

Sunday School & Children's Worship

Offering for November



(Peanut Butter & Jelly/Jam)

Awareness Book Club

The Awareness Book Club will meet again in January, and we will discuss *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*, by Kristin Kobes Du Mez. The dialogue is open to all members and your friends. We had a good discussion of *Unsettling Truths* by Mark Charles at our last session, and we expect another good dialogue in January. Even when we disagree with the author or one another, we learn from each other. The tentative date for the next session is Tuesday, January 19. If you have any questions, please get in touch with either Pastor Joel or Eric Rowe.

Note from the Elders

Dear Covenant Family,

Greetings to each of you from the Covenant Council and the COVID Task Force! Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the support, prayers, and patience you have shown throughout this time of COVID. We have moved forward very cautiously in this season, more cautiously than most churches in Sioux Center, believing that this would keep our congregation and community safe during the pandemic.

As a Council and COVID Task Force, we have felt the burden of these decisions, praying that restrictions would not be polarizing and public health measures would be viewed as bi-partisan. We do not take your trust for granted.

As we move into the New Year, we are hopeful. Which is why we are cautiously optimistic that after the New Year we can begin Children's Worship, Sunday School, Catechism, and Covenant Sunday Morning, with full attendance of all members during worship services. We will continue to offer the Livestream of services as well.

I know I feel like at every turn I'm encouraged to 'be patient' and 'be flexible'. At

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Courier

November 2020

COVENANT
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Note from the Elders

(Continued from page 1)

home, work, school, and church, the call for patience and flexibility can be exhausting. It means we don't always know the next step, and that can bring anxiety and frustration. And so it is with a humble heart, that I once again ask for patience and flexibility as we continue to navigate church life in the midst of a pandemic at the close of the year.

As each day inches closer to Advent, I find myself longing for a change of pace and a purpose that this season so often brings. I offer this pre-Advent prayer penned by Henri Nouwen to carry us forward into the coming

season:

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day, we who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

Blessings to all,

-Melissa Bailey

Council Chair and COVID Task Force Member

Christian Education Fund Update

Greetings from the Christian Education Committee! It may seem like our committee has been pretty quiet over the last several months. Typically during the fall, our committee would have been busy planning Pork N Bands and an auction, but because of COVID those things just didn't happen this year. There have been a few construction jobs and a couple silage piles and we thank both the donors and everyone who helped with those. So far we have been able to stay up to date with payments to our schools, but we would

also like to encourage our congregation members to think about how they can financially support our Christian Education fund through your regular offerings. Because we have not had the in-person fundraisers like we normally would have in the fall, we hope that you will prayerfully consider giving what you can so we can continue to stay on top of our obligations to our Christian school. Thanks!

-Megan Haan



Even if you don't have kids in school, you can buy gift cards for almost any store—both local and national—at the TRIP office at Sioux Center Christian School and have the money sent to either the Christian Education Fund or the Tuition Assistance Fund at here at Covenant! It's another way to raise a bit of money for our Christian Education Fund while getting groceries, stocking up on toilet paper, buying Christmas presents, and paying for your car's oil change! Thank you to those of you who already support this program! We get small checks throughout the year from this service. Check out www.siuoxcenterchristian.com/support/tripinfo.cfm or talk to a deacon for more information!

Notes from the Deacons

For our Thanksgiving offering this year, the list of causes to which we may contribute will remain largely unchanged from last year. As in previous years, we will place an envelope along with the list in your church mailboxes. However, due to the fact that many of us have been unable to regularly check our church mailboxes over the last several months, we will make the envelopes available as early as the November 1st service. Following the next week's service on November 8th—once all pastoral groups have had the chance to attend and collect their mail—any envelopes that have not been retrieved from their mailboxes will then be mailed or hand-delivered by a deacon. Once received, you may simply choose the cause(s) to which you would like to contribute and return the envelope to church by Thanksgiving Day.

Once again, we have more than two dozen causes to choose from. We know this has been a year of unexpected challenges for our church (and the world at-large) in ways both individual and communal. And yet, we have many reasons to give thanks. As always, the Thanksgiving season helps us recognize that for which we are grateful and to use that gratitude as a lens by which to see and understand the needs and trials of our human family, near and far. We as deacons are grateful for the continuing generosity of our church, the wonderful causes we are able to support, and the abundant love and grace of God. Thank you for being a blessing to us and our community.

-Ross Feikema



Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!

