

Chili & Cinnamon Roll Cook-Off

Let's have dinner together at church on Friday, January 26 at 5:30 PM! Bring a pot of chili or pan of cinnamon rolls to share and enter into the contest. (Covenant will provide necessary chili toppings.) We will eat potluck style and then vote secretly for our favorites. Winners will receive a major award. If you want to participate like a pro, bring a muffin tin to eat multiple chilis from. Kids are welcome and there will be board games to play afterward for anyone that wants to stay.

If you plan on participating, please sign up either after church or by emailing Laura Janssen at laurajanssen2@gmail.com. If you have any questions, contact Laura.



From the Elders...

Dear Covenant brothers and sisters,

As elders, we want to let you know that we continue to be busy, often behind the scenes, working with Sara and Rebecca and many others in the congregation to ensure that regular preaching and fellowship keep happening even as we are not led by a pastor at this time.

Thanks to all who attended the Young People's lasagna supper and the congregational meeting. Thanks to all of you who filled out church profile surveys and attended the Covenant Sunday Morning discussion session on the second service. We need and appreciate your thoughts. Your input helps us as we proceed in planning for continued worship and fellowship.

As we search for a new pastor and deal with other matters pertaining to our congregation, we ask for your prayers that God may continue to lead us as elders, deacons, and congregation. Please feel free to contact the council members with any questions or comments.

We're so grateful for our guest preachers and all the members of the church staff and volunteers from the congregation who have helped

(Continued on page 7)

Tongues that Dance

**Smidt's burning bush has tongues of flame that dance
and leap in autumn's winds. The oaks that shed**
their dull brown leaves seem to look askance
as this tall bush so boldly flaunts her red.

I do not take my shoes off as I pass--
though Moses did when "I Am" told him to--
but stop before I hurry on to class.
"Perhaps a voice will tell me what to do,"

I muse, not for a moment thinking I
will hear reply when softly, voices brush
my ear, as sparrows sing and flit and fly
inside the flaming bush, whose tongues, I blush

to realize, are tongues of praise as well
**as tongues of flame. "Give tongue to songs that flit
unsung within your heart like unring bells,"**
the voices seem to sing. "Be bold and let

your words flame out, oh, let them leap and dance.
Say that the King has come and speaks good news.
Make highways straight. Fill deserts with green plants.
All ground is holy now. Take off your shoes.

And dance!"

-Dave Schelhaas

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Jenni M	12	Terry F	26	Jonathan B
2	Dallas A	14	Michael VP Willem T	28	Trena VW
3	Jo A Paola Gracia Josue & Ana F	16	Rog VH	29	Josue F Don TN
5	Andy & Rachel L	17	Jaren B	30	Jeff T
6	Mark & Sara H	20	Jenni B Dave K	31	Sos & Kara Maletoungou
7	Kaden F	23	Stetsen F		
9	Lois VZ	24	Vicki H		
10	Bryanna C	25	Jasper F		



Offering Schedule

January 7

AM General/Building Fund
PM Resonate Global Mission

January 14

AM Christian Education Fund,
Compassion Fund
PM Justice For All

January 21

AM Missions Fund
PM Bethany Christian Services

January 28

AM Tuition Assistance Fund
PM Cadets

From the Maletoungous...

Dear Friends and Ministry Partners,

From the beautiful and warm land of West Africa, we are wishing you all a Merry Christmas as you celebrate the birth of our Savior and Lord! We pray that in the midst of the busyness, you will have time to reflect on the wonder that is His coming. May Immanuel, the reason for the season, renew your hearts with peace, joy, and everlasting hope!

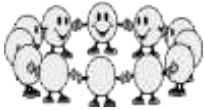
Please let us know if there are any special ways that we can be praying for you as we finish 2017 and prepare to enter the new year.

Happy New Year in anticipation!!!

