd** like to be added to the nursery schedule, contact Sara in the church office.

From Classis Iakota...

Classis Iakota has convened a Church Plant Committee to explore the possibility of a new church on the west side of Sioux Falls and in other growing communities in South Dakota **like Chamberlain. Please pray for God's guidance** to begin a new church that will reach people who are not yet Christians and to rekindle faith in the life of people who have distanced themselves from church life.

10 Ways to Pray about Hunger

As we continue to fill our Peter Fish in preparation for World Hunger Sunday on November 5, here are some ways to pray for those we are helping to feed. (Reprinted from World Renew)

1. Pray for participants of World Renew and its partner Angkar for Development of Rural Areas' (KADRA) alcohol awareness program in Cambodia.
2. **Pray for children living in rural Guatemala. Many parents don't understand the importance** of education for their children. World Renew seeks to work with some of the most isolated regions to encourage education, among other areas such as health, and agriculture.
3. Pray for families like the Ramos family who has been working diligently in Honduras to **implement what they have learned through World Renew's sustainable livelihoods program**. The family has established a home garden, growing cucumbers, onions, green peppers, and more. Pray that their garden not only supplies them with healthy food, but also extra income from selling it at the market.
4. Pray for adequate rain in Kenya. Dry conditions have left millions of citizens without enough food. Pray that enough rain will come for farmers to yield a harvest from the seeds they have received from World Renew.
5. **Pray for girls in Malawi who are participating in World Renew's business and entrepreneurship training**. Many of these girls are learning new ways to earn income so that they can leave transactional sex.
6. Pray for farmers like Lyop who are learning new techniques to grow spices in Nigeria. Her family has been struggling to make ends meet and through training with World Renew she has been able to grow enough turmeric and fennel to sell to a spice processing company.
7. **Pray for World Renew's village savings and loans (VSLA) program in Sierra Leone. The program assists mothers like Kadiatu who aren't able to earn enough income to cover basic** needs for their families. Kadiatu and her husband have five children and struggled to provide two meals a day for their family to eat. Through the VSLA program she has been able to take a loan to grow her business selling house-hold goods.
8. Pray for families who have been displaced due to war in Syria. Ahmad and his family were forced to move four times before crossing the border into Lebanon. Work has been hard to find and it has been difficult to pay rent and provide food for his family. Thankfully, Ahmad was connected to a local church partnering with World Renew to supply food vouchers, but the struggle continues as more families are forced to flee their homes.
9. Pray for conservation agriculture techniques being taught in Tanzania. A farmer agreed to use his land as a demonstration plot to show how techniques such as spacing, manure, and intercropping could improve harvest. In the past the land usually produced 2-7 bags of maize. Now, it has been able to harvest 18 bags! Praise God!
10. Pray for refugees fleeing from South Sudan amid recent violence. Bidibidi, a resettlement area, in Uganda has become home to nearly 300,000 refugees. World Renew is building latrines for those who have been displaced. The latrines will help them guard against diseases like cholera and typhoid.