

A Note from the Pastor

As Tricia and I approach our seventh month in Sioux Center and at Covenant, we have much for which to give thanks. We feel well matched in our work and our worship at Covenant. We feel grateful for Tricia's job in the library at Dordt University. We believe God has led us here, and we trust God to provide and continue to work in our lives as our journey here continues. And, as June draws near, it seems fitting for me to share with you our plans for the upcoming month.

After the Pentecost worship service on June 9, I will have four Sundays away from the pulpit at Covenant. For the first two, I will enjoy a time of study-leave; for the final two, I will take vacation time. I will return to leading worship at Covenant on July 14.

Most of my study leave will take place in California, near where our daughter Rachel lives and also my sister Mavis and her family live. Beginning on June 14, I will take an eight day retreat at a Jesuit retreat center called Los Altos. On that retreat, I will follow the practices of meeting once per day with a spiritual director and spending the rest of my waking time pondering the Scriptures and opening my imagination to the leading of our Lord. Central to such contemplation will be seeking to discern how our Lord will move by the Spirit at Covenant. I've been asked to review a book called *A Pastoral Rule for Today*, and that book will factor into my thoughts and prayers. I very much look forward to this time with my Good Shepherd Lord.

Tricia will fly to California toward the end of my retreat so that she and I can visit our daughter and my sister and her family. They all live in San Jose, which is part of a remarkably lovely area in North America. On our previous visit there, we saw sequoia trees, vineyards, the Pacific Ocean, the Golden Gate Bridge, and the rolling streets of San Francisco. For me, such sites make for a promising culmination to my retreat. When Tricia and I return, we will also take a shorter retreat together at St. John's Abbey in San Francisco.

Guest preachers have been arranged for the Sunday mornings I am away (June 16, 23, 30, and July 7), and elsewhere in the *Courier* you can find some information about the Sunday evening plans.

-Pastor Joel

Notes from the Elders

Dear Covenant sisters and brothers, at the last elders' meeting, April 22, one of the items discussed was church safety. You may know that Covenant has a position of Safe Church Coordinator, which is filled by elder Rebecca De Smith. Safety in church, these last number of years, has come to mean more than safety from physical objects such as, for example, an unsafe staircase, or safety from abuse by those in positions of power. Because of recent armed attacks on places of worship, we also wonder if we are safe from outside violence when we worship in our church building. Our Safe Church Coordinator has been busy investigating what steps, if any, our congregation needs to take in light of these recent attacks on places of worship, and the elders, council, and the Building Committee are all involved in the discussion. Members of the congregation with questions or comments are invited to bring them to the elders, council, or Safe Church Coordinator.

This past Sunday, my grandson, Tristan, and his girlfriend, Marti, were over for dinner. I told them that I would be writing a note for our monthly Courier about church safety and that I had been looking at Psalms 3 and 4, in both of which the psalmist cries out to God in times of danger and also



In Peace
I will both
lie
down & sleep;
for you alone,
O Lord.
MAKE ME
dwell
in Safety
PSALM 4

in both of which the psalmist realizes that only under the protection of God can he lie down in peace, wake again, and dwell in safety. We talked about the psalmist and our trust in God's protection, and also that we and the psalmist are not spared trouble and danger during our lives.

How do we respond to the danger of a possible armed attack on our worship service? First of all, we know from Scripture that God always and ultimately protects and saves those who trust in him. Should we leave it at that and take no action? As Marti pointed out, it is not the protection of God that is in question, but, as some have already experienced, it is the very real action of "our foes," or "the unrighteous," as the psalmist puts it, that is the topic of discussion. Just as in the psalmist's day, when he asks for God to take action (which often amounted to military action), we too should prayerfully examine what kind of steps, again, if any, we need to take as a congregation and council, in a world of very real dangers. Just to be clear, we live in a different world than that of the psalmist, and I don't think our dangers should be met with any violent or military type of response.

As I said above, the discussion about safety from armed attack is going on, also in Sioux Center. As council, we feel we need to be engaged in this. For example, the deacons and the building committee are looking at ways to lock the lower doors and have someone at the main door once a service starts.

And now for the good news. I remember that our former pastor, Kory, often used the phrase, spoken by Jesus, "Do not be afraid!" What a joy and encouragement—this word of instruction and comfort from our Lord! We do

(Continued on page 3)

Congratulations, Covenant Graduates

Sioux Center Christian

Jonathan Breems
Emily Eppinga
Lauren Vander Plaats
Meghan Vos

Unity Christian High School

Micah Goslinga

Micah is going to Dordt University and will be majoring in business. He will also be on the baseball team and in choir.

