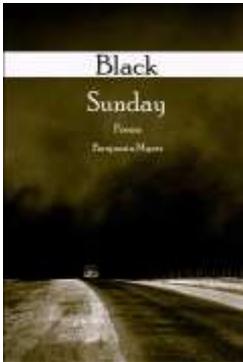


# Black Sunday



You've probably already read the bulletin announcement about plans for the October 13 Formation Gathering. A few members of our congregation are working very hard to prepare for this dramatization of the Dust Bowl sonnets and we hope you'll join us that evening and bring a

friend. I encourage you to read Jim Schaap's book review at his blog to learn a bit more about the book from which the dramatization is taken:

<http://siouxlander.blogspot.com/2019/03/book-review-black-sunday-by-benjamen.html>



*The weather wasn't great for the picnic this year, but the fellowship was still sweet. Thanks to the council for grilling and to the kitchen committee for all their hard work!*

# A Note from Pastor Joel

In the 16th century, Protestants and Roman Catholics divided with respect to how God speaks through the Scriptures in relation to how God speaks through tradition. In the 17th century, leading thinkers began to question more openly whether God speaks at all and even whether this is a God. In the face of such radical challenges regarding revelation, it turned out that Protestants and Roman Catholics were nearer to each other than they had realized. In fact, we can put it this way: Reformed Catholics and Roman Catholics both seek to listen to God in both the Scriptures and tradition. We have differences, but more than that, we are united in what C.S. Lewis calls "Mere Christianity," which we can also call "ecumenical Christianity."

On the evening of October 27, the Christian Reformed Churches in Sioux Center will gather to commemorate the 16th century Reformation. The worship begins at 6:00 PM, and it will take place at Bethel Christian Reformed Church. We encourage you to attend. At 5 PM on October 27, I will lead a brief Formation Gathering at Covenant, in which we will explore the catholic character of the Reformation. We will conclude a little after 5:30 in order to give people plenty of time to get to the 6 PM service at Bethel. I look forward to exploring Reformational Catholicism with you.

-Pastor Joel

Courier

October 2019

COVENANT  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

# Notes from the Elders

Romans 8:28, in the NIV, reads: “We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” An alternative translation put forward by Robert Jewett reads: “We know that in all things God works for good with those who love God and are called to his purpose.” This translation was pointed out to me by authors Walsh and Keesmaat in *Disarming Romans: Resisting Empire, Demanding Justice*. Walsh and Keesmaat bring us this alternative translation of God working for good with those who love him, as encouragement for all believers to see how we have work to do, while we are “being conformed to the image of his Son...” (Romans 8:29). All of us in our current situations, whether we are busy parents, educators, farmers, city workers, students, factory workers, retirees, or a combination of one or more of these, are given a job to do, imitating Jesus and seeking to do good within our sphere of influence, whether that be limited to our homes, our jobs, our communities, or far beyond. And this is in spite of our weakness and troubles. I hope each one of you finds that encouraging. God is using you in the building of his kingdom. And that brings me to some of the work your elders and council have been engaged in lately.

You should know that pastor Joel is encouraging and leading us in an extended time of prayer during our meeting as elders. We pray that God will use us in the council, who love him, to work for good in our congregation and community. The council would also like you to know that a committee, working under the leadership of our Safe Church Coordinator, Rebecca De Smith, has come up with a pro-

posal that they feel will make our church a safer place during the morning worship, while, above all, remaining welcoming and friendly to all who seek God’s presence and our community.

The council approved this proposal, which consists of the following four sub-points:

- Ten minutes into the service, all doors except the main entrance under the canopy on the northwest side will be locked. Signs will direct visitors and latecomers to that entrance where someone will be waiting to provide them with a bulletin and help them find a seat.
- Nursery and children-in-worship rooms will remain unlocked, though nursery access will be limited to one main, central point.
- Ongoing training, beginning with members of the council and volunteers, should be the chief component of developing safe church policies and practices.
- Any and all changes made to improve church safety must be clearly explained to the members of the congregation.