In His Grace,
-Sos, Kara, and the boys

January Assignments

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



Nursery

Parents of the month: Rob & Megan H

January 7

AM INF Jason & Dani W, Pat C
TODDLER Davey & Kate H, Steve C
PM Dave & Jeri S, Jo F

January 14

AM INF Jeff P, Rebecca DV
TODDLER Laremy DV, Sara P
PM Dave & Jan V, Doug & Marge DB

January 21

AM INF Lee R, Angela H
TODDLER Ryan H, Laura L
PM Eldon & Marcia W, Dennis & Pam DJ

January 28

AM INF Robin F, Paul C
TODDLER Adam F, Ruth C
PM Rob & Megan H, Ron & Carol O

February 4

AM INF Isabel C, Rebecca DS
TODDLER Alejandro C, Bob DS, Laura J
PM Nick & Jenni B, Mark & Lisa C



Are you interested in serving in any of these ministries, but aren't currently on the schedule? Contact Sara in the church office—we'd love to add you in! (covenant@mtcnet.net)



Coffee Servers

Bob DS, Laremy DV, Dave G,
Sally J, Linda V, Marcia W



Greeters

AM Sara H, Merrill MC, Rockne MC
PM Howie H, Daryl H, Kris VP



Ushers

AM Sharon D, Mark H, Jeff T
PM Rachel L, Stan VB

Substitutes

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

Doug DB, Pam DJ, Robin F,
Rob H, Vicki H, Sarah H

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, January 22 for the February issue.

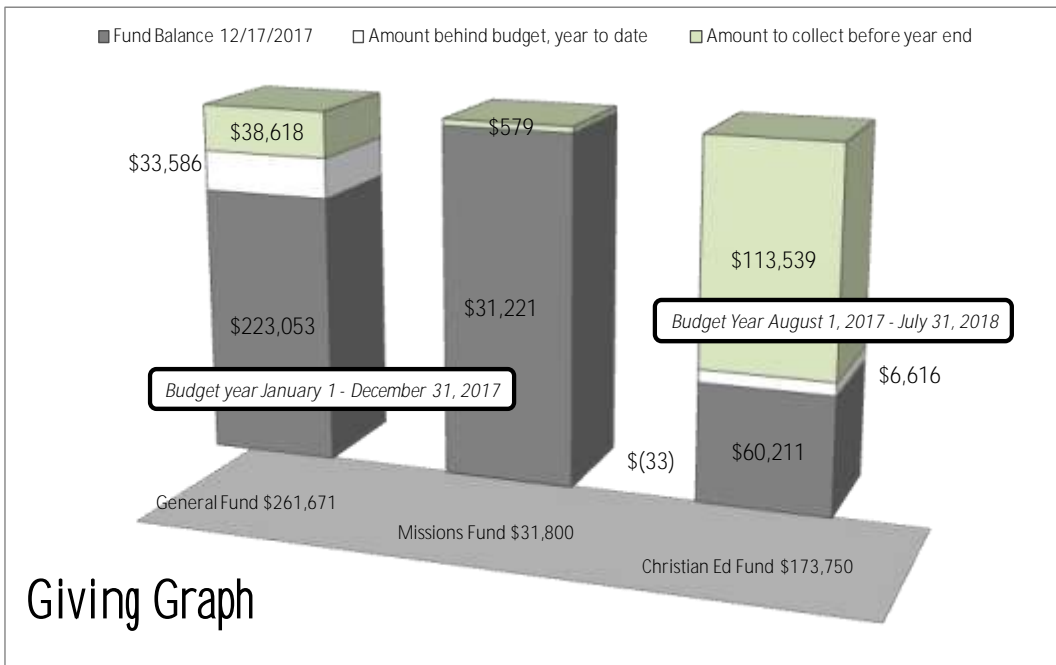


Thanks to all the Children in Worship and Sunday School kids for sharing their gifts with us and leading us in worship through the Christmas Program on December 10! We were blessed!

Classis Iakota Church Plant Progress

Give God thanks for the progress in planting a fourth CRC on the west side of Sioux Falls. Rev. Peter Kelder of Resonate Global Mission has assessed the opening steps and encourages us to proceed. Beginning in January, Pastor Cliff Hoekstra will be working with Sioux Falls Seminary to potentially identify a planter and begin the first steps of planting. God has been answering our prayers so please keep praying so we can praise Him.

