



“Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?” will take place on **October 12** at 5:45 PM. This used to be a popular annual event at Covenant

everyone! If you would like a ride or have a couple you would be more comfortable attending with, please let Laura Janssen know. Because of the logistics of the evening, we ask that children do not participate. However, let Laura Janssen know if you would like help finding childcare or if the cost of childcare would be prohibitive.

-Laura Janssen

and we brought it back last year with great success. If you didn’t participate last year, this is a great way to get to know people at Covenant. Please sign up at the back table. You will be assigned a dish to bring ahead of time. However, we won’t tell you whose house you are going to until that night when you drive through Covenant’s overhang and are given the address of your host! (Of course, we will let hosts know that they are hosting ahead of time.)

We want all adults to feel welcome to participate—couples, singles, college students—



## Pastoral Group Dinner Schedule



September 30—Hibma/Eggebeen  
October 14—Ploegstra/Haan  
October 21—DeSmith/Wielard  
October 28—Kok/Christians  
November 11—Jongsma/Mellema  
November 18—Tazelaar/Oostra

Courier

October 2018

**COVENANT**  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

# Serving at Covenant

*This is part of an ongoing series about the many ways Covenant members serve in our church, our community, and beyond. This month's article focuses on someone who has been served by the Covenant family!*

How does one go about thanking so many people? I know that I have said this before, but I want to say it again. You have been such a blessing to me.

At the start of the year. I was diagnosed with cancer. Today, September 10, I have finished my treatments. It was not easy, but I made it through.

God has blessed me so much during this process. I was shocked at first, but God gave me a sense of peace that I cannot begin to comprehend in it's entirety. Even at the worst of times, I felt this peace and tried to communicate it with you. It is the peace that passes understanding that the Bible speaks of. God says we are to stand in the face of the enemy, and I did with the help of the prayer and loving support of the congregation. When I started to feel alone, I knew in my heart that that wasn't true. I have treasured this so much. God will never leave you or forsake you.

One of things that impressed me so deeply was the big number of people who volunteered to drive me to appointments, especially this last six weeks. More drivers wanted to volunteer than I had trips to make to Sioux Falls. I am treasuring up what I learned from each person during the two hours of driving from sharing faith and deep theological conversations. I have come to love the people of Covenant CRC more than I would have ever thought. It was so many of you, that I feel I

know the church so much better than before. I have heard profound stories of grace and forgiveness, God's richest blessings, and walking in faith that surpasses circumstances. I thank you so much for sharing yourselves with me.

So today, I say thank you to God and to you. I know that God holds me in love and the salvation found in Jesus Christ. And I wonder at the love that followed me along my journey. Thank you for being such a blessing!

-Pat Eggebeen

## From the Elders...

### Update on Pastoral Transition

These are exciting times for Covenant as we prepare for Joel and Tricia Kok's move to Sioux Center. On September 3, we received the email saying that Pastor Joel had accepted our call. Later an excited flurry of emails between Toronto and Sioux Center settled on December 2, the first Sunday of Advent, as his first Sunday as pastor of Covenant. A subsequent email burst decided on November 26 as the date for Joel's installation, and a few days later, more emails and telephone calls to work out further details. The Koks requested a few minor changes in the parsonage to make it their new home. Dave Kramer and Rin Goedhart of the Building Committee are communicating with the Koks on these matters.

Stay tuned for ways you may be able to help as we prepare to welcome Joel and Tricia, and if you haven't yet emailed a welcome note, now is a great time to do so.

-Dennis De Jong (on behalf of the Elders)

# GEMS News

The Northstar GEMS kicked off their year on Wednesday, September 12. Girls and counselors met at Central Park for hot dogs, theme shirt making, games, and fun! We welcomed two new counselors and 15 4th grade girls.



Our theme for the year is “Be a Blessing” using II Corinthians 9:8 as our theme verse. The verse reads, “And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” God’s blessings are packaged big and small. Of all the good gifts He gives us, our greatest blessing is Jesus Christ. In Him and through Him we can find peace and joy. In Him and through Him we can help other people do the same. Our venue for the year takes place in a garden. We are like seeds that look up to bless God and reach out to bless others.



Will you be in prayer for the 14 counselors and 65 girls as we dig into God’s Word throughout the year to learn the Truth with a capital T, God’s Truth.

-Valerie Van Beek

Club Coordinator for Northstar GEMS



*Top right: Participating in mixer games.  
Middle: Working on making theme t-shirts.  
Bottom: Covering the 4th graders in prayer.*

## Evening Worship Schedule

**October 7:** No evening worship

**October 14:** 6:00 PM service

**October 21:** 6:00 PM Hymn Sing

**October 28:** 6:00 PM Joint Reformation Day Service (at Covenant CRC)

# October Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Dave G Judah H	9	Emma He Steve H Kara Maletougou Ed & Natalie B	21	Erin E
2	Ethan B Ava L			24	Lydia C Kenny H Marv W
3	Alleke Crull	13	Sara H	25	Layne V
5	Ed B Anna C	14	Finley D	27	Dave & Emily K
7	Kayt F Arie H Eric R	15	Brenda F Mark H	28	Julia K Linda VH
8	Dan Kuiper Dave & Jan V	17	Zoe H	29	Nick B Tina D Jonathan VT
		18	Pam DJ		
		19	Pat C Laura J	30	Emilyn S Pete VP
		20	Esther E		