As always, questions and comments concerning church safety can be directed to Rebecca or any council member. Speaking of questions and comments: you are encouraged to get in touch with pastor Joel and your council members with your questions, encouragements, and comments as we, the congregation of Covenant Christian Reformed Church, seek to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

-Sanneke Kok (on behalf of the Elders)

# An Update on our Formation Gatherings

A hypothetical conversation about Formation Gatherings with Pastor Joel, Rebecca, and an inquisitive church-goer:

**Q:** What are “Formation Gatherings”?

**A:** Since January we have been holding what we call “Formation Gatherings” each Sunday evening. By “formation,” we mean our participation in God’s actions to transform and conform us more and more into people like his Son, Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:29) As a congregation living in what many call a “post-Christian” era, we do not limit formation to teachings from the Scriptures, Creeds, and Confessions—although we do study these writings regularly and eagerly. But because we can encounter Christ in all things, we also include testimonies to how our Lord has shaped our lives, intergenerational sessions that can include shared meals, presentations regarding arts such as music and poetry, and discussions of social and political matters that we call “Meeting House” gatherings. Such gatherings complement our Sunday morning worship. On Sunday mornings, we love God by listening to God through the Scriptures and communing with God in the sacraments. Having received transformation by the renewing our minds in worship in the morning, we gather in the evening to explore ways to offer our bodies and entire selves to God as living sacrifices. (Romans 12:1-2)

**Q:** So what has this looked like?

**A:** Well, here’s some of what we’ve been up to over the last few months. We started the summer with a few Sundays focusing on creation care. We worshipped (and ziplined) out in our Father’s world at the Fedders’ Farm. We heard from and shared a meal with missionaries Ben and Tricia, caught up with former Pas-

tor Gil and Janet, and got a beautiful glimpse of life and ministry in Senegal by Carlye and Ariel. We continued to study the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer with Pastor Joel. We heard moving testimonies from Tricia Kok and Doug and Marge De Boer. And we were told stories of faith through poetry and song from Mary Dengler and Luke Hawley and just this past week from Rachel Hibma and Dave Schelhaas. We met in the sanctuary for a hymn sing, at tables for a Back to School WE service and on the bike path for a prairie walk. In each of these gatherings—through the teaching, dialogue, stories, songs, fellowship—God has

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Grandpa Alert!

Lincoln Jay Anderson (great-grandson) was born at 5:44 PM on Tuesday, September 17 at Sanford Hospital in Sioux Falls. Eric and Katie (granddaughter) Anderson are the parents, Tim (oldest son) and Pam Ackerman the grandparents, and ME the great-grandparent. 20 inches long, 6 pounds, 8 ounces, strawberry blond hair. And...is about as sweet and beautiful as a baby can be!



# October Birthdays & Anniversaries

|   |   |    |                                 |    |  |
|---|---|----|---------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Dave Goslinga<br>Judah Hawley   | 14 | Finley Drissell                 | 27 | Dave & Emily Kramer                            |
| 2 | Ethan Brue<br>Ava Landman   | 15 | Mark Horstman                   | 28 | Julia Kramer<br>Linda Vanden Hoek              |
| 3 | Alleke Crull  | 17 | Zoe Hoekstra                    | 29 | Nick Breems<br>Tina Dekker<br>Jonathan Van Tol |
| 5 | Ed Brummel<br>Anna Christians   | 18 | Pam DeJong                      | 30 | Emilyn Smit<br>Pete Vander Plaats              |
| 7 | Eric Rowe   | 19 | Pat Crull                       |    |  |
| 8 | Dan Kuiper  | 20 | Laura Janssen<br>Esther Eppinga |    |  |
| 9 | Emma Henreckson<br>Steve Holtrop<br>Kara Maletougou<br>Ed & Natalie Brummel | 21 | Erin Eggebeen                   |    |  |
|   |   | 24 | Lydia Clark<br>Marv Wielard     |    |  |
|   |   | 25 | Layne Vos                       |    |  |