Hi! My name is Graham Casey Rhoda. This picture was taken Saturday, October 17, shortly after I came into this world. Can you tell I'm exhausted? My dad, Casey, and my mom, Lauren, will be in the hospital with me for a few days, and then we can go to our home in Sioux Falls.

I am not so big now, as I weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. and was 21 inches at birth; but I might grow to be quite tall like my parents and grandparents. My grandparents, Scott and Becky Rhoda, live in California; they plan to meet

me in mid-November when my baptism is scheduled at Peace Lutheran Church. My other grandparents, Terry and Michelle Adams, live in Sioux Falls and attend that church, too.



Len and Lee Rhoda are my great-grandparents, I am their 7th great-grandchild, and they are so thankful for us all... 3 boys and 4 girls. It will be fun to get to know my cousins!

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Jan Bajema Clark Stiemsma | 15 | Teo Crull | 26 | Georgina Gracia Kate Henreckson David Taylor |
| 3 | Natalie Brummel Mary Ploegstra | 16 | Mia Mercado Castelan Lauren Vander Plaats | 27 | Tim Kamp Ryan Zonnefeld Jerry & Shonna Plasier |
| 4 | Austen Goslinga | 20 | Verne Meyer Duane & Jan Bajema Paul & Ruth Clousing | 28 | Neil Collins McCarthy Doug & Marge DeBoer |
| 5 | Rue Mellema | 21 | Cambri Zonnefeld Alejandro & Isabel Castelan | 29 | Laremy DeVries Hannah Landman |
| 8 | Rebecca DeSmith | 23 | Bob DeSmith Sadie Landman | 30 | Esteban Gracia Jocelyn Zonnefeld Ed & Mary Dengler |
| 10 | Anna Westfall | 24 | Louisa DeVries Titus Westfall | | |



Offering Schedule

November 1

AM General/Building Fund

November 8

AM Christian Education Fund

November 15

AM Missions Fund

November 22

AM Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund

November 26

AM Thanksgiving Offering

November 29

AM World Renew: World Hunger

Don't forget to return your Peter Fish on November 1! We hope you have filled it with coins for the hungry around the world. All money will be sent to World Renew's World Hunger Campaign.



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, **November 23** for the December issue.

November Scheduling

Sunday Scheduling

None of our normal monthly volunteers will be needed for November. The nursery will remain closed as well this month, so nursery volunteers will not be needed.

Formation Sunday Evenings

Join us for our 5:00 PM gatherings this month!

October 25: Jeff Taylor and our Political Climate

November 1: Memorial Reflections

November 8: Dwight & Kathleen Van Tol

November 15: John Visser

November 22: Prayer Service: Praise & Lament

November 29: No Gathering

November Worship Schedule

October 25: Pastoral Groups 2,4,6
(Ploegstra/Janssen, Brue/Goslinga, Rhoda/Sybesma)

November 1: Pastoral Groups 1,3,5 (Friend/Eggebeen, DeSmith/Feikema, Schaap/Rowe)

November 8: Pastoral Groups 2,4,6
(Ploegstra/Janssen, Brue/Goslinga, Rhoda/Sybesma)

November 15: Pastoral Groups 1,3,5
(Friend/Eggebeen, DeSmith/Feikema, Schaap/Rowe)

November 22: Pastoral Groups 2,4,6
(Ploegstra/Janssen, Brue/Goslinga, Rhoda/Sybesma)

November 29: Pastoral Groups 1,3,5
(Friend/Eggebeen, DeSmith/Feikema, Schaap/Rowe)

Giving To Date

| Fund | Budgeted | Received | Difference |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| General | (1/1/20-10/18/20) \$219,204 | \$191,814 | -\$27,390 |
| Missions | (1/1/20-10/18/20) \$19,110 | \$14,894 | -\$4,216 |
| Christian Education | (8/1/20-10/18/20) \$44,027 | \$46,420 | +\$2,393 |

As I Wash My Hands: A Prayer for Faith & Sanity

As I wash my hands, 20 seconds,
I think of the raw, over-sanitized skin
of hospital staff.

Circling soap over knuckles and palms,
I think of the gloved hands
of grocery clerks and restaurant workers.
Cleansing under fingernails and past the
wrists,

I think of the aged hands of my grandmothers
in nursing homes that I hope are free of
germs.

As I wash my hands, faucet flowing,
I think of the clear air above halted cities,
the clear waters of Venice canals,
how the world looks when we are quiet and
grounded,
how sand and mud and toxins settle when we
shelter in place.