## Offering Schedule

### October 7

**AM** General/Building Fund  
Inspiration Hills

### October 14

**AM** Christian Education Fund  
**PM** World Renew: North American  
Disaster Relief

### October 21

**AM** Missions Fund  
Ministry Shares: Disability Concerns

### October 28

**AM** Tuition Assistance Fund,  
Compassion Fund  
**PM** Joint Reformation Day Service

## Covenant Sunday Morning Schedule

**October 7**—No class

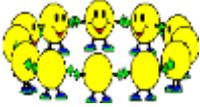
**October 14**—Ruth Clark on Chapter 5:  
“Tender Lives and the Assaults of the Uni-  
verse” Dr. Robert Coles

**October 21**—Mark McCarthy on Chapter 6:  
“Chasing Grace” Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dos-  
toevsky

**October 28**—Jeri Schelhaas on Chapter 10:  
“The Splendor of the Ordinary” Annie Dillard

# October Assignments

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



## Nursery

Parents of the month: Josue & Ana F

### October 7

AM INF Mark H, Dani W  
TODDLER Cheri H, Jason W

### October 14

AM INF Donna B, Rob H  
TODDLER Ethan B, Megan H  
PM Steve & Pat C, Jo F

### October 21

AM INF Ryan H, Marge DB  
TODDLER Angela H, Doug DB

### October 28

AM INF Dave K, Kate H  
TODDLER Emily K, Davey H  
PM Adam & Robin F, Kathy DW

### November 4

AM INF Jeff P, Laura L  
TODDLER Sara P, Emilyn S  
WE Mark & Lisa C, Paul & Ruth C



## Coffee Servers

Tina D, Shirley M, Merrill MC,  
Len R, Beth VB, Rog VH



## Greeters

AM Jan B, Alejandro C, Barb H  
PM Bob DS, Cheri H, Jeri S



## Ushers

AM Rachel L, Stan VB, Linda V  
PM Dave G, Daryl H

## Substitutes

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

Donna B, Robin F, Rob H,  
Sarah H, Sherri TN, Kris VP

## Thanks for serving!

*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)*

### 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, **October 22** for the November issue.

# Notes from the Deacons

The deacons would also like to share with the congregation this article by Philip Leo which was posted on [www.crcna.org/Network](http://www.crcna.org/Network).

## Note About Clothing Collection

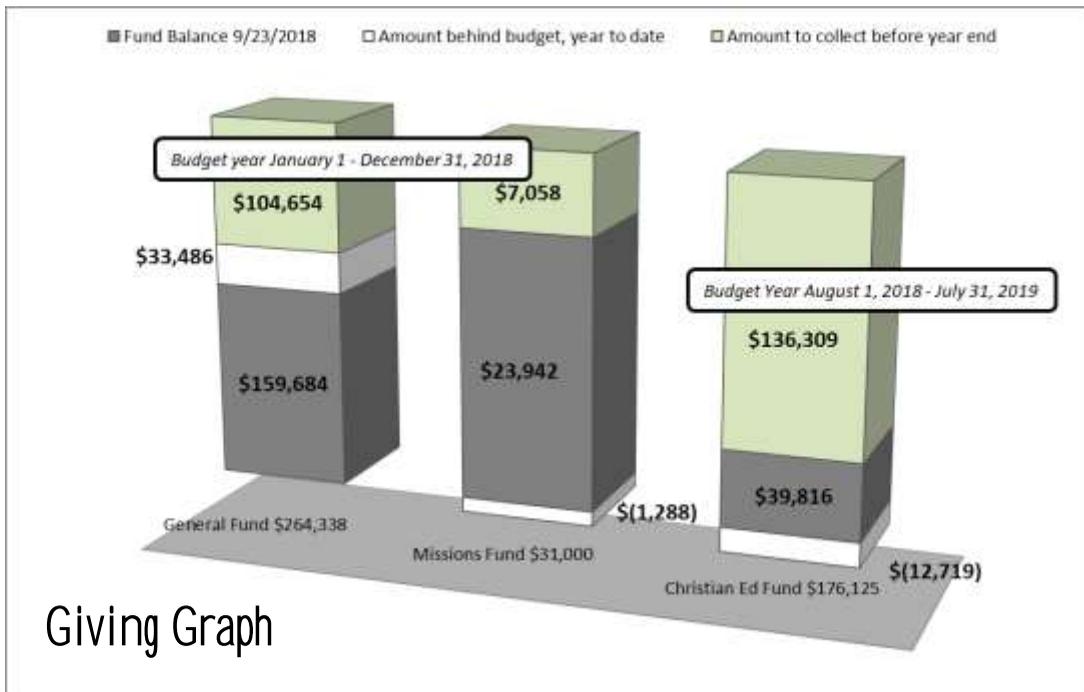
The Deacons have decided to discontinue collecting used clothing for the Gospel Mission in the entrance to church as we have for the past few years. We no longer have an easy access to the Gospel Mission in Sioux City and the small amount collected is not worth making a special trip. We suggest bringing your things to Melissa's Hope Chest (Sioux Center), JFA (Rock Valley), Bibles for Missions (Orange City), or Bargain Alley (Hull). If you need assistance, please call a deacon, and thanks for your understanding.

