

Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard?

Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard? On Sunday evening, July 5, we're bringing back "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," but instead of dining in a Covenant member's house, this time you'll get to hang out in their backyard for an hour or so of good fellowship and re-connecting. Everyone—families, singles, couples, (dogs?)—is heartily invited to participate.

Here's how it works. When you sign up, you will be asked if you want to host a gathering in your backyard or attend in someone else's. If you host, you will be told the number of people joining you but you will not know who is joining you until they show up. If you are attending, you will be given your host's ad-

dress via phone call, text, or email and invited to head over to your host's home around 5:00. You will be asked to bring your own chairs, your own brown bag meal or snack, and your own drink. Then let the fellowship begin!

The Formation Fellowship Committee will provide some optional fellowship and formation activities, but hosts are welcome to come up with activities on their own. Croquet anyone? Badminton?

Click [here](#) to sign up! Contact Rebecca DeVries if you have questions.

-Rebecca DeVries



Courier

July 2020

COVENANT
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Jesus Cooks Breakfast: Ideas for Sharing Sensory Bible Stories with Kids

Here is an article reprinted from The Network with some helpful ways to keep kids engaged in the Word!

It just might be my favorite Bible story of all. Looking for a bit of normalcy after the emotional rollercoaster of Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter decides to go fishing. A few other disciples join him. They fish all night, flinging out their wet, heavy nets over and over.

Nothing. Still nothing. Not. One. Fish.

Early in the morning, they're tired, hungry, and discouraged. As they near shore, they see—Jesus! But what's he doing? He's not standing there looking holy with his hands raised in benediction. The risen Lord is bending over a fire frying up some crispy fish fillets, tending them carefully so as not to burn them. And to top it all off, he provides Peter and company with their own catch in nets full to bursting.

The sensory elements of that story are SO compelling. The sight of Jesus in the early morning light, the sound of the waves lapping the shore, the smell of frying fish sizzling over a smoky fire, the welcome taste of food after a long hungry night, and, I like to think, the feeling of Jesus hugging his friends as they climb out of the boat.

Exploring the Bible with All Five Senses

The Bible is full of sense-tingling stories like that one. With just a little imagination, you can weave sensory elements into the explora-

tion of any Bible story, whether you're at home, at church, or any other place. Here are some ideas.

NOSE

- When you read a Bible story, make a “smell list” with kids. Write down all the things you might smell if you were there while the story was happening.
- Go on a smell hunt. Read a Bible story and look for things around the house or your church that smell like things on your smell list.
- Light a scented candle or some incense each time you read a Bible story together, so kids associate a special smell with the “special revelation” of God's Word.

MOUTH

- Use food as a prop. For example, put Cheerios on the floor to represent manna and let your kids gather and eat them while you read the Exodus story (might wanna clean that floor first, just saying.)
- Make a meal of foods mentioned in the Bible, and read the stories that correspond to them as you eat. Taste things like unleavened (pita) bread, milk and honey, olive oil, grapes, and fish.
- Sing along (and sing loud!) to your favorite Bible songs, praise songs, and hymns.

EYES

- Look for Bible storybooks that are a feast

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Jesus Cooks Breakfast

(Continued from page 2)

for the eyes as well as the soul. My favorite series of all time is [Tales That Tell the Truth](#) from The Good Book Company.

- Search for inspiring works of art, both classical and contemporary, that illustrate the Bible story. Check [Eyekons.com](#), or search “Bible story art” on [Etsy](#) or Google. There’s a lot of poor art out there, as well as a lot of blond Jesus illustrations, but there’s some wonderful art as well.)
- Check out the fabulous free videos from [The Bible Project](#), which are especially good for older kids.

EARS

- Invite kids to make their own sound effects as you read a Bible story together. They’ll love it, and listening for opportunities to make some noise will keep them engaged.
- Listen to kid-friendly Christian music from groups like [Rain for Roots](#), Scripture songs

from [Seeds Family Worship](#), and others. Connect the songs to passages from Gods Word.

- For sound-oriented kids, check out audio versions of story Bibles like [The Jesus Storybook Bible](#) and [Growing in God’s Love](#).

HANDS

- Use physical books whenever possible, rather than reading from a device. Holding the book and turning pages helps kids engage with the story.
- Make up simple hand motions to help kids learn Bible verses by heart, as suggested in [Memorizing Scripture with Littles: A Fun and Easy Tip](#).
- Retell Bible stories using LEGO people, stuffed animals, or wooden figures from [Worship Woodworks](#). Retelling stories encourages kids to use their listening and interpreting skills. Plus it’s just plain fun!

-Sandy Swartzentruber

Reprinted from The Network.

Serving at Covenant

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

Nothing new this month, except to remind you to bring in your donations for Mid-Sioux by the end of June! We hope to bless our community through our donations to Mid-Sioux! Monetary donations can be left in Kurt Vos or Carol Oostra’s mailboxes and all food, paper products, etc. can be left in the northeast entrance to church!



July Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Barb Hoekstra Linda Visser	12	Jill Friend Dane Hibma	25	Dane & Rachel Hibma
2	Stuart Buckingham Annemieke Lappenga Stan Vanden Berg Luke & Sarah Hawley	14	Barb Schaap Angel & Faby Addink	26	Pastor Gianni Gracia
4	Merrill McCarthy	16	Jason & Dani Wyenberg	28	Jacob Vander Plaats Eldon Westra
5	Mary Dengler	17	Dwight Van Tol Kris Vander Plaats	29	Dennis & Pam DeJong Cal & Sally Jongsma
6	Gidge Meyer	19	Justin & Melissa Bailey Pete & Betty Vander Plaats		
8	Isabel Castelan Sabine Feikema Luke Hawley Sharon Vos	21	Miriam Groenewold		
9	Tom Clark Chris & Rin Goedhart	24	Josiah Feliciano Mark & Merrill McCarthy		



Offering Schedule

July 5

AM General/Building Fund

July 12

AM Christian Education Fund

July 19

AM Missions Fund

July 26

AM World Renew: General Fund

Formation Sunday Evenings

Join us for our 5:00 PM gatherings:

July 5: Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard?