Dordt College

Karl Hoekstra

Karl graduated with a degree in business and is planning to move to California.

Notes from the Elders

(Continued from page 2)

not need to live in fear about what might possibly happen to us and our loved ones. Instead, we can focus on what Pastor Joel pointed out to us in his sermon on May 19, namely, to glorify God and to enjoy him forever (Westminster Shorter Catechism). Each of us, in our own area—the family, the church, the meat packing plant, the environment, politics, community service, education, farming, art, and technology—are called to seek to live lives of gratitude, service, and healing in this beautiful yet broken world that God has given us as home.

-Sanneke Kok (on behalf of the Elders)

Ruth Clark

Ruth Clark graduated from Dordt College with a M.Ed in teacher leadership.

Trinity Christian College

Kyle Vander Plaats

Kyle graduated this May with Bachelor of Science degrees in Accountancy and Finance. This fall, he'll be returning to Trinity to take the last two classes he needs to be CPA eligible, and in January, he'll be moving to Bellingham, Washington to work in tax accounting at Moss Adams.



Formation Sunday Evenings

Our 5:00 PM Evening Formation Gatherings this month will include the following:

June 2: Mary Dengler tells the story of unexpected events from God in her family

June 9: Pastor Joel will do some biblical teaching

June 16: To be determined

June 23: Visit from the Groenewold-Van Dyk missionary family

June 30: To be determined

July 7: Visit from former Covenant pastor and current missionary Gil Kamps

June Birthdays & Anniversaries

2	Daryl & Deb H Mark & Cheri H Mike & Nancy VB	12	Troy & Faith Bierma Lee & Jenni M Les & Lila S	24	Alexa C Tom & Ruth C Verne & Gidge M
4	Davey H Sherri TN Dallas & Carol A	13	Joya B Terry & Jill F	25	Logan H Barb T Bob & Rebecca DS Fednel & Kara T
5	Jo F Joe & Erin E	14	Cal J Talja VN	26	Rachel L Nick & Jenni B Laremy & Rebecca DV Rockne & Joan MC
6	Corrie DV Naomi P	15	Faby A Kurt & Sharon V	27	Steve H & Sharon B Jim & Barb S
7	June B	16	Jake VW Kyle VP Marv & Mary W	28	Gaby C Sally J Alyda M
9	Jeri S Adam & Robin F Don & Sherri TN Marty & Kris VP	18	Dale & June B	29	Kurt F Ryan H Jasper L
10	William C Sarah H Mike & Megan Ribbens	19	Daryl H	30	Andy L Mary W
11	Amira Ribbens Ross & Lisa F	21	Duane B		
		22	Donna B		
		23	Robin F Isabella H Stan & Beth VB		



Offering Schedule

June 2

AM General/Building Fund

June 9

AM Christian Education Fund

June 16

AM Missions Fund

June 23

AM World Renew: Disaster Response Services

June 30

AM Building Fund

“

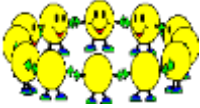
No one has ever
become poor by giving.

Anne Frank

”

June Assignments

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



Nursery

Parents of the month:
Jason & Dani W

June 2

AM Ryan & Val Z, Josue & Ana F
PM Mark & Cheri H, Rob & Megan H

June 9

AM Joe & Erin E, Adam & Robin F
PM Ethan & Donna B, Ron & Carol O

June 16

AM Ryan & Angela H, Jo F, Laura L
PM Doug & Marge DB, Mark & Lisa C

June 23

AM Kurt & Sharon V, Jason & Dani W
PM Paul & Ruth C, Jeff & Sara P

June 30

AM Dave & Emily K, Dave & Jeri S
PM Jake & Trena VW, Lee & Jenni M

July 7

AM Tom & Ruth C, Nick & Jenni B
PM Laremy & Rebecca DV, Kathy DW



Coffee Servers

Jenni B, Ed B, Mark H,
Lee R, Stan VB, Jason W



Greeters

AM Jo A, Andy L, John Z



Ushers

AM Marge DB, Kyle VP, John V

Substitutes

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

Donna B, Pam DJ, Robin F,
Sarah H, Marty VP, Wil A



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, **June 24** for the July issue.

