

Jocelyn Goes to the Fair

In case you missed it in the Unity Bulletin this month, here's a bit about Jocelyn's experience at ISEF in May:



When people ask me about the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), the two words that immediately come to mind are wild and breathtaking. Even though I had a slight idea of what it was like from my brother's description, I was blown away by the level of projects that high schoolers had pursued. I walked by one project that had discovered a planet and another (who ended up winning) that created goggles to be used in spinal surgery for more accurate screw placements. My project was about analyzing the differences in the amount of a gene in cancerous tissue compared to healthy tissue. I was admittedly petrified of the judges, worried that they would tear my project apart, but it ended up being an incredible experience. Each of the judges was encouraging me to pursue my research and congratulating me for making it to ISEF. As a whole, I had expected a purely academic atmosphere, but the most surprising aspect of ISEF was the fair's emphasis on enjoying the experience. Between the speakers' encouragement during the ceremonies and the periodic motivational texts from science fair alumni, it was apparent that I needed to realize where I was. I had been given an incredible opportunity to represent my school on an international level, joining over 1800 students for a week of both studying science and developing relationships.

Apart from the events directly related to the science projects, I was able to go to an Arizona Diamondbacks game, exchange pins with people from about 80 other countries, and dance off all the pressures of judging in a room where I could feel the floor bouncing up and down. Though I did not bring any awards home from Phoenix, it was an experience that I will never forget and I am grateful for all of the people that guided me in my journey to ISEF.

-Jocelyn Zonnefeld

Formation Sunday Evenings

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

July 7: Covenant's former pastor, Gil Kamps, will share about his mission work in Kenya

July 14: Teaching by Pastor Joel

July 21 & 28: To be determined

Courier

July/August 2019

COVENANT
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Farmer to Farmer

Wil Alberda wanted to share with the Covenant family this story of a family in Nicaragua that was helped by the Farmer-to-Farmer program. Members of Covenant were involved in starting this program nearly twenty years ago.

We are pleased to be able to share another partner farmer story with you. Please meet María Obando Díaz. This is her story in her own words.

“My name is María Obando Díaz, I am 48 years old, mother of five children; three boys and two girls. I am a beneficiary of the Nueva Jerusalem land bank, in Guapotalito, in el Tuma, la Dalia. Nicaragua. I live with two little grandchildren ages of 2 ½ and 3 ½ years and all my children are working outside the community.”

“All my life I worked in farms, with machete. Every day I had to do it, even if I was sick, because they could fire me. What I earned was not enough to save and buy my own plot. There were times when there was no work in the farm. They gave me a place to stay but I had to go and look for food in another place; so sometimes I only ate cooked bananas that some people gave me.”

“Nine years ago, while working at Hacienda San Jose, a man named Denis Centeno, told me that he had been financed by an organization, at low cost and with long-term payments, and he urged me to apply. My lack of faith did not let me act, but 15 days later he told me again and I decided to make a request.”

“On January 30, I completed 9 years on this plot of land and being a member of Acción

Medica Cristiana. I came with my children and at first it was difficult, and I did not think I had the capacity to pay. There came a time when I thought I would leave and go back to work at the farms, but the engineer told me, ‘you already have what you need, now it’s just work and that you do very well. Stop the fear and continue.’”

“Those words encouraged me and I gave up on leaving the plot. My children and I started working. Today I have three manzanas (5 acres) of land that I never thought I had. 1 mz has coffee, with ½ in development and ½ productive, I also have 1.5 mz of cocoa that in 3 years will be productive.”

“Thanks be to God, I do not lack food because in the plot I produce plantain, bananas, yucas, malangas. I never thought I was going to sell my own coffee or cocoa, now I do it from my own farm. I believe in God that soon I will pay my plot, that I am going to inherit it to my children so they can work it and sustain me when I can no longer work.”

“Having this plot is a blessing. My two grandchildren with whom I live are now food secure. I feel the relief of being in my own house, plot and work, without the fear that if I get sick, they can fire me. I only have to thank God and all who make it possible for many families like mine to enjoy their own land.”



Babies, Babies, Babies!

Welcome, Julian!

Julian Alejandro Addink was born to Angel and Faby Addink on May 2. He was 8 pounds 1 ounce, and was 20 inches long. Alejandro and Isabel Castelan are proud grandparents!



Welcome, Justus!