July 12: No gathering

July 21: Outdoor Walk

July 26: To be determined

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, **July 20** for the August issue.

July Assignments

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

Sunday Scheduling for July

None of our normal monthly volunteers will be needed for July.

Nursery Scheduling

The nursery is currently closed, so no nursery volunteers are currently needed.

July Worship Schedule

July 5: Pastoral Groups 3 & 4 (DeSmith/ Feikema & Brue/Goslinga)

July 12: Pastoral Groups 5 & 6 (Schaap/ Rowe & Rhoda/Sybesma)

July 19: Pastoral Groups 1 & 2 (Friend/ Eggebeen & Ploegstra/Janssen)

July 26: Pastoral Groups 3 & 4 (DeSmith/ Feikema & Brue/Goslinga)



Giving To Date

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/20-6/21/20) \$130,479	\$108,379	-\$22,100
Missions	(1/1/20-6/21/20) \$11,375	\$8,952	-\$2,423
Christian Education	(8/1/19-6/21/20) \$175,956	\$169,596	-\$6,360

Notes from the Deacons

We're excited to have some new deacons ready to serve at Covenant! Read on to get to know each of them a little bit as they begin their terms serving our church.

My wife Lisa and I both have family roots in Sioux County and we attended Covenant while we were students at Dordt. I grew up on a farm by Luverne, MN, and since we graduated from Dordt, Lisa and I have lived in Duluth, MN, where I completed my MA in English; St. Paul, MN; South Korea; and Pittsburgh, PA. We moved back to Sioux Center in late 2017 with our daughter Sabine, who will be four in July. I work remotely as a writer and editor for a company that does pre-investment and executive due diligence and background screening (yes, it sounds like nonsense!); Lisa is the social and cultural services manager at Sioux Center Health. We're happy to be a part of Covenant and I look forward to serving as a deacon.

-Ross Feikema

I grew up in Pipestone, Minnesota, and went to USD for an undergraduate degree in math and physics. I met Laura in 2007 during my first year of graduate school at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and we were married at 1:59PM on Pi Day in 2009. Our daughter, Lila, was born in 2016, and son Sam in 2019. I started teaching mathematics at Dordt in 2014. My hobbies and interests include board games, fermentation, and, recently, running half marathons. I'm looking forward to learning as I serve in this new role!

-Mike Janssen

Hey Church, this is Eric Rowe. I'm the son of an engineer and a literature teacher. I am a juggler and enjoy other forms of body control and challenges like dance and gymnastics as hobbies. I work full time doing structural analysis at 3D Engineered Solutions in Hull. We work on a lot of certified lifting tools, so I'm in charge of putting together the reports verifying that the tool is safe and up to code. I also work part-time for the City of Sioux Center Arts and Rec as a swing dance instructor and have been involved in community theatre performances over the last 2 years. I've been attending Covenant CRC since my freshman year at Dordt in 2013 and became a member in 2018. I live in Sioux Center and am renting a house with two other 2017 Dordt Grads. I was born and raised in Renton, WA before moving to the Midwest. I've never been on any council or church committee, so I'm excited to grow into this new role and experience.

-Eric Rowe

Hi! I'm Les Sybesma, a new deacon here at Covenant. I've been at Covenant for a long time, way back in the days that we worshipped at the Christian School gym. I've been a deacon, served on the building committee, and also ran the sound system for 20 years. My wife Lila and I live in Sioux Center, and have three grown daughters and four grandchildren. I work at Premier Communications. I look forward to the next three years, in service at Covenant.

-Les Sybesma

In this time when we have not been able to gather and sing together most weeks, and indeed, when there is so much uncertainty about the safety of the very act of singing together in church, it is good to remember that whether we sing or not, our God sings.

A Singing God

The Lord your God ... will rejoice over you with singing. —Zeph. 3:17

God sings? Who knew?
And he sings to us!

Of course the angels sing their glorias,
and everyone knows God's people sing to him:
"Make a joyful noise!" the psalmist says,
and we do, it seems, whenever
more than two or three of us get together.

We know that Jesus sang. The rabbi
and his disciples sang a hymn,
after the Passover meal but
before they headed out with cleansed feet
toward Gethsemane and heartbreak.
Was there a standard post-Seder-meal hymn?
Psalm 103, perhaps?
Did someone give the pitch?
Did this motley male choir harmonize?
Did they miss Iscariot's strong tenor or
was he a monotone?
Did Jesus on this last night
stop singing from time to time and just listen?

Jesus, the God-Man, singing—

But now here's Zephaniah whose words I have
left unread
for 60 years or more,
telling us all—all of Abraham's seed—
that Yahweh is bending over us
singing and rejoicing
like a mama dreaming the future of her cradled babe.

How does he sing, this Spirit God
who has no larynx with vocal folds,
no pharynx, trachea, diaphragm, or tongue?

Yet the prophet says he sings over us
and surely he's not just talking
about thunder, bird song, choir concerts,
or even the "music of the spheres,"
that celestial hum
the Ancients said the planets made
as they moved in their appointed paths.

No, it's God's voice I'm going to be listening
for,
crooning a lullaby,
a love song,
a bit of blues, perhaps,
in a voice that sounds older than Satchmo's
singing "What a wonderful world!"

-Dave Schelhaas





This is my Father's world,
and to my listening ears

all nature sings,
and round me rings
the music of the spheres.