## Offering Schedule

**October 6**

**AM** General/Building Fund

**October 13**

**AM** Christian Education Fund

**October 20**

**AM** Missions Fund

**October 27**

**AM** World Renew: Disaster Response Services

**PM** Center for Financial Education  
(at joint Reformation Day Service)

## Formation Sunday Evenings

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

**September 29:** Alex Vasquez, Young Life

**October 6:** Pastoral Teaching: "Deliver us from the evil one"

**October 13:** Black Sunday

**October 20:** Intergenerational WE Service

**October 27**

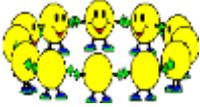
5:00 PM: Reformational Catholicism

6:00 PM: Community Reformation Day Service at Bethel CRC

**November 3:** Pastoral Teaching: "For yours is the kingdom, power and glory"

# October Assignments

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



## Nursery

Parents of the month:  
Lee & Jenni M

### October 6

AM Dennis & Pam DJ, Andy & Rachel L  
PM John & Linda V, Tricia K

### October 13

AM Doug & Marge DB, Alejandro & Isabel C  
PM Mark & Lisa C, Barb T

### October 20

AM Bob & Rebecca DS, Emilyn S, Laura J  
PM (no nursery)

### October 27

AM Duane & Jan B, Daryl & Deb H  
PM (no nursery)

### November 3

AM Dave & Luanne G, Ross & Lisa F  
PM Steve & Pat C, Mark & Cheri H



## Coffee Servers

Ana F, Terry F, Rin G,  
Linda VH, Sharon V, Eldon W



## Greeters

AM Pam DJ, Tim K, Len R



## Ushers

AM Ruth Clo, Sharon D, Mark H

## Substitutes

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

Doug DB, Zoe H, Ron O,  
Lee R, Les S, Beth VB

## Pastoral Group Dinner Schedule



October 13—Hibma/Eggebeen  
October 27—Ploegstra/Haan  
November 3—DeSmith/Wielard  
November 10—Kok/Goslinga  
November 17—Schaap/Vander Plaats  
November 24—Bailey/Oostra

## 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 21** for the November issue.

# Giving To Date

| Fund                | Budgeted                      | Received  | Difference |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| General             | (1/1/19-9/22/19)<br>\$190,902 | \$176,644 | -\$14,258  |
| Missions            | (1/1/19-9/22/19)<br>\$16,835  | \$25,458  | +\$8,623   |
| Christian Education | (8/1/19-9/22/19)<br>\$25,187  | \$31,665  | +\$6,478   |

## Notes from the Deacons

Growing up, the two things I always wanted to do in church were to climb up into the attic and on to the roof. Of course, I never had the chance to until this year. With the leaks in the roof that Covenant has, I finally got to crawl way up in the church attic, looking for where the water was pouring in. Together, Adam Fedders and I found the leak on the inside. With a drone, we looked at the roof and found a few troubled spots.

A couple of weeks ago, we rented a larger manlift from Rent-All and went up on the roof. Technically, we were over the roof, but it's still an up close and personal look at the roofing tiles. Bringing along a caulking gun and some roofing tar, we inspected, found, sealed, and glued down any tiles that looked to be a problem. Lo and behold, we found The Big One, a hole in the tiles where the wood was visible from the outside. We plugged it up and hopefully that took care of the problem, at least for now.

As I'm writing this, there's a huge rainstorm headed for us. In the morning, assuming all goes well, I plan to go to church and see if indeed that took care of the leak. If it did,

though, that means we'll have to patch the attic a bit where the water running in rotted out some of the roofing boards. Then we'll have to see about repairing the drywall above the pulpit as well. There's still a bit to do and still some costs that will have to be met.

\*Update: after the 2 or so inches of rain from September 10-11, the buckets were dry!

I suppose this is an excellent way to remind everyone that every fifth Sunday in any given month is specifically set aside just for the Building Fund. There are only a few each year, but those offerings help give the Building Fund a boost to help take care of issues such as a leaky roof.

And as long we're on the topic of offerings, I should remind everyone that each Sunday the offering is designated for a particular fund—the first week for General and Building Funds, the second week for Christian Education/Legacy Plan (formerly Fair Share), the third for Missions, and the fourth for either the Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund or World Renew.