Justus Toussaint Themistol was born May 23 at 12:48 AM to Fednel and Kara Themistol. He was welcomed home by siblings Reya (4) and Kellan (2). Reya and Kellan have loved holding the baby every chance they get and talking to him even more. Justus was 7lbs 12oz at birth and 20 inches long. Justus means "just" and Toussaint is after General Toussaint Louverture of the Haitian revolutionary army. He was a crucial member of the overthrow of the French slaveowners, gaining freedom for the slaves to form an independent state. In his

life, Toussaint was known for being a peacemaker first, always seeking the most fair and just outcomes, sometimes to a fault.

We are so thankful for a healthy birth and baby. We have been so blessed by the congregation with prayers, meals, gifts, and kind words. You all mean so much to us, and we're thankful we can share the birth of our son with you.



Welcome, Samuel!

Samuel Thomas Janssen was born to Mike and Laura Janssen on May 29 and was 7 lb 10 oz. Everyone is doing well and Lila is thrilled to be a big sister. We are so thankful.



July Birthdays & Anniversaries

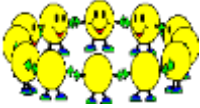
1	Barb H Linda V		Luke H Sharon V	19	Justin & Melissa B Pete & Betty VP
2	Stuart B Annemieke L Stan VB Luke & Sarah H	9	Tom C Nate VN Chris & Rin G	21	Miriam Groenewold
3	Fednel T	12	Jill F Dane H	24	Josiah F Mark & Merrill MC
4	Merrill MC	14	Barb S Angel & Faby A	25	Dane & Rachel H
5	Mary D	16	Jason & Dani W	26	Pastor Gianni Gracia
6	Gidge M	17	Dwight VT Kris VP	28	Jacob VP Eldon W
8	Isabel C Sabine F			29	Dennis & Pam DJ Cal & Sally J

August Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Marge DB	7	George F Jeff & Sara P	18	Del & Lois VZ
2	Ruth Clo Pat E John & Sanneke K	8	Rin G Ron O	19	Steve C
3	Rob H Sos Maletougou Laurey Z Dave & Luanne G	9	Ron & Carol O	20	Barb M
4	Max H Ryan & Angela H	11	Dani W Robbin & Sara E	21	Derek F John & Linda V
5	Dave V Caden Z	12	Benjamin & Tricia Groenewold-Van Dyk	23	Chris G John Z
6	Ezra L Lee M	13	Kathleen VT	26	Len & Lee R
		15	Deb H Ryan & Amie S	27	Faith Bierma Matt D
		16	John & Laurey Z	29	Shonna P Dave S
		17	Jake & Trena VW	30	Melissa B

July Assignments

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



Nursery

Parents of the month:
July: Josue & Ana F

July 7

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

July 14

AM Chris & Rin G, Andy & Rachel L
PM Dennis & Pam DJ, Lee R

July 21

AM John & Linda V, Emilyn S, Tricia K
PM Doug & Marge DB, Mark & Lisa C

July 28

AM Alejandro & Isabel C, Duane & Jan B
PM Bob & Rebecca DS, Barb T



Offering Schedule

July 7

AM General/Building Fund

July 14

AM Christian Education Fund

July 21

AM Missions Fund

July 28

AM Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund



Coffee Servers

Ruth Clo, Josue F, John K,
Ron O, Dave S, Beth VB



Greeters

AM Jill F, Lila S, Barb T



Ushers

AM Bob DS, Tim K, Len R

Substitutes

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

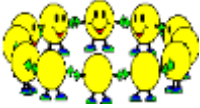
Dave G, Barb H, Rachel L,
Nate VN, Dennis VP, Lois VZ

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, **August 19** for the September issue.

August Assignments

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



Nursery

Parents of the month:
Mark & Merrill MC

August 4

AM Dave & Luanne G, Laura J
PM Daryl & Deb H, Steve & Pat C

August 11

AM Ross & Lisa F, Luke & Sarah H
PM Mark & Cheri H, Ethan & Donna B

August 18

AM Kris & Marty VP, Josue & Ana F
PM Ryan & Val Z, Joe & Erin E

August 25

AM Rob & Megan H, Laura L
PM Adam & Robin F, Ron & Carol O

September 1

AM Jeff & Sara P, Kurt & Sharon V
PM Paul & Ruth C, Jo F



Coffee Servers

Lisa C, Steve C, Rebecca DV,
Rog VH, Shirley M, Merrill MC,



Greeters

AM Tom C, Tricia K, Mark T



Ushers

AM Dennis DJ, Kathy DW, Lee M

Substitutes

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

Jan B, Paul C, Jo F,
Daryl H, Shawna VN, Dani W



Offering Schedule

August 4

AM General/Building Fund

August 11

AM Christian Education Fund

August 18

AM Missions Fund

August 25

AM World Renew

Thanks for giving!