As I wash my hands,
interlacing my fingers in a prayer,
I think of the work that is paused
or the work that is increased.
Lather, water, clarity,
now your work is more visible
in the world and in me.

You desire clean hearts,
right spirits.¹
Wash us with water
and your Word.
Present us to yourself a radiant Church,²
A model of holy sanity,³
as we wash our hands.

-Darcy Wiley

Reprinted from *Pandemic Prayerbook*

¹ Psalm 51:10

² Ephesians 5:26

³ A reference from C.S. Lewis' Introduction to *On the Incarnation* by St. Athanasius



Safe Church Training

Classis Iakota and Classis Heartland are teaming up to offer a virtual Safe Church Training that will be offered on Saturday morning October 31, from 9:00-11:30 AM. The morning begins with an introductory session, followed by two breakout sessions covering a variety of other topics relating to maintaining safe churches.

The information for the training can be viewed [here](#). Please note, that the zoom links for the sessions will be added to the page prior to that day. We ask that you register by adding your name/information to [this google sheet](#) (there is also a link to registration at the bottom of the training schedule). You can click on the tabs at the bottom of the sheet to register for the breakout sessions you plan on joining. This is a free training. If you'd like to make a donation to the safe church ministry you may do so [here](#).

-Tara Boer

Serving at Covenant

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

I was asked to write about how I volunteer at Sioux Center Health. I started volunteering for Diabetes Education back in 2007. There are many booklets and hand-outs that must be prepared for all different clients that have diabetes. Back in the old hospital I had to copy lots of information on colored paper and then assemble into the booklets handed out for the different situations. There are classes for pre-diabetes, gestational diabetes, and more. There was a need for these to be translated into Spanish and so I was soon making all booklets, etc. in Spanish and English.

The new hospital was a great transition for the Diabetes Department. There were conference rooms that I could work in, a new color printer that printed two-sided, and a storage room for supplies. I was asked to keep the storage room organized. I did filing, mailings, and even patient changes in the database. Every week was interesting to see what projects needed to be done. However, Covid ended my work there. The good news is the hospital will be hiring a new employee to work part-time as an administrative assistant for diabetes education and the nutritionist.

As plans for a new hospital came about, a gift shop was added. It was decided to staff it with volunteers. I signed up and was given Tuesday afternoon for my time. I have the privilege of working with Kris Altena who is the part-time director of the gift shop. Some of my work varies as there are projects I help Kris with. The most important job is to meet and greet people as they come into the gift

shop. We also assist them in looking for specific items. The computer system was easy to learn. It is not always busy, so they allow the volunteers to read. The hospital staff are great customers and appreciate having the gift shop there to save them time in picking up presents for family and friends. We welcome everyone to shop here.

The gift shop sells homemade bars, candy bars, and gum. They sell hot chocolate, pop, and even Starbucks. Melissa and Doug toys, books and puzzles, and baby items are always in stock. Candles, cards, purses, Walk by Faith jewelry, and home décor are available to purchase. There is free coffee to enjoy as you shop. Please stop by and enjoy shopping at the gift shop!

-Marcia Westra



Thanksgiving and Prayer Items from the Maletoungos

- Give thanks to God for his ongoing goodness and faithfulness in a yet disrupted global context
- Pray that the Lord will continue to enable us to be instruments of peace in our community.
- Pray for sustained peace and socio-political stability in West Africa including in Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria
- Pray for the Lord's continued provision for the ministry of Christian education in West and Central Africa.



The GEMS theme for this coming year is Friended. Friendship matters. But friendship is not every girl's story. Our girls live in a culture that is unprecedented in both its digital connection and its social isolation. Girls desperately search to find a place to belong and be loved, whether it's at school, on the sports field, or through their innumerable Snapchat streaks. We dry their tears and ache over the loneliness and isolation that will always be a part of their lives until they hear about a Friend who changes everything. That Friend is Jesus. Our deepest need is for Him to be our Savior, Lord and Friend. Throughout our year, girls will discover that God, who is King and Lord of all, invites them to be His friend. The girls will also learn what it means to be "One Another" friends as we explore the GEMS Dinner this year.



Top: The girls enjoyed an outdoor movie night at Faith CRC to kick off the season on September 23.

Above middle: During the first meeting, the 4th grade girls decorate their GEMS bags which they'll use each year they're in GEMS.

Left: The girls make their GEMS t-shirts outside during the meeting on October 7, as well as enjoying root beer floats!