Sometimes, however, we can only give every other week or maybe once a month. To give to any cause, remember that you can write the designated cause on the memo line of the

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Serving at Covenant

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

## Bargain/Opportunity/Need

There is a bargain available—better known as the Bargain Alley Thrift Store operated by Western Christian High School in Hull. The store supports the mission of the school by taking donation items such as furniture, clothing, home décor, hardware, and a variety of other items and sells the items to raise money for Western Christian High School.

An opportunity exists because the store needs volunteers to help go through the donated items to make them presentable for display and sale in the store. There is an opportunity to volunteer since the store would have a dif-

ficult time existing without volunteers. You are needed!!!

A need is met by the store. Many people come in to buy affordable items for their families that are very usable. Needs are met by having a place to donate usable items as well as help sell items to people who are looking for affordable day to day things for their homes and families. The store connects people who have something to give with those people who need something. In the process, Christian education is supported.

Volunteering provides a fun social venue where you interact with fellow Christians to promote a kingdom cause. Please consider donating your unused items as well as volunteering at the store. Your support is needed and appreciated. You can call the store at (712) 439-6800 for more information.

-Jan Bajema

## Notes from the Deacons

*(Continued from page 6)*

check or use the giving envelopes. The deacons make sure that the offerings get sent to the appropriate funds. And if you're not sure where to designate your giving, feel free to write "where needed most" in the memo line, and we'll see to it that the money is used as we see best. If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to talk to your pastoral group deacon.

Lastly, I ought to mention the fact that the yearly budget process is underway. In the next few weeks, committees should be in contact with the appropriate deacons to see about monetary needs. Please keep an eye out for those communications.

-For the Deacons, Joe Eggebeen



*Sunday School is off and running and Sanneke clearly has the fifth graders under control. ☺ Ana is helping the first graders learn the ropes!*



# Family Celebration

We are a family of six siblings. The oldest is 83 and the youngest is 73. We live with our first spouses. We can gather and witness to God's faithfulness for four generations. We have scattered from the place we grew up, but have returned periodically to help the next generations know their roots.

This past July we gathered at Fairmont Hot Springs Resort, near Butte, Montana to celebrate the blessings and faithfulness of our Heavenly Father for a family of 133 (counting some who are on the way) with only one death, a baby who had no brain. That family later had triplets.

Our parents are no longer living. Dad died at age 46; mom at 95. I am the oldest of their children, and I held their youngest great-grandchild of nine weeks. My prayer at that time was that this young child might celebrate an occasion such as this when he is my

age. Knowing the way family life has in some ways disintegrated and the forces at work that can make family seem even more irrelevant, I was hesitant to offer the prayer. The stress on families, along with the way we as a nation have left a legacy to these young ones that it is legal to kill them before they leave the womb, is even more profound.

Several members of the next generations are not concerned about the issues of life that my generation was taught are important; nor are they faithful in church attendance, which we regret. This thought related to Psalm 119 comes to my mind as I feel led to pray: "How shall the young find their way?"

This is only part of the story. Every generation and every family has struggles, as well as its blessings. Our love for the rising generations in our family leads us to pray for them with both thanksgiving and intercessions. As a congregation that prays together, I hope you can appreciate our (Wil and Jo) joy and concern.

-Willis Alberda

---

## An Update on our Formation Gatherings

*(Continued from page 3)*

indeed been active, transforming and conforming us more and more into people like his Son, Jesus Christ. As friends of Jesus and friends of each other, we have grown in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**Q:** What's coming up next?

**A:** Next Sunday night Alex Vasquez, director of Young Life Ministries in Sioux Center will share with us about his exciting work with teenagers around Sioux County. On October 13 some Covenant members will be presenting a dramatization of Black Sunday: Dust Bowl Sonnets by Benjamin Myers. Through the imagined voices of people who lived in the icon-

ic scenes of those hard times, we will witness their lives and hopes, their struggles with the land and with God. On October 6, we'll continue to study the Lord's Prayer. And on October 20 we will gather for another intergenerational WE service. In light of Pastor Joel's teachings on the Lord's Prayer, this evening will include prayer stations based on each of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. The interactive stations are geared for all ages and the evening will conclude with a shared meal.

We hope you'll join us for a Sunday night this fall and why not invite a friend or neighbor to join you!

-Rebecca DeVries