Giving To Date

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/19-6/23/19) \$128,988	\$125,251	-\$3,736
Missions	(1/1/19-6/23/19) \$11,375	\$17,784	+\$5,876
Christian Education	(8/1/18-6/23/19) \$161,698	\$170,239	+\$8,541

Notes from the Deacons

We started our new deacon year by electing officers for the coming year at our meeting on June 10. We are thankful that Adam Fedders was willing to step into the position of church treasurer. The other three positions will stay the same—Pat Crull as chairperson, Megan Haan as secretary, and Carol Oostra as vicar.

We are thankful for each of the deacons and their willingness to serve as a deacon representative on various committees. The new committee assignments are as follows: Tuition Assistance—Kris Vander Plaats, Building Committee—Joe Eggebeen, Christian Ed—Adam Fedders, and Worship Committee—Luanne Goslinga. Other committee assignments that will stay the same are Elderly/Disability—Marv Wielard, Young People—Joe Eggebeen, Christian Ed—Megan Haan, and Service & Missions, World Renew, World Hunger, Siouxland Diocanal—Carol Oostra.

We also wanted you to know that the Deacons and the Executive Council have approved a Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund policy that gives a little more clarity on how those funds are used. It is patterned after an example found on the CRC website and states that, “The Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund is designed to provide financial assistance to

both church members and members of the local community who are experiencing difficulties meeting needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health care, tuition assistance, or other financial needs.”

Thank you for your faithful giving over the past year. We ask that you continue to pray for us as deacons, that we will be given wisdom and discernment as we strive to serve our Lord and you, the members of the Covenant congregation.

-For the Deacons, Pat Crull

Serving at Covenant

This is part of an ongoing series about the many ways Covenant members serve in our church, our community, and beyond.

In March, Ron and I had the opportunity to join a Justice For All team on a Service and Learning trip to Colorado City, Arizona. This is the town that was built by the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints sect of the Mormon church that practices polygamy. Two young couples, along with a small group of Christians from the area, seek to minister to this community with their organization Grace Reigns. They have a small building with the top floor for worship services and other events, and the lower level is a thrift store. It is the only

(Continued on page 8)

Serving at Covenant

(Continued from page 7)

church in town other than the FLDS church.

Our team built and finished cupboards, laid sod, and helped with various projects, but the main event was to unload a semi truck carefully packed full of gently used items for the thrift store. The next two days were spent serving a steady stream of shoppers from the area and keeping the shelves stocked. Our prayer is that people will get used to coming here, appreciate the smiling helpful people, become friends, and eventually share their lives and learn the truth about Jesus.

As the week passed we came to see more than a dark, secretive, barren community. Rather, we saw a Christian Center with open doors, friendly helpful people, and a park-like green space with play equipment and basketball hoops. This place is like an oasis—a beacon of Light, speaking the truth about Jesus and serving with love in His name for anyone who has questions or is seeking.

We were so blessed to be able to serve! Thanks to God, JFA, and the people of Colorado City where Grace Reigns.

-Carol Oostra

June 16, 2019

Outdoor Evening Worship

In public prayer I paused a moment,
But not long enough,
To turn our ears to the sounds around us—
Wrens chittering, a cardinal whistling,
Grass and leaves catching breeze
And hissing, but never in derision.
The pause grew noisy with delight.
I had been attempting the impossible,
Maybe the silly,
Using petty words to praise,
With Creation the white noise to my prayer.

Words are lost in breath, while
“Day after day, they pour forth speech,”
Eloquent without words.
Yet you give us words, Lord,
Poor pointers sometimes,
But full, like your word,
Like the Word,
Prayers of the people
Outdoors on a June night
When roasted hot dogs and
Rhubarb treats are prayers, too.

-Bob DeSmith



Thanks so much to the Fedders for hosting us at their farm for this outdoor worship time.