## How Generosity Crushes Greed

*"Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need... They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."* (Acts 2:45-47, NIV)

Suppose I'm a teacher, and you're a student in my classroom. Toward the end of the course, I offer you a choice between 2 and 6 extra credit points. Clearly, this is a no-brainer and you decide to take 6 points... until I tell you there's a catch. If 10 percent or

*(Continued on page 7)*



## Giving Graph

\* Please note that the Christian Education Fund total on the graph is our commitment from last year. We haven't received numbers from each school so we don't have an updated total for this fiscal year.

## Notes from the Deacons

*(Continued from page 6)*

more of your classmates also decide to take 6 points, no extra credit will be awarded to any student.

So, what do you do? Take the 6 points and hope no one else does? Or choose 2 points and hope the rest of your classmates aren't greedy?

Actually, this scenario plays out every semester at the University of Maryland where Dylan Selterman teaches undergraduate psychology. "For the first eight years I used this exercise," says Selterman in a June 2018 *National Geographic* article, "Only one class—of all the dozens I've taught—stayed under the 10 percent threshold. All the other classes failed." I know this result is predictable, given how easily greed bubbles up in people. But you might be surprised to learn that, since 2016, about half of Professor Selterman's classes now receive extra credit points.

What changed? Students were also offered a zero point option by which they could cancel out someone's else's choice for 6 points. A few students each semester choose this option in order to get extra credit for the rest of their classmates.

It turns out that just a handful of self-sacrificing students can make a huge difference.

This is the difference the early church made through sacrificial giving. Though small in number, their uncommon generosity transformed both the needy and their communities. These believers enjoyed the favor of their neighbors but more importantly, they reflected the favor of their God.

The same principle demonstrated by Professor Selterman's class applies to us... it only takes a handful of saints giving sacrificially to make a significant difference.

Greedy living may be normalized and even idolized by many. But this only highlights the need for selfless generosity to be lived out by a few.

There's no telling where things will end up when today's believers display this powerful witness. After all, who could've guessed the results from Acts 2?

Just imagine the plans God has for us when we give sacrificially in Jesus' name. There's no telling what may come of it!

-Philip Leo



Covenant turns 45 years old this year and we plan to celebrate! On November 4, we will worship together at 10:00 AM, enjoy a meal together following

the service, and then gather again for a WE service following the meal. Join us in a time of worship, fellowship, and reflection on Covenant's past and future!



Mark Wednesday, November 14 on your calendars! We will meet that evening for a congregational meeting. The meeting is a bit earlier in the year than usual since we want to approve the budget before Pastor Joel arrives. The Youth Group will be serving a lasagna dinner before the meeting. Watch for more details to come!

## Get to Know the Maletoungous

A missionary family that Covenant supports will be with us on Sunday, October 7. The Maletoungous work in West Africa through Resonate Global Mission. We invite you to get to know them through these events:

9:00 AM—Meet & Greet

10:00 AM—Worship Service: The Maletoungous will share about their work during the service.

12:00 PM—Potluck: Sandwiches and chips will be provided, bring a dish to share.

## Thank You!



Thank you to all the volunteers who gave of their time and energy to run a shop vac and to help with the clean-up during the latest church basement flooding! Thanks also to those who brought equipment to church when it was needed. And thank you especially to Dave Kramer, chair of the Building Committee for heading up the clean-up efforts. Your help was greatly appreciated!

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## Thank You to the Pastoral Search Committee

The council would like to express its gratitude to the members of the Search Committee for their dedicated work and insightful decisions these past seven months. We are grateful to God for blessing this work so richly and providing such excellent and timely results! We ask members of the congregation to personally thank the search committee members (listed below) when you next see them.

The process began in February with the filling out of the church profile and placing ads in places like the Banner and our website. Then we looked at the daunting list of 1300 individuals in the CRC database of pastors, winnowing our list of people we wanted to look at to 60. Search Committee teams of two were assigned to read pastor profiles and listen to sermons for all 60 of these pastors! Eventually we got a list of the best prospects, and the process seemed to speed up at that point. We chose three to invite to Zoom interviews. And that led us to invite Pastor Joel Kok to come to Sioux Center. That visit was a huge event but so rewarding!

Special thanks to Dennis Vander Plaats, who chaired the committee, put in a ton of time, kept track of our timeline and mandate, and kept us on the straight and narrow!

Committee members were:

Anna E Christians  
Pat Crull  
Bob De Smith  
Adam Fedders  
Josue Feliciano  
Dane Hibma  
Steve Holtrop  
Mike Janssen  
Rachel Landman  
Jeri Schelhaas  
Dennis Vander Plaats  
Kris Vander Plaats

Thank you to each of you!

-Steve Holtrop, Chair of Council