Giving To Date

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/19-5/19/19) \$103,190	\$98,128	-\$5,062
Missions	(1/1/19-5/19/19) \$9,100	\$13,700	+\$4,600
Christian Education	(8/1/18-5/19/19) \$144,496	\$153,988	+\$9,492

Notes from the Deacons

This month we have two exciting things to report: an update on offerings and some new deacons to introduce. In light of our transition to morning offerings only, after reflection we have done some prioritization and simplification on the offering schedule as you may have noticed. With fewer offering slots available, one consolidation we've decided to make is to combine Tuition Assistance and Compassion offerings. Moving forward, when we take a Compassion Fund offering, it will be listed at Tuition Assistance/Compassion Fund, and will be deposited into the Compassion Fund account. The deacons will use compassionate discretion as we address needs in the congregation and community for both tuition assistance and other needs. We will continue to use already allocated funds in the Tuition Assistance account only for that purpose, and when those funds are used completely, we will start using the Compassion/Tuition Assistance offerings for both purposes. We have a healthy balance in both accounts currently and encourage the congregation to help make the deacons aware of needs in congregation and for those connected to our members. One of the joys of diaconal work is to help those in need. Supporting our families who wish to send their children to Christian day school

through Legacy Fund and Tuition Assistance support has been especially encouraging to us.

Secondly, as we've just installed three new deacons, we asked them each to write a bit of an introduction about who they are and reflect on what they look forward to about their upcoming service.

From Adam Fedders:

What do I look forward to as a deacon... I look forward to the free tacos and all-you-can-eat chimichangas that we have at our meetings. At least that is what I was told when I agreed to have my name on the list of possible deacons.

No, seriously though—I look forward to serving our congregation in this capacity. It's been roughly 6 or so years since I served as deacon and feel the Lord is leading me to serve again. Its difficult handling the deaconate needs of the church. It takes time and lots of prayer to make the right financial decisions for our church. I feel the Lord has made me ready for the challenge and I look forward to serving our church in this way.

From Luanne Goslinga:

"What do you look forward to about serving as a deacon?" Tough question. I think sometimes

(Continued on page 8)

Notes from the Deacons

(Continued from page 6)

your name gets put in that new officer drawing bag and you silently chant, "Please not me, please not me." Full disclosure: I was chanting, "Thy will be done... but please not me." Like most of you, I am a busy lady. Next year I will have one kid in junior high, one in high school and one in college. I also teach half time in the English department at Unity Christian. My plans for this summer include watching Austen and Micah at the mound, taking a family vacation to Yosemite and spending many terrifying hours sitting in the van while Annika learns to drive. I now add to that list learning what it means to serve my church family as a deacon. So, what am I looking forward to? Probably sitting around a table talking about needs and how to meet them. I suppose this is not the most inspiring, "You just won the job of deacon. What are you going to do next?" type commentary. But let's face it, while church leadership is not a visit to the

magical kingdom, it is definitely Kingdom work—and I'm ready.

From Kris Vander Plaats:

I grew up here in Northwest Iowa. Marty and I met at Dorcht and have been married 30 years this June. We have 4 children—Kyle, Jacob, Michael and Lauren. We also have a dog named Shane. I work 4 days a week at The Fruited Plain. I enjoy baking, morning walks with our dog, puzzles of all kinds and trying new things (usually). Some things that I am looking forward to as a deacon are seeing how God will use me and grow me, helping others in need, and getting to better know the other members of council.

Please welcome these new deacons, and pray for them as they grow in wisdom and begin a new season of service.

For the Deacons,
-Tom Clark

Wil Alberda Shares about Hope Haven Ministry

(Wil shared this article about his recent visit to Ireton Christian School. This was reprinted from The Ireton Christian newsletter.)

Students and staff at Ireton Christian School learned more about the Hope Haven International Ministries during their April chapel. Wil Alberda came and talked about a trip he took to Vietnam in November, 2015. He and the members of his team delivered wheelchairs to children and adults that the church there had identified as needing assistance.

Hope Haven has delivered 126,030 chairs to

108 countries with the help of volunteers putting in 728,575 hours of aid since this mission was established in 1994. Mr Alberda challenged the students to actively live out their faith as a child of God, saved by grace, heaven bound, and willing to serve Him. Seeing a life-sized doll in a child wheelchair there was a visible reminder of the work Hope Haven is doing. The ICS 6th-8th graders have been working at the Ireton Hope Haven location in helping build and disassemble wheelchairs preparing them for deliveries around the world.