-Pastor Jack Gray



From the Elders

(Continued from page 1)

us to experience both the distressing needs of the world and of ourselves, and the joyful anticipation that Christ is coming a second time to make all things new. To all of our dear Covenant family members, may God bless you and give you his purpose and peace as we celebrate his tearing open the heavens and breaking into our world.

Notes from the Covenant Sunday Morning Discussion on the Evening Service

Prior to our morning worship a few weeks ago, Covenant members gathered in a large circle in the fellowship room to discuss this question: **“Should Covenant continue to have two services every Sunday?”** The discussion was spirited and frank yet completely free of rancor or pettiness; in other words, it was the kind of discussion one would expect to observe among followers of Jesus.

Council president Mark Tazelaar identified five recurring themes in the discussion, and the elders are now looking for creative ways **to develop them in Covenant’s communal life.** The five themes are Fellowship, Structure, Rest, Worship, and Transformation, and we seek to relate each to the concept of Sabbath.

Sabbath and *Fellowship*—What is the fellowship of believers and what role can/does the second service play in developing and affirming fellowship?

Sabbath and *Worship*—**Shouldn’t we maximize worship, create more opportunities on this day of all days, rather than minimize**

them? Does worship have to include a sermon?

Sabbath as a call to *Rest*—Does an evening service contribute to the Sabbath feeling of being busy rather than restful? Would other activities make it feel more—or equally—busy? How do we affirm rest in the context of an evening service?

Sabbath and the call to *Transformed Living*—Should we stress the Sabbath as an opportunity for transformation in our lives through the power of the Gospel? Do we need a second service to emphasize that God has transformative expectations for us? Will an emphasis on transformation and the action implied by the idea of transformed lives lead to more busyness on the Sabbath?

The *Structure* of the Sabbath—Many of us feel that a second service gives structure to our Sabbath, but must that be only one kind of service, a preaching service? Are there other kinds of activities that could give closure to the Sabbath? Do the other four themes follow from the morning/evening structure or could the structure follow from our understanding of the other four themes?

-The Elders



Sabbath is not simply the pause that refreshes. It is the pause that transforms.

-Walter Brueggemann



January Series 2018

Covenant is once again a remote site for a **Calvin College's January Series!** We hope you will stop in as often as possible to take advantage of these wonderful learning opportunities. The lectures will be livestreamed each weekday from January 3-23, at 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM.



January 3: Mary Hulst
Why Millenials are the Hope of the Church

January 4: David R. Williams
Unnatural Causes:
Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

January 5: Randy Lewis
No Greatness without Goodness:
How a Father's Love Changed a Company
and Sparked a Movement

January 8: Shane Claiborne
Executing Grace: How the Death Penalty
Killed Jesus and Why It's Killing Us

January 9: Pashon Murray
Detroit Dirt: Zero Waste from the Ground Up

January 10: John Inazu
Confident Pluralism: Surviving and Thriving
through Deep Differences

January 11: Laura Sumner Truax
Love Let Go:
Radical Generosity for the Real World

January 12: Caroline Webb
How to Have a Good Day: Using Behavioral
Science to Improve Everyday Life

January 15: Beverly Daniel Tatum
Why Are All the Black Kids *Still* Sitting To-
gether in the Cafeteria?
and Other Conversations on Race

January 16: Katherine Boo
Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death,
and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity

January 17: Kevin Olusola
In Concert and Conversation

January 18: Jeremy McCarter
Hamilton, Hope and Change

January 19: R. David Edelman
Cybersecurity and Geopolitics

January 22: Kevin Palau
Unlikely: Exploring Partnership between
Churches and Cities

January 23: John Swinton
Still Waters Run Deep:
Reimagining Dementia and Humanness

Check out <https://calvin.edu/january-series/>
for more information about the speakers.